



PELAHATCHIE NEWS NETWORK



Julv 2025 ■ Volume 14, Issue 7 ■ Pelahatchie, MS

Pelahatchie keeps going even through summer break



Special to Pelahatchie News

By Guest Columnist Voncille Anderson, Head Principal, Pelahatchie High School

What a fun time of year to celebrate our nation's independence, take long walks on the beach, or finally enjoy that long-awaited family trip to Disney! While summer brings a well-deserved break for students and teachers, many people wonder: What happens at school while the building is quiet for those two months?

Actually, the school is still open during the summer! Our hardworking custodial staff is busy cleaning, mopping, and waxing floors to make everything shine. New furniture and equipment are being ordered, and several areas are getting a fresh coat of paint.



Photos special to Pelahatchie News

Behind the scenes, we're closing out one school year while gearing up for the next. Administrators are working to ensure we're fully staffed and are growing professionally by attending summer conferences and meetings. If you need a form for a driver's license, want to submit physicals for summer workouts, or have questions about credits or sched-

Continued on page 2

Social-Emotional Learning matters for child growth all year long



Special to Pelahatchie News

By Guest Columnist Robin Sanders, Head Principal, Pelahatchie Elem. School

When the school year winds down and summer begins, many families shift their focus from school schedules to vacations, outdoor fun, and a much-needed break. While this time offers wonderful opportunities to relax and recharge, it's also an ideal season to nurture something just as important as academic learning—our children's social-emotional development.

We believe in educating the whole child. Social-Emotional Learning or SEL, is the foundation for helping students manage emotions, build healthy relationships, and make responsible decisions. These skills don't take the



Photos special to Pelahatchie News

summer off—and neither should our commitment to them.

Why SEL Matters in the Summer
SEL helps children develop empathy, resilience, and confidence—traits that are just as vital on the playground as they are in the classroom. During the summer, children may face changes in routine, new social settings, or the absence of regular peer interaction. These shifts can impact their emotional well-being, especially after the

Continued on page 2

Town in full bloom: Garden club enhances downtown



Special to Pelahatchie News

By Shaun McInnish, Sr., City Beat Writer, Pelahatchie News

A love for nature and a desire to beautify Pelahatchie inspired the creation of the Pelahatchie Petals Garden Club in the fall of 2024. Founded by local resident Jearleen Holly, the club began with a simple mission: to transform neglected flower beds and

public spaces into vibrant areas filled with color and life.

Today, the club has grown to 12 active members and is proudly part of the Natchez Trace District, affiliated with the Garden Clubs of Mississippi. Their work is most visible at the town's four-way stop and along the downtown sidewalks, where they've planted a mix of flowers and shrubs to boost curb appeal and lift community spirits.



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Continued on page 7

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East Rankin Academy 2024-2025 MAIS All-Sports Champions

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The All-Sports award is earned through a points system tracked by MAIS. Each sport has a range of points awarded based on whether it is a major or minor sport. The top four teams in each division and sport earn points. Both boys and girls results are combined for an overall total. If you go to https://home.msais.org/test/athletics/all_sports_award/all_sports_current_standings.php, East Rankin's win consisted of the following sport team finishes: Girls Soccer – 2nd – 7 points; Girls Cross Country – 1st – 6 points; Boys Cross Country – 2nd – 4 points; Girls Basketball – 1st – 10 points; Boys Soccer – 1st – 10 points; Girls Track – 2nd – 7 points; Boys Track – 3rd – 5 points. This adds up to a point total of 49 (see 5A Class listing).



Class 5A All-Sports Award Standings

East Rankin Academy	49
Parklane Academy	45
Pillow Academy	30
Simpson Academy	27
Bayou Academy	25
Heritage Academy	25
Columbia Academy	24
Lamar School	20
Leake Academy	20
Oak Forest Academy	18
Magnolia Hts School	17

Photos special to Pelahatchie News

Continued from front page

PHS over summer break

ules—we're here for you.

Mrs. Johns, our school counselor, is available throughout the summer to assist with schedules and answer questions about classes. As we prepare for the return to school, please remember that residency documentation may be submitted beginning in July. These documents are required before students can pick up their schedules. Schedule pickup will begin around the third week of July, so now is a great time to get ahead of the game!

We will also be sharing more information soon about 7th grade orientation and MacBook rollouts—stay tuned for those important updates.

