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Volume 12, Number 10

“Good News You Can Use”

October, 2024

Veterans Memorial dedication set for November 11

By Bob Arnold

Active and retired military personnel, leaders and members of veterans organizations, representatives of agencies and groups serving veterans and public officials and other dignitaries are expected to help the Town of Wesson dedicate a long-planned veterans memorial at an 11 a.m. ceremony on November 11.

The Town’s public works department completed work on the memorial and grounds in recent weeks, funded by Blue Cross Healthy Hometown grant monies and assistance from local donors. The memorial was part of the plans for the municipal park that opened eight years ago and was inspired by a ten-year old artist’s rendering.

The memorial is a new portion of the park behind the Copiah Clinic Wesson facility and beside the railroad tracks.

While the original artist’s rendering of the memorial showed a marble obelisk as its central feature, a less expensive 46-inch vertical 110-pound bronze stat-



Special to Wesson News
Artist’s rendering that inspired development of the Wesson Veterans Memorial

ue – a Battlefield Cross created by Stan Watts at Atlas Bronze Castings in Salt Lake City, Utah – takes its place on the grounds. The durable bronze statue has an estimated 4,000-year lifespan.

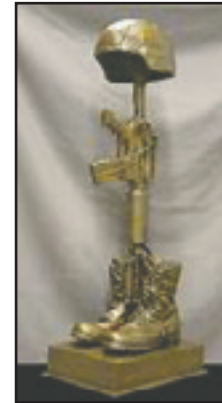
The Battlefield Cross, or The Fallen Soldier Battle Cross, an iconic symbol which honors American men and women who gave their lives serving their country, recreates the ceremonial arrangement that soldiers in the field use to honor a soldier who has died on the battleground. A helmet signifying the fallen soldier is atop an inverted rifle with bayonet denoting a time for prayer and combat boots at the base represent the final march of a soldier’s last battle.

The image of the Battlefield Cross is believed to date back as far as the American Civil War, when it was used to mark the temporary grave of

a fallen soldier. It was commonly used in World Wars I and II as a marker for personnel to remove a body for burial, and also as a memorial. Since then, it has become a way for the living to memorialize and mourn those who die in battle.

The statue stands at the center in front of a brick wall with three 15-inch to 18-inch diameter 3D bronze emblems of the armed services flanking it on each side - Army, Marine Corps and Navy on the left, and Air Force, Coast Guard and Space Force on the right. In front of the wall, behind the statue and to its left and right, are the flags of Mississippi, the United States and POWs.

For the memorial, Wesson’s Aldermen have drawn on funds from the \$100,000 Blue Cross Health Hometown grant designated for



Special to Wesson News
A Battlefield Cross, crafted by Stan Watts, is the focal point of the Wesson Veterans Memorial.

cont. on page 11

Family tradition continues with Wesson pharmacist

Wesson News

Wesson residents Abby and Carlos Garcia have manifested their love for people and their local area into a business that gives them the opportunity to serve both. The two opened KC Family Pharmacy in May of 2023 in order to offer their community a personal touch.

“We could see there was a need, from working in corporate for too long,” said pharmacist-owner Abby. “There was a desperate need for personalized service [and] personalized care. The ‘community pharmacy’ was not what it used to be, when it comes to big box stores.”

“We lost our joy for the profession when we couldn’t personalize care and services,” said Garcia.



Special to Wesson News
Pharmacists and Wesson residents Dana Brooks Shoemake and Abby Garcia

Garcia’s grandparents, Lester and Katie Furr, owned Wesson Pharmacy (where Milltown Salon is now located) from 1948 to 1971. The Furrs were part-owners with pharmacist Lonnie and Iris Freeman. Wesson Pharmacy was not the typical drug store - it had a wedding registry, film drop-off, comic books, fancy choco-



Special to Wesson News
Abby Garcia’s grandparents, Lester and Katie Furr, and Lonnie and Iris Freeman, circa 1961, in the Wesson Pharmacy, which the Furrs and Freemans owned

lates, tie-dyed t-shirts, and even bus tickets, as it served as a bus stop.

Garcia is keeping tradition in the same way.

The pharmacy has a large gift shop, which Garcia says has filled a void in the area, offering favorite local and collegiate

team items and apparel, gift cards, men’s clothing, and even HGTV’s Laurel Mercantile/ Scotsman products.

KC Family Pharmacy full-time pharmacist Dana Brooks Shoemake, another Wesson native and resident, says she is more fulfilled with her job being a local business.

“We are able to do what we are called to do now,” said Shoemake.

Shoemake has been a pharmacist since 2007. Both Garcia and Shoemake, who were college roommates, received their pharmacy degrees at Ole Miss and have worked together ever since.

