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Wesson News

SPOTLIGHT

Santa Claus Comes to Town

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PO Box 1028
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Volume 4, Number 12

“Good News You Can Use”

December 13, 2016

Special ways to enjoy a special season

By Guest Columnist Shaw Furlow

Regular readers of this column may have noticed that I'll often introduce it by saying “this is my favorite time of the year.” When I say it, I mean it. Is there any time better than fall and the beginning of a new school year? And football! In the spring, it's the blooming of the dogwoods and Bradford Pears and the crack of the bat. So here I go again. Honestly, is there a better time than the holiday season?



During this special season, families come together to celebrate. People you meet on the street are friendlier. And the crisp air that ushers in the season is a much welcomed relief from the oppressive heat of the summer and fall. There's so much to do, too. From an arts perspective, here are some options:



Special to Wesson News

The Lincoln County Choral Society presents The Messiah at First United Methodist Church in Brookhaven today.

Musical and dramatic performances. While many of the area's parades and school programs have occurred, there are still opportunities for you to enjoy music and plays. Many area churches are presenting Christmas cantatas and other special programs.

For starters, there are two programs today:

- The Lincoln County Choral Society will present G.F. Handel's choral masterpiece, “The Messiah”, at First United Methodist Church in Brookhaven. The concert, conducted by Maestro Patton Rice, begins at 7:00 p.m. and has an admission fee of \$10.

- The Old Brook Wind Symphony, with

Leroy Smith conducting, will perform at Easthaven Baptist Church beginning at 7:00 p.m.

Both the The Lincoln County Choral Society and Old Brook Wind Symphony are volunteer ensembles and are always looking for new members. Here are some other suggestions:

- Ashley Jackson will perform in concert in Trinity Park in Brookhaven at noon on December 15.

- Carol Bennett and Joe Elliot will present an Advent music program at Redeemer Episcopal Church in Brookhaven at 5:30 p.m. on December 16.

- First United Methodist Church Sanctuary Choir presents a concert on December 18 at 10:00 a.m.

- Strong Hope Baptist Church presents its choir at 10:45 a.m. on December 18.

- Wesson Baptist Church Adult Choir will present a program on December 18 during its Sunday Evening Service.

Christmas lights. When I was a child, dad would load our family into the

cont. on page 3

Wesson Pearl Harbor victim comes home

By Bob Arnold

A Wesson U.S. Navy man, who died in the attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941, has come home after 75 years.

Wesson townspeople, including children from the Wesson Baptist Church pre-school program and Wesson Attendance Center (WAC) students, area veterans, and local and state dignitaries, including Governor Phil Bryant, welcomed Fireman 1st Class Jim H. Johnston back to his native town on Wednesday last week -- the anniversary of his death.

Dozens of persons lined Highway 51, Spring Street, Railroad Avenue and Grove Street and saluted as some sixty Patriot Guard motorcyclists escorted the remains of the fallen hero to Wesson Cemetery, where he was buried next to his parents. American flags also adorned the route to the gravesite. Outside Wesson Attendance Center in front of the cemetery entrance, from the high school gymnasium east to the baseball and softball fields, students paid their respects as the funeral procession made its way to the gravesite.



Wesson News

Law enforcement and Patriot Guard motorcyclists escort Johnston's remains from Jackson International Airport to Riverwood Family Funeral Service on Interstate 55.

At the gravesite funeral, which was as much a Pearl Harbor Day memorial as a burial for Johnston, an emotion-filled Governor declared “an American hero has come home,” but noted that many in the armed services, who sacrificed their lives for their country, have not returned to their homes and remain unidentified. “Today, however, a grateful state and

nation honor Jimmy's dedication and sacrifice,” he said.

The Navy conducted a full military funeral at Johnston's gravesite, with an honor guard team firing seven volleys in his honor, a bugler playing taps and a ceremony in which the flag draped over his coffin was folded and presented to his nephew. A Navy chaplain read

scripture and presented a homily focusing on Johnston's sacrifice for his country. A Naval aircraft flew over the gavesite. More than one-hundred persons gathered for the funeral, and WAC students and teachers watched it from the hillside in front of the school and overlooking the cemetery.

Johnston died on the *USS Oklahoma*, which arrived in Pearl Harbor on December 6, 1940. One day more than a year after the arrival of his battleship, which spent several months participating in exercises and conducting patrols, a fleet of Japanese carriers launched formations of dive bombers, torpedo planes and fighters against the vessels moored in Pearl Harbor.

The 24-year-old Wesson man was among 429 casualties on the ship, which capsized quickly after sustaining damage from several torpedoes. At the time, most of the dead could not be identified, and the U.S. Navy buried the remains of some 400 sailors and

cont. on page 4

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Ways to enjoy a special season

Oldsmobile and ride us around at dusk to take in the wonders of Christmas lights. I have previously written before about Carey and Celeste Williamson's display on Tanglewood Drive in Brookhaven. You owe it to yourself to check out their work. The light show is well worth the drive. The Williamsons start assembling their lights extravaganza the day after Thanksgiving. It takes the entire Williamson family to assemble the twelve scenes and over 80,000 lights. The Williamsons' display is a two-fold give-and-take opportunity. Obviously, visitors can take in the display and delight in the show. Secondly, the Williamsons provide a box to give, where visitors can make a contribution, if they choose, that goes to Parent Project Muscular Dystrophy. More than \$7,000 has been donated over the years.

Another spectacular light show is Santa's Way, created by David and Kelly Parks on the sides of an eighth of mile stretch of road that winds past their house, utility buildings and fields on their 43-acre property, located off Highway 547 in southwestern Copiah County near the Claiborne County border (25 miles from Wesson, Hazlehurst, Brookhaven and Port Gibson). It continues through

December 27 from dusk to 9:30 p.m. on weekdays (except Mondays and Tuesdays) and to 10 p.m. on weekends and features 256 synchronized light channels and static lights highlighting scenes of Santa and his elves and the nativity. With both the Williamson and Parks displays, there is accompanying music accessible at designated FM frequencies on car radios.



Multi-media. Speaking of extravaganzas, the Recreation Department of Crystal Springs sponsors what I call "a parade in reverse." The roadway that winds through Lake Chataququa Park is lined with exhibits from different civic, church and school organizations. As with the Williamson and Parker displays, you set your car FM radio to a designated

frequency to hear accompanying music and ride through the park enjoying the sights and sounds of Christmas. The exhibit is open Thursday thru Sunday and costs \$3 per carload.

Live nativity scene. While you ride around, drinking hot chocolate and enjoying your family, drive out to the New Sight Community Church, and look at its living nativity scene. Its cast of 70 is recreating the birth of the Christ child at the church for the fifth year. It is a drive-by exhibit, but you can get out of your car and walk around. Or, if the weather is cold, you can stay in your car.

Don't forget that live music turns a Christmas party into a festive occasion. Hire a musician for Christmas. You both will benefit. Until next month, I wish you the happiest of holidays. Support the arts, and support the artists!

EDITORS NOTE: R. Shaw Furlow is a local composer, musician and arts promoter. He produces an internet-based video show -- From the Shadyside -- that spotlights area musical talent and is a consultant to school bands in the region for Brookhaven Music and Sound.