We're also excited to share some incredible new opportunities for the upcoming school year! We are launching a Teacher Education Preparation Program (Teacher Academy) through our Career and Technical Education (CTE) department. This innovative new program will allow us to begin recruiting and training future educators right here on our campus.

In addition to the new Teacher Academy, our health science, agriculture science, and engineering programs continue to thrive. These academies are being enhanced with updated technology such as VR goggles, VEX IQ robots, and a state-of-the-art Anatomage Table—all designed to provide hands-on, real-world learning experiences.

We are committed to providing our students with a world-class education that prepares them for success in an increasingly technical and dynamic world.

In short, even during the summer, we are still here to serve. We're working hard to prepare the place where our students are always safe, supported, and successful.

Wishing you a joyful and restful summer! Go Chiefs!

Continued from front page

Social-Emotional Learning

structured environment of the school year.

Summer provides a natural setting to reinforce SEL through family conversations, community involvement, and unstructured play. Parents and caregivers play a crucial role in modeling self-awareness and emotional regulation. Simple actions—like encouraging kids to talk about their feelings, resolve conflicts with siblings calmly, or set personal goals—can have lasting effects.

Easy Ways to Practice SEL This Summer

1. Start with Feelings: Ask your child each day how they're feeling and why. Encourage them to name their emotions.
2. Read Together: Choose books that highlight characters showing kindness, facing challenges, or learning from mistakes.
3. Create a Routine: Even a flexible schedule helps children feel secure and builds self-management skills.
4. Celebrate Effort, Not Just Achievement: Praise perseverance, problem-solving, and teamwork.

Looking Ahead

As we prepare for a new school year, we want to remind families that strong social-emotional skills are essential for academic success and lifelong well-being. When students feel safe, supported, and understood, they are more ready to learn and grow.

This summer, let's work together—school and home—to ensure our children not only rest and play but continue developing the inner strengths that will guide them far beyond the classroom.

From all of us at Pelahatchie Elementary, we wish our families a safe, fun-filled, and meaningful summer. We can't wait to welcome our students back end of July, full of stories, smiles, and that unstoppable spark for learning.

Mark your calendars for the Meet the Teacher event will be on Tuesday, July 29th from 8:00-9:30 a.m.; 12:30-2:00 p.m.



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Jackson Communications, Inc. wins bid to replace weather warning sirens

Special to Pelahatchie News

On June 2, 2025, the Rankin County Board of Supervisors selected Mississippi-based Jackson Communications, Inc. as the best bid in response to Rankin County’s request for qualified proposals to replace the county’s aging outdoor weather warning siren system throughout unincorporated Rankin County. The proposal submitted by Jackson Communications, Inc. provides for replacement of the county’s 40 outdoor weather sirens over the coming months at a cost to Rankin County of approximately \$1.5 million. The decision to replace the aging system is a priority initiative identified by the Board of Supervisors as a critical component of the county’s public safety program.

Brian Grantham, Director of Rankin County Emergency Operations Center, notes the need for this important activity. “The citizens of Rankin County expect their leaders to focus on public safety, law enforcement and providing well-planned, well-maintained public infrastructure,” Grantham said. I appreciate very much that the Supervisors are willing to invest heavily in public safety. One of the critical initiatives that the Supervisors identified is our need to modernize the outdoor weather siren system. The current system is a patchwork of outdated



Special to Pelahatchie News

and, at times, unreliable equipment. This new proposal will provide Rankin County citizens with a more reliable tool for public safety and weather awareness. A lot of work has gone into the planning and preparation for this upgrade and we have had the full support and commitment of the Supervisors on this project.”

“The Board of Supervisors is fully committed to public safety. Our citizens expect their precious tax dollars to be invested in safety measures that are reliable, “a spokesman for the Board of Su-

pervisors remarked. “Where upgrades or corrective actions are required, the Supervisors will lead the effort. We are extremely pleased to have a local partner in Jackson Communications, Inc. and we look forward to working with them toward a successful project.”

In addition to an outdoor weather warning system, the Rankin County Board of Supervisors also provides all citizens with free access to weather-related emergency notifications through a digital service known as “Regroup.” Citizens who wish to be notified through digital devices concerning inclement weather affecting Rankin County are encouraged to navigate to the county’s website at www.rankincounty.org and locate the icon at the top of the home page labeled “Regroup.” By clicking this link, citizens will receive instructions to sign up for notifications.

