

PELAHATCHIE NEWS NETWORK

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August 2026 ■ Volume 15, Issue 8 ■ Pelahatchie, MS

PHS grad receives Bounds Scholarship from MASS

Special to Pelahatchie News

Christian Beeman, a recent graduate of Pelahatchie High School, is among 12 Mississippi students selected to receive a $1,000 scholarship from the Mississippi Association of School Superintendents.

Named in honor of the late veteran educator Walter S. Bounds, the Bounds Scholarship for Excellence recognizes high-achieving students who demonstrate outstanding leadership, community service and involvement in extracurricular activities. Recipients must also meet academic standards and be recommended by their district superintendents.

"The future of Mississippi depends on developing students who are prepared to lead, serve and make a positive impact in their communities," said Phil Burchfield, MASS executive director. "The Bounds Scholarship program allows us to recognize students who exemplify the values of hard work, character and commitment while encouraging them as they pursue their next steps."

Beeman is recognized as one of Mississippi's outstanding students, reflecting the academic achievement, leadership and commitment to service the Bounds Scholarship program was established to honor.

Through their accomplishments in the classroom and engagement in their schools and communities, recipients represent the next generation of Mississippi leaders and the promise of what students can achieve when given opportunities to grow and serve.



Special to Pelahatchie News

Christian Beeman

Beeman will attend Tougaloo College to major in computer science and mathematics education.

"Christian represents the very best of what we hope our students will become," said Rankin County School District Superintendent Shane Sanders. "His dedication, leadership and positive influence have made an impact on our school community, and we are excited to see all that he will accomplish in the years ahead."

The Mississippi Association of School Superintendents and the Alliance of Educational Leaders of Mississippi is a nonprofit association whose membership includes 139 public school superintendents and more than 2,000 public school administrators. Its mission is to provide resources, advocacy, leadership, policy information, training, support, renewal and public relations services that improve the quality of public education.

Whitehair joins Bridge Oncology leadership

Special to Pelahatchie News



Special to Pelahatchie News

Lynn Whitehair, Director of Oncology Services at Bridge Oncology

Bridge Oncology, a premier partner for comprehensive oncology service line transformation, recently announced the addition of Lynn Whitehair, MBA, ACHE, as Director of Oncology Services, as the firm continues to expand its capabilities. Whitehair adds operational leadership as Bridge Oncology builds upon radiation oncology expertise to partner with health systems, hospitals and oncology practices across medical oncology, infusion services, pharmacy, theranostics and enterprise oncology strategy.

"Lynn brings a proven track record of helping health systems navigate complexity, improve performance and deliver better patient care."
- Jordan Johnson, Co-founder and CEO of Bridge Oncology

Whitehair brings more than 25 years of experience, concentrated in running high-performing oncology service lines that require simultaneous coordination of clinical operations, financial performance and patient access. Bridge Oncology offers a unique model of pairing active clinical leadership with seasoned healthcare operations expertise, enabling clients to make decisions that improve both patient care and long-term financial sustainability.

In her new role, she will lead the service line strategy and operational excellence initiatives, including operational assessments, infusion and medical oncology workflow optimization, program development, accreditation readiness, workforce planning, patient access improvement, facility program expansion planning and implementation support to help cancer programs achieve measurable operational, financial, and clinical outcomes.

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Beechem earns pre-teen state title, scholarship

Special to Pelahatchie News

Ramzey Za'Riah Beechem has been crowned the 2026 National American Miss Mississippi Pre-Teen Queen. She earning the title during the state pageant held June 15 in Houston.

Ramzey, the daughter of Ryshonda and Roderick Beechem, received the official state crown, banner and trophy, along with a four-year, $128,000 college scholarship to Midland University as part



Special to Pelahatchie News

Ramzey Za'Riah Beechem has been crowned the 2026 National American Miss Mississippi Pre-Teen Queen.

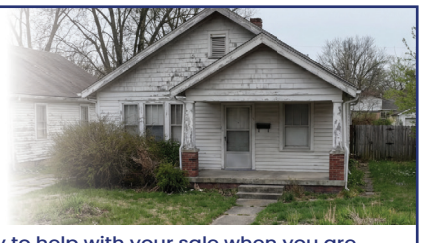
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Continued from front page

Whitehair joins Bridge Oncology leadership

"Cancer care is becoming increasingly interconnected, more complex and more specialized than ever before," said Arpit Chhabra, M.D., Co-founder of Bridge Oncology and Radiation Oncologist, Director of Theranostics and Director of Education at New York Proton Center. "Lynn has spent her career building high-performing oncology programs, and her experience further strengthens our ability to help clients improve access, streamline operations and build comprehensive service lines across the oncology enterprise."

Oncology programs across the country are facing mounting reimbursement and regulatory pressure, including the anticipated 2027 Medicare Proposed Rule, that are reshaping how service lines operate. Whitehair's expertise will help clients defend clinical margins, improve efficiency, enhance patient access and integrate care across the oncology continuum. As healthcare organizations seek experienced partners who can implement meaningful operational improvements, Bridge Oncology is evolving to provide execution-focused support across the broader oncology enterprise.

"Oncology programs are facing unprecedented financial and operational pressures, and they need practical solutions, not just advice," said Jordan Johnson, Co-founder and CEO of Bridge Oncology. "Lynn brings a proven track record of helping health systems navigate complexity, improve performance and deliver better patient care. Her addition complements our multidisciplinary team to support organizations across the oncology continuum and turn strategy into measurable results for long-term success."

Whitehair has provided operational leadership at some of the nation's premier cancer programs across both academic and community settings. Most recently, she served as Senior Director of Operations at Emory Healthcare Winship Cancer Institute, where she helped lead the large-scale expansion of oncology services, workflow redesign, workforce planning, and financial management. She also previously served in cancer service line leadership roles at Baylor Scott & White and Memorial Hermann Healthcare Systems.

