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Wesson News

SPOTLIGHT

**Co-Lin Named
Among Top 150
Community Colleges**

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Wesson News
PO Box 1028
Wesson, MS 39191

Volume 4, Number 3

“Good News You Can Use”

March 8, 2016

Rain, winds & tornado wreak havoc

By Bob Arnold

All Photos By Wesson News

Heavy rains, strong winds and an EF-2 tornado left hundreds without power and damaged dozens of homes, buildings and vehicles in the Wesson area last month.

Wesson police reported winds felled trees and ripped off limbs, causing damage to vehicles and buildings and downing power lines on Hotel, Oak and Collier Streets and around the baseball fields on Fourth Street during the storm on Monday, February 15. A downed tree destroyed the roof of a home near the Wesson corporate line, and traffic was blocked on Highway 51. In the midst of the havoc, however, there were no fatalities.

Hundreds of electric utility customers lost power for more than



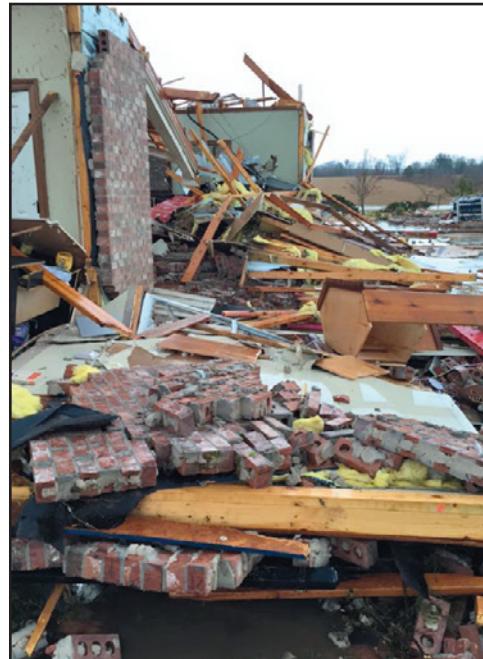
Workmen repair library roof at Wesson High School.



Tarpaulin covers roof of home at Stonghope after tornado.



Roof of Stonghope home was partially destroyed.



Brick house at Stonghope was demolished.

twelve hours, with the winds bringing down lines in the early afternoon of February 15. Work crews restored power to most of the affected area by 1 a.m. the next day, but there were scattered outages until that afternoon. Porches Restaurant opened as usual at 11 a.m. on Tuesday, February 16, but had no lights until shortly after noon.

“We had gas stoves and paper plates and cups,” Porches owner Al McSweyn said. “So we opened for business.”

Co-Lin reported trees down and cancelled classes, but sustained no damage.

The tornado, which travelled thirty-one miles from just southwest of Wesson on Highway 51 to Simpson

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Pending legislation can help Wesson

By Guest Columnist Wesson Mayor Alton Shaw

Well, it's that time of year again: Our state legislature is back in full swing in Jackson, and there are several bills that could have a direct affect on our town:



• One of the main ones deals with how much of the sales tax spent in Wesson returns here to be used. Currently, the Town of Wesson receives 18.5% of the seven per cent received inside the city limit, which averages out to just under 1.3 cents for every dollar spent. A proposed bill would phase in an increase over three years that would raise the 18.5% up to 20%, with the

increase designated to be invested in infrastructure, such as water, sewers and roads. Everyone would still pay the same amount in sales tax. The only difference is that more would come back to the municipality and less stay with the state.

• Another bill that could have a potentially large impact on municipalities throughout the state deals with the collection of outstanding debt, particularly police fines. It would allow cities to request that the Department of Revenue (DOR) withhold any state tax return from individuals who may have an outstanding debt, and use those funds to help pay it off. A variation of this system is already in place for DOR to collect money owed on outstanding child support payments. There would be very little expense to the state to implement this new program. The ability to collect on several of our old fines would go a long way in

funding the various aspects of our police department's functions.

It is always interesting dealing with our legislative system, and there are many hurdles that still need to be overcome to see these two bills enacted into state law, but we are very optimistic. As immediate past president of our state municipal league, and currently serving as the legislative chairman, I am always looking for ways to increase local revenue without having to increase taxes so that more public services can be offered and maintained. I look forward to continue working with our elected officials in Jackson to hopefully see these two come to fruition.

As always, if there is every anything we can do as a town to help, or if you have any suggestions on how we can improve, please don't hesitate to contact us. May God bless.

Couple celebrates 70th anniversary

Wesson News

For Wesson native George Mercier, who loves the warm, sunny South, the cold and snow in Elmhurst, Illinois, on February 10, 1946, didn't make the day particularly auspicious. But Mercier embarked on a journey with his bride Dorothy (Dottie) Ragland that day which has lasted more than seventy years.

Last month, their friends hosted a surprise reception for them to help celebrate the occasion.

George, who served in the U.S. Navy during World War II and attained the rank of Lieutenant Commander, met Dottie in 1945 as he was being released from service. He proposed to her three weeks later on Thanksgiving Day, and they married in another two-and-a-half months. They honeymooned in New Orleans.

Born December 22, 1922, in Elmhurst,

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cont. from page 1



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ClayMansell@WessonNews.com

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Publisher/Owner
Clay Mansell

ClayMansell@WessonNews.com

Editor
Bob Arnold

BobArnold@WessonNews.com

Design/Production
Brad Henderson

Designer@WessonNews.com

Staff Writers & Photographers

Marie Watts

Special Contributors

Dr. Stephanie Duguid
Healthy Living

R. Shaw Furlow
Area Arts

Sales

Bob Arnold

Tony Norton

Sales@WessonNews.com

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Tornado wreaks havoc

County, struck Wesson Attendance Center (WAC) before it touched down. Its winds damaged the roof over the high school library and a high school gymnasium wall and partially tore off the roof over the old gymnasium that separates the elementary school and high school. The facility also sustained significant water damage inside.

Trees with limbs ripped off their tops across the street at the Nena Smith Dance Studio evidenced the tornado.

“We were extremely fortunate,” WAC principal Marilyn Phillips said. “Our classrooms were untouched, and no one was injured.”

Phillips said school officials evacuated students into hallways, where there are no windows, when tornado alarms sounded in Wesson.

On the elementary side of WAC after students were sent into the hallways, Phillips described the scene as “calm” with children thinking “it was just another drill.”

“On the high school side, where most of the damage occurred, there was

more tension and excitement,” she said.