The proposal of Jackson Communications, Inc. was selected from among multiple proposals received. Work on this project is expected to begin in the summer of 2025 with completion of the project prior to year end. For more information, contact Brian Grantham, Director of Rankin County Emergency Operations Center at 601-825-1499 or brian.grantham@rankincounty.org.



Griffin Family Medical Clinic

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REVISED PUBLIC NOTICE

To: Residents of Rankin County
Supervisor District 4

From: District 4 Supervisor, Steve Gaines

Re: Upcoming Town Hall Meetings

Rankin County Supervisor, District 4, Steve Gaines, invites the residents of District 4 to a series of town hall meetings designed to provide constituents with important information about District 4 and offer residents a forum to discuss future growth and atmospheres of our communities. Currently there are two town hall meetings scheduled. The first meeting will be held on July 10, 2025, from 6:00 p.m. until 7:00 p.m. at the Pisgah/Sandhill Community Center for the residents of Pisgah, Sandhill and Leesburg. The second meeting will be held on July 17, 2025, from 6:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. at the Pelahatchie Community Center for the residents of Pelahatchie, Shiloh and Crossroads.

Pelahatchie Library kicks off summer with suds in the sun

Special to Pelahatchie News

The Summer Library Program had a great kick-off playing in the suds and having fun in the sun. Thanks to all who came and to CCI Rentals for providing this awesome foam party. There are events for kids every Thursday in June, so swing by the Pelahatchie Public Library for a summer of fun.



Photos special to Pelahatchie News

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NEWS
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Cross Roads Baptist Church welcomes new children’s minister



Special to Pelahatchie News

Recently, Cross Roads Baptist Church called Rev. Billy Hollingsworth known lovingly as Mr. Billy as the church’s new Children’s Minister. Mr. Billy brings a heartfelt passion for equipping children and families to grow in their faith together. With his experience, joyful spirit, and God-given vision for children’s ministry, we know he will make a meaningful impact. Please welcome him and his family by covering him in prayer as he steps into this vital role. Cross Roads Baptist Church is excited for the journey ahead and all that God has in store for the children through his leadership.

Rankin County School District recognizes Byrd as stand-out athlete



Special to Pelahatchie News

Recently, the Rankin County School Board recognized Maddi Byrd. She is a standout student-athlete at Pisgah High School and a two-time 2A MHSAA State Champion in shot put and discus. Best results: Shot Put – 35’ ½”; Discus – 121’ 11” – the best throw in the state across Classes 1A–7A and a Pisgah High School record. Byrd is also a 2A MAC All-State softball player, holding the career home run and RBI records at Pisgah.

Pelahatchie Library July Events

LEFT ON READ:
TEEN BOOK CLUB
JULY 3RD @ 3:30 P.M.

SENIOR SOCIAL
JULY 8TH AND 22ND @ 11:00 A.M.

A TIME TO REMEMBER:
GRIEF CLUB
JULY 10TH @ 11:00 A.M.

BRUNCH & BOOKS:
ADULT BOOK CLUB
JULY 16TH @ 11:00 A.M.

GARDEN CLUB
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Rankin County Co-op

City Beat: Mayor, Alderman meeting for June 2, 2025



Special to
Pelahatchie News

By Shaun McInnish, Sr., City Beat Writer,
Pelahatchie News

The monthly board meeting for the Town of Pelahatchie took place on Monday, June 2, 2025, at 6:00 p.m. at Town Hall—just one day before the municipal election.

Mayor Karl VanHorn called the meeting to order. The meeting opened with the invocation and Pledge of Allegiance. All aldermen were present: Diane Hill, Sandra Harvey, Margie Warren, Eddie Jones, and James Harrell.

RESIDENTS OR VISITORS BUSINESS: None

DEPARTMENT DISCUSSIONS:

- Police – No report
- Maintenance – None
- Clerk – None
- Zoning – None

OLD BUSINESS: None

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Approval of Minutes from the May 5, 2025 Regular Board Meeting: Alderman Eddie Jones made a motion to approve the minutes. Alder-

man James Harrell seconded the motion. The motion passed by a 3-2 vote.

2. Approval of the Unpaid Claims Docket: Alderman Eddie Jones made a motion to approve the unpaid claims docket.



Alderman James Harrell seconded the motion. The motion passed by a 3-2 vote.

