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Seven recognized by Wesson Chamber

Wesson News

A community organization, a town agency, an employer and four citizens have received 2019 Wesson of Chamber of Commerce awards for service to their town.

The Chamber recognized the seven honorees for their contributions to Wesson at its annual banquet last month. Some 150 attendees at the event helped the Chamber celebrate:

- Wesson Band Boosters Club as Organization of the Year
- Wesson Police Department, recipient of the Public Service Award
- Copiah-Lincoln Community College as Business of the Year
- Dr. Steven Liverman , recipient of the Community Service Award
- Lucile Horton as Ageless Hero
- Linda Mehri as Wesson Attendance Center Educator of the Year
- Brad Hamilton as Co-Lin Educator of the Year

Chamber members Brandon Halford, Janet Currie, Chris McSweyn, Marty Stroud, Marilyn Britt and Stephen Ashley introduced the honorees, described their roles in the life of Wesson and presented special award plaques to them.

Halford, also pastor at Decell Memorial United Methodist Church, noted achievements of the Wesson High School band during 2018, including superior, first and second place awards in West Lauderdale competition and superior ratings in Pearl State Marching Evaluations, calling the Band Boosters "the Mighty Cobras biggest cheerleaders."



Paige Anderson (right) accepts Organization of the Year plaque on behalf of Wesson Band Booster Club from Chamber of Commerce's Brandon Halford.



Chamber of Commerce Ageless Hero is Lucile Horton (left), who accepts award plaque from Chamber's Marty Stroud.



Wesson Attendance Center Educator of Year Linda Mehri accepts award from Chamber of Commerce's Marilyn Britt.

"They make sure the band has water and Gatorade, pay to have its uniforms clean and ready, load their instruments onto trailers and pull them, helped move the band hall to a new location, coordinate props and raise money," he pointed out.

Currie, the Chamber president and proprietor of Another Time... Another Place, lauded the Wesson



Chamber of Commerce's Stephen Ashley (left) presents Co-Lin Educator of Year award to math teacher Brad Hamilton.



Dr. Stephen Liverman (right) receives Chamber of Commerce Community Service Award from Chamber's Chris McSweyn.



Wesson Police Department officers look on as Chamber of Commerce president Janet Currie (second from left) presents Community Service Award to WPD Chief Chad O'Quinn for work of the force.

Police Department for the protection it provides to the community in the midst of events and varied activities that "bring a lot of people through town."

Currie also noted that Wesson "is blessed that Co-Lin is part of the town." Established as an agricultural high school in 1915, it became a junior college in 1928 and now is celebrating

its ninetieth year, meeting needs of more than 3,000 college students on three campuses at Wesson, Natchez and Simpson County in 60 buildings on 525 acres, she said.

McSweyn, chef and co-owner of Porches Restaurant, compared Dr. Liverman's service in Wesson to that of special servants of God described in the Old Testament. He described the physician's extraordinary care to him and members of his family when stomach viruses -- "a hazard faced by restaurant workers" -- have afflicted them. Liverman, McSweyn said, settled in Brookhaven with his family when he was two years old, met his wife-to-be, Sandra -- the daughter of Wesson physician, Dr. Barton Friedman, there when he was in elementary school and came to Wesson to work with Dr. Friedman in 1984. He graduated from the University of Mississippi Medical Center at Jackson in 1978, did a three year residency in family medicine at the Naval Hospital in Jacksonville, Florida, on a Navy Health Professional Scholarship and worked in a three-year payback program for his scholarship at the Marine Air Station at Cherry Point, North Carolina.

Stroud, a manager at the Walmart distribution center in Brookhaven, said "In God We Trust" has been the guiding principle for Ageless Hero Horton, who retired from an educational career in 1991 as director/instructor at Co-Lin's child care center. In her student years, before starting work as a teacher in Pueblo, Colorado, Horton played basketball in the lower grades, was valedictorian and a cheerleader in high school and

Cont. on page 3

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"Great River Road" frames literary conclave

By Guest Columnist Shaw Furlow

The Natchez Literary and Cinema Celebration (NLCC), one of Mississippi's most respected conferences for literature, film, history and culture and well-known globally, will focus on Mississippi River-inspired art framed by "The Great River Road" as its theme for the February 21-23 event.

For thirty years, the event has featured nationally known scholars, artists and experts who build their presentations around themes related to the American South. The annual celebration is sponsored by Co-Lin, the Mississippi Department of Archives and History and the Mississippi Humanities Council, with the support of the City of Natchez, Adams County Board of Supervisors, and National Park Service.

Dr. Jane Hulon, president of Co-Lin, Darryl Grennelle, Mayor of the City of Natchez, and Co-Lin Natchez campus Vice President Teresa Busby will convene the 2019 conference at 8:30 a.m. on Friday, February 22. On the agenda are presentations and discussions on the history of the French in Natchez and the Rhythm Club fire, a look at culinary history, a showing and discussion of *Mississippi Madam: The Life of Nellie Jackson*, a film documentary.

The program reflects the Mississippi River as the subject of romance and folk lore. The great river road opened Natchez up to the world. Flat boats traveled north and south along the river originally tethered by lengthy ropes to mules that pulled the boats from the shorelines. Later, the grand paddle wheelers would travel the river, providing transportation for both business men and



Special to Wesson News

tourists. One of the favorite stops was the city of Natchez, where the well-healed and scoundrels coexisted. One of the discussions will explore "Flatboats and Floozies."

Mississippi Madam: The Life of Nellie Jackson, a documentary film, will be shown on Thursday night, followed by a discussion. Nellie Jackson had been a well known madam in the Natchez area for years. Her establishment was well organized and run with strict rules. Show up drunk and you were not allowed in. The front door was locked at midnight, so you had to get there early.

NLCC will recognize southerners who have distinguished themselves in their particular fields. Mississippi native, story teller, poet and National Public Radio contributor Ellen Gilchrist will receive the Richard Wright Excellence in Writing award. Awards named for former Mississippi U.S. Senator Thad Cochran and Governor William Winter will also be presented.