When the winds subsided and weather conditions improved, WAC allowed parents to pick up their children, and it did not hold classes the following day.

A few miles north, the tornado that affected WAC heavily damaged and destroyed a number of homes in the Stronghope area when it touched down along its 250-yard wide path and its winds reached a peak rate of 130 miles per hour. Throughout Copiah County, fifteen single family homes were affected by the weather, including six, which were destroyed, eight, which sustained minimal damage, and another four, which suffered major damage. Four mobile homes were destroyed, and two others sustained minimal damage, the Copiah County emergency management office reported. In Lincoln County, three children sustained minor injuries when a suspected tornado also knocked down a mobile home near the Copiah County line, where Ashley and Ryan Terry provide daycare services.

At the March Wesson Aldermen’s meeting, Mayor Alton Shaw and Mark Brown, director of the public works department, expressed their thanks, on behalf of the town, to the City of Brookhaven for its assistance in cleaning up debris after the storm. Brookhaven’s public works and street departments supplied a dozen people, three trucks and a trailer and a frontend loader to help Wesson with its cleanup task. “Work that would have taken us two months took just two days with Brookhaven’s assistance,” Mayor Shaw said. Brown singled out Keith Lewis, director of the Brookhaven public works department, and Willy (Bert) Wilson, the City’s street department supervisor, for their contributions.

Police Blotter

Special to Wesson News

During February, Wesson Police Department activity encompassed:

Response to complaints:

- One simple assault on a minor

Citations & arrests:

- Ten speeding
- Four improper vehicle equipment
- Three driving with a suspended license
- Three driving with no insurance
- Two driving without a license
- One driving with an expired tag
- One careless driving
- One contempt of court violation
- Two possession of controlled substance felony
- One possession of paraphernalia
- Three possession of beer
- One shoplifting
- One failure to comply
- One noise ordinance violation
- One public drunkenness
- One petty larceny
- One credit card fraud
- One false identification to a police officer

On school days, the Wesson Police Department facilitates traffic flow at Wesson Attendance Center with officers on duty between 7 a.m. and 8 a.m. and 3 p.m. and 3:30 p.m.

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Chorus stirs patriotic spirit

Wesson News

At the dawn of a presidential election year, when all Americans take stock of their country and its needs before choosing their candidate, the Wesson High School Chorus helped stir the patriotic spirit of members of the 50-Plus Club at their February meeting.

The chorus, under the direction of Daphne Johnson, who will be retiring at the end of the current school year, treated the Club to "Heal Our Land," a mini-musical arranged by Russell Mauldin, which features medleys of patriotic, folk, and spiritual music mixed and a narrative designed to inspire an audience's national pride combined with humility.

The work has four components:

- My Country Medley, including "This is My Country," "This Land is Your Land" and "America," -- songs expressing national pride;

- Song of the Past Medley with folk music that expresses the "heart and soul" of America -- "Long, Long Ago," "Polly Wolly Doodle," "Shoo Fly," "The Erie Canal," "Nobody Knows the Trouble I've

Seen." "All My Trials," "In the Good Old Summertime," "A Bicycle Built for Two," "The Band Played On," "Hello! My Baby," "Oh! Suzanna" and "Bill Bailey,"

- The Dream Goes On with an arrangement of "America the Beautiful" that reminds the audience of America's values of freedom and self-government that "survived with God's help,"

- Heal Our Land Medley, a selection of hymns affirming that "keeping the American dream going begins with the country on its knees before God" -- "Heal Our Land," "He's All I Need," "The Solid Rock" and "Revive Us, O Lord."

Members of the chorus included Olivia Allen, Joslynn Arzate, Lexie Barlow, Kaitlyn Burns, Alissa Coone, Chloe Cooper, Reid Crow, Zoe Davis, Steven Dennis, Tre Flemming, Rayanna Granger, Jim Guess, Sonya Jackson, Brooke Jones, Jasmine King, Iris Linderman, Aaron Love, Cade Lowery, Savannah Madison, Tabitha Manning, Cheyenne McCraine, Chelsea McManus, Jimmie McQuage, Preston Middleton, Justin Morgan, Anna Roberts, Breanna Sanders, Kaitlyn Smith, Paige Tadlock and Misty Tanksley.



Wesson News

Wesson High School Chorus performs "Heal Our Land" at 50-Plus Club.

MEET YOUR NEIGHBOR

Linda Stegall, antique collector & refurbisher

Wesson News

Linda Stegall works two days a week at the Mill Town Mall in her retirement years after owning her own florist-gift shop in Wesson and being employed at a local drug store and Wesson Hardware. She has been married 53 years to Jesse Stegall, who also works after his retirement from Bell South at Wesson Hardware. "I went back to work after Jesse retired because he went back to work," she explains. Except for seven years in Louisiana, Linda and Jesse have resided in the Wesson area all of their lives. They grew up just outside Wesson in the Beauregard area and attended Co-Lin. She and Jesse currently live on long-time Stegall property on a road that honors the family name just north of Beauregard Cemetery.

What is your hobby?

Antiquing. Jesse and I collect and refinish. We go to estate sales, flea markets and auctions in the area. Although we used to travel outside the area to acquire antiques, we rarely do so now.

What is your favorite book or movie?

Gone With The Wind -- both the book and movie -- because they are about the South. I read the book and watch the movie every ten years. There's so much in them.



What kind of music do you like?

Anything from the 1950s. That's when I was a teenager. We play '50s music at the Mill Town Mall, tuning into a special internet station.

Do you have a favorite musician?

Tom Jones.

How would you spend a \$1 million?

I'd give it away -- some to my church, Zion Hill Baptist, and some to help people in need, such as the recent victims of local storms and others who suffer because of sickness.

Editor's note: Suggest neighbors you want to read about via email to bobarnold@wessonnews.com.

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The story of the Easter lily

By Guest Columnist Rebecca Bates

Each holiday is marked by its traditions. Easter has its share – egg decorations and hunts, gift baskets and chocolate bunnies, church services and the Easter lily. The trumpet shaped blooms symbolize purity, virtue, innocence, hope and life – the spiritual essence of Easter.

The Easter lily is native to the southern islands of Japan. Prior to World War II, all Easter lily bulbs were exported to the United States from Japan. After the bombing of Pearl Harbor, all exports ceased, and bulb production was taken over by the United States.



