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Volume 11, Number 3

“Good News You Can Use”

March, 2023

New Wesson healthcare unit growing

Special to Wesson News

Since Dr. Steven Liverman retired from his long-time Wesson practice at the end of 2021, Copiah Medical Associates (CMA) has rapidly become the focal point of local healthcare.

“We are now seeing 20 to 30 patients daily and have a total patient load of 4,000 to 5,000,” says Karen Boone, the Family Nurse Practitioner who currently heads the staff at the Beech Street location where Dr. Liverman had served Wesson since 1984, first in partnership with Dr. Barton Friedman, his father-in-law, who retired in 2008 and left the practice to him.

“It was a group effort involving Dr. Liverman and our people that led CMA to locate its third Copiah County clinic in Wesson, assure ongoing service to existing patients coming there and establish another base for our own growth,” Boone says. “With Dr. Liverman’s consent, we can access his patients records as necessary.”

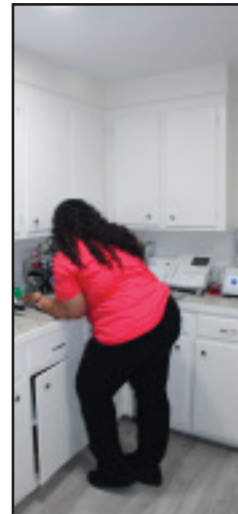
CMA, which recently merged with Copiah County Medical Center, established its first offices in Hazlehurst and expanded to Crystal Springs before opening in Wesson. Actually, it moved into the Beech Street building in fall 2021, taking over half of the space and operating part time. CMA is now serving the town full-time hours and renovated the space.

The updated facility with modern furnishings and equipment includes a comfortable waiting area, laboratory,



Wesson News

Copiah Medical Associates staff – (left to right) Kristi Carney, Trish Coleman, Shaquille Claiborne, Karen Sue Boone and Shannon Armstrong – accepts Chamber of Commerce Best New Business award from Britt Duguid (far right).



Wesson News

Wesson Copiah Medical Associates does laboratory work on site.



Wesson News

Comfortable waiting room at Wesson CMA.



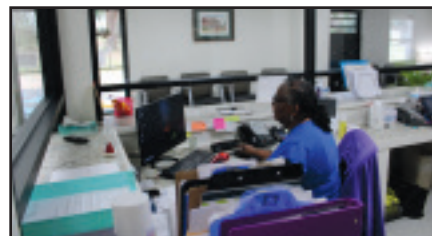
Wesson News

Wesson CMA features four treatment rooms.

eight examination rooms and four treatment rooms for procedures, offices and storage space. CMA is renting out the second floor apartment, where Dr. Liverman and his wife once lived temporarily after he decided to settle in Wesson.

CMA services at the Wesson facility include laboratory work, wellness and chronic care management, acute care, emergency treatment. There is no x-ray equipment on site. Through Copiah County Medical Center, CMA can access cardio, orthopedic and GI care for its patients.

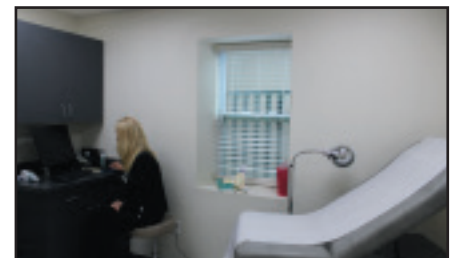
In addition to Boone, Shaquille



Wesson News

Data processing at Wesson CMA tracks 4,000 to 5,000 patients.

Claiborne is a medical assistant and Trish Coleman and Teresa Davis handle data processing and billing at the Wesson location. “Sooner than later, we also expect to add a full-time physician to the staff,” says Boone.



Wesson News

Exam room at Wesson CMA.

At Wesson, CMA welcomes walk-ins as well as takes appointments, and accepts all insurance plans, including Medicare and Medicaid. Hours are 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday; and 8 a.m. to 12 noon Thursday.

Scouting revival is Lions Club's goal

Special to Wesson News

Wesson Lions Club is seeking to revive Scouting among young people in and around town.

“Our first task is recruiting new leaders, with the hope that membership of young persons 11 to 17 years old will follow when the roles of Scoutmasters and assistants are

filled,” says Alton Ricks, currently an active Lions Club member who chairs its scouting oversight committee and one of the early leaders of Wesson Scouting.

Scouts BSA, as Boy Scouts of America has been known since 2019 to reflect its policy change allowing girls to join separate, gender-specific troops, is one of the largest


youth organizations in the United States, with about 1.2 million youth participants. Founded in 1910, about 110 million Americans have participated in its program as part of the international Scout Movement. It was a founding member of the World Organization of the Scout Movement in 1922.

In Wesson, a Presbyterian pastor

founded BSA Troop 125 in 1933, and along with subsequent leaders, including Ricks and, most recently Ken Carraway and Wayne McKenzie, built an active organization with some 57 members who received the Eagle Scout Award – the highest presented by the organization.

There were ups and downs in its


cont. on page 12



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Michigan tourist in the neighborhood

By Bob Arnold

Every year, some 23 million persons visit Mississippi, where they spend some \$6.3 billion to help drive the state's economy, and pump almost \$400 million into the state's General Fund to help pay for government services.

Tanya Strickland from Michigan is among them.

A single mom, Strickland started coming to Mississippi when her son Brandon Jason, now 21 and an Amazon employee, was old enough to leave behind when she wanted to take a break from the cold weather in the Great Lakes State.

This year for the third time, she joined the some 16,000 visitors annually who visit Lake Lincoln State Park, its nearby environs in Lincoln County and the Wesson area.

Born in Allendale near Grand Rapids, Strickland went to Palmer Elementary School and graduated from Creston High School in 2002, where she played soccer and was a cheerleader. While attending high school, she also studied cosmetology at a trade school, before going on to earn a degree at Chic University of Cosmetology (CUC) at Standale, Michigan. After graduating from CUC in 2005, she started a career that has encompassed cosmetology, assisting a dentist and bartending.