“I was at Mississippi College in pre-med [before going to pharmacy school],” said Shoemake. “[As an undergrad], I got

cont. on page 10

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Vintage car show planned to honor Troy Floyd



All photos Special to Wesson News

By Angie DeLaughter

The Aspen, an assisted living facility, will be holding its third annual vintage car show on October 19. Set to begin at 8 a.m. and continue until 2 p.m., organizers say the event is expected to be a spectacular display of vintage cars, each with its own story and history.

"This will be a day of family and fun for the entire community," said Mechelle Burnette, Aspen's director of sales. "The car show has grown from eighteen cars the first year to twenty-one the second year."

The event will also include a silent auction, live entertainment, vendors and food. Linton Glass of Brookhaven will be cooking the meat for food plates available for purchase.

All officers who show their badge will eat free.

Everyone is encouraged to "bring a chair and enjoy," Burnette said.

Brookhaven Country Club has donated the use of its golf carts for anyone needing complimentary transportation from the vehicle parking to the event area.

"We are encouraging vendors to come out to this community gathering," said Burnette. All vendors are welcome to set up at no charge.

The cost to enter a car is \$20 car, and all proceeds will go to the family of fallen Summit officer Troy Floyd, who lost his life on August 8 in the line of duty. Floyd leaves behind a wife, Sage, and three children, Raiden (wife Shelby) Floyd, Carlyanna (husband Braydon) Nicholson and Jacob Floyd, as well as two grandchildren, Morgan and Brancin Floyd, along with many friends and family.

Donations for the silent auction can be made by calling Burnette at 601-455-4619.

The Aspen is located at 500 Silver Cross Drive in Brookhaven.



Ole Brook Futbol Club brings home gold



Special to Wesson News

Ole Brook Futbol Club boys recently took gold at the Hattiesburg Raisin' Cane Labor Day Classic. Ole Brook went undefeated on the weekend, conceding only three goals all weekend. Pictured (l to r) are, front row Brantley Smith, Jhosen Lopez, Braxton Shoemake, Griffin Newell, Jameson Medlin, Eli Medlin, Preston Kennedy, Gage Windham, Mason Bales, Kingsley Leopold, Konner Minton and Ellis Smithhart; and, back row: coaches Anthony Pocasangre, Cameron Newell and Erik Medlin.



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Cobras celebrate 2024 homecoming



Special to Wesson News

The Wesson Cobras celebrated homecoming on Friday night, September 27. Pictured (l to r) are the members of the 2024 Wesson High School Homecoming Court, front row: Attendants for the Queen Sharon Lee and Logan Royal, and Attendants for Mr. and Miss Wesson High School Beau Garrett and Annslea Hogan; and back row: Eighth-Grade maid Aubrey Carraway, Eighth-Grade maid Madison Rowley, Jr. High Football Maid Ady Prestridge, Sophomore Maid Micqueal Berry, Sophomore Maid Enijah Hubbard, High School Football Maid Sa'Niya Brice, Senior Maid Aubree Smith, 2024 Homecoming Queen Laney Kate Earls, Mr. Wesson High School Trevor McRee, Miss Wesson High School Lilly Kate Channell, Senior Maid Maggie Runnels, Junior Maid Lexi Prestridge, Junior Maid Kylie Rorie, Freshman Maid Mallory Wilkinson, Freshman Maid Laina Hart, Seventh-Grade Maid Mae Logan and Seventh-Grade Maid Lyla Formby.

Gift card drawing to be held for new library card signups



Special to Wesson News

September was Library Card Sign Up Month. Residents who visit the Wesson Public Library to get a new library card through October 19 will be entered into a drawing to win a gift card. The adult winner will receive a \$50 gift card to the Wesson restaurant Firehouse BBQ, while the youth (under the age of eighteen) will receive a \$50 gift card to Park Place Ice Cream. The drawing will be held at the Wesson Flea Market, at the booth in front of Milltown Mall. The promotion, which is sponsored by the Wesson Public Library and the Wesson Friends of the Library, is for first-time card holders only. To get a library card, applicants must have a picture ID and a utility bill that verifies applicant's current street address. Pictured are mother and daughter Mandy King and Laci King getting a library card.

ILR begins fall semester with bounty of offerings

Special to Wesson News

Painter Dawn Marks started the learning experiences for Institute for Learning in Retirement (ILR) members this month (October 8) in a fall semester packed with two other workshops on cooking and Christmas wreath-making, ongoing chair yoga classes, monthly luncheons that started September 10, travel opportunities, and a game day last month for ILR bingo players.

