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NEWS

Pelahatchie

MERRY CHRISTMAS TO ALL

December
2021

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Pelahatchie, MS

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Pelahatchie News
P.O. Box 771
Pelahatchie, MS 39145

Pelahatchie Chiefs have best season in 20 years

By Susie A. Wolfe

The Pelahatchie Chiefs football team made it to the fourth round, where they lost the MHSAA 2A state semifinals 60-14 to undefeated Scott Central in Forest on November 26. They had an 8-6 record. The team, led by second-year Coach Ryan Keeton, made it to the first-round last year.

"Our Pelahatchie Chiefs hit the field for the final time this season tonight (November 26). Our guys played hard, our fans cheered loud, and there is not a single reason to feel defeated. These young men and coaches went further than our Chiefs have in the past 20 years of football. Thank you for an unforgettable season. As always, Our Tribe Our Pride. #Tribe." This post sums up the



Photos by Adlyn Till, Pelahatchie High School student photographer

After a power outage due to a blown transformer during the Friday, November 12 game left the field in total darkness, the two teams were forced to continue the game on Saturday, November 13. After the teams regrouped, the Chiefs went on to win their 2nd playoff game 39-35, defeating the Philadelphia Tornadoes.

great football season the Chiefs had this year.

"It's pretty exciting!" said Coach Keeton, who has won South State in 2016 and 2017 and played in the 2017 state championship. "We had a tough schedule this year, but the kids were resilient and worked hard. After a slow start, they won six games in a row. They believed they could and got it done."

Keeton, who was an assistant coach at Pelahatchie in 2012-2014, said, "This is a springboard for the young kids and a testament for the seniors after working hard for four years. We hope to be there again next year."

ERA girls cross country team wins State Championship

Special to Pelahatchie News

The MAIS AAAAA East Rankin Academy (ERA) Patriot Cross Country Team concluded their 2021 season on Monday, October 26 at the MAIS State Finals at Choctaw Trails in Clinton. Consistently among the top teams competing in MAIS 5A this year, the varsity girls' commitment and steady improvement culminated in their first ever state championship, narrowly defeating the defending champion, Simpson Academy, by two points. The state championship effort was anchored by Leah Collipp finishing second and Emily Williams finishing third, both girls earning All-State honors among the top ten finishers. The varsity men did not run a full team, but solo competitor Grayson Blair improved his 5K time by nearly seven minutes, setting a new personal record of 22:51:00.

The JV teams, competing in the 3K open inclusive of all MAIS JV teams

combined (regardless of class size), featured the Patriot JV boys finishing fourth out of fifteen teams and the Patriot JV girls finishing eighth of seventeen teams. The JV boys' fourth place team finish included Top 25 performances from Walker Sartin (14); John Parker Pierce (20); and Jadon McGee (25). The JV girls' top finisher was Jensen Baker in 25.

As a result of the season performance, the varsity girls' team qualified by time (21:35 average 5K) and state final results to post-season competition at the inaugural Mississippi XC All-State Meet of Champions was held on November 13. This meet pitted the best public and private cross country schools in the state for an overall crown and cross country swag.



Special to Pelahatchie News

The ERA 2021 girls cross country team, led by Coach David Hopper, celebrated winning the MAIS 5A State Championship with Leah Collipp finishing second and Emily Williams finishing third. The Cross Country team also finished third in the All-State Meet on November 13. This meet pitted the best public and private Cross Country schools in the state for an overall crown. All-State honors went to Leah Collipp who finished first; Emily Williams who finished second; and Audrey Mayatte who earned an Honorable Mention. Overall, it was a great season for many ERA athletes who achieved personal records.



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Christmas time and Agriculture's part in it



By Doug Carter, Rankin County Extension Agent

Special to Pelahatchie News

Having been raised on a farm in rural Rankin County, I can easily say that Christmas is a very important time of the year for those of us involved in agriculture. Some of us are finished with gathering crops, fall tillage and are anticipating next year's crop. Some are feeding livestock daily. For some, Christmas comes in the middle of hunting seasons. Most of us are from Christian families, so the reason we celebrate Christmas is no big surprise. As I look back, it seems the whole time I was growing up, Christmas was such a magical time of the year.

The setting of the Christmas Story is a stable, in a town in the Middle East, called Bethlehem. A stable is something that we can easily refer to, since many of us grew up around farm animals. I can remember as I grew up, both of my grandfathers had stalls in their barns.

We understand that a manger was not a bad place or situation, it could be used as the resting place for a newborn child. According to the dictionary, a manger is a structure used to hold food for farm

animals. The word comes from French managier (meaning "to eat"). Mangers or troughs, as they are called today, are mostly used in raising livestock.

We all know the story, the time came for the baby to be born and Mary gave birth to her firstborn, a son, she wrapped him in clothes, and placed him in a manger, because there was no room for them in an inn.

Inns during that time were nothing like they are today. The occupants slept in rooms together, probably without any heat, except what was produced by their own bodies. Try to imagine all the snoring and other sounds, not to mention the smells, the diseases and the pests the travelers carried with them, from all over the Roman Empire.

I just believe the innkeeper did them a huge favor by placing them in a stable, away from the other travelers. He placed them with the animals, where there was hay for bedding, and the warmth of the

animals could help take the edge off the cold of a long winter night. It is hard to imagine a more peaceful place.

It is so easy to see that all of this had to have been planned, and it came to set the stage for the story we know so well



Special to Pelahatchie News

today.