In 2005, Strickland also joined her mother to operate Kate & Curls, a Grand Rapids salon and spa that offered tanning, manicure, pedicure and massage services. She later started Unique Elegance Salon and Spa with six workers who also helped her provide services at area expos. While still at work in 2009, she entered Grand Rapids Community College to study business, received an Applied Arts & Science degree in 2015, and joined the staff of Cherry Health as a dental assistant until 2022 and took on extra work as a bartender beginning in 2020.

Today, she continues to operate a salon in the third generation home in which she grew up in Grand Rapids and serves drinks at the well-known Point Bar there when she isn't travelling in the South to escape the cold Michigan winters.

The Lake Lincoln area became one of Strickland's vacation stops after she met Charles Fortson, Jr., who operates Uncle

Rays eatery, bait shop, convenience store and RV rentals across from Lake Lincoln State Park, and visits friends in Michigan every year.

"Shortly after the COVID pandemic struck in 2020, I took my first trip with a friend to Lake Lincoln," she recalls. "We stayed in the park, and came back the next year on a stop that included Louisiana, Texas and Florida. This year, Uncle Ray hosted me, and showed me Natchez and part of Louisiana."

On the eve of her return to Michigan "to get back to my hair styling work," Strickland talked about travelling to Arizona in the near future to see if she liked it, eventually leaving Michigan altogether and possibly taking on seasonal work in Mississippi at Uncle Rays.



Wesson News

What are your hobbies?

Obviously, I like to travel. But that's not all. Dancing. Boating. Canoeing. Swimming. Beaches. Bowling.

Are you a reader?

Not a big one. If I am forced to read, I will. But I am a Tik Toker. I have become pretty good at making and posting videos on the internet. While visiting Uncle Rays this year, I made some cooking videos to publicize Charles' meals.

Do you have favorite movies or plays?

I enjoy action and sci-fi movies particularly. I like to watch actors Channing Tatum and Jim Carrey and actress Angelina Jolie. I stream movies on the internet at home, but go to the theater every once and a while.

Do you enjoy music?

I like country, hip hop, R&B and the music of Vintage Culture to which I can dance. I used to sing karaoke.

What would you do with lottery winnings if you were so lucky?

I would do work on my house, buy an RV and travel a lot. My various family members as well would be at the top of a help list – my two sisters, mom, three nieces, two nephews, two great nieces and son.

How would you change the world?

I don't really know how, but I would try to address all the hate in the word by helping those in need, being kind to my neighbors and trying to promote happiness.

MEET YOUR NEIGHBOR



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“Artists’ Corner” to spotlight locals

Wesson News

Wesson Public Library has a new “Artists Corner” to honor Wesson and Copleah County artists and expose their work to the public.

Wesson Friends of the Library (FOL) established the new feature at the library, and Dr. Steve Liverman, an FOL member, will coordinate ongoing exhibits.

The first exhibit features paintings by Elene Hutson, a former Wesson librarian, with other works by Stella Williams, Margaret Furr, May Cox, Rene Curtis, James Hulett Fairchild, Dot Furr and Imogene Case; and historical pictures of Wesson during the period when Mississippi Mills operated.

“Wesson and Copleah County have been and continue to be home to artists who create works in many different genres – watercolors, oils, sculptures, collages, quilting, among others,” says Liverman. “Wesson Friends of the Library will display works of our local artists – past, present



FOL's Dr. Steven Liverman and Marilyn Britt at public library's first "Artists' Corner."

Wesson News

and future – on a rotating exhibit basis to highlight this aspect of our culture and heritage, increase appreciation of their talent and stimulate and encourage our budding artists.”

FOL will announce future ex-

hibits through local media and its Facebook site. An “Artists’ Corner” Guide with information related to significant displays will be available at the library. The librarian will assist in finding answers to specific questions about

exhibits.

Friends of the Library is a group of volunteers and donors who support the Wesson public library with special projects, programs and fundraising. Ask the librarian for an application form.

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Eating foods as God made them

By Bob Arnold

If you get your proteins, carbohydrates and healthy fats in foods close to the way God made the plants and animals from which they come, your diet probably is on the right track, says the manager of Co-Lin's new Wolf Den Grill and Smoothie Bar and a student of nutrition who has helped others eat healthy for more than 25 years.

Speaking to an Institute for Learning in Retirement (ILR) audience at the Wolf Den, Leah Embry singled out processed foods and sugar as major culprits in bad nutrition.

"I started studying nutrition after reading labels on cans and food packaging and wondering about those big words I couldn't pronounce or which, like 'BLT,' were abbreviated," she said. "I learned they are by and large chemicals used to prevent oils from becoming rancid, have little nutritional value and may even be harmful. So I advise counting chemicals instead of calories, and plan your meals to reduce their intake with less processed foods."

Coupled with the chemicals is sugar, which Embry calls "public enemy number one." "You need it, but no more than 25 grams per day, not in the enormous amounts our canned and packaged foods contain," she pointed out.

Within this context, Embry said no one nutritional plan fits all. "Build meals around numbers your doctor determines in monitoring your health – blood sug-

ar and cholesterol, especially -- and how your body reacts to what you eat, reflected particularly in your bowel habits," she counseled. "The amount of protein, carbohydrates and fats consumed will vary from person to person from occasion to occasion, but every meal and snack should have all three nutrients. For example, eat fruit with a hard boiled egg, or peanut butter with an apple. Be sure to include healthy fats in meals and snacks with olives, fish, avocado, nuts, eggs, coconut and olive oils."

Two important neurotransmitters – serotonin and dopamine – that influence physiological and psychological states are produced in the gut and are nutrition-dependent, Embry noted. "Keep a journal that tracks how you feel after eating," she advised. "What foods made you feel good? What made you feel bad?" Serotonin levels, which affect moods, sex drive and varied bodily functions, are better with high-fiber foods, meats like turkey, milk, eggs and nuts, along with exercise. Yogurt and a high-protein diet with sunshine and exercise produce high levels of dopamine, a factor in memory, movement and moods.