Pennington takes summer internship at Jackson airport



Special to Pelahatchie News

Preston Pennington from Pelahatchie recently completed his freshman year at East Central Community College and plans to transfer to Delta State University to pursue a career in aviation management or operations. This summer, he's gaining valuable hands-on experience in Airport Operations at JMAA (Jackson-Medgar Riley Evers International Airport) and learning what it takes to keep an airport moving.

Continued from front page

Beechem earns pre-teen state title, scholarship

of her state queen prize package. She also earned an invitation to compete at the National American Miss Pageant during Thanksgiving week in Orlando, Florida.

In addition to winning the overall state title, Ramzey received several individual awards, including Talent Winner, Actress Winner, Runway Winner, Miss Personality Winner, Best Resume Winner, Miss Spirit Winner and Heart of Service Winner.

National American Miss awards more than $1.5 million annually in cash, scholarships and prizes to participants across the country, and is committed to helping participants become the best version of themselves through a program that is age-appropriate, inclusive, and family-oriented. Pageants are held in each state for girls and women ages 4 to 39, across seven age divisions. To encourage a healthy self-image, makeup is not permitted in any of our Junior Divisions.

According to the organization, the program emphasizes inner beauty, self-expression and leadership while encouraging participants to develop life skills, set goals and serve their communities.







Photos special to Pelahatchie News

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Edwards leading in service as 2026-27 Rankin Rotary Club president

Special to Pelahatchie News

Rotary is a global network of civic organizations dedicated to service. For many members, though, it is much more than that: it is a family of community leaders who believe that serving others can truly make a difference. For Misty Edwards, the 25-year financial industry veteran who has been named the 2026-27 President of the Rankin County Rotary Club, "Service Beyond Self" is personal.

Edwards has dedicated her career not just to lending, but to becoming a comprehensive resource for her clients.

Edwards' was born and raised in Pelahatchie where she and her husband, Brian, are raising their three children: Camden, who is pursuing a nursing degree at Mississippi University for Women; Kyndal, studying interior design and business at Holmes Community College; and Dawson, a tenth-grader at Pelahatchie High School.

A Life Member of the Junior Auxiliary of Rankin County, she also sits on the board of



Special to Pelahatchie News

Rankin County Rotary Club President Misty Edwards of Community Bank, right, presents Michelle Adcock, center, a plaque of appreciation for her dedication to the Rankin County Rotary Club as she served the last two years as Club President. Also shown is Barbara Travis, who invited Adcock to join Rotary.

Pelahatchie's Parent Teacher Outreach—each role a reflection of her.

Edwards holds an MBA from Belhaven College and recently graduated from the Mississippi School of Banking. She is currently enrolled at the prestigious LSU School of Banking. Early in her career, she was selected for a competitive management training program that exposed her to all facets of banking.

Edwards is active at Cross Roads Baptist Church, where she is involved with Mexico mission work with Senda de Vida centers around the humanitarian and faith-based refugee camps in border cities like Reynosa, Mexico, providing shelter, food, and support to migrants.

As Edwards begins her year as president, she invites all interested in attending the Rankin County Rotary Club. The contact details and meeting information for the Rankin County Rotary Club include phone number (601) 624-9231, mailing address P.O. Box 549, Brandon, MS 39043, and weekly Thursday noon meetings at Genna Benna's.





PHS Chiefs: Building a Better Tomorrow, One Classroom at a Time

By Guest Columnist Kessie Key, Ed. S., Pelahatching High School

Below is information regarding our PHS Tribe Teachers investing in training and professional academic development throughout the summer to better themselves for the momentum of the upcoming school year.

Building a Better Tomorrow, One Classroom at a Time

Inside the Toolbox: How Pelahatchie Educators Spent Their Summer Preparing for the 2026-27 School Year

While summer vacation is typically a time for rest and relaxation, the dedicated teachers and faculty at Pelahatchie High School have been hard at work. Throughout the summer months, our educators have crossed state lines, mastered cutting-edge technologies, and collaborated with statewide leaders—all to expand their "teacher toolboxes" and ensure Pelahatchie students receive a world-class education this fall.



Photos special to Pelahatchie News

Jennifer Pope

From advanced virtual reality to artificial intelligence, here is a look at how our faculty spent their summer investing in academic excellence.

Bringing Virtual Reality and Innovation to Agriculture

In June, Mrs. Pope participated in the highly selective MS Ag360 professional development program at Mississippi State University. After completing eight intensive weeks of online coursework, Mrs. Pope was honored as one of just ten educators chosen statewide to attend the hands-on training on campus.

The program focused on the vital role agriculture plays in daily life, but it went far beyond traditional textbooks. Participants actively created immersive content to bring back to their local schools. Thanks to MS Ag360 and #NIFAImpacts, Mrs. Pope is returning to Pelahatchie High School equipped with brand-new VR headsets, 360° cameras, and advanced instructional strategies.



Emily Hayes and Jonna Shoemaker

"We can't wait to see our Pelahatchie High School students dive into this amazing technology," Mrs. Pope shared, extending a huge thank-you to MSU's Dr. Carley Morrison, Dr. OP McCubbins, Dr. Stephanie M. Lemley, and graduate assistants Jai and Ross for a phenomenal week. Hail State and Go Dawgs!

Leading the Charge in AI and Advanced Placement

As technology rapidly evolves, Pelahatchie is staying ahead of the curve thanks to Mrs. Key. She dedicated a week of her summer to rigorous Advanced Placement Computer Science Principles (AP CSP) training to support our advanced tech students.

Additionally, Mrs. Key represented our community on a broader stage, attending and speaking at the AI Summit hosted by the Mississippi Department of Education (MDE) and the Center for Cyber Education.

Continued on page 2

Uncle Sam stops by Crooked Creek Animal Hospital for the Fourth of July



During the recent Fourth of July holiday, Uncle Same stopped by Crooked Creek Animal Hospital to take a photo with his furry friend Remi.