All Easter lily bulbs are produced in a small, isolated coastal region straddling the California and Oregon border. This region is called the “Easter Lily Capitol of the World” and produces nearly all of the bulbs grown for the potted Easter lily market.

The commercial bulbs are shipped to greenhouse growers throughout the United States, who force the plants under controlled conditions to flower in time for Easter. This can be tricky, since Easter can fall on any day between March 22 and April 25 – determined by the vernal equinox.

After you have enjoyed the beauty and fragrance of your lily, plant it in the yard. They prefer a sunny location with well drained soil. Without the trickery of a controlled greenhouse environment, expect your lily to bloom in the summer.

Happy Easter!

Editor’s Note: Rebecca Bates is the Mississippi State University Agricultural Extension Agent based in Brookhaven at the Lincoln County Court House.

TENDING YOUR GARDEN

cont. from page 1

Couple celebrates 70th anniversary

a Chicago suburb, Dottie graduated from high school in her home town and from Vanderbilt University. Timothy George Mercier was born in Wesson on May 8, 1917, and graduated from Wesson High School, Co-Lin, and Louisiana State University, where he earned a degree in chemical engineering.

The Merciers returned to Wesson in 1972, when George retired following a twenty-year career with Ethyl Corporation, for which he worked in Baton Rouge and Houston. Over that

span of time, they had five children -- three of them now adult seniors themselves: Tim, 69, Anne, 67, Laurie, 64, Patricia, 57, and Chet, 55.

Asked what advice they would give to today’s newly-weds for an enduring marriage, Dottie quoted from a scrapbook given to her by her daughter on her eightieth birthday:

“There is no such thing as a perfect husband or a perfect marriage, but, like a garden, marriage flourishes with patience, optimism and tender loving care.”



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At a party for the Merciers hosted by Debbie Brown at her hair salon, the Merciers cut their anniversary cake. Unlike their wedding ceremony, however, George did not bring his Navy sabre for the task.

At anniversary party (left to right): Debbie Smith, Beverly King, Dottie Mercier and JoAnn Miller. Around twenty of their friends celebrated at the surprise party with the Merciers.

The former Dorothy (Dottie) Ragland & George Mercier at their wedding in Elmhurst, Illinois, seventy years ago.

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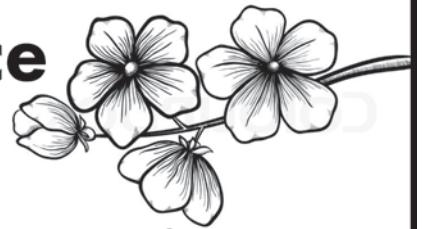
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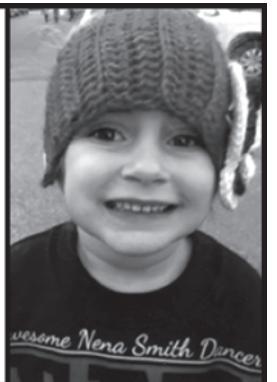
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Community Calendar

March weather forecast: *The Old Farmers Almanac* calls for an average temperature 53 degrees F (three degrees below average) and precipitation of five inches (one inch below average).

MARCH 8

Diabetes support group. Meets weekly on Tuesdays. Education Annex at King's Daughters Medical Center, Brookhaven. 1:30 p.m. For information, call Natalie Ybarra at 601-835-9489.

Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) and VFW Auxiliary Post 2618 meet. \$5.00 for meal. VFW Hall on Industrial Park Road, Brookhaven. 5:30 p.m.

MARCH 10

OSHA 10-Hour General Industry training starts & continues March 11. The course provides a broad awareness of recognizing and preventing hazards at general industry work sites and an OSHA Safety and Health 10-Hour completion card is awarded to successful students. \$125 fee. Registration is a first-come, first served basis. Locations vary on Wesson Co-Lin campus. 8 a.m.-4 p.m. Contact Toni Dobbins at 601-643-8716.

Widows support group meets second Thursday of each month. Furlow Senior Center, Brookhaven. 5 p.m. Call 601-823-6376 or email bvaugnfurlow@gmail.com.

Wesson Lions Club meets. Conference Room at Co-Lin student cafeteria building. 6:30 p.m.

MARCH 11

Brookhaven Exchange Club Fair. Continuing on March 12, it features two fun-filled nights of family-oriented events. Admission is \$10 for adults and \$5 for children. 6 p.m.-9 p.m. Call 601-669-2682 for information.

MARCH 12

Garage sale fundraiser for Lincoln County Historical and Genealogical Society's museum and grounds. Donations are tax deductible. Brookhaven Recreational Department on Highway 51. 7 a.m.-2 p.m.

MARCH 14

Beginner clogging classes for persons of all ages beyond age five are held every Monday night. A small fee is charged each month. Brookhaven Recreation Department on Highway 51. Call 601-833-3791.

Blood drive every second and fourth Monday. King's Daughters Medical Center Hospital Annex. 1 p.m.-6 p.m. Also on March 28. Call 800-817-7449 for information.

Charlie & Jim Hewitt in concert. Free. Magnolia Blues Bar-Restaurant Listening Room (505 W. Monticello Street, Brookhaven). 7 p.m.-9 p.m. For reservations, call 601-990-2366.

MARCH 15

Brookhaven Regional Arts Guild (BRAG) monthly meeting for artists and patrons. Cecelia Baker, an art teacher from Ridgeland, will do a demo in pastels. Members present will select an Artist of the Month, who will receive \$25 in prize money and whose work will be displayed at Leamandi Studios. If you are an artist, bring a work for consideration. Contact Nancy Hanks-Myers at Modestyann@aol.com and visit Brookhaven Regional Arts Guild on Facebook. Lemanadi Arts & Interiors in down town Brookhaven just off Cherokee Street. 5:30 p.m.

MARCH 17

St. Patrick's Day.

50+ Club. Anderson Building on the Co-Lin campus. 10:30 a.m.

American Legion Post #79 meets. American Legion Lodge on Main Street, Wesson. 6:30 p.m.

MARCH 18

Talent show hosted by Brookhaven/Lincoln County Youth Council No. 5943. Admission fee: \$1. Competition entrance fee: \$5. Prizes will be awarded to first, second, and third place winners. Alexander Teen Center. 6 p.m.

MARCH 25

Good Friday

MARCH 27

Easter Sunday

MARCH 30

Pathways Job Fair. Job-seekers can meet prospective employers in transportation, engineering and industrial career pathways from 9 a.m.-11 a.m. and in professional, service industry and healthcare pathways from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. Thames Conference Center on the Wesson Co-Lin campus. Call 601-643-8707 for information.