Embry also advised:

Drinking lots of water. Although water may be the single most important thing consumed every day, daily hydration habits of most people need to be improved, she said. Every cell, tissue and organ in the body needs water to work properly. The importance of drinking water and maintaining healthy hydration habits di-



Wesson News

Leah Embry counsels Co-Lin ILR audience on nutrition basics.


rectly impacts the immune system, which is dependent on the nutrients in the blood stream that is made mostly of water. Dehydration can contribute to muscle tension, headaches, low serotonin production and digestive issues. "A gallon of water a day seems like lot to drink, but it can be a game-changer," Embry said.

Watching gluten. Gluten is a protein associated with baked goods, breads, pasta, cereals and beer, among other processed foods and beverages, that causes inflammation and produces stomach and intestinal issues with related fatigue in susceptible persons. Fruits and vegetables; natural beans, seeds, legumes and nuts in unprocessed forms; eggs, non-processed meats, fish and poultry; and most low-fat dairy products are non-gluten foods.

Taming inflammation. Inflammation, which is the root cause of most diseases, is not only a byproduct of gluten for those who are sensitive, but can stem from a diet including added sugars, artificial trans fats and saturated fats, excess Omega-6 fatty acids, refined carbohydrates and processed meats. Some good anti-inflammatory foods and beverages are avocados, beets, berries, onions, spinach, extra virgin oil and green tea.

Supplements in moderation. "I find a plant-based multivitamin a good nutritional supplement, but you can overdo it with supplements," Embry warned. "Consult your doctor." Adding tumeric and cinnamon to food could be beneficial, she said. Tumeric, an anti-inflammatory, anti-bacterial and anti-viral used in Chinese and Indian medicine, has been demonstrated to help prevent bowel disease, improve liver function and positively impact brain health. Cinnamon, a spice obtained from the inner bark of several tree species, is an aromatic condiment and flavoring that also has demonstrated medicinal properties as an anti-oxidant and anti-inflammatory that can help prevent heart disease, improve insulin sensitivity, lower blood sugar levels and have beneficial effects on varied neurodegenerative diseases.


Throughout Embry's discussion, members of her ILR audience sampled the special smoothies with nutritional benefits from the fruits, vegetables and spices mixed into a refreshing cold drink that are part of the Wolf Den menu.



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Tetrazzini for Southern tastes

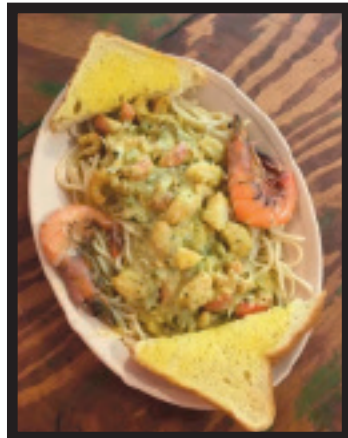
By Guest Columnist Charles Fortson, Jr.

Tetrazzini has an Italian ring, but a rich creamy sauce with shrimp or crawfish from the Gulf makes it a Southern treat.

The creamy sauce prepared like you would make Southern gravy is the secret.

Ingredients:

- 1 lb. of thin spaghetti (or rice if you prefer)
- 1 large onion (chopped)
- 1 green onion bunch (chopped)
- 2 tablespoons of minced garlic
- 2 tablespoons of parsley
- 2 pounds of small shrimp or crawfish
- 3 caps of crab oil
- 1 can Rotel tomatoes & pepper (drained)
- 1 quart half & half or whipping cream
- White flour
- Salt and pepper
- Butter
- Olive oil
- Velveeta Cheese
- Shredded mild cheddar cheese



Directions:

1. Pre-cook onions and garlic until tender in mix of one tablespoon of butter and one tablespoon of olive oil heated on medium to low fire.
2. Pre-boil shrimp or crawfish to flavor it. Boil one quart of water and three caps of crab oil with one tablespoon of butter and one tablespoon of salt in a two-quart sauce pan. Add the shrimp or crawfish and bring to a boil again. Drain and cool.
3. Prepare spaghetti or your favorite pasta. Boil two quarts of water with one tablespoon of butter and one tablespoon of salt in a large pot. Add broken spaghetti, bring to a second boil, reduce heat and cook for 20 minutes or until tender. Drain water and add Rotel tomatoes and pepper, pre-cooked onions and garlic, and parsley.
4. Prepare creamy sauce. Stir white flour into the whipping cream over low heat to make a thick gravy. Add Velveeta Cheese and the shredded cheddar cheese until the gravy has the thickness you desire.
5. Combine the prepared spaghetti, creamy sauce and shrimp or crawfish. Keep warm and serve with garlic bread. Serves eight.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Charles Fortson, Jr., is proprietor-chef at Uncle Rays across from Lake Lincoln State Park. He makes lunches and dinners to take out or for table service, while also operating a convenience store and bait shop at his Sunset Road location. Follow his cooking tips on Uncle Rays Facebook page or call 601-643-0174 to check on his daily specials.

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Men hoopsters claim conference title

Special to Wesson News

Co-Lin men's basketball team coasted through February without a loss to claim the Mississippi Association of Community Colleges (MACC) Conference championship and then fell to Jones Junior College 71-56 in the second round of the Region 23 National Junior College Athletic Association (NJCAA) tournament to end its season. At the same time, the Lady Wolves ended their season on a sour note with five consecutive

losses, including their season finale to Southwest Mississippi 73-48 in the first round the Region 23 NJCAA tournament.

In the final game for the men, the Jones Bobcats used a 13-8 scoring run in the opening minutes to hold a lead over the Wolves by that margin with 15:01 left in the first half. The Bobcats then used a 12-9 scoring run over the next few minutes to increase their lead to 25-17 with 8:54 remaining. The Wolves then closed the first half

with a 12-10 scoring run to cut the Bobcats lead down to 35-29 as the teams entered the locker rooms at halftime. The Bobcats opened the second half with a 14-7 scoring run to increase their lead to 49-36 with 15:05 left to play. The Wolves then responded with a 16-9 scoring run to cut the Bobcats lead down to 58-52 with 7:10 remaining. However, the Bobcats closed out the game with a 13-4 scoring run to secure the win.