A membership organization for persons aged fifty and older who are retired or semi-retired, ILR seeks to provide learning opportunities that are both fun and serious for senior adults, who define and pursue their own informal educational goals at their own pace, according to their own choices and talents. Members, who come from wide-ranging backgrounds and bring varied experiences to the organization, design its program. Co-Lin, as the ILR sponsor, provides staff and management for the organization, which is fully funded by member dues.

At the initial workshop, Marks brought paints and planks from cypress timbers with the border lines of an autumn scene and helped participants create a painting they could be proud to hang in their homes.

Marks offers her classes through Original Cypress, a small home-based company she operates with her husband, Mike. Original Cypress began almost twenty years ago, selling Marks' cypress works with Louisiana motifs, such as pelicans and swamp scenes, to gifts and crafts stores. While Marks continues to paint her own works to sell, teaching others to paint has become the main thrust of Original Cypress. She teaches, on average, five classes a week.

Michael Tristan Peavey, Jr., the Lincoln County Agricultural Extension Service (AES) Agent, spoke about the work of AES at the September ILR luncheon. At the second luncheon on October 3, ILR members enjoyed a meal at the Anderson Building on the Co-Lin campus, prepared and served by the college's culinary students, and heard special presentations made by several ILR members in a "Get to Know You" program.

The ILR travel season started October 16 with a day trip to Mary Landrum Pyron's Hatmaker workshop at Crystal Springs. The owner of ML Provisions discussed and demonstrated the hat-making skills she learned over five years in Wyoming and hosted a light lunch.

Other workshops, luncheons and travel experiences in the weeks ahead include:

- **October 29. Cooking workshop.** Co-Lin's executive chef will show participants how to prepare a luncheon that they will enjoy eating as part of the experience. \$25. 11 a.m. Co-Lin Thames Center on Co-Lin campus.
- **November 7. Day trip to Angels on the Bluff at Natchez, Mississippi.** Trip includes meal at Old Country Store, Lorman, Mississippi; guided tour of historic Windsor and ghost town (Rodney), tour of Angels on the Bluff Cemetery. \$163.
- **November 12. Luncheon.** Veteran's Day program with keynote speaker Andrew Adcock, LTC, LG, MSARNG, Commander, Recruiting and Retention Battalion, and guest speaker Craig Weaver, COL JROTC Senior Army Instructor, Lawrence County. Lawrence County JROTC Presentation of the Colors. Patriotic music by members of the Co-Lin Choir. \$14. Thames Center on Co-Lin campus.
- **November 19. Wreath-Making workshop.** Conducted by Heather Bonds of Hetty Bug's Flowers. \$25. Thames Center on Co-Lin campus. 11 a.m.
- **December 3-6. Jingle Jangle Christmas in Pigeon Forge, Tennessee.** Three nights' accommodation at Pigeon Forge with daily breakfast and three dinners, including Dolly Parton's Stampede Christmas Dinner Show and Hatfield & McCoy Christmas Dinner Feud; Hometown Guided Tour; Smith Morning Variety Show; Skyland Ranch Festival of Lights; and visits at The Island and Old Mill Square. \$890 triple, \$980 double and \$1,220 single.
- **December 10. Christmas luncheon.** Traditional Christmas luncheon with Steve Russell playing Christmas carols on the piano for sing-along. Thames Center on the Co-Lin campus. \$14.

Throughout the semester, every Wednesday from 10:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m., Cheryl Myers will continue to coach a chair yoga class for ILR members.

For information, contact ILR Coordinator Erin Johnson at erin.johnson@colin.edu or 601-643-8702. Visit the ILR Facebook page at [Facebook@ILRCoLin](https://www.facebook.com/ILRCoLin).

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Wesson Legion, an active family



Special to Wesson News
Auxiliary President Kim Whittington is pictured at the VA home in Collins, where the Wesson auxiliary has been appointed as the VA representatives.

Wesson News

The American Legion supports its "Four Pillars" - veterans, defense, youth and Americanism.

"Be a part of making a difference in this community by joining the American Legion Drane-Prine Post 79 in Wesson," said Bobby Thornton, post commander.

The organization holds monthly meetings on the third Tuesday of each month starting at 6:30 pm. at the post, which is located at 1014 Main Street.

Membership in the American Legion is open to veterans and active-duty military members of any age. Sons of the American Legion membership is open to anyone who is related to a veteran or active-duty military member. Auxiliary members must be eighteen years of age or older and a mother, sister, daughter, granddaughter or spouse of a veteran or active-duty military member, living or deceased, but no more than two generations away. Junior memberships are available for students until age eighteen.

Dual membership in both the American Legion and the Sons of the American Legion is permitted.

Dues for 2024-24 membership year are \$45, Auxiliary Unit dues are \$34, and Sons of the American Legion dues are \$15.