Crooked Creek Animal Hospital

Charles Edwards II, DVM
Katlyn Henning, DVM
Jenny Sowell, DVM
Carter Hill, DVM

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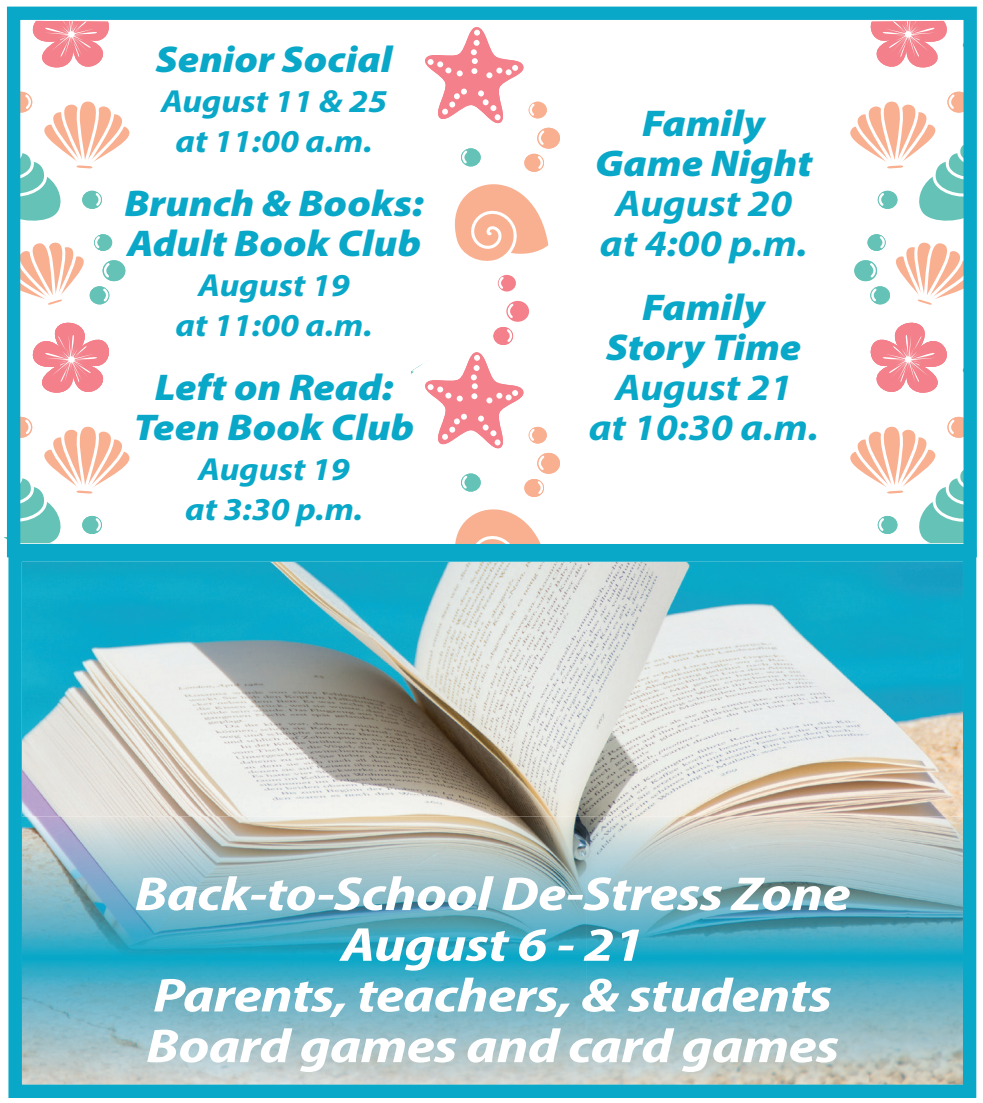
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Pelahatchie Library August Events





PHS Chiefs: Building a Better Tomorrow, One Classroom at a Time

To ensure these powerful digital tools are used effectively and safely locally, she also participated in the Rankin County School District (RCSD) AI Ambassadors training. This initiative focuses on implementing artificial intelligence effectively and efficiently into classrooms for the 2026-27 school year.

National Training for Chief Chiefs

Our JROTC program continues to benefit from top-tier leadership. Colonel Herd traveled to Orlando, Florida, to complete the 22-hour United States Army JROTC Professional Development JSOCC Course.

Hayes also participated in the RCSD Mentor Team Training (RISE). This program specifically trains veteran educators to mentor and guide new teachers with one to three years of experience, ensuring our entire staff has the support they need to thrive.

Analyzing Data and Enhancing Classroom Resources

For Ms. McNair, the summer was an invaluable opportunity to dive deep into the district's newly enhanced digital suite. Educators reviewed upgraded features in widely used tools like MagicSchool, Newsela, ELS, and Formative.



Special to Pelahatchie News

Kessie Key (group photo far right attending AP CSP training).

The national conference provided advanced educational training centered on classroom management, innovative teaching techniques, curriculum implementation, and strict accreditation standards. Colonel Herd's time in Orlando ensures our cadet program remains elite, structured, and deeply impactful.

Leveling Up Math Curriculum and Mentorship

Mrs. Hayes kept her focus on numbers and leadership this summer, juggling multiple professional development milestones. She attended the Metro Math Conference and joined middle and high school math teachers from across the region at the county office for intensive math textbook training, preparing for the rollout of the district's brand-new math curriculum.

Recognizing that great schools require great teamwork, Mrs. Crucially, Ms. McNair and her peers spent significant time analyzing recent ACT data to target areas for academic growth. "I was previously unfamiliar with MasterPrep and the instructional videos linked on the district's ACT page," Ms. McNair noted. "I appreciated the opportunity to learn new strategies for integrating these tools into the upcoming school year to support our efforts to improve student scores."

The true heart of Pelahatchie schools lies in a faculty that never stops learning. When our doors open for the 2026-27 school year, our students will be walking into classrooms led by teachers who are sharper, more innovative, and more prepared than ever.

Thank you, Pelahatchie faculty, for your tireless dedication to our kids!

City Beat: Mayor, Alderman meeting for Monday, July 6, 2026



Special to Pelahatchie News

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

The July 2026 Pelahatchie Mayor and Board of Aldermen regular meeting was held on Monday, July 6, 2026, at 6:00 p.m. at Town Hall. Mayor Karl VanHorn presided and called the meeting to order and Alderman Jones performed the invocation. Alderwomen Diane Hill and Sandra Harvey, along with Aldermen David Gray, Eddie Jones, and James Harrell, were in attendance for the proceedings. The city attorney was absent from the meeting.