Before the loss to Jones, Co-Lin

had beaten, East Central (100-83), Hinds (76-65), Coahoma (90-70), Itawamba (88-81), Gulf Coast (87-80), Northwest Mississippi (82-80) and Meridian (70-58) during February.

The Lady Wolves started February with wins over Coahoma (62-54), East Central (61-51) and Hinds (72-49), then sputtered with losses to Itawamba (71-61), Meridian (66-59), Gulf Coast (69-49) and Northwest (87-79) before its season-ending loss to Southwest.

Ceremony celebrates Sullivan Field upgrades



Special to Wesson News

Members of the Co-Lin Board of Trustees, administration and athletic department and representatives from Wier Boerner & Allin Architecture and Paul Jackson and Son Construction cut the ribbon to officially open the newly renovated Walter R. Sullivan baseball field.

Phase one of the renovation reflects the college's vision of excellence in all areas of campus and student-life at Co-Lin, college officials said at the ceremony.

"We are thrilled to wrap up Phase One of the renovations at Sullivan baseball field," said Co-Lin President Dr. Jane Hulon Sims. "Thank you to our Board of Trustees, our chairman Mr. Melton King, all our corporate sponsors, and our private donors. It's a great day for Co-Lin and our baseball program."

Phase one of the project included a Shaw turf infield with a Bermuda grass outfield, new dugouts, new black fencing, a new sidewalk entrance to the stadium and a state-of-the-art Musco lighting LED system that allows custom scheduling and the ability to instantly power on or off with no delay. The dimensions of the field stayed the same down left (330 feet) and right field (335 feet), but center field is now 400 feet.

"We are excited to have these upgrades to Sullivan Field," said Co-Lin Athletic Director Bryan Nobile. "To give Coach (Adam) Chamblee, his staff, current and future student-athletes an opportunity to play at a great venue was the goal. Hopefully, we can now say we have a homefield advantage."

The Wolves open their spring season in the stadium. They will also use it for their fall season and summer camps. High school and junior high games will also be played on the field.



Golf standout goes to Co-Lin



Wesson News

Wesson High School standout golfer Harlan Brewer has signed on with Co-Lin. At the signing ceremony were (left to right in front row) his father, Derrick Brewer; Harlan and his mother, Jonie Brewer. In back row (left to right) are Jeremy Loy, Wesson Golf Coach; and Tommy Clopton, Wesson Attendance Center Principal/Athletic Director.

Special to Wesson News

Wesson High School (WHS) senior golf standout Harlan Brewer has inked a scholarship with the Co-Lin Wolfpack Golf Team.

Brewer is a member of both the golf and soccer teams at Wesson, and is an honor student, a dual-enrollment college student at Co-Lin, and a member of the Gold ACT club on campus.

Brewer was a member of the district championship golf team in eighth grade, a member of the second place state championship runners-up team in the tenth grade, and voted Wesson Golf Team Most Valuable Player in the eleventh grade. He made four consecutive state championship appearances as part of the Cobra Golf Team.

Brewer also served as Team Captain on the Cobras Soccer Team in the eleventh and twelfth grades, and was Midfielder Most Valuable Player in the tenth grade.

Three join WAC Hall of Fame

Special to Wesson News

Three Wesson High School (WHS) seniors are 2023 Wesson Attendance Center (WAC) Hall of Fame inductees – the most prestigious honor WAC students can receive – for their academic performance, leadership, character and school participation/involvement.

Will Loy, Taylor Papizan and Orrin Ainsworth join the five percent of WHS seniors each year who are Hall of Fame inductees based on the vote of WAC secondary school faculty and staff.

Family members and closest friends of the inductees celebrated their honor with them at a recent reception.

Loy is the son of Jeremy and Sarah Loy. He was chosen STAR Student at WHS, is an honor roll student and a member of Beta Club. The student body and staff chose Loy as Mr. Wesson High School, and he was also selected as Most Athletic in the Senior Who's Who. Loy played on the football, baseball, and golf teams at WHS.

Papizan is the daughter of Ken and Terri Papizan. She is an honor roll student and member of Beta Club,



WAC Hall of Famers (left to right) Will Loy, Taylor Papizan and Orrin Ainsworth.

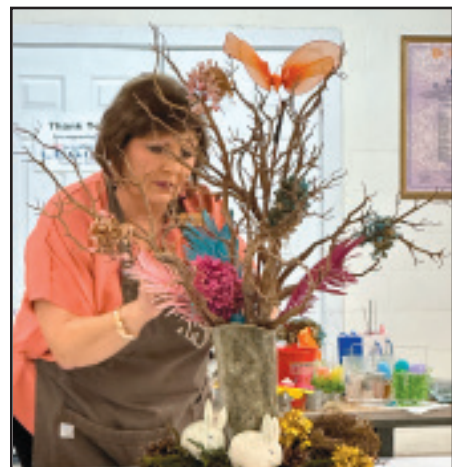
part of the cheer and soccer teams and a member of the Cobra Band. Papizan is Senior Class Vice President and a senior class representative to the student council. She is also a senior editor on the yearbook staff. Her classmates chose her as Wesson's 2022-2023 Homecoming Queen and as Most Likely to Suc-

ceed in the Senior Who's Who. She has received many academic, athletic and band awards throughout her high school career.

Ainsworth is the son of Chad and Keli Ainsworth. He is a member of the football team, the Cobra Band and robotics team. Ainsworth serves as President of the Student

Council Organization and President of the Senior Class. He received the DAR Good Citizenship Award, and his classmates chose him as Most Dependable in the Senior Who's Who. He has also received a variety of academic, athletic and band awards throughout his high school career.

Tablescape ideas explored by WGC



Special to Wesson News

Carla Stringer.

Special to Wesson News

The Wesson Garden Club February meeting at American Legion Post 79 featured guest speaker Carla Stringer, Garden Clubs of Mississippi Natchez Trace District Director.

Stringer demonstrated how to prepare an Arbor Day Tablescape and other seasonal tablescapes. A tablescape describes the pairing of dinnerware with table décor, either placed on it or incorporated into its own design. It is about organiz-

ing a table in a way that expresses the creativity the person doing the table setting and reflects a particular theme, ambiance or feeling for those who see it. Stringer shared various and unique ideas to create a beautifully-decorated table.