Most events are free, but there are a few ticketed events, including lunch at Dunleith, a tour of the Concord Quarters -- the residence of the Spanish Governor when Mississippi was part of Spain, and the Grand Gala that ends the celebration. For information on tickets, call 601-446-1208 or 601-446-1274. Here is the full calendar of events. They are at the Natchez Convention Center unless otherwise noted:

Thursday, February 21

•*Mississippi Madam: The Life of Nellie Jackson*. Presented by Mark Brockway and Tim Givens. 6 p.m.

•*Making the Film, Women of the Struggle*. Presented by Beverly Adams and Mark G. LaFrancis. 7:30 p.m.

Friday, February 22

•Opening Ceremony, including President Dr. Jane Hulon, Co-Lin; Mayor Darryl Grennell, City of Natchez; and Co-Lin Natchez Campus Vice President Teresa Busby; followed by recognition of William Winter and Vance Scholars. 8:30 a.m.

•"Flatboats and Floozies: Culture and Commerce on the River Road." Presented by author and journalist Anne Butler. 9:15 a.m.

•"Albert James Pickett's History of Alabama, and Incidentally of Georgia and Mississippi." Presented by James Pate, historian and Emeritus Professor of History at the University of West Alabama. 10 a.m.

•Thad Cochran Award for Excellence in the Humanities presented to Dr. John F. Marszalek, Giles Distinguished Professor Emeritus at Mississippi State University. 1 p.m.

•"Preparing for the World: Experiences of a Mississippi Delta Jew." Presented by Gene Dattel, Cultural and economic historian. 1:30 p.m.

•"Guidebooks to Sin: The Blue Books of Storyville, New Orleans." Presented by author Pamela D. Arceneaux, Senior Librarian and Rare Books Curator at the Historic New Orleans Collection/Williams-Research Center. 2:30 p.m.

•"Making the Film: *Mississippi Madam*." Presented by Mark Brockway, director and creator and Tim Givens, cinematographer. 3:50 p.m.

•Tour of Concord Quarters -- the remaining slave quarters dependency of Concord Mansion and the official residence of the Spanish governors of the Mississippi Territory. Tickets \$15. 5 p.m. & 5:30 p.m.

Saturday, February 23

•Opening Remarks, Dr. Jane Hulon, President, Co-Lin; and recognition

of the John D. W. Guice Young Writers Competition award recipients by Co-Lin Natchez Campus Vice President Teresa Busby. 8:30 a.m.

•"Heating & Cooling: 52 Micro-Memoirs." Presented by Beth Ann Fennelly, Poet Laureate of Mississippi, author, professor and Master of Fine Arts, University of Mississippi. 9 a.m.

•Richard Wright Awards for Literary Excellence with educational presentations by the award winners Ellen Gilchrist, author, National Book Award Winner; and Jack Elliott, journalist, *The Clarion Ledger*. 10:30 a.m.

•Luncheon at Dunleith Plantation served inside the main house. Tour available to ticket holders upon request at no extra charge. Tickets \$30. 11 a.m.

•"Crooked Letter." Presented by Tom Franklin, *New York Times* best-selling author and Associate Professor of Fiction Writing, University of Mississippi. 1 p.m.

•"The Cooking Gene." Presented by Michael Twitty, chef, James Beard Award Winner and culinary historian. 2 p.m.

•"A Crime and Disgrace Anyway You Look at It: National Press Coverage of the 1940 Rhythm Night Club Fire in Natchez." Presented by Dr. Karen Cox, author and Professor of History, University of North Carolina at Charlotte. 3:45 p.m.

•Benefit Gala Reception, Magnolia Hall. Honoring authors, speakers, patrons, and award winners.

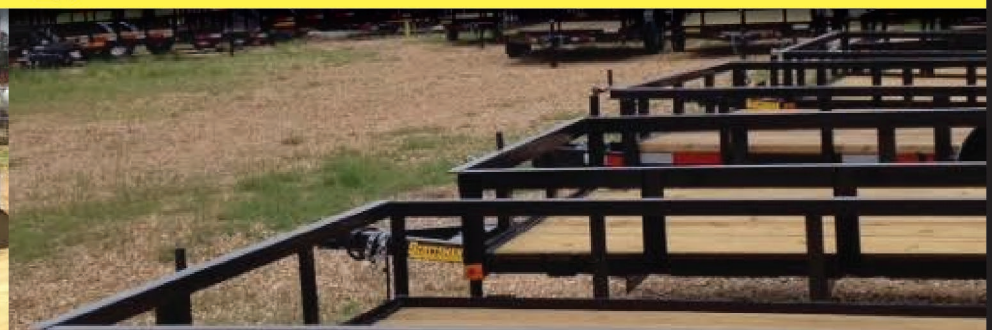
Tickets \$60. 5:30 p.m.

EDITOR'S 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.



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Cont. from page 1

Seven recognized by Wesson Chamber

part of the band, Collettes, cheer squad and tennis team at Co-Lin, where she graduated with honors. She has a BA Degree in Home Economics from Delta State University and an MA in Early Childhood Education from Jackson State University. In her later years, Horton has been active in Wesson Garden Club, Copiah Homemakers, Eastern Star, AARP, the 50-Plus Club, the Missionary Union, American Legion Auxiliary and Socks for Heroes. For 46

years before his death in 2005, she was married to Francis Kennedy Horton. She has three children, eight grandchildren and thirteen great grandchildren.

Britt, Wesson Trustmark Bank branch manager, said Wesson Attendance Center (WAC) Educator of the Year Mehri has taught science and social science in first through the ninth grades in Louisiana and Mississippi, and currently is a third

grade teacher at WAC. A New Orleans Baptist Seminary graduate, she also serves Beauregard United Methodist Church in a pastoral role. She studied at Mississippi College, the University of Mississippi and University of Southern Mississippi. She came to WAC as a substitute teacher when she was in seminary and stayed, "realizing her ministry and mission was in the classroom," Britt said.

Ashley, an AT&T manger, said Co-Lin Educator of the Year Hamilton has been a member of Co-Lin's mathematics/computer science division for 12 years and is a Future Teachers of America advisor at the college. A Co-Lin graduate, he received his Bachelor and Master's degree from Mississippi College. He was instrumental in establishing Co-Lin's Elementary Education Partnership with the Mississippi University for Women.