Residents or Visitors' Business: Representatives from Aflac Insurance addressed the board to discuss offering Aflac services to city employees. It was noted that offering these services would come at no cost to the town.

Agenda Amendment and Wastewater Project: At 6:15 PM, Alderman Jones made a motion to amend the agenda to add Hayden Overby, the town engineer from Waggoner Engineering. Alderwoman Hill seconded the motion. and the motion passed with all in favor. The board discussed a change in loan terms regarding the ongoing wastewater project and voted to rescind the offer made during the previous month. Alderman Jones made the motion to rescind the offer, and Alderman Gray seconded the motion, which passed with all in favor.

A subsequent motion was made to award the total base bid, along with alternate #1 and alternate #2 for the project. Alderman Jones made the motion, Alderman Gray seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously. Additionally, the board approved items for CDAP and CIF through Delta Regional. Alderman Jones made the motion, and Alderwoman Harvey seconded, passing with all in favor.

Department Discussions:

Police Department: The board discussed and considered a request from the Police Department to use approximately $1,500 in seized funds for the purchase of 500 new uniform patches in bulk for a discounted price. Alderman Jones made the motion to approve the purchase, and Alderman Gray seconded the motion. The measure passed with all in favor.

Zoning: Scott May presented the Edwards Garden Proposal, detailing plans for a new housing development featuring 20 houses. The development will have an entrance off College Street and will be built by S & S Builders. The proposal includes a common retention pond designed to catch and hold water in place. Construction is slated to start as soon as possible, within 30 days. Alderman Jones inquired about groundskeeping, and it was established that getting the grass cut along College Street will be the town's responsibility. Benchmark Construction is also involved in the project. Alderwoman Hill made a motion to approve the development plans, and Alderman Gray seconded the motion. The measure passed with all in favor.

Pelahatchie
THE PLACE TO PROSPER

Ed Little was scheduled on the agenda to discuss a North Avenue proposal from last month, but he was not present for the meeting.

New Business: The board discussed, considered, and voted to approve the minutes from the previous regular board meeting held on June 1, 2026. Alderman Jones made the motion to approve, and Alderwoman Hill seconded the motion. The measure passed with all in favor.

The board discussed, considered, and voted to approve the payment of the unpaid claims docket. Alderman Jones made the motion to approve, and Alderman Harrell seconded the motion. The measure passed with a 3-2 vote with Alderwoman Hill and Harvey voting nay.

The board discussed, considered, and voted to approve the disbursement of a bank draft payment to Morgan and White Insurance in the amount of $950.66. Alderman Jones made the motion to approve, and Alderwoman Hill seconded the motion. The measure passed with all in favor.

The board discussed, considered, and voted to approve a bank draft payment to EMC Insurance for property insurance in the amount of $6,804.32. Alderman Jones made the motion to approve, and Alderman Gray seconded the motion. The measure passed with all in favor.

The board discussed, considered, and voted to approve a bank draft payment to Blue Cross Insurance in the amount of $7,088.66. Alderman Jones made the motion to approve, and Alderman Gray seconded the motion. The measure passed with all in favor.

The board discussed the approval and ratification of the payment of payroll for June 2026, which included $112,968.88 for the General fund and $42,568.80 for the Enterprise fund. Alderman Jones made the motion to approve the payroll, and Alderman Gray seconded the motion. The measure passed with a 4-1 vote, with Alderwoman Harvey voting no.

Executive Session: At 6:24 PM, Alderman Jones made a motion to enter an executive session, which was seconded by Alderman Harrell. At 6:26 PM, Mayor VanHorn announced to the public that the board voted to go into executive session to discuss a police personnel issue. During the closed session, Officer Colby Morgan was officially promoted to Lieutenant at the Pelahatchie Police Department. The executive session ended at 6:31 PM.

With no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned following the executive session.

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Capital Ortho announces partnership with East Rankin Academy athletics

Special to Pelahatchie News

Capital Ortho is proud to announce its partnership with East Rankin Academy as the official sports medicine partner for Patriot Athletics.

From Friday night lights to packed gyms and every practice in between, Patriot athletes put in the work year-round. Capital Ortho is honored to stand alongside East Rankin's coaches, families, administrators, and student-athletes with sports medicine support designed to keep them healthy, active, and ready to compete.

"We're excited to partner with East Rankin Academy to support the health and performance of Patriot athletes," said Dr. Andy Brien, physician owner and orthopedic surgeon at Capital Ortho. "Our goal is to provide trusted sports medicine care that helps student-athletes recover well, stay in the game, and compete with confidence."

We're happy to say that Cody Shaw will continue serving East Rankin athletes as the on-site athletic trainer, now as part of the Capital Ortho team. Cody has been a familiar face on the Patriot sidelines for the past several years, and he looks forward to continuing to support the athletes, coaches, and families he already knows so well.

Capital Ortho is proud to be the support behind East Rankin.



Special to Pelahatchie News

Cody Shaw, Athletic Trainer (left), Brooke Rhodes, Athletic Director & Head Basketball Coach (right)