Attending the meeting were Marilyn Britt, Rebecca Norma Carroll, Sherri Carty, Sonya Cowen, Robin Furr, Cherry Head, Debbie Hoaglin, Rhonda Ishee, Denise Jackson, Meghan Jackson, Pam McLemore, June Owens, Pam Owens, Jennifer Peets, Joy Phillips, Jean Ricks,

Debbie Smith, Lisa Smith, Dixie Thornton, Cathy Warren, and Joy Wesbrooks.

Providing refreshments at the meeting were hostesses Sherri Carty, Meghan Jackson, Nancy Sullivan, Cathy Warren, and Joy Wesbrooks.

The Wesson Garden Club is a member of The Garden Clubs of Mississippi, Inc., National Garden Clubs, Inc., Deep South Garden Clubs, Inc., Natchez Trace District-Garden Clubs of Mississippi, Inc.

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A portrait and magnolia painter

Special to Wesson News

Painter Meliora "Ora" Newton Gibson from Crystal Springs, born November 23, 1873, the daughter of George and Mary Purdom Newton, painted wildlife backdrops, portraits and magnolias that are well known throughout Mississippi.

W.A. Purdom, her grandfather, served as Mayor of Jackson in 1859, and her Uncle Oscar Newton founded the Newton Female Institute, a school for young ladies where she received her education that was incorporated into Crystal Springs Consolidated School in the 1920s. Her mother attended the Metropolitan Art School in Philadelphia and influenced her daughter's pursuit of painting.

At age 17, Gibson first exhibited her works, gathering everything she had drawn and painted and selling it all -- a harbinger of success that continued throughout her life.

She taught music and art for several years, teaching two other prominent Crystal Spring artists – Robert Cook and Edith Lotterhos. In 1915, she married Stuart Gibson from Crystal Springs and settled with him in Port Gibson. After her husband died in 1935, she started painting backdrops for museums with the Works Progress Administration (WPA), including the one for the bird display at Jones County Community College in 1940, and later many others for the Mississippi Wildlife Museum during the 1950s, when she worked closely with its Director, Fannye Cook, to assure the scenes captured typical poses and the natural habitat of species.

She returned to Crystal Spring to paint for many years in the Methodist parsonage on Georgetown Street after living in Jackson for some time. She was well known for her portraits, which people commissioned, and magnolias, and won many blue ribbons and prizes. She painted the portrait of Crystal Springs Senator Pat Harrison now in the collection at the Chautauqua Visitor's Center and drew the magnolia engraved on the tray for the silver service for the Battleship Mississippi. Her best-known magnolia graced Mississippi's Official Statistical Register (the "Blue Book") published



Special to Wesson News

annually by the Secretary of State's office. The J.T. Biggs Memorial Library at Crystal Springs and the private collection of Mr. and Mrs. Henry Carney also display her majestic magnolia paintings with vibrant hues of teal green, red and brown. Most of her paintings are in private collections.

Gibson painted into her late 80s, and died in 1954 at 90 years old.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Throughout the 2023 Copiah County Bicentennial year, Wesson News will feature sketches of past and present visual artists, musicians, authors and photographers who are natives of the county. They will be excerpted from Tricia Nelson's reporting in A Shared History: Copiah County, Mississippi 1823-2023 edited and compiled by Paul C. Cartwright and available through Cartwright for \$25 plus \$5 for shipping at 3 Waverly Circle, Hattiesburg, MS 39402. Nelson is a Crystal Springs writer who contributes to the Copiah County Monitor.



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Kindness spotlighted for adult learners

Special to Wesson News

With their monthly luncheon, Institute for Learning in Retirement (ILR) members received a lesson in kindness as their appetizer from the Co-Lin ILR staff person.

“I had another speaker lined up who couldn’t make it, so I thought I would speak about something that was weighing on my heart – kindness,” Erin Johnson told the audience at a special meal prepared for it by students in Co-Lin culinary arts program.

Citing the negativity and hostility characterizing social interaction today, Johnson referenced some observations about kindness offered by respected sources and suggested some ways to practice it as an antidote. For the timely adult education lesson, she first pointed to a Biblical exhortation from Ephesians: “Get rid of all bitterness, passion and anger; no more shouting or insults, no more hateful feelings of any sort. Instead, be kind and tenderhearted to one another, and forgive one another, as God has forgiven you through Christ. Since you are God’s dear children, you must try to be like him.” Then she called attention to insights from:

- **Poet and author Maya Angelou.** “I’ve learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel.”
- **Princess Diana.** “Carry out a random act of kindness, with no expectation of reward, safe in the knowledge that one day someone might do the same for you.”
- **Peter Pan creator James M. Barrie.** “Always be a little kinder than necessary.”
- **Mississippi actor Morgan Freeman.** “How do we change the world? One random act of kindness at a time.”

Johnson’s own advice:

- Give a compliment.
- Let someone cut in front of you in line.
- Give someone your seat in a crowded waiting room.
- Send a letter.
- Bake something for a neighbor.
- Tell someone when they do a good job.
- Talk or greet someone who is new.
- Smile.
- Hold the door open for someone.
- Buy someone a cup of coffee.




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Hot plants for spring gardens

By Guest Columnist Rachel Bond

After a dreary winter comes every gardener's favorite time of year: spring. Here are some hot plants you should try this season – some varieties fairly new, and others making a comeback:

- Two unique varieties of Buddleia, commonly called butterfly bush. They are perennial and attract loads of butterflies during their long-season blooming. They prefer full sun and are heat tolerant and deer resistant. Pugster is a dwarf Buddleia variety, perfect for smaller flower beds and containers. This compact beauty grows to only about two-feet tall and wide. But don't let the size fool you. The buds are still very large and fragrant. There are five different colors of Pugster. Grand Cascade is a full-sized Buddleia bush with enormous flower panicles that cascade in a weeping form. By enormous, I mean panicles are 12 to 14 inches long and four inches thick. The bush grows five to six feet tall and spreads seven to eight feet wide. Grand Cascade loves full sun and attracts tons of pollinators such as hummingbirds, butterflies and bees.