3. Approval of Disbursement of Bank Draft Payment to Morgan and White Insurance (\$1,082.27): This is the AmFirst card and is secondary to Blue Cross. Alderman Eddie Jones made a motion to approve the disbursement. Alderwoman Diane Hill seconded the motion. The motion passed with all favor.

4. Approval of Bank Draft Payment to Blue Cross Insurance (\$9,052.36): Alderman Eddie

Jones made a motion to approve the payment. Alderwoman Diane Hill seconded the motion. All were in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

5. Approval of Bank Draft Payment to EMC Insurance (\$5,916.32 – Property Insurance): Alderman Eddie Jones made a motion to approve the payment. Alderwoman Diane Hill seconded the motion. All were in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

6. Approval and Ratification of Payment of Payroll for May 2025:

- General Fund: \$75,217.72
- Enterprise Fund: \$27,684.96

Alderman Eddie Jones made a motion to approve payroll. Alderman James Harrell seconded the motion. The motion carried by a 3-2 vote.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

The board entered executive session at 6:05 p.m. to discuss personnel issues within the Police Department.

ADJOURNMENT:

Alderman Eddie Jones made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Alderwoman Diane Hill seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 6:19 p.m.



Crooked Creek Animal Hospital, Inc.

Charles M. Edwards II, DVM
Staci L. Rhodes, DVM
Jenny Sowell, DVM
Katlyn Henning, DVM
Susan Thrash, DVM

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Garden Club helps town to bloom



Special to Pelahatchie News

Members say that gardening brings more than just blooms—it brings people together. Tending to the gardens has become a way to stay connected with nature while fostering new friendships and creating a stronger sense of community. Their efforts not only brighten public spaces but also promote wellness by offering residents a peaceful and beautiful environment to enjoy.

Pelahatchie Petals holds meet-

ings on the third Thursday of each month at 5:30 p.m. at the Pelahatchie Public Library, with a short summer break in July and August. Regular meetings will pick back up in September, and anyone interested in gardening or community improvement is welcome to attend.

Through teamwork and a shared vision, the Pelahatchie Petals Garden Club is turning small spaces into something special—one flower at a time.

A message from new PHS Baseball Coach Bryce Henry

As the new Head Coach of Pelahatchie Baseball, I’m incredibly excited to lead this program and bring a new level of energy, pride, and passion to our team.

My goal is to create a baseball experience that brings joy to our players, families, and the entire Pelahatchie community. Together, we’re building something special – and I can’t wait to see what we accomplish.

My purpose as a coach is to inspire young people to discover success in places they may have never thought possible. I strive to help athletes unlock their potential – not just on the field, but in life – and to guide them as they grow into confident, capable leaders in our community. My wife, Andie Henry, is in her 3rd year of medical school. We have two dogs Ollie and Chex that you will see around at events.



Special to Pelahatchie News

Cross Roads Baptist Church



Sunday Schedule:

9:00 a.m. - Worship Service
10:30 a.m. - Sunday School for all ages

Wednesday Schedule:

5:30 p.m. - Family Dinner (Call to make reservations)
6:30 p.m. - Prayer Meeting; Youth Worship;
Children’s Activities; Ladies Bible Study

Online Worship Opportunity:

(Cross Roads Baptist Church Facebook Page)
9:00 a.m. - Worship Service every Sunday

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Harrell signs with Meridian CC



Special to Pelahatchie News

East Rankin Academy would like to congratulate Aiden Harrell who will be continuing his outstanding running career at Meridian Community College.

Pelahatchie High School Band Senior Spotlight: Jessica Ellis



Special to Pelahatchie News

Upon graduation, Ellis will be attending Holmes Community College studying to be a teacher. She also wishes to give back to her school community by being a substitute here at Pelahatchie. The school is so proud of Jessica and her dedication to the band program and wishes her the best in the future.

Crooked Creek welcomes Dr. Hill



Special to Pelahatchie News

Crooked Creek Animal Hospital introduces Dr. Carter Hill. Dr. Hill is a recent graduate of the Mississippi State University College of Veterinary Medicine. Originally from Kosciusko, MS, she and her family now reside in the Brandon area. Dr. Hill and her husband have 6 pets, including a bearded dragon! In her spare time, Dr. Hill enjoys trail riding, reading, and exercising her working dogs. She is very excited to start her career at Crooked Creek Animal Hospital and offer professional services to a wide variety of pets and livestock!