MARCH 31

Movie day at Lincoln County Public Library, Brookhaven. 2 p.m.

Wesson Lions Club meets. Conference Room at Co-Lin student cafeteria building. 6:30 p.m.

APRIL 2

The Jericho Road Show with Steve Gardner in concert. An evening of blues, folk & bluegrass music. Advance tickets \$5. Magnolia Blues Bar-Restaurant Listening Room (505 W. Monticello Street, Brookhaven). 7 p.m.-9 p.m.

Brookstock Singer/Songwriter Festival, a spin-off from the annual summer Brookhaven music show, will feature a variety of local musical composers and artists, who perform and discuss their work. Haven Theatre, Brookhaven. 7 p.m.-11 p.m.

APRIL 4

Beginning Sewing: Summer Outfits. Instructor Francis Taylor teaches basic sewing skill while students create a child's summer outfit. Class participants must bring their own working, portable sewing machines. \$45 fee. Registration deadline is March 21 on a first-come, first served basis. Locations vary on the Wesson Co-Lin campus. 6 p.m.-8 p.m. Classes continue on April 11, 18, 25 and May 2 & 9. Contact Toni Dobbins at # 601-643-8716.

APRIL 5

Wesson Board of Alderman meet. City Hall. 6 p.m.

Digital Photography. Instructor Jonathan Alford, a photographer, covers lighting, focus tricks and setting correct speed and , overall, improves skills of participants and helps them get the most out of their cameras. \$50 fee. Registration deadline is March 22 on a first-come, first served basis. Locations vary on the Wesson Co-Lin campus. 6 p.m.-9 p.m.. Classes continue on April 12, 19 & 26. Contact Toni Dobbins at 601-643-8716.

APRIL 7

American Heart Association Adult CPR & First Aid classes for non-medical professionals cover adult cardiopulmonary resuscitation and basic first aid techniques and award a CPR/FA/AED certification card to successful students. \$40 fee. Registration deadline is on a first-come, first served basis. Locations vary on the Wesson Co-Lin campus. 8 a.m.-2 p.m.. Contact Toni Dobbins at 601-643-8716.

APRIL 9

Pancake breakfast served by Wesson Lions Club. Wesson Baptist Church. 6 a.m.

APRIL 11

I Use Which Fork? Table Etiquette. Co-Lin Culinary Arts Instructor Jody Hoff teaches proper table manners and helps students understand when and how to use formal eating utensils. \$15 fee. Registration is on a first-come, first served basis. Locations vary on the Wesson Co-Lin campus. 6 p.m.-8 p.m.. Contact Toni Dobbins at 601-643-8716.

CONTINUING

Exhibit of photography by Bill Perkins sponsored by Brookhaven Regional Arts Guild (BRAG). Lincoln County Public Library, Brookhaven. Through March 30.

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Eating healthy when you're on the run

By Guest Columnist
Dr. Stephanie Duguid

You probably eat out a lot, as do most Americans. People are looking for fast, easy and good-tasting foods to fit a busy lifestyle. Whether it's carry-out, food



court, office cafeteria or sit-down restaurant, you can also make smart choices to fit a healthy lifestyle. The Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics suggests these strategies:

- Think about your food choices for the entire day. If you're planning a special restaurant meal in the evening, have a light breakfast and lunch. Think ahead, and plan where you will eat. Look for restaurants or carry-out with a wide range of menu items. Take time to look over the menu, and search for the healthier choices. Be sure to read restaurant menus carefully for clues to foods that have less fat and calorie content, including terms such as baked, braised, broiled, grilled, poached, roasted and steamed. Menu terms with more fat and calories are batter-fried, pan-fried, buttered, creamed, crispy and breaded. While eating out, splitting your order, including desserts, with others at your table may be a good idea.

- You can control how much you eat: It is always a good to eat your lower-calorie food first. Soup or salad is a good choice, followed by a light main course. Ask for sauces, dressings and toppings to be served "on the side." It is best to pass up all-you-can-eat specials, buffets and unlimited salad bars.

- If you do choose to go to the salad bar, pile on the dark leafy greens, carrots, peppers and other fresh vegetables. Lighten up on mayonnaise-based salads and high-fat toppings. Enjoy fresh fruit as your dessert.

- When choosing pizza as your meal, load up with vegetables rather than meat.

- If you would rather visit a sandwich shop, boost the nutrition in all types of

sandwiches by adding tomato, lettuce, peppers or other vegetables. Be sure to choose lean beef, ham, turkey or chicken on whole grain bread or in a soft tortilla. Ask for mustard, ketchup, salsa or low-fat spreads. And don't forget the veggies! When considering your side options, be sure to replace fries or chips with a side salad, fruit or baked potato.

- Order the regular or child-size portion. Hunger can drive you to eat too much. Consider holding the bread or chips given before a meal until your main meal is served.

- If you are grabbing dinner at the supermarket deli, select rotisserie chicken, salad-in-a-bag and freshly baked bread. You can also try sliced lean roast beef, onion rolls, potato salad and fresh fruit.

- Are you always eating on the go? Tuck portable, nonperishable foods in your purse, tote, briefcase or backpack for an on-the-run meal. Some suggestions are peanut butter and crackers, granola bars, a piece of fresh fruit, trail mix and single-serve packages of whole grain cereal or crackers. For desk-top dining, keep single-serve packages of crackers, fruit, peanut butter, soup or tuna in your desk for a quick lunch.

In summary, you can eat out and eat healthy! The key is to plan ahead, ask questions and choose foods carefully. Compare nutrition information, if available, and look for healthier options that are grilled, baked, broiled or steamed. How, when, why and where we eat are just as important as what we eat. Develop a mindful eating pattern that includes nutritious and flavorful foods.

Editor's Note: Dr. Stephanie Duguid is Assistant Dean of Academic Instruction and the Health, Physical Education, and Recreation Division Chair at Co-Lin. She is also an athletic trainer and nutrition specialist and has been teaching courses related to those two areas as well as practicing what she preaches for more than twenty years.