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Bob Arnold, Editor

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Police Blotter

Special to Wesson News

During November, Wesson Police Department activity encompassed:

Response to:

- Two petit larcenies
- For vehicle accidents
- One aggravated assault felony
- One grand larceny
- On burglary

Citations & arrests:

- Two possession of drug paraphernalia
- Two marijuana possessions
- One contempt of court
- Three driving with suspended licenses
- Four disregard of traffic devices
- Eight speeding
- One property maintenance ordinance violation
- Four driving without a license
- One possession of methamphetamine
- One controlled substance violation
- One careless driving
- One open container violation

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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Wesson Pearl Harbor victim comes home



Wesson News

Frank Springs, nephew of Jim Johnston, accepts flag in honor of his uncle.



Wesson News

Mississippi Governor Phil Bryant speaks at funeral.



Wesson News

Marines, which it collected during efforts to salvage the vessel, as unknowns in the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific in Honolulu. Applying advances in forensic and analytical capabilities in 2015, the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency exhumed those remains and started indentifying them, including Johnston's.

Frank Springs of Lucedale, who accepted the folded flag in the gravesite ceremony, submitted DNA samples that helped the forensic scientists identify his uncle. "They got in touch with me," Springs explained. "They had researched the family tree and found that I was the oldest living relative." A few weeks ago, he learned that Johnston's remains had been found. "It hits you kind of strange when you're notified all of a sudden after 75 years that they've identified him and will bring him home to anywhere you want to lay him to rest," Springs said. "That gives you kind of a warm fuzzy feeling."

Springs has a vague memory of his uncle. "When he was killed, I was three to four years old," he said. "I hadn't known him very well, so my recollection of him is not very much, but I did hear stories about him as I had grown up."

Johnston's remains arrived at Jackson International Airport the day before the funeral, and were transferred to Riverwood Family Funeral Service in Brookhaven. Hundreds of persons, who wanted to honor Johnston, assembled on overpasses from Crystal Spring to south of Hazlehurst to view the procession, which included the Patriot Guard and law enforcement, on Interstate 55.

"I want to thank the Navy, law enforcement officials, the Governor, veterans, and especially the people of Wesson for showing honor to my uncle," Springs told the crowd at the gravesite following the funeral.

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- 2005 Ford Ranger Edge Super Cabo, 6 cyl, 5 speed, Bright Red, Sharp;
- 2011 Chevrolet Impala LTZ, Leather Seats, Spoiler, New Tires, SHARP!
- 2003 Mercury Grand Marquis, ONLY 33,000 one owner miles, Leather interior;
- 1984 Dodge Ram Charger with only 81,000 actual miles, Super Nice!
- 2005 Jeep Grand Cherokee Limited Low Mileage, Sunroof, Leather, Power Seat, Nice SUV;
- 2009 Dodge Dakota Club Cab SXT, 6Cyl, Auto, New Tires, Sharp! ;
- 2000 Dodge Ram 1500 Club Cab One Local Owner, Low Miles, Bed Liner, Tow Pkge, Nice

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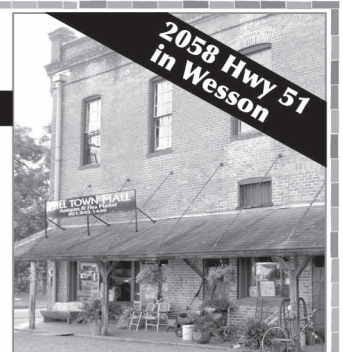
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Community Calendar

December weather forecast: The Old Farmer's Almanac calls for an average temperature of 56 degrees F (eight degrees above average) and precipitation of five inches (average). December 13-19: sunny, warm; December 20-26: showers, mild; December 27-31: rain, then sunny and cold.

DECEMBER 13

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 for meal. VFW Hall on Industrial Park Road, Brookhaven. 5:30 p.m.

The Old Brook Wind Symphony in concert. Leroy Smith conducting. Easthaven Baptist Church. 7:00 p.m.

The Lincoln County Choral Society in concert. G.F. Handel's *The Messiah*. Conducted by Maestro Patton Rice. \$10 admission fee. First United Methodist Church, Brookhaven. 7:00 p.m.

DECEMBER 15

Ashley Jackson will perform in concert. Trinity Park in Brookhaven. 12 noon.

DECEMBER 16

Advent music presented by Carol Bennett and Joe Elliot. Redeemer Episcopal Church in Brookhaven. 5:30 p.m.

DECEMBER 18

Christmas choral presentations. First United Methodist Church, Brookhaven. 10 a.m. Strong Hope Baptist Church. 10:45 a.m. Wesson Baptist Church Adult Choir. Sunday evening worship service.

DECEMBER 19

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

DECEMBER 20

Copiah County Master Gardeners monthly meeting. MSU Extension Office at Gallman. 6 p.m.

American Legion Post #79 meets. American Legion Lodge on Main Street, Wesson. 6:30 p.m. For information, call 601-563-5438.

DECEMBER 21

Wesson Attendance Center Christmas holidays begin.

DECEMBER 25

Christmas.

DECEMBER 26

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

JANUARY 1

New Years Day.

JANUARY 3

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

JANUARY 4

Wesson Attendance Center second semester begins.

JANUARY 11

WordKeys Assessment for Career Readiness Certificate. Examination. Register in advance with Kristina Stephens at 601-643-8707. Thames Center on Co-Lin campus. 8:45 a.m.-12 noon.

CONTINUING

Alcoholics Anonymous meets at convenient times seven days of every week. First United Methodist Church, 215 West Cherokee Street, Brookhaven. Open meetings are Mondays at noon and Tuesdays (Big Book Study), Fridays and Saturdays at 7:30 p.m. Closed meetings are Wednesdays and Fridays (Big Book Study) at noon and Thursdays and Sundays at 7:30 p.m.

Brookhaven Regional Arts Guild members work on projects every Thursday of the month from 9 a.m.-12 noon at the Brookhaven-Lincoln County Public Library in the Vernon Room when it is available.

Email Community Calendar items to: Bobarnold@wessonnews.com.

Veterans honored in WAC ceremonies

Special to *Wesson News*

“We didn’t earn or deserve your sacrifice, and the only way we can repay you is by simply saying ‘thank you,’” Rev. Nelson Santa Ana, the pastor at Wesson Baptist Church, told military veterans at the annual special celebration honoring them at Wesson Attendance Center (WAC) last month.

Kindergarten, elementary, junior high and high school students honored close to 100 former U.S. Army, Air Force, Navy, Marine and Coast Guard personnel at the Veterans Day ceremonies.

“As a civilian, I don’t understand the military and what you did to save my life -- your willingness to train, endure stress, fight, leave your home and go overseas and sacrifice so I can enjoy my life,” Santa Ana said. He joked that “I can wear an LSU in front of a Mississippi audience, thanks to your willingness to sacrifice.”

Santa Ana compared the sacrifice of military veterans to the sacrifice of the savior he worships as a Christian, so “it is well, it is well with my soul” in the words of the hymn. “Your sacrifices have saved my life -- both keeping me alive and preserving my life, the way I live,” he said.