First CRUISE-IN night a success







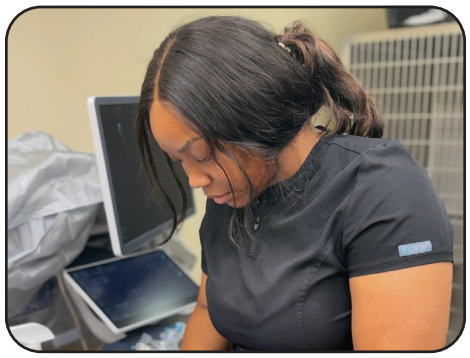


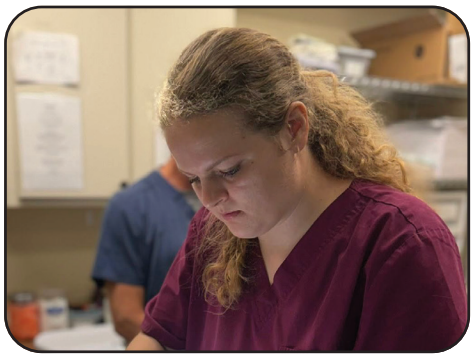




Photos special to Pelahatchie News

Crooked Creek continues partnership with MSU Veterinary Medicine







Photos special to Pelahatchie News

Crooked Creek Animal Hospital in Pelahatchie, has been part of the Enhanced Clinical Practicum (ECP) Program since the Mississippi State University College of Veterinary Medicine launched the program in 2021. To date, the hospital has mentored 18 students from the ECP Program and hosted countless student externs. All four of the hospital's veterinarians are graduates of the MSU CVM themselves, so there is plenty of Bulldog pride in the building. Class of 2027 DVM students Sodiya Scott and Grace Hutson are currently completing their training at Crooked Creek Animal Hospital as they inch closer to graduation.

Pelahatchie HS 7th grade cheer team welcomes new school year



Special to Pelahatchie News

Recently, the Pelahatchie High School 7th Grade Cheer Team, led by Mrs. Anna Bigby, helped welcome other 7th grade students and staff back to school for orientation and laptop role-out. This was their first event as a team, and the PHS community is proud of their school spirit. Pictured, back row: Coach Anna Bigby, Edyn Nance, Sunnie Mccrory, Kamiyah Stokes, Emalynn Atkinson, Baylee Jones; front row: McKenna Cupstid, Demi Ward, Hayzlee Nelson and Bailee Goodin.

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Family opens Brooks Street Antiques & Interiors Downtown

By Susie A. Wolfe

The more than one hundred-year-old building at 115 South Brooks Avenue in Pelahatchie, just across from Rhodes and Robby Drugs, has been empty for many years. Brooks Street Antiques & Interiors opened in June and sells a combination of new home decor and gift options plus vintage and antiques.

Sheena Gill Pace was in town and saw the building was for sale and checked on it. Originally owned by Andrew Jackson (AJ) Glaze, and then Docie Edwards, it had been a mercantile store in its previous lives. Pace said she likes



Special to Pelahatchie News

The building at 115 South Brooks Avenue was in bad shape, not having anyone operate in it for many years. The three new owners had Meridian Contractor Tim Allred restore the building to keep its character and authenticity.

the fact that it is still a woman-owned business offering a variety of products for shoppers.

The family is "fitting right in" to Pelahatchie. "I love the Town so much," Pace said. "We love our vendors and customers and want to continue to connect with the community."

In addition to local families and shoppers, Brooks Street is drawing interest from around the Metro Area and surrounding states. "Every day since we opened has been an amazing day," said Sasha Williamson of the initial response.

Although Tropical Storm Arthur put a damper on their opening in June of 2026, postponing the ribbon cutting, shoppers still turned out to check out the new business downtown. The Rankin Chamber Ribbon Cutting was held July 1, with a large crowd representing businesses around the county.

The approximately six thousand square foot shop, purchased on August 26, 2025, was then restored by Meridian contractor Tim Allred to "keep the character and authenticity." It is sixty percent shop-owned versus forty percent vendor product.



Special to Pelahatchie News

Brooks Street Antiques & Interiors sells a combination of new home decor and gift options plus vintage and antiques. The phrase "something for everyone" is a true statement of the store's content. In addition to a "husband chair," the shop also has seating area where groups can relax and read a book or hold a Bible Study.



Susie A. Wolfe

Though initially postponed due to Tropical Storm Arthur in June, the Rankin Chamber Ribbon Cutting was held July 1. Pictured are family members (l to r) are: Jason Pace, Jamie Pace, Natalie Pace, Sheena Pace, Patricia Gill, Sasha Williamson, and Evelyn Williamson.

Brooks Street Antiques & Interiors is owned by two daughters, Sheena Gill Pace and Sasha Gill Williamson, and their mother, Patricia Gill, of Brandon. They have a tight-knit family in Pelahatchie and in Texas, where they originated in Burnet. Having her own shop had been a dream of Patricia "forever and ever," who is "the collector who hunts for her treasures or organized hoarder." After their father died at age 69 in 2000, the girls wanted more than ever to do something with their mother.

Pace, who worked as a dental assistant for twenty-two years, is married to Jason Pace, a Brandon accountant. They have two children, Natalie, 16, and Jamie, 15. Williamson is an auctioneer with Lance Varner's Highway 18 Auction in Brandon. She and her husband, Bryan Williamson, who works with Systems Electro Coating, have a son, Eli, 13, and daughter Evelyn, 9.

In addition to the family antiques and collectibles, these vendors have areas in the shop displaying their product: Brook Burt, Carol Chapman, Raina Cofer, Charlett Coulter, Latrelle Donovan, Anna Leigh Gordon, Ginnie Wadsworth, Keith and Deanne Giordano, Debbie Henry, Tracy and Stacy Hip, David Kennedy, Brande Leeper, Amy Lyle, Amy Moon, Justin Slay, Grace Tharpe, Cindy Weldon, and John and Teresa Wells.

According to former building owner, Due Edwards McKinion, the store's history goes back to the 1800's with Colonel George W. Brooks, who had the original mercantile. It was later owned by J. W. Glaze and was a mercantile too.



Special to Pelahatchie News

Coming from a tight-knit family, daughters Sheena and Sasha always wanted to open a shop with their mom, Patricia, who is the collector of treasures. Pictured (l to r) are: Sasha Williamson, Patricia Gill, and Sheena Pace.

According to McKinion, "We love seeing Mom's old store building come back to life. I have gotten to know Ms. Patricia, Sasha, and Sheena. They brought what was once my Mom's whole heart (and mine) back to life again."

Brooks Street Antiques & Interiors is located Downtown Pelahatchie. Hours are currently Tuesday - Friday, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Saturday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.; and Sunday, 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. The phone number is 601-967-6647.