After Jesus's birth, a very bright star was seen in the eastern sky. There were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch of their flocks, and an angel appeared to them. This part of the story confirms to me the apparent importance of these lowly people, who as shepherds, were producing sheep, for

the sheep's wool. These shepherds were regarded as highly important members of society.

The actual story sounds like they all left their sheep and traveled to see the child. However, anyone that understands sheep will understand that some went, and some stayed with the flocks to guard them, from the predators of the night. Just think of the story they had to tell their fellow shepherds when they returned to the fields.

During this time, agriculture was the occupation that sustained society, just as it does today. Then it required most of the population to do all the work required, to produce the food and clothing they needed.

Jesus went on to live his life. The week he was crucified, Jesus entered Jerusalem, riding on a donkey, a beast that was used to transport farm products.

Agriculture cannot be removed from this great story, and it has translated into the faith of so many people of the world today.

From the Rankin County Extension Service, "Merry Christmas," and "Happy New Year."

Sources: Dr. Ernie Flint, Ph.D, CCA, "Christmas and agriculture have always been close allies," *Field Notes*.



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Publisher

Clay Mansell
 claymansell@pelahatchienews.com

Editor in Chief

Stephanie Tracy

Managing Editor/Sales

Susie A. Wolfe, (601) 566-1932 x2
 news@pelahatchienews.com

Graphic Designer

Katie White, (601) 566-1932 x5
 designer@pelahatchienews.com

Office Manager

Doris Bynum, (601) 566-1932 x0

For submission information, email
 news@pelahatchienews.com.

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(L to R) front row, are, Jenny Harrell/ Manager, Amy Bailey, and Jennifer Quick; and (L to R) back row, are: Cindy Jo Weimer, and Brian Hall/Owner.

Winter Specials

Walking in a MI(N)Ter Wonderland
 (white chocolate & peppermint)

Baby it's Cold Outside
 (chai tea)

Christmas at Hogwarts
 (butterbeer inspired)

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ERA names Student Council



Special to Pelahatchie News

East Rankin Academy (ERA) recently announced members of the school's 2021-2022 Student Council. Pictured (l to r) are: Kate Betts, treasurer; Reese Harper, vice president; Cole Moudy, president; Stephens Bulger, twelfth grade representative; Mason Morgan, secretary; Aiden Boyd, eleventh grade representative; Kyla Kate Huffman, tenth grade representative; and Audrey Mayatte, ninth grade representative.



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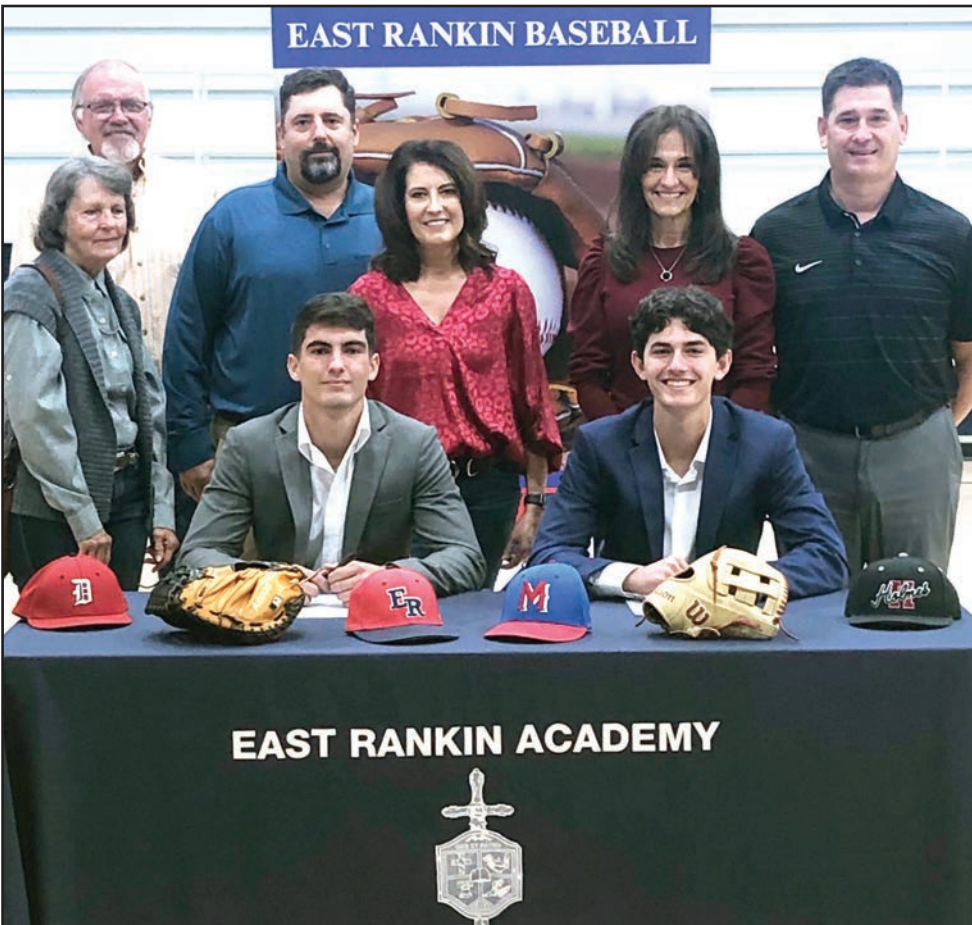
Mary Ann Griffin, CFNP
Tracie Bass, LPN

Kim Risher
Keli Robertson

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ERA athletes earn baseball scholarships



Special to Pelahatchie News

Two East Rankin Academy (ERA) athletes are shown signing baseball scholarships. Mason Morgan signed with Mississippi Delta Community College and Cole Moudy signed with Holmes Community College. Jonathan Worrell is the ERA baseball coach. Pictured (l to r) front row, are: Mason Morgan and Cole Moudy; second row: Becky Conley, Tom Conley, Shad Morgan, Lisa Morgan, Michelle Moudy and Tate Moudy.