Expansions pace local economic development

By Bob Arnold

Three major Brookhaven employers deepened their commitments to the area economy last year, and new retail organizations are expected to further boost the economy in the coming year, Garrick Combs, Executive Director of Brookhaven-Lincoln Chamber of Commerce (BLCC) reports.

McClane Southern, American Railcar Industries (ARI), and Aptiv each made moves last year that are strengthening or promising to strengthen the area economy:

•McClane, a Texas foodservice distributor, moved into the speculative 54,000 square foot industrial facility built by Agracel, Inc., for the BLCC-led Brookhaven-Lincoln Economic Development Alliance in Linbrook Business Park. The Linbrook building houses McClane's second Brookhaven distribution operation and is employing twenty workers at the site. "It had stretched the capacity of its facility in Brookhaven-Lincoln Industrial Park (BLIP) and needed more space," Combs says.

•ARI acquired an option agreement to purchase 18 acres for potential expansion in BLIP. After completion of a brownfield program to assure the railcar repair company that it will have no legal liability for any contamination on the property, it is expected to move forward with the purchase to accommodate future expansion, Combs explained. The brownfield program involves soil samplings and testing and public hearings related to the property, on which Keystone-Seneca once operated.

•Aptiv, a Dublin, Ireland, manufacturer of next-generation automotive technology, continued transitioning its former Delphi operations in BLIP and added some thirty new jobs last year.

"With the McClane move, planning future development of Linbrook Business Park will be an important focus and priority in Lincoln County economic development during 2019," Combs says. "We could work with Agracel again in building a new speculative facility to attract an expansion-minded employer here. Another option is creating pod-ready

sites with the infrastructure for an industrial building that can be quickly erected." Combs says either action will help attract companies seeking new locations that want to move quickly to set up operations and prefer existing buildings or readily developable sites.

Brookhaven and Lincoln County each invested \$2.2 million, BLCC contributed \$500,000 and Mississippi Development Authority provided a \$1.1 grant to create the 400-acre Linbrook Business Park. Agracel, an Illinois industrial development company, constructed the \$2 million spec building there based on a Brookhaven-Lincoln Economic Development Alliance plan approved by the Lincoln County Board of Supervisors and Brookhaven Board of Aldermen.

During 2019, Combs is also looking for the Brookhaven and Lincoln County relationship with Retail Coach to bear fruit. Over the past few years, the Tupelo national retail consulting company has conducted market research and provided recruitment assistance in attracting new retail organizations, including restaurants, to open for business in Lincoln County. Last year, it played an important role in bringing the Zaxby's restaurant chain to Brookhaven, and Combs says other retail gains are on the horizon this year.

Although Retail Coach has not been significantly involved, Combs says grocery stores are, increasingly, looking at Lincoln County and Brookhaven, and he is increasingly confident that a major economic void in the area will be filled sooner than later.

"Studies show the lack of grocery-shopping options is an economic drag here," he says. "People are going outside Brookhaven and Lincoln County to buy their groceries, and the problem is growing with Piggly-Wiggly's business uncertainty."

Lincoln County's low unemployment rate and sales tax collections are strong economic indicators, Combs affirms.

"We're looking forward to significant investments by businesses in the area during 2019," he concludes.



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Police Blotter

Special to Wesson News

During January, Wesson Police Department activity encompassed:

Reported

- Commercial burglary
- Two accidents
- Recovered lost firearm
- Cruelty to animal
- Petit larceny
- Recovered stolen vehicle

Arrests & citations:

- 10 speeding violations
- 4 expired tags
- Bail bond jumping (warrant)
- 2 disregard of traffic device
- Driving with a suspended license
- Disorderly conduct, public drunkenness, simple assault of a law enforcement officer (arrest)
- Disturbing the peace (warrant)
- Contempt of court (warrant)

A Wesson Police officer is on duty during school hours at Wesson Attendance Center every day. Wesson Police also conduct nightly business checks at the school. On school days, they facilitate traffic, with officers on duty between 7 a.m. and 8 a.m. and 3 p.m. and 3:30 p.m.

Community Calendar

February & March weather forecast: *The Old Farmer's Almanac* calls for an average temperatures of 50 degrees (three degrees above average) in February and 60 degrees in March (four degrees above average) with precipitation of three inches (two inches below average) in February and five inches (one inch below average) in March. February 12-14: Rainy periods, mild. February 15-20: Sunny, cold. February 21-28: Showers north, sunny south; mild. March 1-3: Sunny, warm. March 4-7: T-storms, then sunny, cool, March 8-12: A few t-storms; warm, then cool.

FEBRUARY 12

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.

FEBRUARY 13

Institute for Learning in Retirement luncheon. Pianist Blake Scafidel will perform. \$10 with advance reservation/\$12 at door. Thames Center. 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. For information, email JulieWright@colin.edu or Tricia.Russell@colin.edu or call 601-643-8705.

FEBRUARY 14

Valentine's Day.

WorkKeys Assessment for Career Readiness -- first of five. Must register in advance. 601-643-8707. Thames Center on Co-Lin campus. 12:45 p.m. Also February 15, 28, March 6 and 7.

American Legion John Edwards Post 12 meets. All members, veterans and their spouses are welcome. 4 p.m. Jimmy Furlow Senior Citizens Center. For information, call 601-835-8137.

Widows Support Group meets. The group supports widows, who are walking through the grief process, with programs on pertinent issues related to their situation. Brookhaven. 5 p.m. For information, contact Becky Vaughn Furlow at bvaughnfurlow@gmail.com or 601-540-4308.

NAMI 4Rivers family support group meets on the second Thursday of each month. Free, confidential and peer-led, the group includes caregivers and loved ones of individuals living with mental illness. Cannon Hall at First Episcopal Church, Brookhaven. 6:30 p.m.-8 p.m.

Wesson Lions Club meets. Co-Lin Student Cafeteria. 6 p.m. (Board). 6:30 p.m. (Membership).

FEBRUARY 15

Wesson Attendance Center Valentine's Dance for grades 4-6. 6 p.m.-8 p.m. at school.

FEBRUARY 18

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.