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Author captures life in southwest Mississippi

By Guest Columnist Shaw Furlow

The Bogue Chitto flats was a place of intrigue to those of us who grew up in Brookhaven during the 1950s and '60s. It is where the road bank levels and straightens for several miles beyond the point at which Highway 51 now crosses Highway 84. The neighborhoods did not extend as far as they do currently, and Highway 84 was not where it is now. It was farm land and a wooded area. Almost any spring and summer weekend night, you could find the hottest street rods in town smoking tires and burning rubber on a prearranged quarter mile track perfect for drag racing.

John Case has captured the feel of a much simpler time in southwest Mississippi in *Bogue Chitto Flats, Short Stories from a Southern Town*. It's a book of tales and recollections of growing up in the small south Lincoln County community of Bogue Chitto, but could be about life in Wesson and other towns in the area. The book is currently in its first printing, but a second run is



coming soon, Case reports. The book is self-published and is available for sale in several locations in the area.

Bogue Chitto Flats came together in a peculiar way, much like Case's entire writing career. About five years ago, Kendra Maness, owner, publisher and editor of *Slidell Magazine*, came into his insurance office and asked him to write an historical piece for her publication. He agreed to do one article. Case, who enjoys research, jumped right in, wrote the article and submitted it on time. Maness was impressed and assigned him another article. And then another. The amount of research time for the articles was more than Case was willing to take, but Maness agreed to allow him to write whatever he wanted. Since then, one of his short stories has appeared in each edition of Maness' magazine.

Case, a 1965 graduate of Brookhaven High School (BHS), had written a few stories at BHS and a couple more at Ole Miss. All met with little success. A year or so ago,

however, Maness again approached Case and convinced him to compile a book of his short stories. A few of the stories in *Bogue Chitto Flats* have been



Wesson News

John Case writes short stories about southwest Mississippi and sells insurance in Louisiana.

previously published, but most of them are appearing in print for the first time.

Is Case a storyteller or an historian? When asked, Case chuckles and replies: "Most everything I write has a lot of truth to it. The basic facts are there, but occasionally I have to embellish. So, I guess I'm a bit of both. I'm not sure I have the imagination to write a story from scratch." How does he approach writing? "When the spirit moves me,"

he says. "I do not sit at the computer at a specific time each day and hammer out x amount of pages. But I do try to write some every day," which, he adds, is getting more and more difficult with his travel schedule in promoting the book. "Writing is a passion for me," he says. "I'm certainly not earning a living doing it."

Case met his wife, who was from Slidell, at Ole Miss. They moved there a few years out of college, and he later opened his own insurance business in the Louisiana town. He has become the city's unofficial historian, although he says others should probably hold that title. "I've always been interested in history, and I enjoy the research," he says. "It's fun and interesting but is just so time consuming."

When Case looks to his future as a writer, he starts talking so fast about so many stories that you can't keep up. He did stop long enough to talk about a novel he is writing. It is several hundred pages into the first draft, but he has no time table for completing it. My guess is it will be a best seller.

So what books are you reading, and to what music are you listening? Contact me at shaw.furlow@yahoo.com.

Until next time, my friends, support the arts.

Editor's Note: R. Shaw Furlow is director of the Mississippi Musicians Hall of Fame.

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Co-Lin competing for \$1 million prize

Special to Wesson News

A prestigious Washington, DC, educational and policy studies organization has invited Co-Lin to compete for a \$1 million prize based on its students' degree and certificate completion and learning and labor market outcomes.

Co-Lin became eligible for The Aspen Institute competition after the organization named it as one of the nation's top one-hundred-fifty community colleges in its College Excellence Program. It is one of eight Mississippi community colleges selected from a national pool of more than one thousand public two-year colleges for which available data on student outcomes document:

Performance -- retention and graduation rates including transfers, degrees and certificates per 100 full-time equivalent students

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The \$1 million Aspen Prize for Community College Excellence, awarded every two years, is the nation's signature recognition of high achievement and performance

among America's community colleges presented for exceptional student outcomes in learning, certificate and degree completion, employment and earnings and access and success for minority and low-income students.

As one of 150 prize-eligible institutions, Co-Lin has also been invited to nominate exceptional students enrolled in their middle-skill science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) educational programs for scholarships awarded by the Siemens Technical Scholars (STS) program. STS will select up to 50 students in programs that provide outstanding preparation for high-demand jobs in manufacturing, energy, health care, and information technology. Together, Siemens Foundation, the Aspen Institute and STS seek to assist community colleges and their business partners bridge the gap between projected shortages of skilled workers and the millions of high-demand jobs in STEM industries. Scholarship winners and the programs that deliver rigorous training enabling their success will be announced this fall.

Nearly half of America's college

students attend community college, with more than seven million students – youth and adult learners – working towards certificates and degrees in them throughout the country.

“Community colleges have tremendous power to change lives, and their success will increasingly define

after college. We hope it will raise the bar and provide a roadmap to better student outcomes for community colleges nationwide.”

Ten finalists will be named in fall 2016. The Aspen Institute will then conduct site visits to each of the finalists and collect additional quantitative data.

A distinguished Prize Jury will select a grand prize winner and a few finalists with distinction in early 2017.

The Aspen Prize is funded by the Joyce Foundation, the Siemens Foundation, and the Kresge Foundation.

“I am very confident that this recognition is a result of the dedication of our faculty and staff to the success of our students,” said Co-Lin President Dr. Ronnie Nettles. “Our focus and institutional commitment in recent years on retention, instruction and completion of our students is making a difference.”

Through the Aspen Prize for Community College Excellence, the New College Leadership Project, and other initiatives, the College Excellence Program works to improve colleges' understanding and capacity to teach and graduate students, especially the growing population of low-income and minority students on American campuses. For more information, visit www.aspeninstitute.org/college-excellence.



our nation's economic strength and the potential for social mobility in our country,” said Josh Wyner, executive director of the Aspen Institute College Excellence Program. “This competition is designed to spotlight the excellent work being done in the most effective community colleges, those that best help students obtain meaningful, high-quality education and training for competitive-wage jobs

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WAC celebrates African American history

Special to Wesson News

Draw on your faith to fight your faults and failures, a Vicksburg pastor urged Wesson High School students at a special assembly celebrating African American History Month.

"Faith is a tool that God gives us to help us fight," Rev. Jamerson E. Jackson said. He cited blaming others for failures, which stem from our faults, as one of the biggest faults that can be changed.

"Use your failures to learn where you messed up, and fight with faith not to do the same thing again," Jackson said.