Schools name Players of the Week



Special to Pelahatchie News

Steven Wallace with Insurance Associates of Rankin County sponsored the Players of the Week at both Pelahatchie schools this season. The final Pelahatchie High School (PHS) winner was Kenner Doster (top), and the East Rankin Academy winner was Ashton Buffington (bottom) for the East Rankin game against Sacred Heart. PHS' Kenner Doster was named Pelahatchie's Player of the Week in their win over Puckett.

Sparkle and Spooks winners announced



Special to Pelahatchie News

The winners of the Mississippi Sparkle and Spooks UM Preliminary Competition were announced on Saturday, October 16. The pageant was held at Pelahatchie High School. There was also a boys division included. Contestants were aged 0 to 30+. Pictured (l to r) front row, is Adilyn Gray; second row: Addison Cockcroft, and Rhyder Bailey; and third row: Darrion Wesley, and Gabriel Owens.



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Renfroe receives Journalism recognition at Mississippi State Press Association convention

By Susie A. Wolfe

Because the Mississippi State Press Association (MSPA) fall convention mainly centers around yearbook and literature magazine awards, the Pelahatchie High School (PHS)'s *Hatchie News* staff competed for categories in Best of Show, and senior editor Laura Renfroe took home several awards: Best Lede, Best Graphic Illustration, and Best Headline, which MSPA Director RJ Morgan read to the audience. She also placed as a finalist for Best Caption.

Awards were given at the November 1 awards ceremony at the University of Southern Mississippi (USM). The winning pieces, published on hatchieheadlines.com, were designed written by Renfroe.

Renfroe plans to attend USM, seeking a degree in graphic design with a minor in journalism, in pursuit of a career in Entertainment Journalism, where she would work for a publication like *Time Magazine* or *Entertainment Weekly*.

In her time working with *Hatchie News* through the journalism class taught by Advisor Laura Grice, Renfroe has accumulated a number of honors, including the ones below.

- **Best of Show** - "Bring the Soul Movie Offers Impactful Insight to



Special to Pelahatchie News

Design and copy are Laura Renfroe's forte as indicated by the numerous honors she has received in her time at PHS. She plans to go into Entertainment Journalism after completing her degree at Southern Miss. She is shown with the four awards she received at the Fall MSPA Convention.

- Stardom Struggles," awarded 2019
- **Best of Show** - "Newest 'Avengers' SuperM Burn the Stage at Atlanta Concert," awarded 2019
- **Best of Show** - "BTS Inspires and Dominates the World with Mature and Artistic New Album," awarded 2020
- **Best of Show** - "BTS Opens Up to the World with Completely Raw Comfort of an Album," awarded 2020
- **Best of Show** - "WandaVision Ris-

es as Marvel's Newest Delightful Oddity," awarded 2021

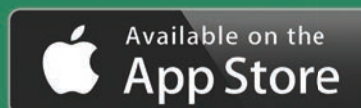
- **Best of Show** - "Diverse Feel-Good Novel Publicizes the Prejudices of Ideldom," awarded 2021
- **Best of Show** - "People Need to Listen to Us': The Anguish of Asian Stereotypes," awarded 2021
- **Best of Show** - "Squid Game Confronts Capitalism with Unsettlingly Relevant Dystopia," awarded 2021
- **Mississippi Scholastic Press Association All-Mississippi Honoree**,

awarded 2020

- **Mississippi Scholastic Press Association All-Mississippi Honoree**, awarded 2021
- **Mississippi Scholastic Press Association Best of Show:**
- **Best Photo Illustration Winner**, awarded 2021
- **Best Lede Winner**, awarded 2021
- **Best Photo Illustration Winner**, awarded 2021
- **Best Lede Winner**, awarded 2021
- **Best Headline Winner**, awarded 2021
- **Best Caption Finalist**, awarded 2021
- **Mississippi Scholastic Press Association Fall Convention Poster Contest Winner**, awarded 2021
- **Mississippi Scholastic Press Association News Publication Awards:**
- **Best Review Finalist**, awarded 2019
- **Best Review Finalist**, awarded 2021

In addition to Advisor Laura Grice, the five-year old *Hatchie News* has two student overseers, Malik Latin for broadcast, and Laura Renfroe for copy. The seven-person staff is made up of Ryan Bayliss, Macy McCamon, Adlyn Till, Caleb Walters, Deuce Ward, Kaitlyn White, and Keith Henley.

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ERA Chess teams wins at MAIS Tournament



Both the East Rankin Academy (ERA) varsity and junior varsity chess teams placed at the October 28 MAIS Tournament. The Junior Varsity Chess Team won first place in the Junior Varsity Division of the Mississippi Association of Independent Schools (MAIS) Annual Chess Tournament on October 28. Pictured (l to r) are: Audrey Mayatte, Audrey Hawk, Nic Riemann, Tate Ogden, Jacob Soto, Corbin Cofer, Cason Patrick, Maci Jo Rakinic, and Sydney McCurdy.