FEBRUARY 19

Institute for Learning in Retirement workshop -- "Margret and H.A. Rey: A Partnership that Create an Icon." Ellen Ruffin, Curator of the de Grummond Children's Literature Collection at the University of Southern Mississippi explore the lives of the creators of monkey character Curious George. Thames Center. 10 a.m. For information, email JulieWright@colin.edu or Tricia.Russell@colin.edu or call 601-643-8705.

OSHA 10 Hour General Industry Training Course provides information on preventing hazards and compliance issues at general industry work sites. Students, who complete the course successfully, receive a completion card. \$50. Advance

registration required. Wesson Co-Lin campus. 8 a.m.-3 p.m. Contact 601-643-8707.

Copiah County Master Gardeners meeting on third Tuesday of each month. Mississippi State University Extension Office at Gallman. Member meeting at 5 p.m. & educational program open to the public at 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.

FEBRUARY 25

ServSafe -- a National Restaurant Association food safety training program for hospitality personnel. \$150. \$75 for exam only. Advance registration required. Wesson Co-Lin campus. 8 a.m.-4 p.m. Arrive at 1:45 p.m. for exam only. Contact 601-643-8707.

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.

FEBRUARY 27

Institute for Learning in Retirement workshop -- "Mississippi Authors: A Literary Legacy" -- led by Nicole Donald, Co-Lin English instructor. \$3. Thames Center on Co-Lin campus. 11 a.m. For information, email JulieWright@colin.edu or Tricia.Russell@colin.edu or call 601-643-8705.

FEBRUARY 28

African American History program. Wesson Attendance Center. 9 a.m.

Wesson Lions Club membership meeting. 6:30 p.m. Co-Lin Student Cafeteria.

MARCH 4

OSHA 30 Hour General Industry Training Course for supervisors and management on preventing hazards and compliance issues at general industry work sites begins and continues on March 5, 6, 7 and 8. Students, who complete the course successfully, receive a completion card. \$150. Advance registration required. Wesson Co-Lin campus. 8 a.m.-3 p.m. Contact 601-643-8707

MARCH 5

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

MARCH 7

Planning continues for 2019 Relay For Life of Copiah/Lincoln event scheduled April 5 at Exchange Club Park in Brookhaven. Team captains will meet. 12 Noon. Pike National Bank in Brookhaven. Also meeting on March 28 at Exchange Club Park.

Institute for Learning in Retirement luncheon with presentation by Sandra Upton on her recent trip to Asia and Russia. \$10 with advance reservation/\$12 at door. Thames Center. 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. For information, email JulieWright@colin.edu or Tricia.Russell@colin.edu or call 601-643-8705.

Institute for Learning in Retirement workshop -- "The Buzz Is the Behive" -- celebrates the 1960s -- the days of miniskirts, transistor radios and flower power. Sharon Langley will lead singing. Attendees are invited to dress to dance and impress in '60s attire. Thames Center. 12:30 p.m. For information, email JulieWright@colin.edu or Tricia.Russell@colin.edu or call 601-643-8705.

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Broadband, candidates, committees & bills

Special to Wesson News

Accelerating rural broadband access. Mississippi legislators acted swiftly in authorizing rural electric cooperatives to offer broadband internet services. Brandon Presley, Northern District Public Service Commissioner who led the effort to pass the proposal, says cooperatives can help bring high speed internet to the state's rural areas, just as they played a major role in bringing electricity to rural areas in the 1930s and 1940s. Presley hopes they will complete the task much more quickly than they did in electrifying rural

areas, which took 28 years. With 72 percent of its population having access to 25 mbps download speeds and 3 mbps upload speeds, Mississippi ranks last among U.S. states in broadband internet access. Even those speeds are not fast enough for some activities, such as telemedicine.

Candidates declaring. March 1 is the qualifying deadline to run for state, district and county offices in Mississippi, but races are already getting crowded for the 2019 elections. Republican Lieutenant Governor Tate Reeves and Democrats

Attorney General Jim Hood and Velesha Williams will run for Governor. Attorney General contenders will be Republican State Representative Mark Baker and Treasurer Lynn Fitch, Democrat State Representative David Baria and possibly Democrat Mike Espy, whom supporters are pushing to get into the race. For Secretary of State, Republicans Sam Britton and State Senator Michael

Watson are in the race, with Democrats Vickie Slater and Johnny DuPree considered likely candidates. Republican Shad White will run for Auditor and the race for Treasurer now includes Republicans David McRae and State Senator Buck Clarke. Mike Chaney is expected to seek reelection as Insurance Commissioner and current Republican Commissioner of Agriculture and Commerce could face opposition, with farmer-businessman Perry Parker and Democrat Representative Michael Ted Evans considering candidacies.

Congressional assignments. Mississippi U.S. Senators and Representatives have landed two committee chairmanships and been assigned to key committees in the 116th Congress. Senator Roger Wicker is chairing the Senate Commerce Committee, while retaining his seat on the Senate Armed Services Committee as the second-ranked Republican. Second District Democrat Representative Bennie Thompson is chairing the House Homeland Security Committee. Junior U.S. Senator Cindy Hyde-Smith is sitting on the Senate Appropriations, Agriculture and Rules Committees. First District Republican Representative Trent

Kelly is serving on the House Armed Services, Agriculture, and Small Business Committees. Third District Republican Representative Michael Guest, who succeeded Gregg Harper, was selected to serve on the House Homeland Security and Foreign Affairs Committees. Fourth District Republican Representative Steven Palazzo has a seat on the House Appropriations Committee and serves on Agriculture, Commerce and Legislative Branch subcommittees

Reducing electric bills. Turning off the lights and television when not using them and lowering the thermostat at night reduce electric bills, but energy-saving equipment will make a bigger impact, Magnolia Electric Power Cooperative advises. LEDs produce light, not heat, in contrast to regular bulbs. When computers, printers and video game consoles share quality power strips that can be unplugged at night, they won't waste energy while you sleep. Single-pane windows cannot keep the cold outside and should be replaced with double-pane versions or at least plugged with weatherstripping and caulking. Window shades block outside heat and cold. A programmable thermostat doesn't forget to adjust heating and cooling as needed.