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Robinson retires from Pelahatchie High School

Special to Pelahatchie News

Pelahatchie High School recently held a reception to celebrate the retirement and legacy of Mr. Bob Robinson. Robinson taught 7-12 and instructed students in Intro to Agricultural Science, Ag and Natural Resources 1 & 2, and FFA. Thanks to all who showed support by attending the reception to express the impact he has had on their lives and those of others. To know him is to love him. PHS has been tremendously blessed to have him as a part of the Tribe. Robinson will be missed, but his legacy lives on.



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East Rankin's Breland competes at New Balance Nationals



Special to Pelahatchie News

Lady Patriot freshman Jillian Breland qualified to the 2025 New Balance Nationals hosted by the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia, PA on June 20th. Competing in the discus final, she finished fifth overall out of 76 nationally recognized freshman throwers. Earning a new personal record throw of 125'-2". Breland's throw was a new ERA school record and took the new top spot among Mississippi freshman throwers as tracked by MileSplit Mississippi. The previous top spot of 125'-0 was set in May 2012 by Murrah High School's Tatyana Loftin. As a result of her top 5 placement, Jillian was named a New Balance Freshman All American.

Crooked Creek Animal Hospital feature: D.A.R.E. Fun Day

Crooked Creek Animal Clinic had the honor and pleasure of attending the Rankin County Sheriff's Department D.A.R.E. Fun Day. Participants Mia, Griffin, and Elliott got a lot of attention and love from the kids. The staff thought it would be a good idea to bring along a photographer for next year.



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PELAHATCHIE NEWS NETWORK



PAST HEADLINES

2015 - 10 years ago

- "Pelahatchie Police Chief Glenda Shoemaker receives prestigious Jefferson Award"
- "Hot, humid weather can cripple and kill"

2020 - 5 years ago

- "Sanders comes home as PES principal"
- "Fusion Martial Arts reopened in June under new ownership"

2024 - Last Year

- "Celebrating Smokey Bear's 80th Birthday at Pelahatchie Library"
- "Sessums Sentenced to Prison for Possessing, Passing Counterfeit Currency"

What you need or don't need in garden soil



By Doug Carter, Rankin
County Extension Agent

Special to
Pelahatchie News

Growing vegetable gardens has a long history in Mississippi. Gardeners can enjoy the freshest produce, ripened in their own garden. In the past, a family's food often came right from their own garden.

Today, gardening is typically much more recreational, even though we have seen an increase in gardening interest in the last few years. Regardless of the motives, gardeners want a successful harvest from what they plant.

The ideal garden soil, just like soil for any wildlife food plot, is deep, loose, fertile, and well drained (internally, as well as on the surface). The ideal garden soil has plenty of organic matter and is free of weeds and diseases. These soils can sometimes be difficult to find, but less than ideal soils can be just as productive with the proper preparation and management.

Clay and sandy soils can be amended by adding organic matter. Increasing the organic matter in clay soils improves the tilth, making it easier to work, and improves drainage. Adding organic matter to sandy soil increases the water-holding capacity and improves its fertility.



Special to Pelahatchie News

Soil and soil conditions affect the way vegetable plants grow and look. When soils are cold, wet, crusty, or cloddy, the seedlings are slow to emerge, and some may not survive. Root rot diseases may take a heavy toll on seedlings, especially beans. Other soil-related plant symptoms are stunted plants, slow growth, poor color, and shallow, malformed roots. Signs of poor soil structure are crusts, hard soil layers below the surface, known as hardpans or fragipans, standing water, and erosion.

We can increase the soil's organic matter con-

tent by adding manure, composted leaves, sawdust, bark, or peat moss. Also, turn under plant residues like sweet corn stalks, and green manure crops (soybeans, rye, southern pea plants, and others) after harvest. Plant residues should be free of diseases if they are to be added to the garden soil. Cover plants can be planted in the fall to prevent erosion and leaching of plant nutrients. They also provide organic matter and nitrogen when turned under in the spring.

Manures vary in nutrient level, and the amount of straw, age, exposure to weather, and degree of composting changes their composition. Be careful not to over fertilize when applying chicken litter to a garden. Use no more than 200 pounds per 1,000 square feet of garden space. Cow and horse manure is lower in nutrient content than poultry litter and can be applied at 250 to 300 pounds per 1,000 square feet.

The overuse of manures can add so much fertilizer to the soil that plant growth is harmed. Most organic materials release some nutrients quickly and rest over time. Test the soil every year or two and make adjustments.