The Varsity Chess Team placed second in the Varsity Division of the MAIS tournament. Pictured (l to r) are: Jonathan Lamberth, Dylan Davis, Garrison Yoder, Tyler Williams, Jonas Vining, Jett Stuart, Stephens Bulger, Peyton Patrick, Judson Giordano, Will Price, and Eli Bowman.

Cross Roads to host Griefshare 'Surviving the Holidays' Seminar

Special to Pelahatchie News

The holidays are a joyous time when we get together with family and friends, eat a lot of good food, and celebrate the occasion. But for many people, this is a difficult time, because they miss the presence of a loved one who is no longer with them. The absence of that loved one and the grief that is felt can rob a person of the joy that should be experienced at this time of year.

This may be your first holiday without your loved one, or they could have left many years ago. Either way, the pain and grief that you feel is very real. As a part of their GriefShare Ministry, Cross Roads Baptist Church will host a Surviving the Holidays seminar on Sunday, December 12, at 2 p.m. This seminar will help those who are grieving to prepare for the holidays. The seminar features video interviews with counselors, grief experts, and other people who have experienced the holidays after their loved one's death and who offer

practical suggestions and reassurance. These people share honestly about:

- Being prepared for surprising emotions that may hit over the holidays
- What to do about traditions and other coming changes
- How to handle holiday parties and invitations
- How to survive potentially awkward moments with other people
- Where to find comfort, strength, and hope in a seemingly hopeless time

Those who attend will receive a Survival Guide filled with practical tips, encouraging words, journaling ideas, and exercises for daily help through the holiday season.

Everyone is invited to attend. Cross Roads is located at 104 Crossroads Road, Pelahatchie. For more information, call Sheila Bradshaw, GriefShare Coordinator, at 601-546-2297.

Grieving?

Know someone who is?

SURVIVING THE HOLIDAYS

When you are grieving a loved one's death, the holiday season can be especially painful. Our **Surviving the Holidays** seminar helps participants prepare for the holidays and even discover hope for the future.

Sunday, December 12, 2021, 2:00 P.M.

Cross Roads Baptist Church
104 Crossroads Road, Pelahatchie, MS 39145
(601) 546-2297

Edwards named PES Parent of the Year



Special to Pelahatchie News

Brian Edwards is shown with two of his three children at this year's Dixie National Rodeo, where Camden, left, was exhibiting. Dawson, a Pelahatchie Elementary student, is shown in front.

By Susie A. Wolfe

Pelahatchie native Brian Edwards, Industrial Maintenance Instructor at Pelahatchie High School (PHS), has been named the Pelahatchie Elementary School (PES) Parent of the Year for 2021-2022.

Edwards has three children who have previously or are attending PES. Dawson is the one that is currently in the fifth grade. Camden is now a senior, and Kyn-dal is a sophomore.

In his 13 years at PHS, Edwards has served as agriculture teacher, shop instructor, baseball coach, and transportation director.

"Thank you, Mr. Edwards, for your continued support of our staff and students," said PES Principal Robin Sanders.

He sponsors staff members of the month, helps with classroom maintenance, provides trailers/trucks for parades, and helps with whatever is needed.

In addition to teaching, Edwards also has owned Jack-Knifed Trailer Repair since 2016. He is also attending Pine Lake Baptist Church; partnering with Senda de Vida in Reynosa, Mexico; and works with local missions in Pelahatchie and Richland.

Edwards said, "I appreciate the time and energy the teachers put into making every child successful. The vigorous classroom instruction has been an asset to all three of my children. The roots and culture of so many teachers and administrators having grown up in Pelahatchie and having their own children there is representative of how truly vested the staff are in the school, community, and families they serve."

"My family is appreciative of what PES has done for my children and all the others. Knowing my kids are loved and taken care of allows me to send them to PES without worry or fear. A big thank you to EVERYONE that pours into the children," he said.

Obituaries

NAME	AGE	CITY	DOD	ARRANGEMENTS
Cynthia Graham	55	Pelahatchie	10/25/2021	Wolf Funeral Services
Lonnie Neal	57	Pelahatchie	10/26/2021	Wolf Funeral Services
James Perritt	76	Morton	10/27/2021	Wolf Funeral Services
Reginald Bell	63	Morton	10/28/2021	Wolf Funeral Services
William Bass	78	Pelahatchie	10/31/2021	Wolf Funeral Services
Adam Pittman	34	Walnut Grove	11/1/2021	Wolf Funeral Services
Melinda Rowell	51	Forest	11/2/2021	Wolf Funeral Services
Tommy Anderson	76	Lake	11/3/2021	Wolf Funeral Services
Drew Moore	21	Morton	11/7/2021	Wolf Funeral Services
Henry Risher	71	Pulaski	11/12/2021	Wolf Funeral Services
Travis Evans	87	Pulaski	11/14/2021	Wolf Funeral Services

East Rankin Academy adds to ACT 30+ Club



Special to Pelahatchie News

After the first nine weeks, the following were added to the East Rankin Academy (ERA) ACT 30+ Club. Pictured (l to r) front row, are: Jett Stuart, Jonathan Lamberth, Max Gainey, Dylan Davis, and Brayden Whitney; and second row: Peyton Patrick; Will Price, Parker Martin, Cole Moudy, Lawson Wuestefeld, and Colby Stewart.