The WAC celebration of the area veterans started with a special breakfast

for them at which they renewed friendships and, in some cases, made new friends, while sharing their stories. After breakfast, the 600 children in WAC’s kindergarten and elementary school programs greeted each veteran, seated and standing in a reception line, and offered them their thanks for serving the country and helping to preserve its freedom. Then the veterans filed into to the old gymnasium at WAC to a standing ovation of high school students and a program of music, poetry, and dramatic readings led by the WAC Student Council, chorus, band and The Experience Drama Troupe. The program featured:

- The WAC Chorus leading The National Anthem.

- Words of thanks to the veterans from WAC principal Marilyn Phillips, High School principal Ronald Greer and Student Council president Kyle Holloway; and a prayer offered by Mary Beth Munn.

- A Formation of Respect Honoring the Red, White and Blue, including dramatic statements about the meaning of freedom from members of The Experience Drama Troupe

- Taps played by Wesson High School Band member C.J. Gills and Salute to Freedom performed by the full band.

- Battle Hymn of the Republic sung by the Wesson High School Chorus.

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Ten softball standouts to boost Co-Lin team



Special to Wesson News

Co-Lin softball recruits are (front row left to right) Mackenzie Gros, Callie Fortenberry, Morgan Dubose, Harmoni Ashley, (back row left to right) Torie Pettit, Makenzie Smith, Julie Scheuermann and Madison Humphrey.

Special to Wesson News

The Co-Lin softball Lady Wolves have signed on ten former high school softball standouts as recruits to begin playing this spring. Among them is Harmoni Ashley from Wesson, who has attended Co-Lin softball camps over the years. She will play first base and brings offensive punch to the team. Other recruits are:

- Makenzie Smith and Abigail Thornton from Loyd Star. Smith is a pitcher, and Thornton will anchor the infield and bring hitting strength to the Wovles.
- Madison Humphrey is a Copiah Academy product, who is a solid player behind the plate and may see some action at third base.
- Callie Fortenberry is an outfielder from Lawrence County with speed that is an asset in the field and on the bases.
- Julie Scheuermann, from Destrehan, Louisiana, joins the Lady Wolves as a catcher, who is extremely athletic and can hit to all fields.

- Morgan Dubose, from Clinton, a pitcher, will see some action at second base and can make things happen offensively.
- Tori Pettit, from Florence, can play a variety of roles in the field and is a disciplined hitter.



- Mackenzie Gros from E.D. White Catholic High School in Thibodaux, Louisiana, will pitch for the Lady Wolves, as well as play several defensive positions and contribute at bat.
- Fallon Plaisance, a St. Thomas Aquinas standout, can play in the field almost anywhere and swings the bat very well.

SCOREBOARD

November 9-December 13
Wesson High School Cobras

Basketball (Varsity)
Boy's Record: 4-3. Recent Wins: West Marion. 79-73. Salem. 63-48. Enterprise. 64-36 & 74-58. Bassfield. 58-40. Recent Losses: West Lincoln. 52-46. Crystal Springs. 56-38.
Girl's Record: 4-2. Recent Wins: West Lincoln. 43-35. West Marion. 51-29. Crystal Springs. 39-33. Salem. 50-40. Recent Losses: Enterprise. 49-30 & 45-31.

Soccer (Varsity)
Boy's Record: 4-7-1 Recent Wins: Wayne County. 7-2. Raymond. 4-1. Loyd Star. 2-1. Magee. 3-1. Recent Losses: North Lauderdale. 3-0. Copiah Academy. 5-0. Brookhaven. 2-0. North Pike 6-3, 3-0. Sumrall. 6-3. Magee. 2-0. Recent Ties: Lawrence County. 0-0.
Girl's Record: 9-3. Recent Wins: Wayne County. 4-1. Lawrence County. 6-0. Raymond. 6-1. McComb. 1-0. Loyd Star. 2-1. Brookhaven. 4-1. Magee. 4-0. North Pike. 3-1. Magee. 3-0. Recent Losses: North Lauderdale. 4-2. Sumrall. 4-0. North Pike. 3-0.

Co-Lin Wolves

Basketball:
Men's Record: 4-4. Recent Wins: Holmes. 74-68. Mississippi Delta. 75-67. Southern Shreveport. 67-65. Delgado. 88-52. Recent Losses: Coahoma. 98-94. Baton Rouge. 96-90. Mississippi Delta. 88-82. Jones. 106-85.
Women's Record: 6-1. Recent Wins: Holmes. 87-84. Mississippi Delta. 73-51 & 68-48. Coahoma. 97-94. Delgado. 51-21. Jones. 79-68. Recent Losses: South Shreveport. 57-55.

Soccer:
Men's Record: 1-18. Recent Losses: Meridian. 3-0. Pearl River. 2-1. Mississippi Gulf Coast. 4-1. Jones. 4-2. Southwest. 4-1.
Women's Record: 0-15-2. Recent Losses: Meridian. 6-0. Pearl River. 8-1. Mississippi Gulf Coast. 8-0. Jones. 12-0. Recent Tie: Southwest. 2-2.

Upcoming Sporting Events

- November 8**
Wesson High School soccer varsity girls and boys Cobras play at Lawrence County. 5 p.m. & 7 p.m.
- December 13**
Wesson High School soccer junior varsity boys and varsity girls and boys Cobras play at Brookhaven. 4:30 p.m., 5 p.m., 6 p.m. & 8 p.m.
Wesson Junior High & High School varsity basketball girls and boys Cobras play Loyd Star. 4 p.m., 5 p.m., 6 p.m. & 7:30 p.m.
- December 16**
Wesson High School soccer junior varsity girls and varsity girls and boys Cobras play Franklin County. 5 p.m., 6 p.m. & 7:30 p.m.
Wesson High School basketball junior varsity and varsity girls and boys Cobras play West Lincoln. 4p.m. 5 p.m., 6 p.m. & 7:30 p.m.
- December 20**
Wesson High School soccer junior varsity boys and varsity girls and boys Cobras play at Loyd Star. 5 p.m., 6 p.m. & 7:30 p.m.
- December 27-30**
Wesson High School basketball varsity girls and boys Cobras play at Columbia Academy Tournament. TBA.
- January 3**
Wesson Junior High & High School varsity basketball girls and boys Cobras play at Loyd Star. 4 p.m., 5 p.m., 6 p.m. & 7:30 p.m.
- January 5**
Wesson High School soccer varsity girls and boys Cobras play Crystal Springs. 5 p.m. & 7 p.m.
- January 6**
Wesson High School basketball junior varsity and varsity girls and boys Cobras play at Jefferson County. 5 p.m., 6 p.m. & 7:30 p.m.
- January 7**
Wesson High School basketball junior varsity and varsity girls and boys Cobras play Crystal Spring. 2 p.m., 3 p.m. & 4:30 p.m.
- January 9**
Co-Lin basketball men and women Wolves play Coahoma. 6 p.m. & 8 p.m.
- January 10**
Wesson High School soccer varsity girls Cobras play at West Lincoln. 5 p.m.
Wesson Junior High & High School varsity basketball girls and boys Cobras play at Bogue Chitto. 4 p.m., 5 p.m., 6 p.m. & 7:30 p.m.
- January 12**
Wesson Junior High School basketball girls and boys Cobras play Brookhaven. 5 p.m. & 6 p.m.
- January 13**
Wesson High School basketball varsity girls and boys Cobras play Hazlehurst. 6 p.m. & 7:30 p.m.