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Pelahatchie Farmer's Market welcomes July a week early

The Pelahatchie Farmer's Market staff loved seeing all the customers decked out in red, white, and blue with their fur babies. Everyone was thankful for another beautiful day together with all the Pelahatchie Farmer's Market friends.

Photos special to Pelahatchie News







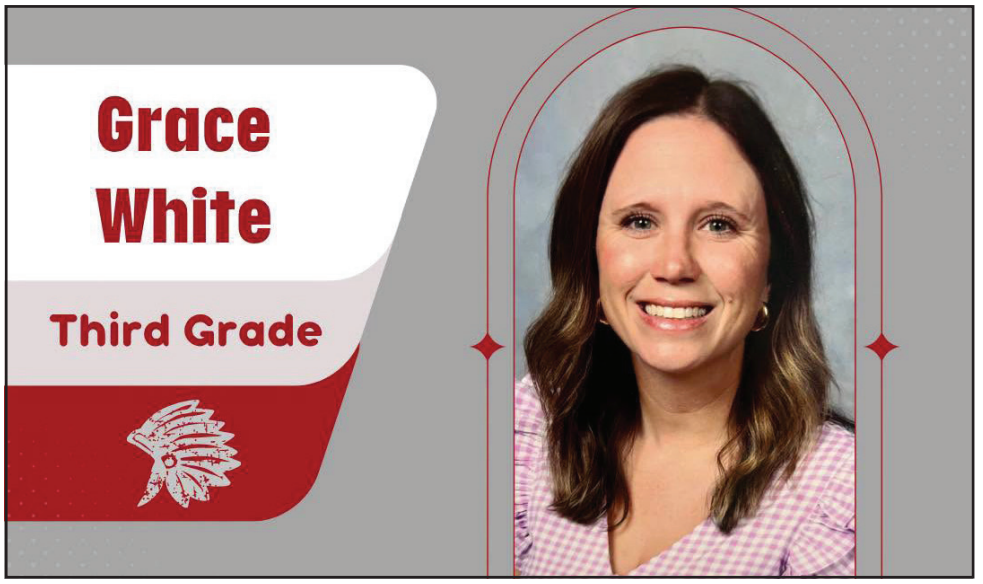








PES welcomes Grace White



Special to Pelahatchie News

My name is Grace White and I'm so excited to be teaching 3rd grade at Pelahatchie! I'm married to my husband Jeff, and we have a sweet five-year-old daughter, Hadley. We are all joining the Chief tribe and are so thrilled to be here! I bring 13 years of experience in elementary education, and I'm dedicated to helping every student grow and succeed.

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PAST HEADLINES

2016 - 10 years ago

- "McCall High School to hold reunion September"
- "MDOT highlights importance of railroad crossing safety"

2021 - 5 years ago

- "Shiloh United Methodist Church now The Church at Shiloh"
- "ERCO's Summer Back to School Bash event a success"

2025 - Last Year

- "Margie Warren retires from Pelahatchie Board after 40 years of service"
- "Chief Sensei Rials earns Master rank"

Southern Pine offers tips to beat the heat and lower summer electric bills

Special to Pelahatchie News

With extreme summer temperatures gripping Mississippi, Southern Pine Electric is encouraging members to take simple steps to reduce their energy use and keep electric bills manageable during the hottest part of the year.

"When temperatures soar into the 90s and 100s, it's not just uncomfortable—it drives up energy use across our entire service area," said Kristen Thorne, Director of Member Services at Southern Pine Electric. "Air conditioners are running harder and longer, and for many families, that means higher bills. We want to help our members stay safe, stay cool, and stay in control of their energy costs."

Southern Pine offers practical, no-cost and low-cost tips for reducing usage during peak demand times—typically from 2 p.m. to 8 p.m.—and easing the strain on both wallets and the electric system:

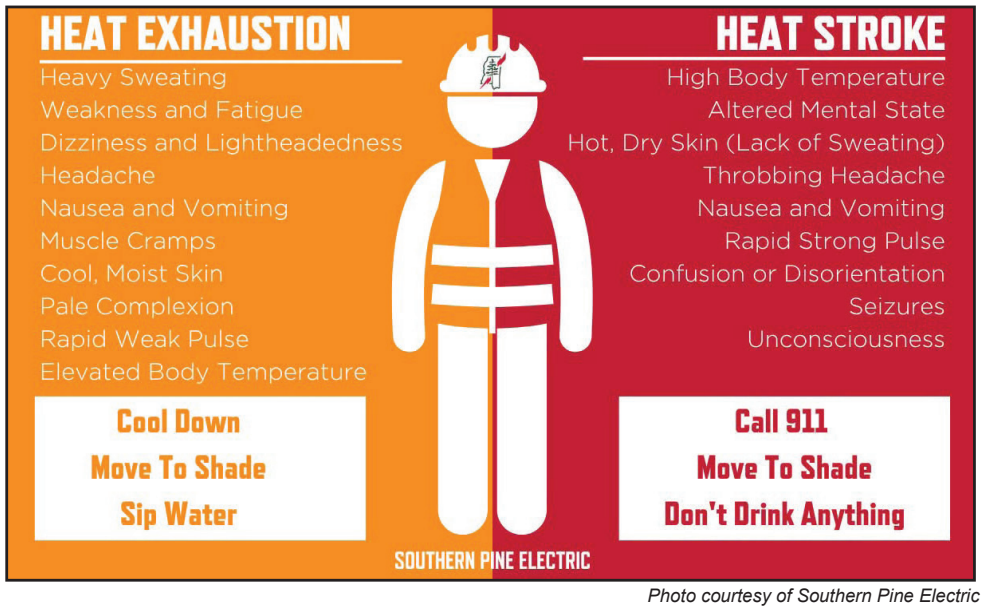


Photo courtesy of Southern Pine Electric

• Set thermostats to 78 degrees or higher when home and even higher when away.

• Use ceiling fans to circulate air but turn them off when leaving a room.

• Close blinds and curtains to block direct sunlight, especially during the hottest hours of the day.

• Avoid indoor cooking during peak hours. Instead, consider using an outdoor grill or small appliances like air fryers, microwaves, or slow cookers.