Special to Wesson News

The Wesson Chamber of Commerce led the celebration of the opening of Copiah Nutrition (CN), a new business on Highway 51 which features shakes as healthy meal replacements, energy teas and protein bar snacks. At a ribbon-cutting ceremony to inaugurate the business were (front row left to right) Arthur Lee Evans, Jr., and Brenda Harper, director and administrative assistant at Copiah County Economic Development District; Janet Currie, Chamber President; Mary Hopson, mother of CN owner; Callie Carter, CN employee; Ana Mason, CN owner; Chasadey Peden, CN employee; Brad Mason, husband of CN owner; Elizabeth Shirley, Chamber Founders Day queen; Stephen Ashley and Marty Stroud, Chamber members; (back row left to right) Cindy Mason, mother-in-law of CN owner; Libby Kirton, Town Hall staff; Joe Mason, father-in-law of CN owner; and Laura Smith. CN's hours are 6 a.m. to 2 p.m. Monday thru Friday and 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Saturday. CN offers 43 flavors of shakes and 53 teas.

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Gardeners CAN rush time

By Guest Columnist Rebecca Bates

I've always been in a hurry. If it's summer, I want fall. In the winter, I want spring. As a child, my grandmother Aileen would say, "Rebecca, don't rush time." Aileen was right, but these gloomy winter days have me daydreaming of spring.

You can rush time and give your home a touch of spring by forcing landscape branches to bloom indoors.

Spring-flowering trees and shrubs set their flower buds the previous fall. Once the buds have been exposed to cold (usually by mid-January), a branch can be cut and forced to bloom indoors.

The easiest branches to force include forsythia, flowering quince, winter honeysuckle, crabapple, redbud and flowering dogwood.

Generally, shrub branches are easier to force than tree branches. Buds take from one to five weeks to open, depending on the plant you choose. The closer to the natural blooming time you cut the branches, the shorter the wait.

Choose healthy branches that are free from disease, insect or other

injury. Consider the plant as much as you would when you are pruning. Cut the branch just above a bud, being careful not to leave a stub. Take branches from crowded spots or other areas where they will not be missed.

The length of the cut branch can vary, but between 6 and 18 inches is a good length. Look for branches with many flower buds (usually larger and fatter than leaf buds). Cut the stem with a sharp knife or pruners.

Next, place the branches in an upright container and add hot water to cover no more than three inches of the stem. Allow to stand about one-half hour, then fill the container with cool water.

Flowers will last longer if kept in a cool spot away from direct sunlight. Be sure to keep the container filled with fresh water.

I believe my grandmother would approve of this method of rushing time. She loved spring and flowers as much as I do.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Rebecca Bates is the Mississippi State Lincoln County Agricultural Extension Agent based at the Lincoln County Court House in downtown Brookhaven.

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Space, land & workers drive economy

By Bob Arnold

For employers looking for major industrial space or land to develop for their facilities, Copiah County is ready to meet the need in the coming year and, at the same time, offer a labor force certified as "Work Ready" by a national educational testing organization to operate them.

Occupying upwards of a million square feet of existing industrial space and 200-plus acres of developable land for industry by telling a story that also encompasses hard workers, business-friendly government and an economically-advantageous location is the priority and vision of Copiah County Economic Development in 2019, says CCEDD Executive Director Arthur Lee Evans, Jr.

Last year was a mixed year economically for Copiah County in a competitive economic environment.

"Throughout the year, our unemployment rate averaged about five percent -- not as good as we would like, but not bad," Evans notes. "We lost 280 jobs with the decision by Advance Auto to close its Copiah County distribution facility in a consolidation program. On the other hand, we preserved more than 350 jobs with the decision by ABB to maintain its Crystal Spring facility in a similar consolidation program."

While the Advance Auto closure was unfortunate, it could have been worse, Evans points out. "I was appreciative of the company's phase-out approach and the assistance it provided to its employees in finding new jobs or relocating," he says. And, of course, Advance's 440,000 square feet of space is part of that almost one million square feet of space Evans now has to offer prospective new employers. The former API facility at Wesson and former manufacturing space in other locations also reflect economic losses Evans is trying to turn into opportunities. "People are actively looking at them," he says.

Although Copiah County didn't gain any major new employer in 2018, business was still good, with small mom and pop retailers and eateries opening in Crystal Springs, Hazlehurst and Wesson, Evans adds. The wood pellet manufacturer, which has been planning operations in Copiah County Industrial Park, also inched along towards beginning production, with

continuing renovation and preparation of the old Universal building for its facility, he reports. "The good news is the alternative energy market is reviving in the overseas markets it will serve," Evans says.

New healthcare organizations -- an urgent care facility in Hazlehurst, a facility that treats brain injuries at Crystal Springs and a primary care clinic at Wesson -- opened in Copiah County last year, not only spurring economic activity as service providers and employers, but providing selling points in attracting other businesses, Evans says.

Looking forward to 2019, Evans not only is promoting industrial space and land opportunities for new business, but the Copiah County workforce as well -- its existing, emerging and transitioning components, which have successfully documented work readiness through an ACT testing program spearheaded by Co-Lin.

"Copiah County has been certified as Work Ready, with a labor force that can provide the skill sets and knowledge businesses require," says Evans. "We have now completed 94 percent of a two-year maintenance program in which employers reaffirm their recognition and commitment to ACT Work Readiness."

If space, land and workers are Copiah County's key economic drivers, it's geographic location and overall business climate are icing on the cake, according to Evans.

"Copiah County has nearby river and interstate transportation close to major business centers in the U.S. and Gulf Coast ports," he points out. "Our government and community leadership is business-friendly, cooperative and eager to assist with no in-fighting."

To tell its story, CCEDD is shifting, increasingly, to digital media to reach modern decision makers, who increasingly rely on the internet on their computers, ipads and iphones to keep informed, Evans says. In a competitive environment in the midst of business uncertainty stemming from the recent government shutdown and trade negotiations, Evans says he remains upbeat and optimistic about economic development in Copiah County during 2019, with a good product to showcase and a strong economy.