Special to Wesson News

Light-purple blooms on a vine have dark-purple centers.

By enormous, I mean panicles are 12 to 14 inches long and four inches thick. The bush grows five to six feet tall and spreads seven to eight feet wide. Grand Cascade loves full sun and attracts tons of pollinators such as hummingbirds, butterflies and bees.

- If it's a unique vine you want, look no further than Petrea volubilis, or Queen's Wreath. This vigorous vine is considered a tropical, so it must be protected from frost. The draping, lavender flowers resemble wisteria. Unlike wisteria, it blooms profusely multiple times a year. Queen's Wreath can tolerate full sun to partial shade.



- For an eye-catching ground cover or "spiller" in containers, try Lysimachia nummularia Goldilocks, commonly called Creeping Jenny. This hardy perennial is sure to create a focal point, with its long, chartreuse to golden-colored strands. It prefers part to full sun and well-drained soil. Its unique growing habit, along with its bright foliage, creates a perfect contrast when planted among darker plants.

- Arbequina olive trees are wonderful additions to any container, orchard or landscape. The stunning grey-green foliage is attractive and evergreen. Olives grow in well-drained soil and flourish in large containers. Turn your patio into an Italian villa using a few large pots with fruit-bearing olives. The black olives can be brined and enjoyed or left on the tree for aesthetic value. It's important that they receive full sun and very loose soil.

- Cold-hardy avocados are extremely popular edible trees. They have beautiful foliage, and who doesn't love a perfectly ripe avocado? While there are many varieties, opt for one that is considered cold hardy down to 20 degrees. These varieties do best in Mississippi and can be grown similarly to citrus trees, either in the ground or a container. Some good varieties to try are Lila, Joey and Fantastic.

- Last but not least, the showgirls of spring are petunias. The gorgeous Headliner Series is not one to miss. Night Sky looks straight out of a Van Gogh painting. Its deep purple blooms with white splotches makes each one unique. This petunia has a mounding and trailing habit and likes part to full sun. Pink Sky offers the same freckled charm in a medium-pink shade. Elevate your beds and containers with these specialty, long-season bloomers.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Rachel Bond, owner of Pine Hills Floral in Pass Christian, Mississippi, contributes to Mississippi State University Extension Service's Southern Gardening accessible at <http://extension.msstate.edu/shows/southern-gardening>



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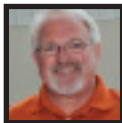


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Magnolia Award honors Higgs



Wesson News

Wesson Garden presents its Magnolia Award for outstanding landscaping to David and Cindy Higgs. At presentation ceremony (left to right) are Joy Phillips, David Higgs, Cindy Higgs, Sonya Cowen, Marilyn Britt.

Special to Wesson News

David and Cindy Higgs are recipients of Wesson Garden Club's annual Magnolia Award.

The Magnolia Award, the most prestigious award presented by the Club, recognizes and honors home gardeners for the most outstanding landscaped yard of the year and their love of gardening.

The Higgs are known for their outstanding hard work in constantly maintaining a well-groomed landscape year round that includes seasonal flowers, native trees and plants, accents,

and shrubs.

The primary basis for receiving the Magnolia Award is consistently maintaining a manicured yard, curb appeal, originality, use of native and seasonal plant material and creativity. Recipients of the award must have received the Club's Yard of the Month award within the same calendar year.

Wesson Garden Club is a member of The Garden Clubs of Mississippi, Inc., National Garden Clubs, Inc., Deep South Garden Clubs, Inc. and Natchez Trace District-Garden Clubs of Mississippi, Inc.

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Legion presents books to library

Special to Wesson News

Important parts of American history are being brought to Wesson Public Library readers, thanks to the American Legion's recent donations of two books for the library's permanent collection and special cartoon booklets available to pick up.

Commander Bobby Thornton from the Wesson American Legion Post led a group of local Legionnaires in a presentation to Friends of the Library (FOL) of *Korea Reborn: A Grateful Nation Honors War Veterans for more than 60 Years of Growth*, *Star-Spangled* and ten copies of *Our Country's Flag* for distribution.

Fellow Wesson Legionnaires Butch White, Deputy Commander, and A.C. Currie; and Dr. Tim Lee from the Monticello Legion and Co-Lin-based veterans advisor, accompanied Thornton to the FOL meeting, where he talked about how the Legion serves its veteran members and families and the wider community.

"Supporting local communities where we have posts is a vital aspect of our work," Thornton said.

The two books and the cartoon booklet will appeal to different age groups, he explained. While *Our Country's Flag* is designed for young readers in the second to fourth grades, *Korea Re-*



Wesson American Legion Commander Bobby Thornton (left center front) presents books to Friends of Library members.

born is an adult book, and high school readers will like *Star-Spangled*.

The photos and narrative in *Korea Reborn* presents a retrospective of the Korean war and its aftermath from the perspective of both U.S. veterans who served in the conflict, and the Koreans who prospered from the freedom left in their wake. Beginning with the events that led up to the war, through the en-

suing battlefields across the Korean Peninsula, and ultimately the transformation from a war-torn country into a vibrant, prosperous nation, this book encapsulates why the fight for freedom is worth it. To this day, the people of the Republic of Korea honor those brave veterans who served and sacrificed on their behalf. A reborn Korea is one that has risen from the rubble of war to be

an economic world leader and a prized example of how freedom works.

In *Star-Spangled*, Tim Grove goes beyond Francis Scott Key's poetic story in the national anthem about the American flag rising high above a fort after a night of intense battle during the War of 1812. Far more than what is sung at ball games, it discusses what the battle was about, whose bombs were bursting, and why rockets were glaring. He talks about who sewed those broad stripes and bright stars, why free black soldiers were fighting on both sides, Francis Scott Key and how did he end up with such a close view. *Star-Spangled* tells the whole story from the perspectives of different real players -- both American and British -- of this obscure but important battle from American history. The book includes an author's note, a timeline, a glossary, endnotes, a bibliography and an index.