Those who are interested in joining any of the organizations are encouraged to come to one of the monthly meetings, which includes dinner, and fill out the membership application.

"You can call us a 'family,' because that's exactly what we are," said Whittington. "We actually won the 'American Legion Family Award' - we won first place last year and second place this year. It's a special honor that goes to the post in the state with the best camaraderie on the most philanthropic projects. Why wouldn't anyone want to be a part of this!"

For more information, visit Legion.org, visit the post's and/or the auxiliary's Facebook page, or call Bobby Thornton, post commander, at 601-951-5871 for an application.

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Prioritizing mental health: Five steps to managing stress during fall

By Guest Columnist Stephanie Duguid

As the vibrant colors of fall begin to take over, many people experience a sense of transition—not only in nature, but in their own lives. With the rush of the holiday season approaching and changes in routine, October is the perfect time to focus on mental health. In recognition of Mental Health Awareness Month, let's explore how to manage stress and maintain mental wellness during this time of year.

While fall brings cooler temperatures, shorter days and beautiful foliage, the seasonal transition can also impact mental health. For some, it can lead to feelings of anxiety, stress or even depression. Known as Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD), this condition is triggered by the reduced amount of sunlight and can leave people feeling fatigued and downcast. However, there are proactive steps you can take to minimize the effects and boost your mental well-being.

Here are five simple steps with action tips you can implement right away to manage stress and improve mental health this fall.

1. Soak up natural light.

As the days get shorter, access to natural sunlight decreases, which can affect your mood and energy levels. Sunlight helps your body produce vitamin D, which is essential for maintaining a positive mood. Even a short walk outside during daylight hours can help lift your spirits. Try spending fifteen to thirty minutes outside each day to get that natural light exposure, or sit by a window when indoors.

ACTION TIP: Make a habit of taking a walk during your lunch break or early in the morning to maximize sunlight exposure.

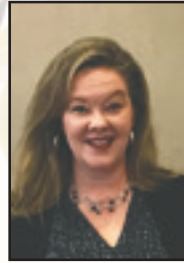
2. Establish a consistent routine.

Fall often comes with changes in daily routines, especially with kids returning to school and holiday preparations kicking into gear. Establishing a consistent routine can help reduce stress and create a sense of normalcy, which is particularly helpful if you're feeling overwhelmed. Set regular times for waking up, eating meals, exercising and unwinding in the evening.

ACTION TIP: Create a simple daily schedule that includes time for work, relaxation, and self-care. Consistency helps reduce stress and anxiety.

3. Practice gratitude and mindfulness.

The changing season is a perfect opportunity to practice gratitude for what's going well in



your life. Studies show that practicing gratitude can boost mood and overall mental well-being. Start each day by reflecting on three things you are grateful for, no matter how small. Mindfulness techniques, such as meditation or deep breathing, can also help ground you in the present moment and reduce anxiety.

ACTION TIP: Spend five minutes each morning writing down things you are thankful for, or practice mindful breathing for a few minutes to center yourself.

4. Stay physically active.

Exercise is a natural stress reliever. Regular physical activity boosts endorphins, improves sleep and helps combat anxiety and depression. Even light activity, such as walking or stretching, can have a positive impact on your mood. With the cooler weather, fall is an ideal time to get outside and enjoy activities like walking, biking or simply strolling through a park to enjoy the fall colors.

ACTION TIP: Aim for at least thirty minutes of physical activity a day, whether it's a brisk walk, yoga or a bike ride. Invite a friend or family member to join you for added motivation.

5. Set boundaries for the holiday season.

The lead-up to the holiday season can be stressful, with added financial pressure, social obligations and family gatherings. Setting boundaries early is essential for protecting your mental health. Learn to say no to activities or commitments that feel overwhelming, and prioritize the events or people that truly matter to you. This will help you avoid burnout and focus on what brings you joy.

ACTION TIP: Make a list of what is most important to you during the holiday season, and practice saying "no" to things that don't align with your values or priorities.

This October, make mental health a priority by taking proactive steps to manage stress and care for yourself during the fall season. By soaking up sunlight, establishing a routine, practicing gratitude, staying active and setting boundaries, you can enjoy the beauty of fall while nurturing your mental well-being. These small changes can have a big impact on your overall happiness and mental health.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Stephanie Duguid is the owner of Do Good ProHealth (CPR classes) and Do Good Leadership (motivational speaking, and leadership and success coaching).