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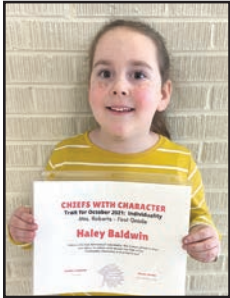
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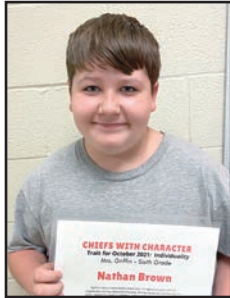
PES names October Character Trait Students



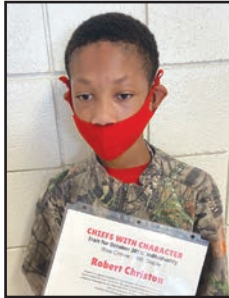
Haley Baldwin



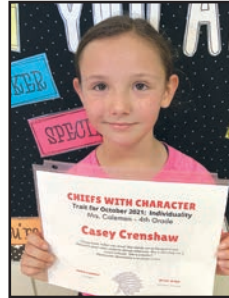
Lila Boykin



Nathan Brown



Robert Christon



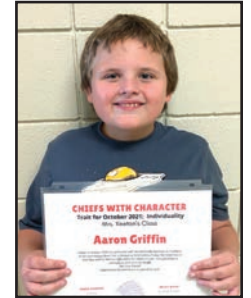
Casey Crenshaw



Kylie Davis



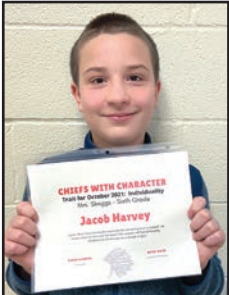
Hannah Dominguez



Aaron Griffin



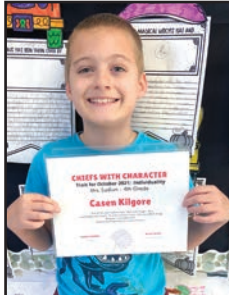
Ella Harvey



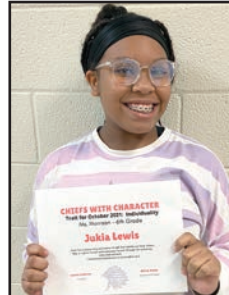
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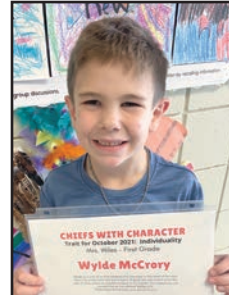
Riley Jordan



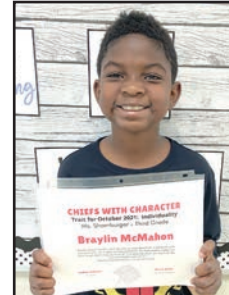
Casen Kilgore



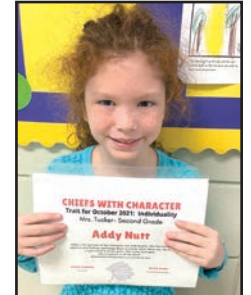
Jukia Lewis



Wylde McCrory



Braylin McMahon



Addy Nutt



Jamie Phillips



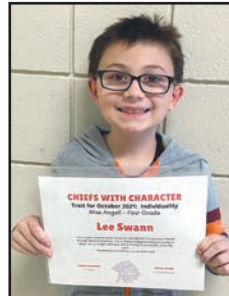
Brooklyn Pilgrim



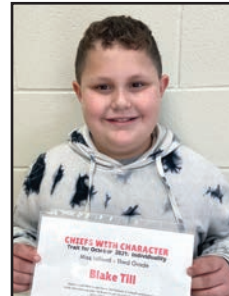
Ian Pybus



KaZariyah Stokes



Lee Swann



Blake Till



Bethany Tuckers



Paisley Winstead

Photos special to Pelahatchie News

Pelahatchie Elementary School (PES) named the October 2021 Chiefs with Character Trait students of the month. The students who earned this honor are shown above.

Cross Roads Baptist Church



Sunday Schedule:

8:30 a.m. - Contemporary Worship Service led by Praise Team
10:00 a.m. - Sunday School for all ages
11:00 - Blended Worship Service led by the Choir

Wednesday Schedule:

5:30 p.m. - Family Dinner (Call to make reservations)
6:30 p.m. - Prayer Meeting; Youth Worship; Children's Activities,
Couples Support Group; College Age Bible Study; Ladies Bible Study

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(Cross Roads Baptist Church Facebook Page)

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 - (b) Are known to mental health or state housing agency to have been arrested or incarcerated in the last year due to conduct related to mental illness; or
 - (c) Are known to the mental health or state housing agency to have been homeless for one full year or have had four or more episodes of homelessness in the last three years
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RQL helps collect food for ERCO Langford named Zoning Administrator



Special to Pelahatchie News

Angela Blakeney and Terry Miles with Rankin Quality Logistics helped collect food for ERCO families for Thanksgiving. The collection box was located at Fairway Foods.

Special to Pelahatchie News

Rankin Quality Logistics (RQL) collected food donations for Thanksgiving to help Ever Reaching Community Outreach (ERCO) feed local families. This nonprofit organization, located in Pelahatchie, helps out families in need. The 2021 goal was to feed 75 families.

A donation box was set up at Fairway Foods. Items that were collected for each box included: two cans green beans; two cans corn; one box macaroni & cheese; one meat (turkey or ham); one cake or brownie mix; one box mashed potatoes; one box stuffing; and one can of yams. They also accepted cash donations.