Source: "Mississippi Vegetable Gardener's Guide", Mississippi State University Extension, Publication 3616



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PES welcomes new teacher, Ms. Priest



Special to Pelahatchie News

Please join us in welcoming the newest Chief to the team. Pelahatchie Elementary School (PES) is excited to have Mrs. Laura Beth Priest as the new 6th grade ELA and Social Studies teacher. Priest is passionate about helping students grow academically and personally, and she is eager to dive into a year full of learning, laughter, and memorable moments. Priest is glad to be part of such a supportive community and is looking forward to the new school year.

OBITUARY

Daniel F Glassmire

December 31, 1950 — June 16, 2025

Daniel F. Glassmire, a resident of Pelahatchie, passed away peacefully at his home on Monday, June 16. Visitation will be held on Thursday, June 19 from 9:00-11:30 a.m. at Ott and Lee Funeral Home in Morton, with funeral services following in the chapel. Burial will take place at Mississippi State Veteran's Cemetery in Newton, Ms. Bro. John Vaugh will officiate.

Mr. Glassmire is preceded in death by his parents, Fred Glassmire and Jacqueline Furman Glassmire.

He leaves behind his loving wife, Sandra Glassmire; four daughters, Olivia and Serra Glassmire, Jean Cooper (Joseph), and Mary Sessums; two sisters, Linda Mosch and Eloise Daisley; seven grandchildren, Haley Scott (Kenneth), Jacey Cooper, Abby Grace and Rawls Hemeter, Katlynn Murray, Carter Sessums, and Kaden Scranage; and one great grandchild, Kyler Scott.

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Pastor's Perspective: You want me to surrender?



By Guest Columnist
Spencer Sullivan, Pastor,
Pelahatchie Baptist

Special to
Pelahatchie News

My family is incredibly competitive. My wife, Melanie, and I both played sports competitively in our younger years and that is certainly a major factor. We started dating in high school and some of our first dates were just meeting up to play one on one basketball (her sport). We still compete, but less on the court. Now we play a certain game on our phones and we keep a running score that goes all the way back to 2019. I won't put the overall score in print for the sake of our marriage, but I'll tell you that the difference so far in this year's score is only one. We both hate to lose perhaps more than we enjoy winning. Surrender is not in our natural DNA. Whether it came through our DNA or just from growing up in our family, our kids are very much the same. When we play games, whether it's basketball or Battleship, we all play to win. No surrender.

Whether competitive is an adjective

that describes you or not, no one has surrender in their natural DNA. In any context, what comes out of our natural DNA is not to surrender, but to be #1. Understanding that is universally true, Jesus calls us to something different. He said: "If anyone would come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow Me." Jesus calls us to something that is counter to what comes natural. Jesus calls us to surrender. Jesus calls us to deny ourselves and take up our cross. What does He mean? If you know anything about Jesus, you know that His cross caused Him great suffering and ultimately cost Him His life. He willingly did that for us so that we could be forgiven of our sin and live eternally with Him. So, when He calls us to take up our cross, the implication is that it will be difficult and even painful at times. Ultimately, He means we are to deny our selfish tendencies and submit to His rule and reign over every area of our lives. But, the Bible also tells us that there is freedom to be had in that surrender. Galatians 5:1 says: "For freedom Christ has set us free; stand firm therefore, and do not submit again



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to a yoke of slavery." That sounds backwards, right? In our natural way of thinking, we might think surrender = slavery. Yet, Jesus calls us to a surrender that equals freedom! Left to ourselves, we are slaves to sin. Surrendered to Jesus, we are free from the chains, the traps, and the snares that

this world entangles us with.

There is another key word from Jesus' call to surrender. He said: "...let him deny himself and take up his cross daily..." This implies that surrendering once is not enough. Yes, when we repent of our sin and trust Jesus to save us, our salvation is secure. The Bible tells us we are sealed with the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 1:13-14). Our salvation is secure in His hands (John 10:28). But, if we want to walk in freedom in this world, surrendering once is not enough. Jesus calls us to a daily surrender. That means we are to consciously surrender everything to His authority on a daily basis. Jesus, I surrender my will, I surrender my family, I surrender my marriage, I surrender my work, I surrender my finances, I surrender my wants and desires and dreams. I surrender my relationships. I surrender my health. I surrender my struggles. I surrender my (fill in the blank). I surrender it all to You, because you are my King! In Jesus' economy, surrender = freedom. Be free from what binds you today and surrender it all to Jesus! Then, do it all over again tomorrow.