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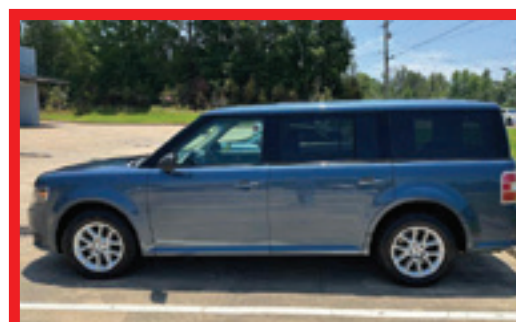


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Wesson marketing firm speaks at USM



Special to Wesson News

Jessica Breazeale and Oliva Fleming



Special to Wesson News

Special to Wesson News

Jessica Breazeale Consulting (JBC), a public relations and marketing firm in Wesson, was recently invited to participate during Strategic Communications (StratComm) Week at the University of Southern Mississippi (USM) in Hattiesburg. She served as a guest speaker for the week's "PR Day" presenting "Real World, Real Talk - Public Relations (PR) and Marketing" to communication majors on campus. The seminar focused on addressing her unique work journey, lessons learned and tips and tricks for rising professionals to utilize.

After presentations, the guest speakers gathered with faculty and staff from USM's School of Media and Communications to discuss the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and challenges facing current student success and future endeavors in the communications field.

Oliva Fleming of Bude, communications major at USM, was in attendance during Breazeale's presentation. Fleming is a former student of Breazeale's and recently moved to Hattiesburg after transferring from Co-Lin Wesson. When Breazeale had a job opening at JBC, she remembered a former stand-out student from her class.

"My favorite things about StratComm Week would be the opportunity I've been given to listen to real-life StratComm professionals," said Fleming. "I got to learn more about what they do, the challenges they face, etc. I think it's really nice to be able to hear these perspectives, so I have insight into my future as a StratComm professional,"

said Fleming.

Fleming has been an employee at JBC since July, and she receives college credit as an intern.

"I had no idea my employee would be in the audience," said Breazeale. "It was nice to see Olivia sitting there, soaking it all in. We are usually in work-mode, so she probably hadn't heard any of the stories I shared before. The guard was down, my journey was an open book in hopes that I might help some students avoid some of the hard lessons I had to learn."

"USM did not have a Strat Comm division when I was a student," said Breazeale. "I absolutely love what they're doing now."

With a deeper focus on strategy, the USM Strategic Communications program, the school's newest edition could potentially set its students apart from other communications majors, offering something the profession currently needs as it faces ethical concerns in the digital world and ever-evolving artificial intelligence. The division is aimed at educating and training the next generation of public relations, media sales and marketing professionals.

Students work on paid media advertising placements, public relations campaigns and social media management for the program and for outside clients.

"Small towns don't typically have very many opportunities for PR/marketing professionals, so it's important to learn how to find your own way and carve your own path," said Breazeale. "That's what I learned to do and have never been happier."

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Chamber holds meet and greet luncheon

The Wesson News

The Wesson Chamber of Commerce recently hosted a meet and greet event under the pavilion beside Wesson Library. The meeting was for members and prospective members to network by providing a forum to speak.

New Chamber President Teri Bath hosted the event, along with Vice President Gerri Lynn Porter; Treasurer Tim Sutton; Secretary Nekitha Jackson; and board members Pam Stamps, Kristy Carney and Janet Currie.



Special to Wesson News

Joslynn Arzate

for us to take advantage of that time of year.”

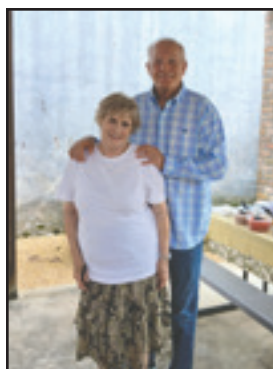
“It would help if people didn’t put their junk out in front of their businesses,” said Bath.

Mayor Alton Shaw addressed the concern by announcing that a new town code enforcer has been hired and will start soon.

“He will start the first of the month [October] and will focus on getting things cleaned up,” said Shaw.

“This is great, I tell you,” said Bath. “We have great leaders. These things need to be addressed. Growth comes with good leadership.”

Ron and Teri Bath moved to Wesson two years ago from Reno. They own Salmon Point Real Estate and are passionate developers looking to be part of “bringing Wesson into the 22nd century,” as Bath said in the meeting.



Special to Wesson News

Ron and Teri Bath

Lenzie Chambers, the owner of the new Firehouse BBQ restaurant in town, catered the event. Attendees raved over his pulled pork, special sauce, potato salad and banana pudding.

Bath shared plans for a new development, a shopping center that will have a coffee shop and more. The land has been purchased and is in the process of being cleared; construction will begin soon.

Wesson Librarian Marilyn Britt shared ideas for bringing in more revenue for Wesson. Chamber members exhibited their love and passion for the town as they discussed ideas and plans.

“I just think we’re missing out on sales,” said Britt. “I just think we are missing out on making our town look really nice...