Special to Pelahatchie News

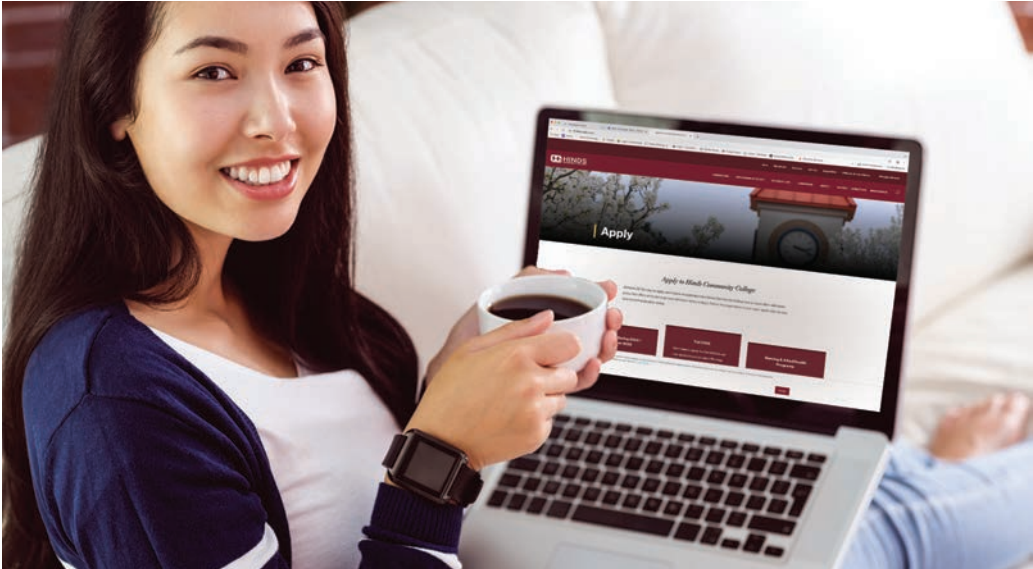
Randy Langford is Pelahatchie's new Zoning Administrator. He has more than 30 years of experience in the construction industry and operates Quality 1st Painting.

Special to Pelahatchie News

Randy Langford was named Zoning Administrator at the November Board of Alderman meeting. His duties are to assist Pelahatchie citizens and businesses with navigating compliance with the town zoning ordinances when adding new construction or additions such as shops, storage buildings to their existing property as

well as assisting in identifying issues with keeping the Town's neighborhoods neat and clean. Langford has more than 30 years of experience in the construction industry. A Pelahatchie resident for over 10 years, he operates a family-owned business called Quality 1st Painting. He said, "I very much look forward to serving the residents of our Town in this capacity."

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Pastor's Perspective: Cancel Christ?



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

Special to Pelahatchie News

The headlines last year proclaimed, "COVID-19 Cancels Christmas." COVID-19 is still lingering around, but it's not making the headlines this year. Now we read "Christmas is at Risk as Supply Chain Disaster Gets Worse."

It seems that whoever wrote these headlines thinks that Christmas is only about presents, commercialization, and spending money; that Christmas is simply a time that people go to the stores (or websites) to buy things. Advertisers have actually been attempting to get that idea into the public consciousness for years, and it seems they've finally succeeded. Making this worse, children are learning from adults that Christmas is only about presents. Within a generation or two, the true meaning of Christmas could be lost to a family.

But Christmas can't be canceled! Christmas is the celebration of the birth of Christ!

Luke 2:8-12 in the New Living Translation tells the story this way, "That

night there were shepherds staying in the fields nearby, guarding their flocks of sheep. Suddenly, an angel of the Lord appeared among them, and the radiance of the Lord's glory surrounded them."

They were terrified, but the angel reassured them. "Don't be afraid!" he said. "I bring you good news that will bring

great joy to all people. The Savior—yes, the Messiah, the Lord—has been born today in Bethlehem, the city of David! And you will recognize him by this sign: You will find a baby wrapped snugly in strips of cloth, lying in a manger."

So, the fact is, you or I can't cancel Christmas, and nobody else can.

But on second thought, maybe we should cancel Christmas! I am not saying that we should cancel the celebration of the birth of Christ, of course. And I

am not saying that we should unstring our lights and put away our presents.

But maybe we should cancel the version of Christmas that has no place for Christ. Let's cancel the version of Christmas that says, "Happy Holidays" instead of "Merry Christmas." Let's cancel the version of Christmas that de-



Special to Pelahatchie News

pends more on "receiving" than on "giving." Let's cancel the version of Christmas that depends on the supply chain and leaves Christ out.

Let's get back to what Christmas truly is: a celebration of the birth of Jesus. I think that at its very best, Christmas is a promise. At its best, Christmas is spend-

ing time with family and friends, enjoying holiday meals, laughing together, exchanging gifts, and worshiping together. I think all of these are a glimpse of things to come—because Christmas is really a promise of Heaven, a promise of something better.

When He was born, Jesus brought hope into the world. And with the challenges and uncertainties we face in our times, we all need more hope. We must remember that not only is God still in control, but that He has a wonderful plan for us and for the world.

So, let's celebrate Christmas for what it is. And it is important, not just on December 25, but every day of our lives, to celebrate Jesus. There may not be as many presents under the tree or even a ham on the table this year. But if we are focused on what Christmas really is, then those things won't matter as much to us. If we ever need to refocus on Jesus, it is now! If we have ever needed Jesus, we need Him now.

So, let's cancel what Christmas has become, and return to what Christmas really is.... A celebration of the birth of our Savior, Jesus Christ!