Jackson, a Fayette, Mississippi, native who started his ministry as a child, joined a broad cross-section of students and organizations in the celebration last month that also included song and dance built around the theme, "Mapping Out Our Futures through Hallowed Grounds and Personal Sacrifice." "Hallowed Grounds: Sites of African American Memories," was the national African American History Month thematic focal point.

Wesson High School English and drama instructor Albert Brown and librarian Kendra Armistad orchestrated WAC's tenth annual celebration of the national focus on the contributions of African Americans to society and culture.

The event, held in the Old Gymnasium at Wesson Attendance Center (WAC),

also featured:

- The WAC Gospel Ensemble, assembled and conducted by Brown, which interspersed Anita Wilson's "Jesus Will," Keith Pringle's "Call Him Up" and Bill Withers' "Lean on Me" to punctuate dance and readings. Soloists included Aysha Thomas, Kennzie Sullivan, DeAnna Young and Jerrineisha Braxton.

- God's Movement, a mime dance team with Wesson High School graduates and current students and Brookhaven High School students, which performed to gospel selections.

- The Spirit Dance Team, with members from a former Wesson High School dance group, the current High School student body and area churches, which performed to Rev. Luther Bonds' "Spirit Fall Down." Wesson High School alum Anna Speights directed the dance team.

- "Stepping with Our Hearts," a step performance based on the African tradition of rhythmic foot movements, hand clapping and voice.

- Noah Martin, who offered a dramatic of rapper Propaganda's "Precious Puritans," a commentary on racial hypocrisy.

The program took place in a setting

and ambiance created by some seven hundred posters on the walls of the Old Gymnasium that celebrated people and events in African American history. They are the contributions of students in Brown's English I and III classes assigned to research the people and

events and report on them with posters and other visuals. Each year, Brown hangs posters from past classes as well as from ones he currently teaches to provide an

appropriate backdrop for the annual WAC celebration.

Mississippi Telemedicine Leader. The University of Mississippi Medical Center's (UMMC) remote connections to 165 sites through telecommunication technology make the state a national leader in telemedicine -- among the seventh best in the country, Politico reports. Born out of the state's shortage of doctors, clinics, nurses, and other services, particularly in rural areas, UMMC's Center for Telehealth includes 35 specialties and provides 8,000 telemedicine visits per month and 100,000 per year in "some of state's most far-flung, medically-deprived cities and towns," according to Politico.

Educational budget request. Mississippi public schools, community colleges and universities are seeking an additional \$372 million in the state's

budget year beginning July 1 -- an eight per cent increase over the \$4.5 billion currently spent on schools from kindergarten through universities. An additional \$172 million would be needed to fully fund K-12 schools under the Mississippi Adequate Education Program (MAEP). Over time, the short-fall in MAEP funding has grown to \$1.7 billion.

Shorter class week. Co-Lin is planning to implement a four-day student class schedule on its Wesson campus similar to those that have been implemented at its Simpson County Center and Natchez campus and Mississippi Delta, East Central, and Northeast Community Colleges. Classes would meet on Mondays and Wednesdays and Tuesdays and Thursdays, Co-Lin vice president of Instructional Services Jane Hulon told the college's Board of Trustees. Hulon said the change not only would save some money, but could positively impact student recruitment and retention.

High School honorees. Seniors and a teacher have received recent honors at Wesson High School. Draven Coleman and Albert Brown are Star Student and Star Teacher. Brittany Moore is a Heisman Award recipient. Nikki Castilaw received the Daughters of the American Revolution Good Citizen Award. Justin Hynum and Kaitlyn Smith are Lindy Callahan Scholarship nominees.

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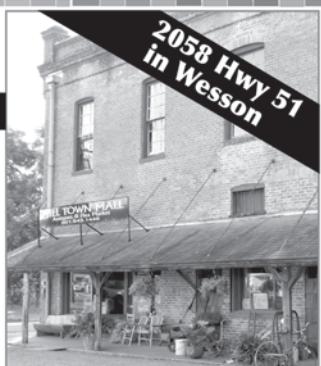
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Community colleges ready for workforce crisis

Special to Wesson News

Community colleges can be the key to preventing an impending national workforce crisis, a Co-Lin workforce education official told the Wesson Lions Club.

“We’re at a tipping point across the nation of workforce shortages in which employers will not be able to find people with the necessary skills to fill available jobs,” says Kenneth Goza, a part of the Co-Lin Career, Technical and Workforce Education staff.

Authorities say the potential shortages could create a major economic problem and, related to changes in age distribution, ethnic makeup, lifestyle and motivation. The employment deal is no longer a simple exchange of loyalty for security, but a larger give-and-take between employee and employer, they point out.

“In job interviews, prospective employees no longer focus as much on job requirements as pay and ask questions about vacation time and when they can start taking vacations,” Goza notes.

As workforce growth slows with the Baby Boom retirement boom, the challenge of education is not only equipping students with the know-how for jobs, but to help them understand work and the needs of employers and making employee-employer connections, he says.

Goza says Co-Lin is stepping up to meet this challenge as a Mississippi Community College Board Certified Work Ready College. He says the school teaches students “jobs and getting jobs” while developing workforce data to drive its programs for students and assist employers as well.

Co-Lin’s Career, Technical and Workforce Education Division is tasked with this mission. Its Career and Technical courses prepare students for immediate employment through college credit, one-year certificate programs and two-year Associate Degree programs, which require fifteen hours of academic studies as well as job-related training. Its Workforce Education classes provide non-credit short-term training for existing workers and unemployed persons to enhance their skills to find jobs. It’s job-focused

training encompass career “pathways,” with classes in six broad areas:

- Business/Information Systems
- Hospitality
- Human Services
- Engineering & Industrial
- Medical
- Transportation

For four years, Co-Lin has been paying special attention to students with deficiencies that could affect their ability to find jobs or perform in the work place through its I-BEST (Integrated Basic Education and Skills Training) program. It targets highly motivated, committed students who need extra support in math, reading or language; high school dropouts, GED students and unemployed and under-employed persons. If an evaluation shows students have basic skills deficiencies, they go into I-BEST classes in which two instructors -- a specialist in the technical field of a student’s choice and one who can help a student with basic academic skills as required -- team teach. A navigator also works with students outside the

classroom as a counselor, keeping in touch with them both while they are in school and when they go into the workplace.

The Washington State Board of Community & Technical Colleges (WSBCTC) introduced the I-BEST instructional model in the 2004-05 and Co-Lin incorporated into its program after receiving Federal grant monies to fund it. Co-Lin is continuing and expanding the program as part of the Mississippi community college system’s adaptation of I-BEST -- the Mississippi Integrated Basic Education and Skills Training (MI-BEST).