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ILR schedules two 2017 trips

Special to Wesson News

The Institute for Learning in Retirement (ILR) has already added two day trips to its 2017 travel calendar -- A Day at the Races in New Orleans on January 17 and a performance of *Million Dollar Quartet* at the New Stage Theater in Jackson on June 8.

On A Day at the Races, ILR members will travel to the New Orleans Fair Grounds Race Course, the third oldest continuously operating thoroughbred racetrack in the U.S., established in 1872. From seats in the glass front clubhouse, they will enjoy spectacular views of the track while enjoying a New Orleans style lunch and horse races throughout the day. The \$70 per person

cost covers a charter bus to and from the track, meal and races.

Million Dollar Quartet recaptures one of the greatest jam sessions ever, when Elvis Presley, Johnny Cash, Jerry Lee Lewis and Carl Perkins gathered together for the first and only time on December 4, 1956, at Sun Records in Memphis. The musical features a score of rock hits, including "Blue Suede Shoes," "Fever," "That's All Right," "Sixteen Tons," "Great Balls of Fire," "Walk the Line," "Whole Lotta Shakin' Goin' On," "Who Do You Love," "Matchbox," "Folsom Prison Blue" and "Hound Dog," among others that one could have heard on that legendary night. The \$30 per person cost will cover bus travel and performance.



Special to Wesson News

The Million Dollar Quartet



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Outstanding Co-Lin faculty & staff recognized

Special to Wesson News

The Co-Lin Alumni Association has recognized six outstanding faculty and staff members at the college.

Those honorees from the Wesson campus include Eddie Britt (Outstanding Academic Instructor), Deborah Barnes (Outstanding Career/Technical Instructor), and Samantha Speeg (Outstanding Staff Member of the Year), all of Brookhaven; and Beverly Jones (Outstanding Career/Technical Instructor) of Union Church. Jan Swoveland (Outstanding Faculty/Staff Member) of Natchez and Jason Cooley (Outstanding Faculty/Staff Member) of Mendenhall are the Natchez Campus and Simpson County Center honorees.

Britt has served Co-Lin since 2004 and is currently a mathematics instructor and chairperson of the Mathematics and Computer Science Division. He received an Associate's degree from Co-Lin, and Bachelor's and Master's degrees in secondary education from Mississippi State University. Before joining Co-Lin, he was a math teacher and coach at Farmerville High School

the Mississippi Cosmetology School Association and Union Church Baptist Church, is married to Bill Jones, and has one daughter, Hope Case.

Speeg has served Co-Lin since 2009 and is currently an academic counselor. She received an Associate's degree from Co-Lin, Bachelor's degrees in mass communication and graphic design from the University of Southern Mississippi, and a Master's degree in higher education administration from Mississippi College. Speeg worked as a graphic designer at Johnny Smith Photography and was a college recruiter before coming to Co-Lin. She is co-advisor to Phi Theta Kappa and was the 2016 recipient of the Ann Bradberry Award from the Trailblazers. She has received numerous awards for various graphic design pieces. She is married to Adam Speeg, and they have three children, Julia, Eden, and John Daniel. They are members of Mt. Zion Baptist Church.

Swoveland has served as an English instructor at Co-Lin since 1999 and holds Bachelor's and Master's degrees



Special to Wesson News

Honored as Co-Lin's Outstanding Faculty and Staff are (left to right) Jason Cooley, Jan Swoveland, Samantha Speeg, Deborah Barnes, Beverly Jones and Eddie Britt.

and Loyd Star Attendance Center. Britt serves as the sponsor for Mu Alpha Theta, the national Mathematics honor society, and is involved in numerous professional associations, including the Mississippi Collegiate Mathematics Association, in which he serves as president. He is a recipient of the Howell Garner High Performance Award at Co-Lin and is a Phi Theta Kappa Faculty Scholar. He is married to Gina Britt, and they have a five-year-old daughter, Emory.

Barnes and Jones are instructors and coordinators in the Cosmetology program. Barnes received an Associate's degree in cosmetology at Hinds Community College and was a cosmetology instructor at Southwest Community College before coming to Co-Lin. She is a member of the Mississippi Cosmetology School Association, School Owners and Teachers Association, and Abundant Life Church. She also owns a salon in Brookhaven. She and her husband Johnny are parents of three children, Adrienne, Christen, and Alexander, and have one grandchild. Jones received an Associate's degree in cosmetology at Co-Lin and owned her own salon in Caseyville for twenty-five years before joining Co-Lin. She is a member of

from Mississippi College. Before joining Co-Lin, Swoveland taught middle school, junior high and high school English for 11 years. She is a member of numerous professional associations, including the National Council of Teachers of English and the state and national Two-Year English Associations. She has been recognized as a STAR teacher, a William Winter Scholar, and the Mississippi Humanities Council's Instructor of the Year. Swoveland received Co-Lin's Howell Garner High Performance Award. She is married to Joe Swoveland, and has two children, Carmichael and Keats.

Cooley has served Co-Lin since 2006 as a business and computer science instructor. He received an Associate's degree from Meridian Community College, an Associate of Applied Science degree from Jones County Junior College, a Bachelor's degree from Troy University, and an MBA from Mississippi State University. Cooley was employed at Arch Wireless and Computer Sciences Corporation before coming to Co-Lin. He is a recipient of Co-Lin's Howell Garner High Performance Award and is active in the Methodist Church. He is married to Joanna Cooley, and they have one daughter, McLeland.

Teacher Albert Brown keeps on giving

Wesson News

Growing up in rural Franklin County near Meadville, Albert Brown enjoyed a family life in which, he says, "gifting, giving and community service became part of what I am." "My mom and grandmother created a gifting environment," Brown elaborates. "Our meals included extended family and friends, and helping other people was what you did. I became a people person, learned about myself, and cultivated communications skills by trying to make the world a better place."

Today, Brown continues to see himself as a servant and utilizes his self-knowledge and skills in a teaching career, which landed him at Wesson High School in 2006, and community service primarily through two churches -- Saint Paul United Methodist Church at Kirby, Mississippi, which he joined as a child, and Grace Community Church, a Brookhaven congregation in which he is also involved. Brown's teaching philosophy, which he adopted from Carol Tillman, a mentor who taught him at Franklin County High School, reflects this orientation.

"She counseled me when I was studying to become a teacher to 'always remember students are unfinished products and unworthy of judgment,'" he says. "At Wesson High School, I am known for my rigorous courses in which I seek to help students think creatively, grow in understanding themselves and to become the best they can be. I try to be relatable, approachable, informed, caring and relevant."

Brown graduated from Franklin County High School in 2001, received a Bachelor's Degree in English Education (2005) and a Master's Degree in English (2012) from Jackson State University, and is working on a PhD in Teacher Leadership from

MEET YOUR NEIGHBOR

Walden University. In high school, Brown was part of the Beta Club, an academic honor society and service organization, and served on the student council and drug council. At Jackson State, Brown sang in a gospel choir and served the community through the Wesley Foundation.

After teaching eighth grade English at

Madison schools for one year, Brown came to Wesson High School (WHS) to be closer to his family. At Wesson, he currently teaches ninth and eleventh grade English and theater and has been selected four times as a STAR Teacher by STAR Students, who earned the top grade on the ACT college entrance examination. He is the Students Against Destructive Decisions faculty advisor at WHS. "What I lost in pay at urban Madison, I gained in wisdom by coming to small town-rural Wesson," he says.