Merry Christmas! Be sure to take your family to church on Sunday!



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The Key to one of the Top Five burgers in Rankin County



Special to Pelahatchie News

The Key family is celebrating its tenth anniversary of their store/restaurant in December. All of the Keys help out at the Cross Roads Store & Grill, even the younger ones are asking to help. Pictured (l to r), front row, are: Aubriana Key, Kessie Key, Bailey Key, Brooks Garletts, Diana Key, and Tommy Key; and second row: Kalai, Thomas, and Drake Key, Collins, Austin, Olivia Key, and Leilani and Dwight Garletts.

By Susie A. Wolfe

"The Lord really blessed us," said Tommy Key, as he described how he prayed at the door of a building for sale on Highway 43 in the Cross Roads Community. "We asked for guidance and feel we had the go-ahead. We are so honored to have the support of the community."

Diana Key quit her job as an office manager at JBHM Architects in Jackson, where she had worked for 12 years, to run Cross Roads Store & Grill in Pelahatchie. She used her talent at making specialty cakes as well as cooking, and Tommy now cooks, too, and is in charge of the annual crawfish they offer. They also offer some groceries as it's at least 5 miles to any of the surrounding towns.

Diana said that the restaurant took off fast and is now 90% of their business. They doubled the seating in 2017 and offered covered dining outside, too. She said they are so thankful for their loyal customers who regularly eat lunch and

dinner. She appreciates that customers were patient during COVID, when they altered their business to make adjustments for carry outs.

She said that being nominated and making it to the Top 5 in the Best Burger category of Rankin's Best of the Best is a big thing for them. It coincides with the store's tenth anniversary, for which they are offering ten percent off all burgers during their anniversary week of December 6-11.

They said it is easy to remember the store's anniversary, as their granddaughter Bailey was born around that time. All the family is involved with the business: their sons, Austin and Drake, and daughter, Leilani, and their spouses, plus the grandchildren, Bailey, Olivia, Thomas, Aubriana, Brooks, and Collins.

If you haven't tried the homemade, hand-pattied hamburger at Cross Roads Store & Grill, it's time to try one of the top burgers around.

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Mayor VanHorn named Cub Scouts' Hero of Community

Special to Pelahatchie News

The Arrow of Light and Webelos dens in Cub Scout Pack 576 of Brandon awarded Mayor Karl Vanhorn as a 2021 Hero of the Community.

In the award's presentation, it said "that as the Mayor of Pelahatchie, he provides invaluable guidance and leadership to the town and community. As the Battalion Chief of Flowood Fire Department, he has shown both the courage and strength to lead others in protecting the citizens with honor and dignity."

The dens said, "Thank you for being an important part of our community and positively impacting many people's lives. We are inspired by the dedication to your vocation and look up to you as a true hero and

role model."

The Den Leaders are Charlie Murray and Wendi Murray, and the Cubmaster is Tommy Nichols.

Members of the dens are: Anthony Armstrong, Leah Armstrong, Miller Canizaro, Mason Clark, Murray Cooper, Tucker Durr, Owen Grant, Jackson Herrin, Lilly King, Carter Murray, Declan Myers, Jordan Parker, Ethan Pixley, Jake Sharp, Hanc Whittington, Grady Acy, Jake Anderson, Deston Blanchard, Zach Bryant, MJ Burnside, Will Causey, Malacai Coughlin, Liam DeMott, Henri Francois, Miller Gilstrap, Joshua Grant, Abbi Griffin, Gabbi Griffin, Isacc Lilly, Reed Nichols, Daniel O'Callaghan, PJ Phillips, Carsten Powell, Jacob Redmond, Alex Rose, Eli Simpson, and Layne Wooten.



Special to Pelahatchie News

Mayor Karl VanHorn was recently awarded the Hero of the Community Award by Cub Scout Pack 576 of Brandon.





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Greer promoted at Pelahatchie PPD



Special to Pelahatchie News

Pelahatchie Chief of Police Robert Mahaffey announced that Officer Jeremy Greer was promoted to the rank of Sergeant of the Pelahatchie Police Department (PPD). "Sgt. Greer has proved himself qualified and prepared for his new responsibilities through his work ethic, dedication to the department, and by setting an example for other officers," said Mahaffey. "Sgt. Greer is respected by his peers and will no doubt serve them well as their first line supervisor."

Carter named to Hinds Homecoming Court



Special to Pelahatchie News

Anna Grace Carter represented Hinds Community College Rankin Branch at the November Homecoming in Raymond. She is escorted by Camden Traweck from Brandon.







Merry Christmas!

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Myers graduates from Emporia State University



Special to Pelahatchie News

Plumb Hall at Emporia State University, named after Preston Plumb. Plumb Hall was named after one of the original settlers of Emporia. Plumb was also a U.S. Senator from Kansas from 1877 until his death in 1891.

Special to Pelahatchie News

Kacey Taylor Myers of Pelahatchie, graduated from Emporia State University (ESU) in Kansas in August 2021.

Myers earned a Master of Science degree in Health, Physical Education, and Recreation.

ESU offers over 200 academic programs in the School of Business, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, School of Library and Information Management and The Teachers College. For five consecutive years, ESU

is the only public university in Kansas to have earned national recognition as a College of Distinction, an honor for universities that demonstrate innovative application of high-impact education. In addition, *U.S. News and World Report* data shows ESU students have the lowest student debt of all Kansas public universities. *U.S. News* also cited ESU's School of Business as a best value for both in-state and out-of-state students and ranked the online graduate education program in the Top 100 programs in the nation.