As a Mississippi Certified Work Ready College, Co-Lin also awards students Career Readiness Certificates. The certificate, an industry portable credential signed by the Governor, confirms to employers that a student has basic workplace skills based on ACT WorkKeys assessments that evaluate problem-solving, critical thinking and proficiency in and the ability to apply reading and mathematics in the workplace.

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24 players join Co-Lin grid squad

Special to Wesson News

Twenty-one players from Mississippi and another three from out of state will join the Co-Lin Wolves for its 2016 football season.

The diverse recruiting class will give Co-Lin greater depth in key positions. Both Tre'Veon Nelson (Simmons) and Javious Bardney (Calloway) played in the annual Mississippi-Alabama All-Star game. Five members played in the Bernard Blackwell All-Star Classic, including Elbert Watson (Rosa Fort), an offensive lineman; Damion Dickens (Holmes County Central), a linebacker; Jamarcus Weatherall (Greenwood), a wide receiver; Alton Conerly (Gulfport), a wide receiver; and TJ Gray (Lake), a linebacker.

Two members of the class also signed with four year colleges, but double signed with Co-Lin in case they cannot qualify academically at the other school. Nelson, an athletic player who can fill many roles, signed with Mississippi State, and Eddie "BJ" Maxon (South Panola), an offensive lineman, signed with Jackson State. Two other players join the Wolfpack after playing at four year colleges last

season. Isaiah Swopes, a defensive back, joins the team after playing at Belhaven and Tyree Owens, a defensive lineman, comes from West Virginia.

The full roster of recruits also includes Jeffery Drake (defensive back - West Point), Alton Conerly (wide receiver - Gulfport), Griffin Sublet (kicker - Pascagoula), Isaiah Swopes (defensive back - Ocean Springs), Charles Cameron (defensive lineman - Morton), TJ Gray (linebacker - Lake), Jawon Gladney (linebacker - Rosa Fort), Elbert Watson (offensive lineman - Rosa Fort), Didravious Henry (defensive lineman - West Marion), Erick Grosseley (tight end - Greenville), Damion Dickens (linebacker - Holmes County Central), Brenton Spann (running back - New Hope), Isaiah Toler (defensive back - Ocean Springs), DeNarius "DJ" Knight (running back - Warren Central), Tre'Veon "Nero" Nelson (multi-role - Simmons), Jermarcus Weatherall (wide receiver - Greenwood), Broderick Jarrett (multi-role - Simmons) and James Allen Coley (line backer - Cathedral).

Five players have already enrolled at Co-Lin: Javious Bardney (offensive

lineman - Callaway), Travez Moore (linebacker - Bastrop, LA), Tyrus Butler (defensive lineman - Landry Walker, LA), RJ Jarrett (multi-role - Simmons) and Tyree Owens (defensive lineman - Oviedo, FL)

Baseball outlook at Co-Lin. Returning sophomores, including key performers from 2015, and new freshmen promise an improved season for Co-Lin in baseball. Among those coming back to play are infielder Jordan Antley, who anchors the defense and also strengthens the bullpen (2-2 with 14 strikeouts); outfielders Jeremy Moore, who batted .373 with 11 RBIs and stole eleven bases in 2015;

catcher Reed Taylor, last season's second leading hitter with .339 batting average and 24 RBIs; and pitchers Cole Langdon (4-5 last year with 48 strikeouts), Jackson Cole, Austin Irby, Austin Odom and Austin Douglas from the bullpen, lefty strikeout hurler Miles Thomas and sidearm thrower Tanner Jones. Other sophomore infield returnees Justin Oliver, Bailey Warren and Jackson Twitty add depth to the lineup. Freshmen Chris Prentiss Tyler McLeod, Kody Smith will also see infield duty throughout the season and J.T. Wright is expected to be an exceptional backup catcher.



Wesson News

Wesson Attendance Center girls soccer Region 6 All-District selections were Harmoni Ashley (front) and (back row left to right) Brooke Jones, Kim San, Arie Douglas, Amber Brinson and Cheyenne Gladden. San was also Most Valuable Girls Offensive Player and Brinson, Most Valuable Girls Mid-Fielder.



Wesson News

Wesson Attendance Center boys soccer Region 6 All-District selections were (left to right) Marcus Jones, Kelvin Casanova, Justin Morgan, Fidel Mellado and Dylan Ingle. Mellado was also Most Valuable Boys Defender and Jones, Most Valuable Boys Mid-Fielder.

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WEEKLY SCHEDULE

9:45 AM Sunday School

11:00 AM Sunday Morning Worship

6:00 PM Sunday Evening Worship

6:30 PM Wednesday Prayer Meeting, Missions and youth

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SCOREBOARD

February 9-March 8

WESSON HIGH SCHOOL COBRAS

Basketball

Boys' Record: 16-12. Recent Wins: Port Gibson, 76-57. Wilkinson County, 75-65. Recent Losses: Port Gibson, 75-44. Wilkinson County, 63-61. Jefferson County, 71-54. West Marion (Playoffs, Round 1), 85-77.

Girls Record: 7-22. Recent Wins: Franklin County, 37-36. Recent Losses: Port Gibson, 51-27. Wilkinson County, 48-25. Port Gibson, 50-44. Wilkinson County, 48-29. Tylertown (Playoffs, Round 1), 66-21.

Baseball (Boys)

Record: 4-1. Recent Wins: East Marion, 15-4. Bogue Chitto, 17-4. South Pike, 13-1. Brookhaven, 13-9. Recent Losses: Loyd Star, 8-7.

Softball (Girls)

Record: 2-2. Recent Wins: Columbia, 7-5. Florence, 10-5. Recent Losses: Lawrence County, 1-0. West Lincoln, 8-7.

Tennis

Combined boys & girls record: 1-0. Recent Wins: Enterprise, 13-0.

CO-LIN WOLVES

Basketball

Men's Record: 7-16. Recent Wins: Southwest, 67-58. Meridian, 73-69. Gulf Coast, 71-69. Women's Record: 21-5. Recent Wins: Southwest, 62-61. Meridian, 92-75. Gulf Coast, 63-53. Northwest (MACJC State Tournament), 75-68. Northwest (Region 23 NJCCA Tournament), 86-75. Holmes (Region 23 NJCCA Tournament), 64-54. Recent Losses: East Central (MACJC State Tournament), 65-61. Itawamba (Region 3 NJCCA Tournament) 68-64.