Chamber adds four new directors



Wesson News

Wesson Chamber of Commerce board members (left to right front row) are Stephen Ashley, Phillip Knight, Marty Stroud, vice president; Janet Currie, president; Laura Smith, Marilyn Britt, secretary; (left to right back row) Brent Duguid, Brandon Halford, Chris McSweyn and Libby Kirton.

By Bob Arnold

Wesson Chamber of Commerce has added four new board of directors members.

Chamber president Janet Currie introduced Libby Kirton, Laura Smith, Phillip Knight and Brent Duguid at the organization's annual banquet last month.

They join Currie, who will serve as president for the second year; Marty Stroud, new vice president; Marilyn Britt, who will continue as secretary; and three other continuing board members -- Stephen Ashley, Brandon Halford and Chris McSweyn.

Currie said the new board is focusing on developing Wesson's annual Founders Day and Flea Market events in April and October, but is open to new program suggestions from members of

the community. She noted the success last year of the Chamber haunted house, which drew some 1,300 persons -- many from outside the Wesson area -- for a scary experience with ghosts, goblins, monsters and witches during the Halloween season.

The Chamber, Currie reported, also welcomed a number of new businesses to Wesson during 2018: Copiah Nutrition, an eatery offering healthy shakes, teas and snacks; Dump's Barbeque restaurant; a monogram and t-shirt retailer; Wesson Firearms and a healthcare clinic.

The Chamber is actively seeking new members. Dues are \$35 per person. Contact Currie at Another Time... Another Place or Marilyn Britt at Trustmark Bank for information and a membership application.



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Co-Lin declares economic development priority

Special to Wesson News

Over its ninety-year history, Co-Lin has played an increasingly important role in economic development by preparing workers to meet the needs of employers. Today, under the new leadership of Dr. Jane Hulon, in her first year as Co-Lin president, economic development is now a declared institutional priority.

In many ways, things are the same. But they are different, too, with economic development singled out as a priority.

Co-Lin's Career and Technical Division continues to offer two-year degree programs geared to equipping students to take their places in the area labor force, and its Workforce Training Division continues to respond to business needs for ongoing and special training that assures workers have current skills and knowledge to do their jobs safely and productively. Co-Lin continues to cultivate partnerships with employers -- more than fifty at last count -- to guide development of classes and curriculum through craft committees. The annual job fair in the spring, which connects job hunters with prospective employers, continues to be a highlight of the college's economic development activities. But now Co-Lin is saying it will go the extra mile and step up to the plate as necessary and assume a leadership role to promote economic development.

"It's important that Southwest Mississippi attracts industry to promote growth, and Co-Lin wants to be an economic development leader in making this happen," says Hulon. "In the process, we're seeking to make sure jobs are available for our graduates." Looking for roles Co-Lin can play, Hulon and a team, including Angela Berch, Workforce Center Director; Jackie Martin, Associate Vice President of Instructional Services; and Kenny Goza, Program Director, are meeting and engaging in serious discussions with area economic development leaders.

At a recent meeting of state leaders on

the Lake Okissa economic development project in Franklin County, Hulon demonstrated one meaning of the college's commitment to economic development in pledging that Co-Lin would deliver workforce training programs at a planned state-of-the-art conference center that is a component of the project.

"Co-Lin is a very special place and an important cog in the economic development wheel," she said at the meeting on Lake Okissa. "Our Career and Technical Division works alongside our Workforce Training Division to train workers and sustain and grow the local workforce in our part of the State of Mississippi."

In another example of assuming a leadership role in economic development, Co-Lin is planning to bring together business, industry and economic leaders from its district encompassing Adams, Copiah, Franklin, Jefferson, Lawrence, Lincoln and Simpson counties at a summit this summer to network, foster relationships, explore issues, identify opportunities and problem-solve.

Hulon says Co-Lin will continue an economic development leadership role it assumed a few years ago in spearheading the ACT Work Ready program in Southwest Mississippi -- an item sure to be on the summit's agenda. Through ACT WorkKeys testing administered by Co-Lin, workers, who are part of existing, emerging and transitioning components of the labor force, document they have the skill sets and knowledge required by employers. Adams, Copiah, Lawrence and Lincoln Counties have already been certified as "Work Ready" because sufficient numbers of their workers have passed the ACT test with at least a minimal score. Franklin and Simpson Counties are expected to become certified soon.

In the Work Ready counties, employers can draw on an ACT database that tracks workers and their test scores to identify qualified employees as part of their hiring process. Work Ready certification is also an important for economic developers in demonstrating

a quality labor force is available to new businesses considering location in a community.

Supporting Franklin and Simpson Counties in gaining ACT Work Ready certification and sustaining the ACT Work Ready programs in already-certified counties will remain central to Co-Lin economic development efforts, but Jefferson County poses a particular challenge with unique issues, Hulon says.

"It is a rural county, with an unemployment rate that is consistently among the highest in Mississippi," she explains. "Our goal is to help all the counties in our district become Work Ready and Jefferson County will be an important economic development leadership focus."

Co-Lin's economic development activity is also internally-focused -- oriented to upgrading and expanding its training capacity. Along with curriculum changes and customized training in line with area business needs, the college is also creating new and better space to house them -- most

notably the current construction of a \$6 million Career and Technical Building on its Simpson County campus for automation and control technology, welding and early childhood education programs, Hulon points out. A diesel technology laboratory is also on the horizon in connection with the diesel technology training program on the Natchez campus, she adds

Hulon says she wants Co-Lin to step up to the plate in economic development because "success depends upon us all."

"That's the theme I have brought to Co-Lin as president -- a theme that also applies to economic development in southwest Mississippi," she says. "We are all in this together -- educators and the business community. As president of Co-Lin, as a citizen and taxpayer in Mississippi, and as a mother, I want nothing but the best for our region and our state. We want the spotlight on our part of the state. At Co-Lin, we care about our students and our employees. We care about the citizens and business in our district. We care about progress in Mississippi."



Wesson News

Dr. Jane Hulon (left) accepts Chamber of Commerce Business of the Year award from Chamber President Janet Currie. Hulon has declared economic development an institutional priority for the college.

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Exercise helps prevent cardiovascular disease

By Guest Columnist
Dr. Stephanie Duguid

It's February, and time to think about how to keep your heart healthy -- American Heart Month. The most important thing to think about: exercise.