In *Our Country's Flag*, cartoons bring to life text which tells a story about four friends inspired in different ways by the special symbol of American freedom and, in the process teaches about the history and evolution of the flag and its meaning, encompassing sacrifices by veterans, national unity and freedom; the Pledge of Allegiance, national anthem and showing it respect.

cont. from front page

Scouting revival is Lions Clubs goal

membership over the years, but the local Troop remained an attraction, particularly for boys, with summer camping at the Hood Scout Reservation near Hazlehurst, until McKenzie left the post as Scoutmaster and the COVID pandemic curbed social interaction.

Rated number eight among the top ten Boy Scout camps, Hood's facilities include a challenge course with climbing walls, pole swings and dual zip lines that is also equipped for outdoor personal experience games and events. Also at the camp are ranges, targets, guns and ammo for shooting sports; areas and equipment for ATV trail riding, mountain boarding and mountain biking; and lakes and waterways for swimming, boating and other aquatic programs.

In Wesson, the Scouts also have their own building on Beech Street for meetings and gathering to work on projects.

BSA's stated mission is to "prepare young people to make ethical and moral choices over their lifetimes by instilling in them the values of the Scout Oath and Law." Youth are trained in responsible citizenship, character development, and self-reliance through participation in a wide range of outdoor activities, educational programs, and, at older age levels, career-oriented programs in partnership with community organizations. For younger members, the Scout method is part of the program to instill typical Scouting values such as trustworthiness, good citizenship, and outdoors skills, through a variety of activities such as camping, aquatics, and hiking.

The main Scouting divisions are Cub Scouting for ages 5 to 11 years, Scouts BSA for ages 10 to 18, Venturing for ages 14 through 21, and Sea Scouts for ages 14 through 21.

The BSA charters local organizations, such as churches, clubs, civic associations, or educational organizations, to implement the Scouting program for youth within their communities. Units are led entirely by volunteers appointed by the chartering organization and supported by local councils with paid professional Scouters and volunteers. Learning for Life is an affiliate that provides in-school and career education.

At its peak, BSA had an active membership of more than four million youth in 1973, with the drop since then reflecting decreasing popularity of outdoor events nationally.

Contact Alton Ricks at 601-643-2466 for more information to discuss volunteer leadership in the organization.

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Cars, hospitals, syphilis, initiatives & taxes

Special to Wesson News

Electric car sales. A bill to restrict electric car manufacturers from opening new brick-and-mortar dealerships in the state unless they comply with the same laws traditional carmakers follow is heading for the signature of Mississippi Governor Tate Reeves, who has not indicated his position on it. Opponents say it betrays conservative principles by setting a government policy that interferes with the automobile market. Proponents say the law would ensure all car manufacturers, regardless of their business model, play by the same rules. Tesla sells vehicles in person at one facility in Mississippi that is classified as a store, not a dealership. The distinction allows the company to operate outside state laws governing franchise businesses, and gives electric car manufacturers special privileges that traditional automakers don't enjoy, proponents argue. Opponents counter that the bill could cause Mississippi to fall behind other states in the race to attract investment from electric car companies. The bill does not restrict the direct sale of electric cars, as people can buy them online. But if they want to buy an electric car in person, they would have to drive to the state's only Tesla store in Pearl, which would be allowed to remain open under the proposed new law. Tesla or any other electric car company could not open a new brick-and-mortar location to sell cars unless they enter a franchise agreement. The bill passed in a bipartisan 39-13 vote.

Hospital ills. Almost two-thirds of rural hospitals across Mississippi are losing money taking care of patients. Data from the Center for Healthcare Quality and Payment Reform shows that 48 of Mississippi's 74 rural hospitals have a negative patient services margin. In the state, rural hospitals are integral to the survival of communities economically and physically. When they shutter, it means the loss of job opportunities and health care. A quarter of Mississippi's rural hospitals are at risk of closing immediately, or within the next two to three years — the fourth highest percentage in the country. If the hospital has enough assets to maintain operations while in the negative for several years, it's at risk of closure, although not immediately.

Syphilis crisis. Congenital syphilis, or infection of a baby from a mother infected with syphilis, is dramatically increasing in Mississippi, according to state data. Although it is easily cured with penicillin, the rate of syphilis nationally has increased by 147 percent since 2016, and Mississippi has the second highest rate of syphilis in the country. It can be passed to unborn children through the placenta or during birth. Delayed prenatal care and testing is the primary problem. The key to addressing this crisis, doctors say, is early prenatal care, which improves maternal-infant health, reduces infant mortality and saves money. Testing pregnant women for syphilis would also help mothers get the care

needed to prevent the spread of syphilis to their babies. Untreated syphilis can result in life-threatening damage to the heart, brain and other organs. A bacterial disease that usually spreads by sexual contact, syphilis symptoms begin with a sore. The bacteria can remain inactive in the body for years before becoming active again.

Ballot initiative revival. Mississippi residents might get back the ability to enact public policy through statewide ballot initiatives, but voters may be banned from using the process to change abortion laws. Starting in the 1990s, Mississippi had an initiative process that allowed people to put proposed state constitutional amendments on the ballot, but the state Supreme Court ruled in 2021 that the process was invalid because it required an equal number of signatures from five congressional districts (Mississippi has only four now). Since the ruling, state voters have lacked a process for addressing issues by launching initiatives. The initial Senate version of legislation to reinstate initiatives has no

provisions related to abortion, but some House legislators are concerned that voters might use the process to expand abortion access and want to restrict it. The new initiative process under consideration would require petitions for ballot initiatives to be signed over a 12-month period by at least 12% of the state's registered voters as of the last Presidential election. A resolution will go to the full House for more debate and, if it survives, be returned to senators to either accept House changes, seek negotiations with the House on a final version or let the proposal die.