Baseball (Men)

Record: 3-8. Recent Wins: Delgado, 9-3. Lincoln Trail, 10-9. Southwest, 16-6. Recent Losses: Mississippi Delta, 8-7, 10-9. Panada, 8-0, 10-7. Delgado, 5-4. Baton Rouge, 7-4, 6-3. Lincoln Trail, 9-6.

Softball (Women)

Record: 10-4. Recent Wins: Southwest, 9-7, 11-0, 5-1, 14-6. Itawamba, 8-7. Baton Rouge, 4-2, 7-4. Hinds, 12-2. East Mississippi, 8-6. Meridian, 4-3. Recent Losses: Itawamba, 15-0. Hinds, 5-4. Shelton State (Alabama), 6-5. Meridian, 7-5.

Tennis

Men's Record: 2-0. Recent Wins: Jones, 6-3. Northeast, 9-0. Women's Record: 1-1. Recent Wins: Northeast, 5-4. Recent Losses: Jones, 9-0.

UPCOMING SPORTING EVENTS

MARCH 8

Wesson High School varsity baseball Cobras play at Crystal Springs. 3:30 p.m.

Co-Lin golf team in Northwest Invitational at Back Acres Country Club, Senatobia, Mississippi.

MARCH 10

Wesson High School tennis team in match against West Lincoln. 4:30 p.m.

Wesson High School varsity girl's softball Cobras play at Pearl. 6:15 p.m.

MARCH 11

Co-Lin women's softball Wolves play at East Mississippi. 2 p.m.

Wesson High School varsity baseball Cobras play Crystal Springs. 7 p.m.

MARCH 12

Wesson High School varsity baseball Cobras play Terry. 1 p.m.

Co-Lin baseball Wolves play at Mississippi Delta. 1 p.m.

MARCH 13

Co-Lin women's softball Wolves play Mississippi Delta. 1 p.m.

MARCH 15

Wesson High School varsity girl's softball Cobras play Bogue Chitto. 12 noon.

MARCH 16

Co-Lin baseball Wolves play at Southwest. 3 p.m.

Co-Lin women's softball Wolves play Jones. 3 p.m.

MARCH 17

Wesson High School varsity baseball Cobras play at Cathedral. 6:30 p.m.

MARCH 18

Wesson High School varsity baseball Cobras play Cathedral. 7 p.m.

MARCH 19

Wesson High School varsity baseball Cobras play Loyd Star. 1 p.m.

Wesson High School varsity girl's softball Cobras play Magee. TBA.

Co-Lin women's softball Wolves play at Northwest. 1 p.m.

Co-Lin baseball Wolves play at Meridian. 2 p.m.

MARCH 22

Co-Lin men's and women's tennis teams in match at Hinds. 2 p.m.

Co-Lin baseball Wolves play at Baton Rouge. 3 p.m.

Co-Lin women's softball Wolves play East Central. 3 p.m.

Wesson High School tennis team in match against Cathedral. 4 p.m.

Wesson High School varsity baseball Cobras play Port Gibson. 7 p.m.

MARCH 23

Wesson High School varsity baseball Cobras play at Port Gibson. 7 p.m.

MARCH 24

Co-Lin men's and women's tennis teams in match against Gulf Coast. 1:30 p.m.

MARCH 25

Co-Lin women's softball Wolves play Holmes. 1 p.m.

Co-Lin baseball Wolves play East Mississippi. 2 p.m.

MARCH 29

Co-Lin men's and women's tennis teams in match against Meridian. 2 p.m.

Wesson High School varsity baseball Cobras play at Hazlehurst. 5 p.m.

Wesson High School varsity girl's softball Cobras play Tylertown. 5 p.m.

MARCH 30

Co-Lin women's softball Wolves play at Hinds. 2 p.m.

Co-Lin baseball Wolves play Jones. 3 p.m.

MARCH 31

Co-Lin men's and women's tennis teams in match at Northwest. 2 p.m.

APRIL 1

Wesson High School varsity girl's softball Cobras play at Brookhaven. 6:15 p.m.

Wesson High School varsity baseball Cobras play Hazlehurst. 7 p.m.

APRIL 2

Wesson High School varsity girl's softball Cobras play at Florence. 12 noon.

Wesson High School varsity baseball Cobras play at East Marion. 1 p.m.

Co-Lin women's softball Wolves play Coahoma. 1 p.m.

Co-Lin baseball Wolves play Northwest. 2 p.m.

Co-Lin golf team in East Mississippi Invitational at Lion Hills Golf Club, Columbus, Mississippi. Continues April 3.

APRIL 4

Co-Lin men's and women's tennis teams in match at Holmes. 1:30 p.m.

Wesson High School tennis team in match against Magee. 4 p.m.

APRIL 5

Co-Lin baseball Wolves play at East Central. 3 p.m.

Co-Lin women's softball Wolves play Pearl River. 3 p.m.

Wesson High School varsity baseball Cobras play at Jefferson County. TBA.

APRIL 7

Wesson High School tennis team in match at Lawrence County. 4 p.m.

APRIL 8

Co-Lin men's and women's tennis teams in match against East Central. 2 p.m.

Wesson High School varsity baseball Cobras play Jefferson County. TBA.

Co-Lin women's softball Wolves play at Northeast. 2 p.m.

Wesson High School varsity girl's softball Cobras play at Bogue Chitto. 6 p.m.

APRIL 9

Wesson High School varsity baseball Cobras play at Loyd Star. 1 p.m.

Co-Lin baseball Wolves play Northeast. 2 p.m.

APRIL 11

Co-Lin men's and women's tennis teams in match against Hinds. 2 p.m.

Co-Lin golf team in Meridian Invitational at Briarwood Country Club, Meridian, Mississippi. Continues April 12.

APRIL 12

Wesson High School varsity baseball Cobras play Franklin County. 7 p.m.

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Greg Smith, Service Director from Rogel Ford, pictured along with Blake Oberschmidt, Technology Service Director from Copiah Lincoln Community College

Relationship with Co-Lin

Greg Smith, Rogel Fords Service Director has had a long relationship with Blake at Co-Lin. Rogel Ford works with them to help train technicians for the future. To date we have donated numerous vehicles and 10's of Thousands of Dollars in Parts.



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