What is your hobby?

Family is probably my most important focus outside teaching. I enjoy outings with my nieces and nephews. I am also president/director of the Anointed



Wesson News

Youthful Praise Choir, a 35-voice community-based Franklin County gospel group. At Grace Community Church in Brookhaven, I am a member of its needs-oriented community task force and a Steward, who seeks to meet pressing needs in the congregation.

Do you have a favorite book or movie?

I like movies set in an educational venue: *Lean On Me*, which stars Morgan Freeman as a high school principal who finds hope in a place of despair. *Freedom Writers*, which stars Hilary Swank as an enthusiastic young teacher challenged by a class of "at-risk" students, the "untouchables," who are not the eager-for-college students she expected. My reading largely revolves around my teaching, but I enjoy African American literature and poetry, particularly Maya Angelou's. In the classroom, I bring students the works of Ralph Waldo Emerson and Henry David Thoreau, grounded in their philosophy of transcendentalism, which stimulates thinking. It's rewarding to hear the

discussions around self-reliance, self-discovery and defining yourself that they generate.

Do you have a favorite actor or actress?

African Americans Morgan Freeman, Sidney Poitier, Cicely Tyson and Forest Whitaker.

Do you have any favorite music?

Gospel and blues. My father died when I was five years old, but I remember him singing blues. I follow Muddy Waters, B.B. King, Z.Z. Hill and Bobby Blue Bland. From my mother, I learned to appreciate gospel music. Singers Shirley Caesar and Leandria Johnson, particularly.

Would you change your life in any way?

Everything that has happened has brought me to where I am. So I wouldn't change much. I might work on completing my formal schooling all at one time if I had the opportunity to do it over again.

Do you have a wish you want granted?

I would wish to be able to thoroughly and effectively address the needs of everyone who crosses my path. I often meet people and know their needs, but can't address them.

If you won a multimillion dollar lottery, how would you spend the money?

I would pay my bills. I would invest in my community through organizations such as Boys and Girls Clubs and church outreach ministries that help youth and adults become self-sufficient. I would also start my own school that puts students first, encourages them to learn a trade, and emphasizes the arts.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Suggest neighbors you want to read about via email to bobarnold@wessonnews.com.

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Car show presents awards to 24

Wesson News

Wesson Chamber of Commerce presented awards to twenty-four persons among forty-eight entries in its "Headlights & Tailpipes" car and vehicles show last month.

Dickie Stevens from Isola received Best of Show, Veterans Choice and Classic Car category awards for his 1934 Ford 5W at the show, which took over the streets of downtown Wesson and drew hundreds of fans, who admired the vehicles on display, talked to the hobbyists who brought their cars, trucks, tractors and motorcycles, shopped at local stores and special vendor booths, and feasted at local restaurants.

Other award winners by category were:

• **Classic Trucks.** Maxie Williams, Brookhaven (1972 Chevy C-10); Wayne Foster, Wayne Foster, Bogue Chitto (1937 Ford); and Carmen Lambert, Bogue Chitto (1965 Chevy S-10 Custom).

• **Rat Rods.** James Dooley, McComb (1955 Ford C-600); Kevin Case, McCall Creek (1953 Chevy 3100 Truck); and Wayne Bessonette, Brookhaven (1946 Ford Pickup).

• **Classic Cars.** Dennis Case, Brookhaven (1930 Ford Model A) and Norman Flowers, Terry (1969 Dodge Charger).

• **Classic Muscle Cars.** Maxie Williams, Brookhaven (1967 Chevy Chevelle Malibu); Bubba Hilton, Mendenhall (1969 Chevy Corvette Stingray); and Don and Janet Wallace, Bogue Chitto (1970 Chevy Chevelle).

• **Modern Muscle Trucks.** Cody and Kayla Pippins, Brookhaven (1999 Chevy S-10); Joey Cothorn, Brookhaven (1990 Chevy 1500); and Johnny Johnson, Crystal Springs (1988 GMC S-10).

• **Motorcycles.** Michael McIntyre, Wesson and John Lambert, Bogue Chitto (2004 Harley Low Rider).

• **Tractors.** Charles White, Brookhaven (John Deere M and John Deere G) and Owen Wayne Smith, Union Church (John Deere 420W).

• **Late Model Cars.** Don Barnes, Natchez (2006 Chrysler 3000C); Rusty Prestridge, Brookhaven (2001 Chevy Corvette); and Hope Beasley, Wesson (2015 Dodge Hellcat).

Vehicle hobbyists who entered the show came largely from the Jackson area and throughout southwest Mississippi. One entrant came from Louisiana. Others were Bobby Case, Brookhaven; J. R. Lofton, Brookhaven; Hoss Henry, Clinton; Paul Miller, Hazlehurst; Blayne Brister, Bogue Chitto; Patrick Clark, Monticello; Ed Stolpe, Union Church; William Price, Brookhaven;

Lonnie Wooley, Vicksburg; Bubba and Carol Walker, Terry; Freddie Stegall, Wesson; Pete Dionne, Vicksburg; John Lambert, Bogue Chitto; David Parks, Pattison; Don Purser, Crystal Springs; Billy Newman, Wesson; Alton Shaw, Wesson; Aron Brister, Brookhaven; Gene Carpenter, Denham Springs, LA; Guy Nix, Brookhaven; Corey Prestridge, Wesson; John Green, Hazlehurst; Dennis McPhail, Prentiss; Denvil McPhail, Prentiss; and Roy Upchurch, Sturgis.

Chamber of Commerce officials proclaimed the event "a huge success" and expressed appreciation to town businesses who welcomed visitors into their stores and the Wesson Volunteer Fire Department and WVFD Chief Ken Carraway for managing barricades.

Children enjoyed a Kids Zone sponsored by Mr Charley's Fun Jumps of Brookhaven, and Back-40 Rhythms provided musical entertainment. Alpha Specialties of Pearl provided the winner trophies. Among food vendors, Ashley's 51 Stop previewed the restaurant it is developing at its location, serving boiled shrimp and crab meals.



Special to Wesson News

Dickie Stevens of Isola receives Best of Show award at the Wesson Chamber of Commerce (CC) car show from CC's Melissa Meredith.



Special to Wesson News

Dickie Stevens' 1934 Ford 5W entry that won Wesson Chamber of Commerce car show's Best of Show award.