Dying tax proposals. Tax relief proposals favored by Mississippi Governor Tate Reeves and Republican legislative leaders are stalled, and are likely dead. Several proposals failed to gain enough support to even come up for a vote in either chamber. House Speaker Philip Gunn and House Ways and Means Chairman Trey Lamar have pushed House members to move toward eliminating the state's income tax, but a group of lawmakers is concerned about passing another income tax cut ahead of November's legislative elections. Mississippi's individual income tax is the second-largest source of tax revenue, making up nearly 35% of revenue in the general fund. "We still have a crumbling infrastructure," said Rep. Robert Johnson of Natchez, the House Democratic leader. "We're still underfunding schools. We have hospitals about to close." Lieutenant Governor Delbert Hosemann, who presides over the Senate, proposed using excess revenues to send income tax rebate checks up to \$500, but has not expressed support for fully eliminating the state income tax. Senate Finance Committee Chairman Josh Harkins, a Republican from Flowood, said the various tax relief proposals would not pass before the deadline. "They are dead," Harkins said. "I think we are focused on moving forward. We have four years to implement the tax cut we already have."

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Pain management program for children

Special to Wesson News

Chronic pain may not seem like a condition of childhood and adolescence, but studies say up to a third of children suffer from pain lasting three months or longer.

Treating pain in children is the focus of the transdisciplinary pediatric pain clinic opened at the Kathy and Joe Sanderson Tower at Children's of Mississippi. The clinic is the first of its kind in Mississippi and the fifty-sixth in the country, anesthesiologist and pediatric pain specialist Dr. Veronica Carullo reports.

Children's of Mississippi physicians say the pediatric pain clinic is helping children with chronic pain enjoy fuller lives.

In addition to caring for patients at the Sanderson Tower, Carullo's team also sees patients who experience pain resulting from underlying medical conditions such as sickle cell disease or cancer at the Center for Cancer and Blood Disorders at Children's of Mississippi and at the University of Mississippi Medical Center's Center for Integrative Health in Ridgeland.

Children's pain can be the result of an injury or conditions ranging from arthritis to headaches. Some patients experience discomfort from primary pain disorders such as complex regional pain syndrome (CRPS).

CRPS results in pain and sensitivity in a particular spot of the body.

The clinic's team includes Carullo, psychologists Dr. Cindy Karlson and Dr. Hannah Ford, physical therapists Tara Husband, Annie Reher, and Rachel Dear, and RN-care coordinator Shannon Armstrong.

The multidisciplinary approach to children's pain treatment reflects the different factors relating to pain, Carullo said. "Pain treatment is not only pharmaceutical. Physical therapy can reduce pain and increase function, and cognitive behavioral therapy can treat pain and the stress, anxiety and depression that can come with it."

Psychological intervention is essential in the treatment of chronic pain, said Ford, associate professor and director of the psychology residency program at UMMC. Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) -- a discussion-based therapy that helps patients identify and change negative thinking -- is an example.

CBT "involves making changes to the way we think about our pain, learning strategies to turn off this physiological alarm system, and also making behavioral changes to support a healthy lifestyle," Ford said. "We practice lots of relaxation skills that are aimed at regulating our autonomic nervous system response, turning off that fight-or-flight response. Patients also learn cognitive strategies to change how they think about pain. We also work together to gradually build up activity to improve functioning and promote healthy behaviors. Our goal is not only to reduce pain, but more importantly, to improve functioning."

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Better living through optimism

By Guest Columnist Stephanie Duguid

March is National Optimism Month.

Considering the past pandemic and other trials and tribulations in all aspects of life, it can be a challenge to remain optimistic in our attitudes. Everyone falls somewhere on the sliding scale between pessimism and optimism. There are advantages to each, but on the average, optimism is a far better option. Optimism has so many benefits and can enhance your life in numerous ways.

You might not consider yourself to be an optimistic person, but that's not true. You're simply a regular person lacking an optimistic perspective. With practice, you can change your perspective!

With optimism come many tangible benefits to your life:

1. Longevity. Many scientific studies have shown that those with a more positive attitude are more likely to live a long life. What a simple way to enhance your health and your longevity. Be determined to find the bright side of things as you go throughout your day.

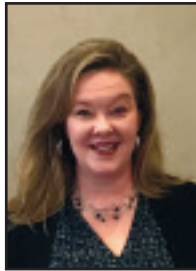
2. Happiness. Unsurprisingly, optimistic people tend to be happier, too. If you live with high expectations, your mood will be better than that of someone who lives with low expectations. Since everyone wants to be happy, it only makes sense to give optimism a try.

3. Less stress. When you're optimistic, you experience lower levels of stress. When you believe that things usually work out fine, they usually do!

4. Solutions. Optimistic people are more focused on solutions than they are on their challenges. This is because they actually believe a solution exists and that they can find it. Pessimistic people, on the other hand, tend to believe that there's no hope, so they don't try to find a way out of their predicament.

5. Likeability. Would you rather be around someone who is all doom and gloom, or would you prefer to spend time with someone that believes good things are going to happen?

6. Productivity. Optimistic people are able to accomplish more each day. Why would you work long and hard if you didn't think things were going to work out for you? The hardest workers are often the most optimistic.



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7. Confidence. When you have high expectations, that's a form of confidence. You believe you're going to be successful. That's essentially the definition of confidence. You can't be pessimistic and have self-confidence at the same time.

8. Persistence. A positive belief about the future is a breeding ground for persistence. People who give up quickly do so because they don't believe a positive outcome is likely. Would you be more likely or less likely to keep trying if you expected to fail? What if you expected to win?

9. Stable mood. Pessimism is stressful. When you're stressed, your mood is less stable. The most stable people are also very optimistic about their future and their abilities.

10. Success. If you're more productive, happier, less stressed, live longer, have more confidence, and are persistent, success is the logical result.

11. Strong relationships. It's easier to get along with people and to be a good friend and a good partner if you're optimistic. To whom would you rather be close to, someone positive or someone negative?

Is a person born optimistic? Who knows? However, one thing is clear. Anyone can choose to be optimistic. Optimism is a deliberate choice that you can make each day. It's simple. All you have to do is to try to find the positive perspective. Ask yourself questions that fuel a positive perspective, such as:

- What is great about this situation?
- What can I learn? What can I get out of this?
- What is good in my life right now?

Tell yourself that you're going to have a great day. Look for solutions rather than focus on your challenges. Choose optimism as a way of life. With so many incredible benefits to be gained, why not give optimism a serious effort for a month? You're going to like the way you feel!

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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