Special to Wesson News

Gerri Lynn Porter and Nekitha Jackson



Special to Wesson News

Lenzie Chambers and Mayor Alton Shaw

Britt mentioned an opportunity for businesses is the Wesson Christmas parade. Joslynn Arzate of Hispanic Heritage suggested adding entertainment downtown. Mayor Shaw’s wife, Christi Shaw, owner of C & L Treasures, suggested utilizing the small stage behind the fountain by Milltown Salon and Spa and C&L Treasures.

Attendees agreed that Wesson is filled with amazing businesses and business owners who are always looking for ways to grow their businesses and the town of Wesson. Many said that Wesson can truly be called “the small town with a big heart,” and part of the reason for that is a Chamber filled with people with the best interest of Wesson at heart.

It’s widely said, “Without vision, the people perish.” Those in attendance agreed that is truly not a concern with the town of Wesson, which is filled with leaders who have a vision for growth in every way possible.

Wesson business owners who have dreams and plans to grow the town are encouraged to join the Chamber and get involved. The next Chamber meeting will be November 19 at Firehouse BBQ. Those who wish to stay updated on plans and events are encouraged to follow the Chamber’s Facebook page.



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cont. from front page

Family tradition continues with Wesson pharmacist

a job as a tech at a small, independent pharmacy in Clinton, and I loved it. I loved seeing people and being able to take care of them.”

The two finished pharmacy school and went to work at a large chain pharmacy.

“We didn’t realize we were so far removed from loving on people,” said Garcia. “Some days, it was an assembly line. I couldn’t ask about your babies, or how you were doing, or visit. It was busy and never a good time to personalize care.”

“This has made me come full circle, seeing people, hugging them, being able to talk to them, which is different, because I was too busy at my other job,” said Shoemake.

With six employees, including two full-time pharmacists, KC Family Pharmacy owners and employees say they are proud to fill what they believe was a big community need.

KC takes almost all insurance providers and will handle all logistics, if needed, from calling the doctor’s office to the transfer process, “because we actually have time to fully take care of the patient now,” explained Shoemake.

While the two say that big pharmacies likely have an hour wait time or more, KC Family Pharmacy says their wait time is ten to fifteen minutes – at most.

“We’re trying to make [picking up your medicine] an easy, pleasant experience, instead of something you dread,” said Shoemake.

Garcia acknowledged that the biggest source of her daily gratification is “loving on people,” and says she is thankful she gets to do that now.

KC Family Pharmacy is located at 657 Caldwell Drive in Hazlehurst.



Special to Wesson News

Wesson Pharmacy, which operated from 1948 to 1971 in the building where Milltown Salon is now located



Special to Wesson News

Pictured inside KC Family Pharmacy are (front) pharmacist Dana Brooks Shoemake and owner/pharmacist Abby Garcia, and (back) Garcia’s nephew and pharmacy employee Preston Kasch Utz.

Mitchell's

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Grilled Pork Chop - \$25

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Wesson youth participate in “See You at the Pole”

Special to Wesson News

Many Copeiah County youth recently participated in “See You at the Pole,” a global day of student prayer that began in 1990 as a grass roots movement with ten students praying at their school. Decades later, millions pray on their campuses on the fourth Wednesday in September. The rally often involves students meeting at the school flagpole before school to lift up their friends, families, teachers, school and nation to God. It is a student-initiated, student-organized and student-led event.

At Wesson High School, rain didn’t stop the students from praying for their schools, students, teachers and administrators, as they moved the rally indoors. That evening, First Baptist of Hazlehurst held a “Saw You at the Pole” Rally for Copeiah County, with Justin Graves delivering a message to youth to advise them that, when they prioritize prayer, take bold steps of obedience, and trust God to move, they open themselves up to life-changing possibilities.



All photos Special to Wesson News



cont. from front page

Veterans Memorial dedication set for November 11

development of the municipal park, as well as donations. The grant funds covered costs related to property purchases, including surveys and closing costs; site development, including dirt work and sod; and a walkway. Alderman Michael King, U.S. Marine Corps (retired), provided funds to purchase the bronze Battlefield Cross, and Tori Earls, on behalf of Woodmen of the World, donated the flag poles.

The Town Aldermen welcome any other donations to fund the memorial, including the bronze service emblems, which are being purchased for \$1,020 each. Those who wish to donate are asked to make checks payable to the Town of Wesson denoted for “Veteran’s Memorial” and deliver to City Hall.

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Lions selling sweet potatoes again

By Bob Arnold

The world's best sweet potatoes, grown at Landreth Farms in the Vardaman area in north Central Mississippi, have arrived again and will be available at bargain basement rates for folk who savor them in Lincoln and Copiah Counties, thanks to the Wesson Lions Club.