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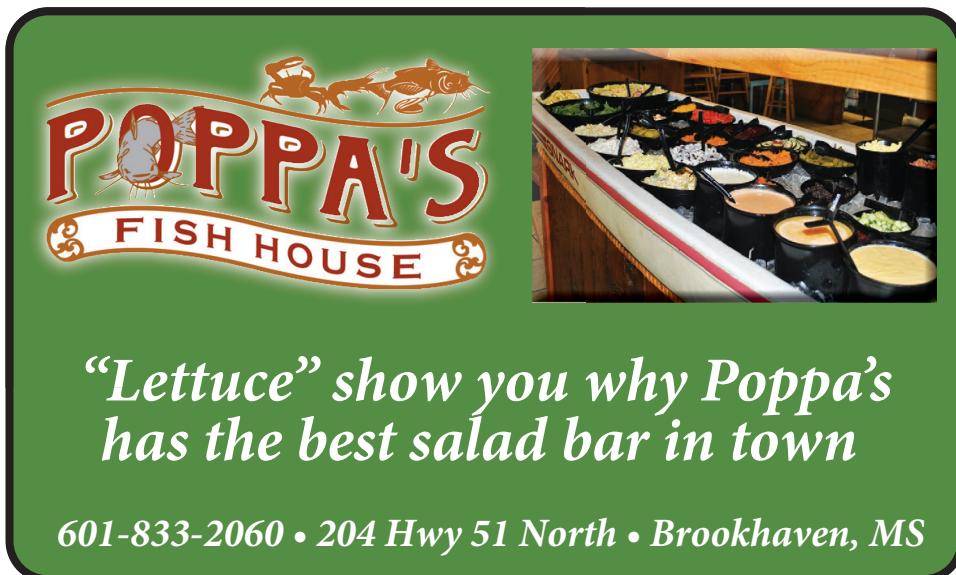
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A record crowd numbering upwards of 1,000 persons lined Highway 51 through downtown Wesson for the town's annual Christmas parade -- one of the biggest ever, with new colorful floats built by organizations throughout Copiah County, beaus and beauties from Wesson Attendance Center and special dignitaries in open vehicles, Wesson High School and Co-Lin marching bands and, of course, Santa Claus. Many lingered after the parade for an open house with refreshments at the Public Library, caroling in the outdoor library pavilion and kids-oriented events, including face painting at the library open house, movies behind the library pavilion, buggy rides around town and Santa's annual visit to the fire station to hear what children wanted him to bring them for Christmas.

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Healthy meals for Christmas

By Guest Columnist
Dr. Stephanie Duguid

With Christmas just around the corner, it is time to begin planning for those wonderful family gatherings and the meals that we look forward to all year long. This year, make an effort to continue your healthier living by adjusting those holiday meals towards reducing much of their unhealthy aspects:



Green Bean Casserole. This version of a traditional dish (six servings) skips the canned soup and all the fat and sodium that come with it. The white sauce with sliced fresh mushrooms, sweet onions and low-fat milk makes a creamy, rich casserole. Each three-quarter cup serving has 211 calories; ten grams fat (two grams saturated); three grams fiber; 23 grams carbohydrates; seven gram protein; 16 micrograms folate; nine milligrams cholesterol; seven grams sugars; zero grams added sugars.

Ingredients

- 3 tablespoons canola oil, divided
- 1 medium sweet onion, (half diced, half thinly sliced), divided
- 8 ounces mushrooms, chopped
- 1 tablespoon onion powder
- 1 1/4 teaspoons salt, divided
- 1/2 teaspoon dried thyme
- 1/2 teaspoon freshly ground pepper
- 2/3 cup all-purpose flour, divided
- 1 cup low-fat milk
- 3 tablespoons dry sherry, (see Ingredient Note)
- 1 pound frozen French-cut green beans, (about 4 cups)
- 1/3 cup reduced-fat sour cream
- 3 tablespoons buttermilk powder, (see Ingredient Note)
- 1 teaspoon paprika
- 1/2 teaspoon garlic powder

Preparation

1. Preheat oven to 400°F. Coat a 2 1/2-quart baking dish with cooking spray.

2. Heat 1 tablespoon oil in a large saucepan over medium heat. Add diced onion and cook, stirring often, until softened and slightly translucent, about 4 minutes. Stir in mushrooms, onion powder, 1 teaspoon salt, thyme and pepper. Cook, stirring often, until the mushroom juices are almost evaporated, 3 to 5 minutes. Sprinkle 1/3 cup flour over the vegetables; stir to coat. Add milk and sherry and bring to a simmer, stirring often. Stir in green beans and return to a simmer. Cook, stirring, until heated through, about 1 minute. Stir in sour cream and buttermilk powder. Transfer to the prepared baking dish.

3. Whisk the remaining 1/3 cup flour, paprika, garlic powder and the remaining 1/4 teaspoon salt in a shallow dish. Add sliced onion; toss to coat. Heat the remaining 2 tablespoons oil in a large nonstick skillet over medium-high heat. Add the onion along with any remaining flour mixture and cook, turning once or twice, until golden and crispy, 4 to 5 minutes. Spread the onion topping over the casserole.

4. Bake the casserole until bubbling, about 15 minutes. Let cool for 5 minutes before serving.

Don't use the high-sodium "cooking sherry" sold in many supermarkets. Instead, purchase dry sherry sold with other fortified wines. Look for buttermilk powder, such as Saco Buttermilk Blend, in the baking section or with the powdered milk in most supermarkets.

Cauliflower Puree. Here's a perfect low-carb stand-in for mashed potatoes (four servings). It gets its fabulous flavor from garlic, buttermilk and a touch of butter and, best of all, it has about one-quarter of the calories of typical mashed potatoes. If you like, vary it by adding shredded low-fat cheese or chopped fresh herbs. Each three-quarter cup serving has 107 calories; seven grams fat (1 gram saturated); four grams fiber; 10 grams carbohydrates; five

grams protein; 86 micrograms folate; three milligrams cholesterol; five grams sugars; zero grams added sugars;

Ingredients

- 8 cups bite-size cauliflower florets (about 1 head)
- 4 cloves garlic, crushed and peeled
- 1/3 cup nonfat buttermilk (see Tip)
- 4 teaspoons extra-virgin olive oil, divided
- 1 teaspoon butter
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- Freshly ground pepper to taste
- Snipped fresh chives for garnish

Preparation

1. Place cauliflower florets and garlic in a steamer basket over boiling water, cover and steam until very tender, 12 to 15 minutes. (Alternatively, place florets and garlic in a microwave-safe bowl with 1/4 cup water, cover and microwave on High for 3 to 5 minutes.)

2. Place the cooked cauliflower and garlic in a food processor. Add buttermilk, 2 teaspoons oil, butter, salt and pepper; pulse several times, then process until smooth and creamy. Transfer to a serving bowl. Drizzle with the remaining 2 teaspoons oil and garnish with chives, if desired. Serve hot.

Tip: No buttermilk? You can use buttermilk powder prepared according to package directions. Or make "sour milk": mix 1 tablespoon lemon juice or vinegar to 1 cup milk.

Sweet Potato Casserole. This healthy makeover gets fabulous flavor from honey and freshly grated orange zest rather than the traditional stick of butter. Each one-half cup serving has 238 calories; nine grams fat (two grams saturated); four grams fiber; 36 grams carbohydrates; five grams protein; 18 micrograms folate; 41 milligrams cholesterol; 17 grams sugars; nine grams added sugars.

Ingredients

- 2 1/2 pounds sweet potatoes, (3 medium), peeled and cut into 2-inch chunks
- 2 large eggs
- 1 tablespoon canola oil
- 1 tablespoon honey

- 1/2 cup low-fat milk
- 2 teaspoons freshly grated orange zest
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 cup whole-wheat flour
- 1/3 cup packed brown sugar
- 4 teaspoons frozen orange juice concentrate
- 1 tablespoon canola oil
- 1 tablespoon butter, melted
- 1/2 cup chopped pecans

Preparation

Place sweet potatoes in a large saucepan and cover with water. Bring to a boil. Cover and cook over medium heat until tender, 10 to 15 minutes. Drain well and return to the pan. Mash with a potato masher. Measure out 3 cups. (Reserve any extra for another use.)