Special to Wesson News

The American Heart Association has declared lack of physical activity the "primary" risk factor for cardiovascular disease. Cardiovascular disease refers to a variety of conditions affecting the heart and the vascular system.

Regular physical activity and good fitness, of course, contribute to optimal health and wellness, but it can make a particularly great impact on hypokinetic diseases, which develop from lack of movement or activity. Cardiovascular disease and diabetes are two examples. The primary cause of cardiovascular disease is atherosclerosis, which is the build-up of fatty plaque on the inside walls of blood vessels. Exercise reduces the formation of fatty plaque and helps keep the vessels clean.

It is now clear that physical inactivity has an independent effect on cardiovascular disease risk. In other words, an active person will have a reduced risk over an inactive person independent of all of the other risk factors.

Three factors predispose persons to hypokinetic diseases:

1. **Age.** As people grow older, their risk of contracting hypokinetic diseases increases. For example, the risk for heart disease is approximately three times as great after 60 as before.

2. **Heredity.** People who have a family history of hypokinetic disease are more likely to develop a hypokinetic condition -- heart disease, hypertension, back problems, obesity, high blood lipid levels, and other problems. African Americans are 45 percent more likely to have high blood pressure, for example, than Caucasians. As a result, they suffer strokes at an earlier age with more severe consequences.

3. **Gender.** Men have a higher incidence of many hypokinetic conditions than women. However, differences between men and women have decreased recently, particularly for heart disease --

the leading cause of death for both men and women. Postmenopausal women have a higher heart disease risk than premenopausal women

Regular physical activity, in many cases, may overcome a person's predisposition to hypokinetic diseases. In fact, physical activity is essential to good cardiovascular health. Regular physical activity can promote good health and also help reduce the chances of developing Type II Diabetes, atherosclerosis, high blood pressure, stroke, peripheral vascular disease, and metabolic syndrome.

Some other things to think about: In addition to physical inactivity, there are four other modifiable risk factors for cardiovascular disease that can be controlled:

- Smoking
- Hypertension (high blood pressure)
- High cholesterol
- Excessive weight

Couple exercise with a heart-friendly diet to develop a strong heart that reduces your risk for heart disease and gives you more energy and vitality.

Build an exercise program around these principles:

- Consistency is key.
- Start at 5, 10, or 15 minutes a day and work your way up to 30 minutes.
- Use the stairs rather than the elevator.
- Take stretch breaks from your desk frequently.

- Keep yourself hydrated before, during, and after exercise.

Make your diet heart-friendly around these principles:

- Strive for 25-30 grams of fiber a day.
- Eat more fruit (skin on) and vegetables.
- Choose lean meats and poultry, without skin (focus on preparation by baking, grilling, or broiling.)
- Choose healthy fats like Olive and Canola oil.
- Choose low fat or reduced fat milk.
- Limit your sodium (salt) intake.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Stephanie Duguid is Dean of Academic Instruction 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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Area Mardi Gras tradition continues

Special to Wesson News

For the third consecutive year, area residents can usher in Mardi Gras in downtown Brookhaven.

Downtown Jazzed Up, a Mardi Gras celebration produced by Brookhaven-Lincoln Chamber of Commerce's (BLCC) Creative Economy Committee and Brookhaven Tourism Council, begins at 3 p.m. on Saturday, March 2, immediately following the annual Goin' to Town Car Show, which is sponsored by Fielder's Pro Shop and presented by BLCC. Both events are among an array of fun attractions throughout the year designed to bring tourists and area residents to Brookhaven and Lincoln County, and boost the local economy in the process.

The Mardi Gras event will feature a walk-in second-line parade led by a New Orleans style jazz brass band that starts in and around the Mississippi

School of the Arts campus and proceeds down West Cherokee Street to Railroad Avenue. When the parade stops, an evening of street dancing with The Bridge Band begins. During the afternoon before the parade starts, there will be walking tours and open houses, boutique and restaurant specials and jumpies and face painting for the kids -- "in all, a family-friendly affair," reports BLCC's Katie Nations.

The car show, starting at 8 a.m., will initially bring the crowds into the downtown Brookhaven area. Owners will showcase some 200 to 250 vehicles. They can pre-register for \$10 to participate in the show or pay \$15 on the day of the event.

The Brookhaven fun events don't end on March 2. Other events on the calendar are:

- A summer concert series brings a variety of local and regional artists

to downtown Brookhaven -- county, rock, hip hop -- at once-a-month block party-like events in May, June and July.

- A summer farmers market with locally grown produce and home-made foods and condiments starts in June and continues until vendors are sold out

- The ninth annual Girls Night Out in June provides a shopping experienced geared to area women in which participating vendors offer deals, door prizes and promotions.

- The twentieth annual Brookstock music festival in July brings together established and upcoming local artists and returning musicians who started their careers in the area. They perform oldies and today's sound -- their own compositions and the music of others in country and rock genres -- over three days in intimate sessions

with audiences and a big grand finale concert.

- The forty-fifth Ole Brook Festival -- a big day-long party in October with live music; arts, crafts and food vendors; an antique car show and designated kids zone with inflatables and games.

New this year is a three-part series of marathons for runners in April -- the Whistle Stop Challenge, with a 5K in Brookhaven, 10K in Summit and 15K in McComb.

The Brookhaven Animal Rescue League Barkfest (April), Hogwild BBQ Cookoff and Festival (May), Ole Brook Rodeo (May), Exchange Club Fair (July), Lincoln County Wildlife and Outdoor Expo (September), Taste of the Trust fundraiser with food samples served by local restaurants (November) and Christmas parade (November) are also on the calendar, among other events.

Speaker thankful for "Wesson spirit"

Special to Wesson News

Jenny Sanders Langley, now a nationally-known motivational speaker, acknowledges she is not young anymore, but thanks to what she calls "the spirit of Wesson" encompassing encouragement, hope, love and a sense of community, she did grow up through some difficult days into a successful life she has enjoyed.