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Kevin Belt leads effort to restore Pelahatchie Park for the next generation

By Kenneth A. McDade

For Kevin Belt, the dusty diamonds and worn fences of Pelahatchie Park aren't just remnants of the past—they're a call to action. Fueled by vivid memories of childhood games and a deep love for his hometown, Belt is stepping forward to lead an effort that blends hard work, heart, and hope.

"I remember playing sports when I was younger. It kept me out of trouble and gave me something to look forward to," Belt said. "I want today's kids to have that same chance—to know there's a place for them, and that they matter to this town."

Belt's plan is simple but significant:



restore Pelahatchie Park to the vibrant hub it once was—and have it ready by fall, just in time for soccer season. He's already spoken with Mayor Karl Van-Horn, who gave the green light and his full support to the project. From there,



Photos special to Pelahatchie News

Belt hit the ground running, mapping out upgrades like fixing the fencing, sprucing up the concession stands, and giving the grounds the care they've long needed.

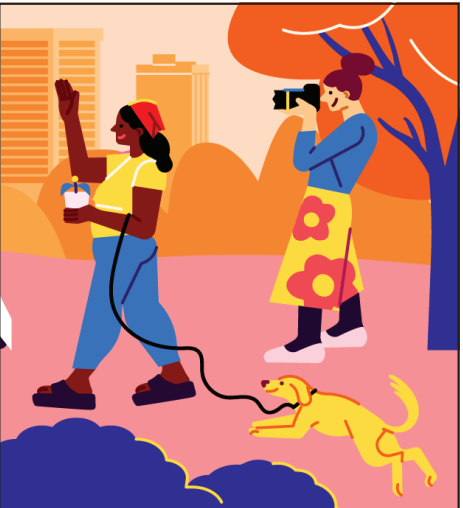
The park currently features three baseball fields, but time and Mississippi weather have worn them down. Still, Belt sees more than cracked bleachers

and rusty gates—he sees possibility.

"This isn't just about baseball or soccer," he said. "It's about giving the next generation something to believe in. A safe place to play. A space where they feel seen."

He's taken his message to Facebook, and the community is responding with enthusiasm. Positive comments and offers to help have flooded in, proving that Belt isn't the only one dreaming of a better space for Pelahatchie's youth.

"This town still has that neighbor-helping-neighbor spirit," Belt said with a smile. "People want to do some-



thing good. They just need a reason and a place to start."

For him, the mission is deeply personal. He believes strongly in giving kids an alternative to idle time, and in the power of sports to teach teamwork, discipline, and resilience.

"Idle hands lead kids down the wrong path," he said. "But if we give them something to belong to—a team, a game, a goal—they'll rise to it. They'll feel important. And that feeling can change a life."

Belt's message to the community is full of optimism and responsibility: the future is watching, and it needs role models.

"It's on us," he said. "We've got to show them the way. Let them know they're special. That they matter to all of us."

With community momentum building and the shared dream of laughter on the fields again, Pelahatchie Park may soon become more than a memory—it might just be the heart of a new era.

Want to get involved or stay updated? Contact Kevin Belt on Facebook or join the conversation on "Let's Talk, Pelahatchie."

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Freedom Ranch showcases animals for library summer program

Special to Pelahatchie News

Freedom Ranch Wildlife Center recently presented a program about birds of prey and other animals at the Pelahatchie Public Library. Those in attendance enjoyed their time with the animals. Freedom Ranch works to bring joy to the hearts of others using God’s beautiful creation and especially to create a love for native birds of prey.



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The Pelahatchie Mayor and Board of Aldermen sworn-in



Photo by Susie A. Wolfe

The Pelahatchie Mayor and Board of Aldermen were sworn in tonight (June 26, 2025) at the Community Center. Pictured (l to r) are: Alderman-At-Large Eddie Jones, Ward Four Alderman James Ray Harrell, Ward Three Alderman David Gray, Mayor Karl Van Horn, Ward Two Alderwoman Sandra Harvey, and Ward One Alderwoman Diane Hill with Supreme Court Judge Jennifer Branning, who swore them in. Bro. Kevin Halle gave the invocation, Tom Miles was the Master of Ceremonies, and State Senator Brian Rhodes gave the closing prayer.