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Coat an 8-inch-square (or similar 2-quart) baking dish with cooking spray.

2. Whisk eggs, oil and honey in a medium bowl. Add mashed sweet potato and mix well. Stir in milk, orange zest, vanilla and salt. Spread the mixture in the prepared baking dish.

3. To prepare topping: Mix flour, brown sugar, orange juice concentrate, oil and butter in a small bowl. Blend with a fork or your fingertips until crumbly. Stir in pecans. Sprinkle over the casserole.

4. Bake the casserole until heated through and the top is lightly browned, 35 to 45 minutes.

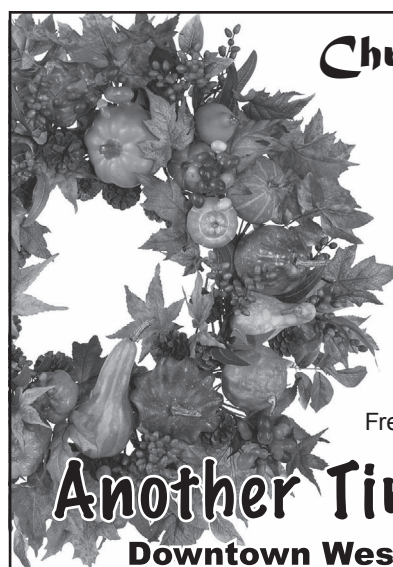
Make Ahead Tip: Prepare through Step 4; cover and refrigerate for up to 2 days.

To complete the healthy makeover, sprinkle a crunchy pecan streusel spiked with orange juice concentrate over the top. You can save the marshmallows for s'mores.

Here's to a healthier, happier, holiday season!

EDITOR'S NOTE: *Stephanie Duguid is Assistant Dean of Academic Instruction and the Health, Physical Education, and Recreation Division Chair at CoLin. 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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Mistletoe: sacred medicine and symbol of peace

By Guest Columnist Rebecca Bates

Mistletoe -- the plant most associated with the Christmas season -- has an ancient and mysterious history.

Around 2,000 B.C., Celtic Druids in Great Britain considered it a sacred plant and used it to counteract poison, increase fertility and protect against witchcraft.

Practitioners of folk medicine called it "Allheal," with North American Indians using it to treat toothache, measles and dog bites. In the 1600s and 1700s, mistletoe was used to treat epilepsy, nervous disorders and internal problems. Serious research conducted in the 1920s suggested that it might even have anticancer properties. But before you add it to your modern day medicine cabinet, remember the berries and foliage of mistletoe are poisonous. Ingestion has caused seizures, vomiting and death.

Those who first observed it noted a plant that would often appear on tree branches where birds left their droppings. The Old English word for dung is "mistel" and the word for twig is "tan." Combining these you get misteltan, which evolved into the term mistletoe, meaning "dung-on-a-twig."

Dung-on-a-Twig is not the only name given to mistletoe. After its sticky, white berry lands on a tree limb, a root grows through the bark into the vascular system of the tree, where it taps water and nutrients. Appropriately, American mistletoe's scientific name, *Phoradendron*, means "thief of the tree" in Greek.

There is more to mistletoe than its association with humans. It is important to wildlife as an essential food, cover and nesting site. Some birds, butterflies and insects are dependent on it for survival. There

TENDING YOUR GARDEN

are more than 1,300 species of mistletoe worldwide, two of which are native to the United States. Dwarf mistletoe grows in the west, and American mistletoe in the east.

Historically, mistletoe has represented peace and remains meaningful, particularly during the



Special to Wesson News

Christmas season. When enemies met under mistletoe in the forest, they had to lay down their arms and observe a truce until the next day. This ancient custom evolved into the current custom of hanging mistletoe from the ceiling and exchanging kisses under it as a sign of friendship and good will. Don't forget to hang some dung-on-a-twig this holiday season, and express your affection for special people in your life.

EDITORS NOTE: Rebecca Bates is the Mississippi State University Agricultural Extension Agent based in Brookhaven at the Lincoln County Court House.

An innkeeper's Christmas heart

By Guest Columnist Alan Randall

Aside from the "real" Christmas story of Christ's birth as found in *Luke 2*, the one below written by Dina Donohue is my favorite. What joy we would experience if we had the heart of the innkeeper in her story -- a heart that gladly makes room for the Savior Jesus Christ. May the joy and peace of Christmas be yours:

Wallace Purling was nine years old that year and only in second grade. Most people in town knew that he had difficulty keeping up. He was big and clumsy, slow in movement and mind. Still, Wally was well liked by the other children in his class, although the boys had trouble hiding their irritation when Wally asked to play ball with them. He was a helpful boy, willing and smiling, and the natural protector of the underdog. When the older boys chased the younger ones away, it was always Wally who said: "Can't they stay? They're no bother." In the Christmas pageant that year, the director assigned Wally the role of innkeeper. The innkeeper did not have many lines, and Wally's size would make his refusal of lodging to Joseph more forceful.

The usual large audience gathered for the town's yearly extravaganza. At the proper time, Joseph knocked hard on the wooden door set into the painted backdrop.

"What do you want," Wally the innkeeper asked brusquely, swinging the door wide open.

"We seek lodging," Joseph said.

"Seek it elsewhere," replied Wally, who looked straight ahead and spoke vigorously. "The inn is filled."

"Sir we have looked everywhere in vain," said Joseph. "We have traveled far and are weary. Please, good innkeeper, this is my wife Mary. She is heavy with child. Surely you must have a corner for her to rest."

Now, for the first time, the innkeeper looked down at Mary. There was a long pause, long enough to make the audience tense with embarrassment.

"No! Be gone!" the prompter whispered from the wings.

"No," Wally repeated. "Be Gone!"

Joseph sadly placed his arm around Mary. Mary leaned her head upon her husband's shoulder, and the two of them started to move away. Wally stood in the doorway, watching the forlorn couple -- his mouth open, his brow creased with concern, his eyes filling with tears.

And suddenly this Christmas pageant became different from all others.

"Don't go, Joseph," Wally cried out. "Bring Mary back." Wallace Purling broke into a big bright smile. "You can have my room!"

A few people thought the pageant had been ruined. Most considered it the best Christmas pageant they had ever seen.

EDITORS NOTE: Brother Alan Randall is pastor of Decell Memorial United Methodist Church.



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Merry Christmas

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Burn bans, budget, deer, and mail



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Two Co-Lin employees have received the college's Howell C. Garner High Performance Award -- Keith Sovall, Sociology/Psychology instructor, and Penny Thedford, a member of the cafeteria staff. From left to right (photo on left) are Ann Brumfield, a past recipient of the award; Sovall, Co-Lin President Dr. Ronnie Nettles and Dr. Jane Hulon, Vice President of Instructional Services at the college. From left to right (photo on right) are Co-Lin President Dr. Ronnie Nettles, Thedford, Stan Patrick, Co-Lin Vice President of Business Affairs; and Diana Mezzanares, the college's Cafeteria-Food Service Director.