• Delay running heat-producing appliances like dishwashers and clothes dryers until later in the evening.

• Change air filters regularly and service air conditioning systems for maximum efficiency.

• Download and use the free MyPower app to monitor daily use and set alerts to avoid billing surprises.

"Members can take charge of their energy use and see the difference on their bills," Thorne said. "These are easy steps anyone can take, and they really add up—not just for your home, but for the entire cooperative system."

Southern Pine Electric encourages members to visit www.southernpine.coop for more energy-saving ideas and to access the MyPower usage monitoring tool. Members may also contact the cooperative to schedule a free home energy audit.

"Mississippi summers are tough," Thorne added. "But with a little planning and a few smart habits, we can all stay cooler and save money while we do it."

Southern Pine Electric is a member-owned, not-for-profit cooperative that distributes electricity to more than 70,000 members in 11 counties in central and south Mississippi. Headquartered in Taylorsville, Southern Pine has offices in Brandon, Newton, Hattiesburg and New Hebron.

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Beat the summer heat: How to handle heat exhaustion

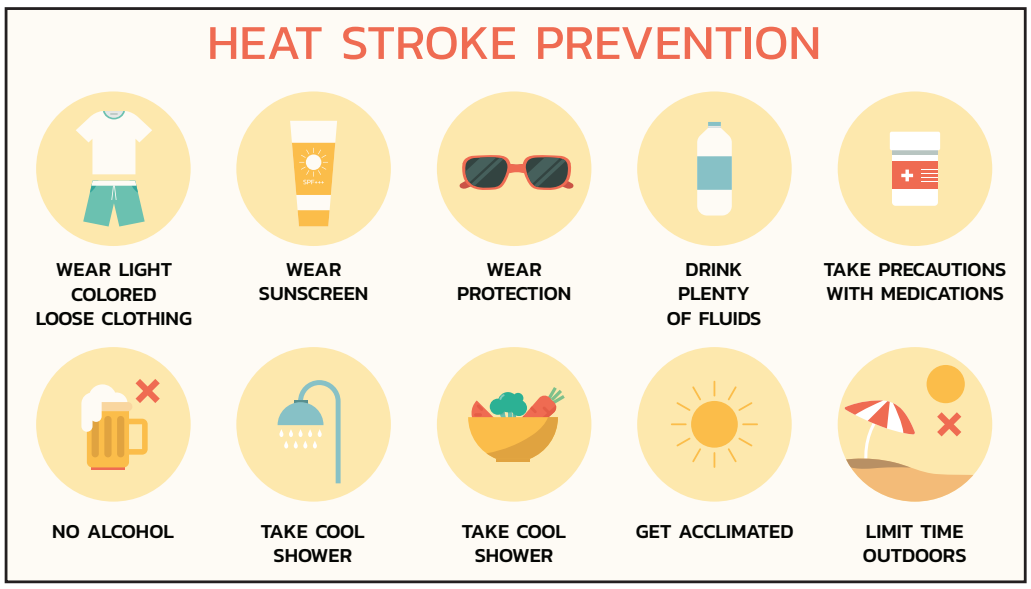


Special to Pelahatchie News

By Doug Carter, Rankin County Extension Agent

Summer is here. As you work and play outside, please be cautious and smart about how you handle this hot and humid Mississippi weather.

Please try to stay hydrated. There is not a set number for the proper amount of fluid to drink to stay hydrated. It is all individual to each person and greatly depends on how much each person normally sweats, and each person's physical condition. It also depends on the physical activity each person is engaged in. Urine color is a good indicator. Clear is hydrated and dark yellow is dehydrated. Loss of 2% or more of body weight after the activity could mean dehydration.



While water is excellent, if you are working at a strenuous task and sweating for over an hour at a time, sports drinks or small snacks will help replace the electrolytes needed. Sodium & carbohydrates will be needed to keep energy levels up. Have a cooler with you at all times, with what you need in it.

Consider using tailgate tents for shade, when possible, for stationary work in an outside area. Adjust work schedules when possible. It is best to start earlier in the mornings and try to accomplish the most intensive effort tasks first. Try to avoid doing strenuous jobs from around noon until 3:30 p.m. or during the hottest hours of the day.

Gradually increase the workload and allow more frequent breaks for new workers or workers who have been on vacation or out of the heat for several days. A body needs time to acclimate to higher temps and other environmental changes. It usually takes 10 to 14 days of heat exposure with the work you are performing to reduce the risk of heat injury and become used to the heat.

Source: MSU Dawg Tracks/ Safety Newsletter/July 2021

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Pastor's Perspective: Unmerited Love



Special to Pelahatchie News

By Guest Columnist Spencer Sullivan, Pastor, Pelahatchie Baptist

As I write this today, my family and I are in the midst of a life-changing week. A few days ago, Melanie and I became grandparents.

Just typing out those words seems more like a dream than a reality. I'll be honest, as soon as we found out our daughter-in-law was pregnant, the whole idea of being a grandfather has been hard for me to reconcile. I don't feel old enough to be a grandfather. I haven't felt ready for that season of my life to begin. You may think this is ridiculous and it is, but I still like to consider myself as a "young adult". However, I had a moment the day our granddaughter was born where perhaps I finally came to grips with the reality check that I'm not young anymore. After sharing the news of our granddaughter's birth with a good friend from overseas, he actually said to me: "It is not good, but you must accept it. You are an old man now!" He was certainly joking with me, but still, a grandfather? Every person in my life that has graduated to grandparenthood has gone on and on about how wonderful grandchildren are! How this is the best part of life! But we still have teenage sons! We're still raising our own kids and now we have a granddaughter? Is this real? As you can see, it has been a process for me to accept this new chapter of our lives. But here's the thing: as soon as I laid eyes on my granddaughter, I was absolutely in love! She's the most beautiful baby girl that has ever been born and you cannot convince me otherwise!