For area sweet potato lovers, it's the most wonderful time of the year.

For the tenth consecutive year, the Wesson-based Lions organization is importing product from the "Sweet Potato Capital of the World" and selling it at unbeatable prices to generate funds for the international and local charities the club supports.

Members of the club started selling them late this month and expect to be sold out by the Wesson Flea Market on October 19 - 520 forty-pound boxes of sweet potatoes sold for \$20 per box, or fifty cents per pound. Individuals and area restaurants stocking up on the quality sweet potatoes are supporting the Lions Club's annual fundraising effort.

Landreth Farms officials say it's the loamy soil - along with timely rains - in the Vardaman area that make their potato crops sweet and special. Landreth plants sweet potatoes on 600 acres, among Mississippi farmers, who raise sweet potatoes on more than 18,400 acres across the state. The farm sells commercially to national food stores, such as Kroger and Wal-Mart, and canners, like Gerber, and produces a line of pre-wrapped sweet potatoes for microwave cooking.

The annual sweet potato sale is among three major fundraising activities of the Wesson Lions Club. The club also has an annual spring pancake breakfast and sells boiled peanuts at Co-Lin athletic events. It disburses some \$10,000 every year to assist deaf and blind persons through the International Lions Club and to support local organizations and causes related to community improvement, children and youth, veterans, hospice care and address other issues and concerns.

To order sweet potatoes or for information about where to get them, call Wesson Lions' Alton Ricks at 601-643-2466 or Hubert Greer at 601-643-2002.



Special to Wesson News

Wesson Lions Club receives sweet potatoes for local fundraising sales from Landreth Farms in the "Sweet Potato Capital of the World."

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Wesson resident volunteers at Mississippi Book Festival

Wesson News

Each year, the Mississippi Book Festival unites readers and authors in a celebration of books at its annual event in downtown Jackson.

The 10th annual Literary Lawn Party was held last month. The event stretches from the entire grounds of the state capitol building to Galloway Methodist Church.

Wesson resident Kim Whittington and two of her grandchildren volunteered at the event. Whittington has served as a book festival volunteer for all ten years.

Authors from across the country, and sometimes international authors, arrive in Jackson to speak on a panel about their books, host book signings and have meet and greets. Lemuria Books is on-site selling the authors' books.

The event includes indoor and outdoor children's activities. This year, Mississippi Public Broadcasting (MPB) was allowing attendees to film their own public service announcement (PSA), which Whittington's granddaughter Mary Murphy Brady elected to do. Meanwhile, State Capitol staff gave Capitol tours to festival attendees, including Whittington's grandson Harrison Brady.

As a Mississippi Book Festival volunteer, Whittington's annual duties primarily consist of managing author check-in.

"My husband had just died in April [ten years ago], and I saw online that they [the Festival] were looking for volunteers. I knew I wanted to keep myself busy, get involved with something great, and I reached out that I'd be happy to volunteer. They took me up on the offer and have needed me every year. I'm now over author check-in," said Whittington.

Whittington is also a member of Friends of the Library, serves as American Legion Auxiliary president, and is a member of the Wesson Chamber of Commerce. As an avid reader, she's also been involved in various book clubs.

"I don't know why I have such a love for books and reading...I just do," said Whit-



Special to Wesson News
Mary Murphy Brady and Kim Whittington



Special to Wesson News
Harrison Brady on a tour of the State Capitol



Special to Wesson News
Mary Murphy Brady filming a PSA with MPB

tington. "A book can take you somewhere you've never been before. Reading helps you have imagination. Since volunteering at the festival, I've expanded my reading genres. I don't read the same old things anymore. I have a much more eclectic bookshelf now."

For the past nine years, the festival was in August. This year, the festival was moved to mid-September.

"The coolest thing about the event this year, to me, was the temperature change. I appreciated how much cooler the festival was this year [as a volunteer]," said Whittington. "LaVar Burton, who was on *Reading Rainbow*, *Star Trek* and *Roots* [to name a few], was a fan favorite author this year. Kate DiCamillo, children's author, who wrote *Because of Winn Dixie*, with her latest book, *Ferris*, was another author with long lines to visit," said Whittington.

Whittington encourages everyone to attend next year. "You'll love it. There is plenty to do there. You can spend the entire day there...plenty of food trucks, too. Make plans to be there!"

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Garden Club announces September awards

All photos Special to Wesson News



The Wesson Garden Club recently awarded their September Autumn Design Award to Cherry and Ira Head at 3008 Monticello Road in Wesson.

Autumn Special

The Wesson Garden Club recently awarded Latonya Collins, at 1198 Highway 51, with its September "Autumn Special" award.