Special to Wesson News

Governor's budget recommendations.

Based on preliminary state general fund revenue projections of \$5.8 billion -- 1.8 per cent greater than revenues in FY 2017, Mississippi Governor Phil Bryant is recommending spending increases of \$16.4 million and \$13.4 million for kindergarten through twelfth grades under the Mississippi Adequate Education Program for public schools and for Child Protection Services, with 1.8 per cent spending cuts for most state agencies. The Governor's recommendations also call for enforcing the sales tax on online retailers to generate \$134 million tax revenue.

Students pursue GEDs & college credits. Twenty-seven students have enrolled in the second-year of a program at Co-Lin that allows them to earn college credits toward a technical certificate or an applied science associate degree, while pursuing their high school equivalency diplomas (GED). The Mississippi Integrated Basic Education and Skills Training program (MI-BEST) at Co-Lin is part of an initiative encompassing the state's fifteen community and junior colleges, which participate in the Mississippi Community

College Board (MCCB), to prepare undereducated and untrained persons for 21st Century jobs. In the program, navigators and team teachers assist students, who can choose from automotive, business office technology, diesel, HVAC or precision machinery study tracks while preparing for their GED examinations. Co-Lin is receiving \$600,000 from a W.K. Kellogg Foundation \$6 million grant to MCCB -- \$200,000 per year -- for its MI-BEST program.

Watch out for deer. With shorter days and cooler temperatures, deer are becoming more active, and the Mississippi Department of Transportation (MDOT) is warning motorists to take precautions to avoid vehicle-deer collisions. Every year, more than 3,000 deer-related crashes occur in Mississippi -- the tenth highest in the nation. MDOT's advice: Drive with extreme caution, particularly in posted areas and at dawn and dusk. About twenty per cent of accidents occur in the early morning and more than half between 5 p.m. and midnight. Buckle up and drive at a safe and sensible speed. When no traffic is approaching at

night, use the high beam, which will illuminate the eyes of deer on or near highways. Slow down when you see a deer, and expect others to follow.

NEWS NUGGETS

twelve per cent more than last year. December 19 will be the busiest mailing and shipping day and December 22, the busiest delivery day for packages, cards and letters. The Postal Service suggests these deadlines to make sure deliveries arrive before Christmas: December 9 for APO/FPO/DPO priority and first class mail; December 15 for retail ground; December 20 for first class mail; December 21 for priority mail; and December 23 for priority mail express.

Economy moves ahead sluggishly. For the first time since 2007 and 2008, Mississippi's economic output is expected to increase for two consecutive years, with 1.5 per cent growth this year, up from 0.7 per cent last year. But this growth lags behind the rest of the nation, including all Southern states

Big mailing season forecast. The U.S. Postal Service expects to deliver sixteen billion cards and 750 million packages during the holiday season --

except Louisiana, state economist Darrin Webb reports. Mississippi's employment is also expected to show one per cent or more growth this year, he says. Hard times in the oil fields, which employ Mississippians out-of-state, have contributed to anemic employment figures. The state's comparative low rankings in educational, health and social advantages among other states are a drag on its economic growth as well, Webb said.

Burn ban lifted. The partial state level burn ban that has been in force across Mississippi since September ended this month, with a proclamation signed by Governor Phil Bryant at the request of The Mississippi Forestry Commission (MFC). MFC said the amount of precipitation and predictions of significant rainfall warranted the proclamation. Fifteen counties, including Lawrence and Lincoln, remained under County Board of Supervisors burn bans as of December 2. MFC officials urged state residents to continue to exercise cautions in outdoor burning activities, monitor the weather and not burn on windy days. Since the beginning of September, 1,166 wildfires have affected 10,943 acres in Mississippi. Dial 911 or Central Dispatch in the Southwest Region (888-823-3473) to report wildfires.



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Alumni group honors Furlow & Bridge

Wesson News

The Band and Colette chapter of the Co-Lin Alumni Association has inducted *Wesson News* arts columnist R. Shaw Furlow of Brookhaven into its Hall of Fame and honored Tyler Bridge of Brookhaven as its 2016 Stanley Stewart Outstanding Young Alumnus.

Furlow, a 1971 graduate of Co-Lin, played in the Co-Lin Show Band and was a member of the first Sojourners, one of several small specialty bands. He received Bachelor's and Master's degrees in music education at Delta State University, where he was also the first male drum major in the marching band. After serving as a band director at several Mississippi secondary schools, Furlow joined Co-Lin as director of its bands program and an instructor in its fine arts division, serving for 16 years until his retirement in 2015. He directed the Co-Lin Sojourners group for four years, restoring it, after it had been transformed into a show choir, to the rock band it had been when it was created. While at Co-Lin, he served as president of the Mississippi Community and Junior Colleges Band Directors Association.

Furlow currently is the band representative for Brookhaven Music



Shaw Furlow (left) accepts congratulations and plaque on his induction into Band and Colette Co-Lin Alumni Association hall of fame from Stanley Stewart, his band director predecessor at the college.

and Sound and is active in the local music scene as a performer and promoter. He is the host and producer of the internet series "Music from the Shady Side," and is one of the organizers of Brookhaven's annual music festival, Brookstock. He released an album of original songs in 2013 and produced



Tyler Bridge (left) receives plaque from Shelly Smith, director of Colettes, in recognition of his selection by the Band and Colette Co-Lin Alumni Association as Outstanding Young Alumnus.

the full-length movie, *Brookstock: The Documentary*. Furlow has directed plays for Brookhaven Little Theater and writes a *Wesson News* monthly column, which focuses on the broad range of arts activity in the area. He has one son, Cole, who is also a musician and producer.

Bridge, a 1998 graduate of Co-Lin, played in jazz bands, a guitar ensemble, and other musical groups as a student. He has been part of the local music scene since he was in elementary school, worked as an announcer and producer for Brookhaven radio stations WBKN and WCHJ and owns Brookhaven Music and Sound, where he offers private lessons in guitar, violin, voice, piano, and other instruments to students of all ages. Bridge also works with band programs in the area to provide affordable beginner band instruments for students. His store features a Kindermusik program for pre-school children and holds a Rock Academy for school-age students during the summer.

Bridge assists in planning singer/songwriter events around the area and continues to perform at churches, fundraisers, festivals, and other musical events throughout Mississippi. He books all entertainment and manages the stage for the annual Ole Brook Festival in Brookhaven. Bridge also assists local songwriters in creating lyrics and music. He is an associate pastor at the First United Methodist Church of Brookhaven and a member of the Brookhaven Tourism Council. He and his wife, Kristi, have one daughter, Lillie.

WESSON'S SPIRIT OF CHRISTMAS AWARDS

Wesson News, in partnership with the Wesson Garden Club, is again pleased to present and sponsor the Spirit of Christmas Awards. Business and residential Christmas decorators will be recognized for distinctive and creative displays by Overall Best and Design Excellence Award yard signs.

The Wesson Garden Club will judge displays and select winners in the Wesson area, encompassing the corporate limits of the town and the Wesson School District. Wesson News will announce winners.

You do not have to officially enter the competition. To assure consideration of your display by the judges, however, complete the form below and mail to P.O. Box 1028, Wesson, MS 39191, or email bobarnold@wessonnews.com.

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