As I think about this deep new love that we have for our granddaughter, Melanie reminded me of certain realities that pregnant moms experience while carrying their babies. Particularly in the latter months of pregnancy, things can get really, really uncomfortable. While still in the womb, this precious baby girl naturally drained my daughter-in-law's energy. Unexpectedly, she would kick her and move in uncomfortable



Special to Pelahatchie News

ways. She even fed off of her. But all the while, my son and daughter-in-law, me and Melanie, her other grandparents, and more would all lay down our lives for her. This was true from the beginning, even before she was born. My granddaughter hasn't done anything to deserve or earn this kind of deep and passionate love. She is loved this way simply because she is ours.

This likely makes sense to you as you consider the love you have for your own children, grandchildren, etc. But I'd like to challenge you to consider this idea as it relates to God's incredible love for you and me. We have absolutely done nothing to deserve His love, yet we have done plenty to confirm we are unworthy of it. Yet, He loves us anyway with this deep, strong, loyal, unending, unfailing, unconditional love that doesn't really make sense accept to understand that we are His. The apostle John wrote: "In this is love, not that we have loved God but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins." Likewise, the apostle Paul wrote: "but God shows His love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us." Talk about a love that doesn't make any sense at all! Yet, God loves us not because of any merit of our own but just simply because we are His. Do you know this love of God? He loves you and He's done everything necessary to adopt you into His family. The response He desires is repentance from sin and faith in His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. Repent and believe today and experience the love of God as a son or daughter of the Most High!





Zinnia varieties perform through summer months



Special to SW Rankin News

By Guest Columnist Eddie Smith, MSU Extension Service

When the summer heat settles across the South, many flowering plants begin to slow down. But not zinnias.

These plants seem to thrive under stifling conditions and put on an incredible show. I find myself stopping to admire them every time I see them through the summer.

One reason I recommend zinnias so often is that they are incredibly easy to grow. Give them a sunny location, reasonably well-drained soil and a little water during extended dry periods, and they will reward you with months of blooms.

Another reason I love them is that they are magnets for butterflies, bees and other beneficial pollinators. This makes them an excellent choice for gardeners who want to create a vibrant and wildlife-friendly landscape.

One variety that has caught my eye is the Crestar Mix zinnia.

These distinctive flowers have unusual, crested blooms that give each blossom extra texture and character. Instead of the traditional rounded flower form, the petals have a ruffled appearance that adds interest to flower beds and cutting gardens alike.

Crestar Mix blooms in cheerful shades of pink, orange, yellow, red and salmon. These flowers create a lively tapestry that brightens the landscape throughout the summer months.

Another eye-catching favorite is Profusion Red Yellow Bicolor.

Its striking flowers feature rich red petals tipped with brilliant golden yellow, creating a dramatic two-toned



Zinnias such as these Crestar Mix are incredibly easy to grow, rewarding gardeners with months of blooms.

effect that almost looks hand-painted. This variety is a prolific bloomer, continuously producing fresh flowers even during the hottest days.

The Profusion series has become



Photos by MSU Extension/Eddie Smith

Profusion Red Yellow Bicolor zinnia is a prolific bloomer with petals that have a dramatic two-toned effect.

a Southern favorite with their outstanding tolerance to heat, humidity and common foliar diseases such as powdery mildew. These plants have a compact, well-branched growth habit, making them ideal for borders, containers, mass plantings and landscape beds where reliable color with minimal maintenance is desired.

Profusion Double White Improved provides a beautiful contrast to these warm colors.

Its fully double, snow-white blooms add elegance and brightness to the garden while helping neighboring flowers appear even more vivid. White flowers have the unique ability to reflect light, making evening gardens glow and creating a cooling look during the hottest months of the year.

This improved variety offers excellent flower production, sturdy plants and the same dependable disease resistance that has made the Profusion series so popular.



This Double White Improved zinnia is part of the Profusion series that has become a Southern favorite.

If you are looking for dependable summer color, it is hard to beat zinnias.

Whether you choose the unique blooms of Crestar Mix, the bold colors of Profusion Red Yellow Bicolor or the bright elegance of Profusion Double White Improved, these flowers will provide a season-long display that thrives in our Southern heat.



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PHS band camp highlights



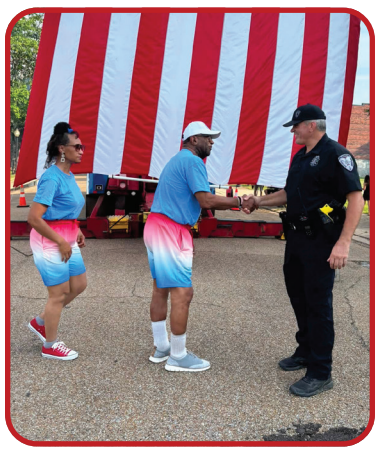




Photos special to Pelahatchie News

Pelahatchie celebrates July 4th with fun for the whole community









Photos special to Pelahatchie News

DATE	HOLIDAY	REASON
SEPTEMBER 7, 2026	SCHOOL HOLIDAY	LABOR DAY
OCTOBER 5–9, 2026	SCHOOL HOLIDAY	FALL BREAK
OCTOBER 12, 2026	STUDENT HOLIDAY / STAFF DEVELOPMENT	PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCE (ELEMENTARY)
NOVEMBER 23–27, 2026	SCHOOL HOLIDAY	THANKSGIVING BREAK
DECEMBER 21–25, 2026 DECEMBER 28–31, 2026	SCHOOL HOLIDAY	CHRISTMAS BREAK
JANUARY 1, 2027	SCHOOL HOLIDAY	CHRISTMAS BREAK
JANUARY 4, 2027	STUDENT HOLIDAY / STAFF DEVELOPMENT	
JANUARY 18, 2027	SCHOOL HOLIDAY	MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. DAY
FEBRUARY 15, 2027	SCHOOL HOLIDAY	PRESIDENTS DAY
MARCH 8–12, 2027	SCHOOL HOLIDAY	SPRING BREAK
MARCH 26, 2027 MARCH 29, 2027	SCHOOL HOLIDAY	EASTER BREAK
MAY 31, 2027	SCHOOL HOLIDAY	MEMORIAL DAY

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