"I was the blue eyed little girl, who grew up at the end of a gravel road -- now Will Bridge Drive -- on the remnants of a dairy farm," she recalled at the Wesson Chamber of Commerce banquet last month. Then she was Jenny Sanders. "In Wesson, people recognized your needs and encouraged you." At the banquet, she talked about some of those people -- some not familiar at all to members of the audience, others known to a few, and still others who shared similar memories of them -- who shaped Jenny Sanders Langley:

- Her grandfather, who took her

with him to the market, now at the Trustmark Bank location, where he sold vegetables to Miss Perritt, who cut samples of cheese for her customers with a long, sharp butcher knife that also took off part of her finger when she was careless one day.

- Her grandmother, who could "cry, whine and pray at the same time, loved Jesus, but not necessarily other people."

- Lucile Graham, who taught her to love Jesus and nurtured her love of music.

- Dr. Barton Friedman, known to have a shot for everything, carried his black bag to house calls, had a slow, methodical bed side manner, taught his children Hebrew and entrusted a special Hebrew word -- "shalom" -- to little Jenny to remember and contemplate.

- George and Thelma Clausey, parents of her best friend Peggy, with whom she bicycled around town.



Jenny Sanders Langley

Special to Wesson News

"Thelma taught us how to be ladies," Langley recalled.

- Charles Langley, Sr., who moved

his family to town, including boys of interest to Jenny and her friend Peggy. "We bicycled near the Langley home and Mr. Langley, who sensed our interest, warned us we 'could do better,'" although Jenny later married Charles (Chuck), Jr.

- Julia Guess, who encouraged Jenny to use her voice in song with the words, "you have a beautiful instrument."

- Mary Lou Landress, who taught senior English and admonished Jenny "to quit feeling sorry for yourself."

- Dr. Billy Thames, who directed Co-Lin; Miss Minnie, Brother Douglas, Johnny Russell, Kenneth and Lester Furr.

"I thank them all for transforming me in a little town," the blue eyed girl at the end of the gravel road says today.

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Softballers eye tourney as archers celebrate

Special to Wesson News

A new coach will lead the 2019 Co-Lin Lady Wolves softball for the first time since 2002. Meleah Howard, a 2008 Co-Lin graduate and softball player who helped the Lady Wolves finish second in the National Junior College Athletic Association (NJCAA) softball tournament, takes over after a stellar career in the high school ranks, most recently at Lawrence County High School, where she led the Lady Cougars to a 31-4 overall record and runners-up in the Mississippi High School Athletic Association (MHAA) 4A State Championship.

The Lady Wolves are looking to return to state tournament play after hosting a first round best-of-three series last season for the first time since 2009. "I expect us to play in the state tournament," Howard says. "We can contend in the Mississippi Association of Community and Junior Colleges and if we can get everybody on the same page, we can win."

The Lady Wolves lost a lot of talent last season in Alex Anthony and Bailey Root, who landed MACJC First Team All State honors; and Taylor Bryant, and Paige Hulin, who earned MACJC Second Team-All State recognition. Root will suit for the Belhaven Blazers this season as a junior and Hulin will play for the Mississippi College Choctaws as a sophomore.

Returning sophomores are: Harmoni Ashley, an infielder from Wesson, who drove in five runs and drew three walks in limited action as a freshman and looks to utilize her power at the plate this season; Julie Scheuermann, a catcher from Destrehan, Louisiana, who drove in 25 RBIs, batted .294 and led the Lady Wolves in doubles with nine; Callie Fortenberry, from New Hebron, who batted .296 with 16 RBIs and 11 stolen bases as a freshman; and Tori Pettit, from Florence, who saw 72 at-bats as a freshman, posted a team-best .319 batting average and had an on-base percentage of .417, while driving in 15 RBIs to earn post-season honors last year on the MACJC Second Team. A talented group of

freshmen joins them: April Lynn, an outfielder from Vicksburg; Hannah Walls, an infielder from Crystal Springs; Carly Polk, an outfielder from Brookhaven; Delaine McMillan, an infielder from Laurel; Amber Brinson, an infielder and pitcher from Wesson; Clesey Mobley, a catcher from Grant, from Louisiana; Ky'Albri Washington, an outfielder from Laurel; Chasity Hightower, an outfielder from Salem; Katelyn Hayman, an outfielder from Clinton; and Marley Poole, a catcher and infielder from Brookhaven.

Two returning pitchers -- Mackenzie Gros and Makenzie Smith, who combined for 41 appearances last year -- will be joined in 2019 by Kaytlyn Ward, a freshman from Grant, Louisiana and Brinson from Wesson. Gros posted an 8-3 record last season in 86.1 innings pitched, finished the year with 36 strikeouts and had a 2.59 ERA to earn MACJC First Team All-State honors. Smith threw only 41.1 innings but struck out 35 on the year, with a 5.08 ERA.

The team finished with a .908 fielding percentage last year and hopes to be even better this season.

Two first-year assistants -- Sam Lee and Drake Flowers -- join Howard this season.

Archers headed to national finals. Co-Lin's archery team won the Mississippi Community College State Indoor Championship, against other Mississippi colleges and university teams competing for places in the United States Collegiate Archery Association finals in Las Vegas, Nevada. Four-year colleges and universities participating in the competition were Mississippi State University, William Carey University, Mississippi College, and Blue Mountain College.

Krysllyn Poole of Meadville won first place in the Basic Bow Female Division and Marc McNeese of Sontag won first place in Basic Bow Male Division. Austin Smith of Mount Olive captured second place honors in the Basic Bow Male Division. Going

into the national competition, Smith and McNeese are seeded number two and three respectively in the men's division and Poole is seeded number four in the women's division.

Co-Lin is the only community college in the state to have competitive archery teams. The team coached by John McDonald is also the reigning Mississippi Community College State 3D Champions.

Youth baseball World Series. Brookhaven will host the Dixie Youth Baseball World Series July 18-21. Some forty teams with players 6 to 11 years old will compete at the event at the Lincoln Convention Center Baseball Complex. Most of the teams will come from Mississippi, and several will come from other Southeastern states.

SPORTS SHORTS



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Co-Lin's Mississippi Community College State Indoor Championship archery team.



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Co-Lin 2019 softball team has its sights on returning to state championship play.

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