Rural Yard of the Month



The Wesson Garden Club recently named Julie and Danny Lowery as the September "Rural Yard of the Month" winners. The Lowreys' home is on Highway 51 North in Wesson.

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Annual flea market hits the streets Oct. 19

Wesson News

For the fifty-third time, the streets of downtown Wesson will be filled with vendors for the annual Wesson Flea Market, sponsored by the Wesson Volunteer Fire Department.

On Saturday, October 19, crafters, artisans and more from around the Southeast will converge on Wesson to offer arts and crafts items, fleas, clothing, food, snacks and refreshments, among other things, to thousands of browsers and shoppers.

A day organized each year by the Wesson Volunteer Fire Department, the event typically has more than one hundred fifty vendor booths for shoppers to peruse. Individuals, church groups, clubs, civic organizations and businesses set up their tents and welcome market-goers from far and wide.

The Flea Market starts at 8 a.m. on Highway 51, and Factory, Spring and Beech Streets. It will be open until 4 p.m. Food offerings will be on Factory and Spring Streets.

The Wesson Friends of the Library, who have raised the stakes for this year's Library Card Sign Up Month, will hold a drawing for a \$50 gift card to Firehouse BBQ for a lucky adult who signed up for a new library card before October 19, and a drawing for a \$50 gift card to Park Place Ice Cream will be held for a new youth library card signee.



Special to Wesson News

For information about booth space and registration, visit the "WessonFleaMarket" Facebook page.

Vendors are encouraged to set up the day before the event, and streets will be open for setup after 6 p.m. on Friday, October 18. Vendors should check in at the Information Booth under the "Wesson Fire Department" banner prior to setting up. Vendors must furnish their own tables, chairs and display needs.

Only vehicles with merchandise, tents, etc. will be allowed in the flea market area for setup.

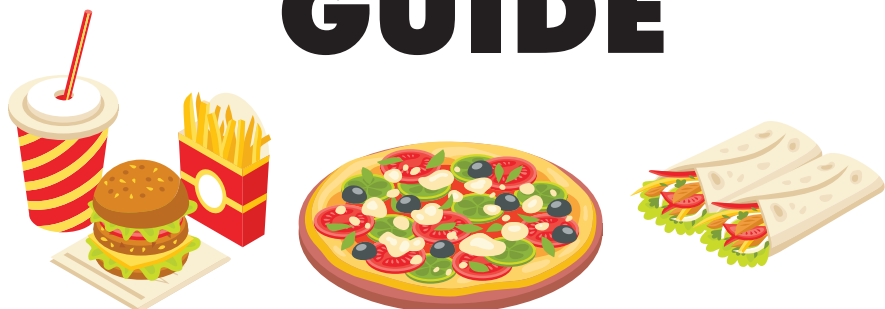
Vendors must be set up and ready for customers by 8 a.m. on Saturday, October 19.

Typically, vendors for the flea market come from throughout Mississippi, Louisiana, Alabama, Texas and Tennessee. While parents shop, children can enjoy a special fun zone that will be set up near Dollar General.

Started by a local merchants' association, WVFD turned the event, known today as the "Wesson Flea Market," into a major fundraiser held annually on the third Saturday in October. The volunteer fire fighters say the booth rentals from the event helps to generate approximately \$5,000 each year to purchase equipment for the fire department.

For more information, contact the fire department at 601-265-1694 or WessonFD@gmail.com.

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Difficulties are no match for God's promises

By Guest Columnist Misty Strieff Prine

“Being negative only makes a difficult journey more difficult. You may be given a cactus, but you don’t have to sit on it.” – Unknown

Life is far from easy.

Sometimes we are dealt a good hand, and sometimes that hand is quite difficult. What we take from that difficulty speaks volumes to our strength and determination and from whom our strength comes from.

You see, harboring negativity along a difficult journey only makes our paths that we have yet to travel even more difficult to endure. Just like this quote says, you may be given a cactus, but that doesn't mean you have to sit on it!

The choice is yours.

Are you going to sit on the cactus, or are you going to choose to walk away and chance finding a nice comfy seat to sit on? The choice is yours! Surrender with your head down, or fight with your head up. When life gives you lemons, make a whole great big pitcher of lemonade, and then drink up that joyful life and fighting spirit that comes with knowing Jesus as your Savior. With Him in your corner, don't you dare sit on a cactus willingly!

God loves you immensely, and He never promised an easy road. One thing He did promise is that He would never leave us or forsake us.

With that promise, hard days should be a lot more tolerable, knowing the King of Glory not only knows you by name but gave His life for you and promised to love you through it. We serve a God that gives such amazing grace!



EDITOR'S NOTE: Misty Prine is a local inspirational writer.

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