Griffin named PES Teacher of the Year



Special to Pelahatchie News

Karen Griffin is shown receiving her PES Teacher of the Year award. Pictured (l to r) are: Mijia Ward, assistant principal; Griffin; and Robin Sanders, principal.

By Susie A. Wolfe

Karen Griffin, a 36-year teaching veteran, was named Pelahatchie Elementary School (PES)'s Teacher of the Year in November. She joined PES in 2018 and now teaches sixth grade math and science.

A graduate of Mississippi Valley State University in Itta Bena, she said she became a teacher because "I love working with people...my mom was a teacher...being able to share knowledge with young people is a gift I feel was sent from above." She said she has a true passion for working with young minds, especially ages 9-12.

Her first teaching assignment was in Las Vegas, Nevada, and that turned into a 30-year commitment in which she taught fifth grade. Her last 20 years was at Gilbert Magnet School of Per-

forming Arts in North Las Vegas. This school was the number one magnet school in the nation and received the Dr. Ronald Simpson Distinguished Merit Award as the Top Magnet School in the Nation 2009-2010. It is a moment that will live with Griffin forever.

She enjoys learning new things, especially using technology. Her goals for the future include "loving life and being with my family, and I would also love to travel."

She is married to Eddie Griffin, a 30-year retired teacher from Las Vegas, Nevada, who is a graduate of Mississippi Valley State University. They have two daughters, Kandis, who is studying medicine, and Kelsey, a graduate of Mississippi State with a degree in Elementary Education, who plans to become a teacher in January. And, they have one grandson, Kendell.



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Yogi receives Jellystone recognition



Special to Pelahatchie News
Out of 77 parks in the Jellystone franchise in two different countries, Yogi on the Lake recently won the Pinnacle Excellence Award, Outstanding Recreation Program, Store of the Year, and Club Yogi Rewards Award, plus was nominated for Resort of the Year.

Special to Pelahatchie News

Yogi on the Lake received a number of awards at this year's Symposium Awards Ceremony held in Covington, Kentucky, November 7 through 10. They took home five awards, including the Pinnacle Excellence Award (Awarded to parks who received a 5-star rating from 95%+ of their guests Outstanding Recreation Program), Outstanding Recreation Program, Store of the Year, Club Yogi Rewards Award, and the highest award of the night where the local resort was nominated for Resort of the Year for the Southern Region.

According to Manager Nikki Ammons, "We might not have won it, but

just the nomination is an honor! Plus, I was elected to represent the Southern District Jellystone Parks on the Yogi Advisory Council. (It was an) absolutely amazing day."

There are 77 parks in the Jellystone franchise in two different countries, Canada and the United States. Ammons was also elected by the Council members to be on the board as secretary.

Additionally, the M-List, hosted by *Mississippi Magazine*, is an annual Best of Travel awards voted on by readers of the magazine as well as its online publication, *A Bit Magnolia*. After tallying 26,000 votes, Jellystone Park Pelahatchie was selected as an M-List favorite in both the RV/Campground and Family Getaway categories.

Rhodes named BHS New Teacher of the Year



Special to Pelahatchie News
Pelahatchie resident Michelle Rhodes was named Brandon High School (BHS)'s New Teacher of the Year in November. She teaches Law and Public Safety. This is her first year to ever teach. Pictured (l to r) are Rhodes with BHS Head Principal Dr. Bryan Marshall, who was previously Pelahatchie HS's principal.

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Local pair headed to Orlando Special Olympics



Special to Pelahatchie News

Luke Robinson and Lisa Dalsin of Gulde United Methodist Church in Pelahatchie are going to compete in the Special Olympics USA games June 5-12, 2022 in Orlando. Both Luke and Lisa will be playing Bocce ball.

The Church at Shiloh names new pastors



Zachary Mason is The Church at Shiloh's new youth pastor. Pictured (l to r) are Lauren, Levi and Zachary Mason.

Special to Pelahatchie News

Zachary Mason is the new Youth Pastor at The Church at Shiloh. As a Rankin County native, he was raised in Pearl, and graduated from Park Place Christian Academy in 2013. During high school, he began dating my now wife, Lauren, who was raised in Pelahatchie and attended East Rankin Academy.

The couple were married in 2017, and had their first child, Levi, earlier this year.

"We are so excited to be at The Church at Shiloh and serving the city of Pelahatchie," said Mason. "I have a heart



Special to Pelahatchie News

Steve Ainsworth is The Church at Shiloh's new minister of music. Pictured (l to r) are Lisa and Steve Ainsworth.

for this community and am excited to see what God is going to do through this ministry."

Steve Ainsworth is the new Minister of Music. He is from Brandon.

He said, "Lisa and I feel so blessed to be a part of The Church at Shiloh. The members are extremely friendly and are not afraid to speak to you."

He said his goal is to lead a blended worship service focused on praise to the Lord Jesus Christ. The morning service begins at 10 a.m. The choir is currently preparing for a Christmas cantata entitled "Mary Did You Know." Rehearsal is from 4:30 to 5:45, followed by the church service at 6 p.m.



Cross Roads Store & Grill Named Top 5 BEST BURGER in Rankin's Best of the Best!

To celebrate the store's Tenth Anniversary on December 9, and show customer appreciation, Tommy and Diana Key are giving a 10 percent discount off all burgers during the week of December 6-11.

SEE the Christmas Village
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