

FOR MEMBERS OF ELECTRIC COOPERATIVES OF MISSISSIPPI

TODAY IN MISSISSIPPI



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A WATERFALL
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CAMPING 101

SEPTEMBER 2026



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SOUTH CAROLINA

Wilmington

Beaufort

NORTH CAROLINA

Kitty Hawk

Norfolk

Yorktown

Williamsburg

Mount Vernon

Washington, D.C.

MARYLAND

Baltimore

Annapolis

Travel is good for the soul

With our annual Travel issue hitting mailboxes and online this month, I'm reminded why travel is so important to us.

It opens your eyes to new places, new foods, new cultures, and travel can help you grow as a person.

When you step out of your comfort zone, you create new memories.

Simply put, travel is good for the soul.

Travel doesn't have to mean heading overseas to Paris, driving to Disney World, or flying to Las Vegas for a show. Although those kinds of trips are fine, popular choices, travel is not defined by the miles in between home and your destination.

Mississippi is our home. But Mississippi is also a bunch of different homes.

Day trips and weekend excursions inside our home state can be as fun and exciting as a vacation anywhere on the planet.

This year, we decided to go to Starkville to check out what the land of the Bulldogs has to offer.

Now, I played football and graduated from The University of Southern Mississippi

(To the Top! Golden Eagles forever!) But I will admit that a weekend or day trip to "Starkvegas" can be a whole lot of fun without ever stepping foot in Davis Wade Stadium.

Check out the Grant Presidential Library on campus, play pickleball at the city's first indoor pickleball court, grab some barbecue at The Little Dooney, and then take a walk around the Cotton District.

When you dig into our cover feature this month, you'll see what I'm talking about.

If you visit Starkville after reading this issue, make sure and tell them that *Today in Mississippi* sent you!

Enjoy the issue!



by Michael
Callahan

*Executive Vice President/CEO
Electric Cooperatives of Mississippi*



Cotton District



ENERGY EFFICIENCY TIP

Get ready for fall

September kicks off the fall shoulder season, when cooler mornings and milder evenings often mean you can give your heating and cooling system a break. Open windows, use ceiling fans and enjoy the fresh air whenever temperatures allow. It's also the perfect time to schedule annual HVAC maintenance before colder weather arrives. Because demand is typically lower during the fall, heating and cooling professionals often have greater availability, making it easier to book an appointment. Regular maintenance can improve your system's efficiency, help prevent unexpected breakdowns and keep your home comfortable all year long.

Source: Dept. of Energy

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TODAY IN MISSISSIPPI

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Vol. 79 No. 9

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On the cover

Starkville Mayor Lynn Spruill at the
Starkvegas mural downtown.

Photo by Whitley Daughtry.

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Today in Mississippi wins two national design awards

Today in Mississippi took home two major design awards this week from the 2026 National Rural Electric Cooperative Association's Statewide Editors Association Institute.

The conference was held in Pittsburgh from Aug. 2 to Aug. 5 and put on by the Pennsylvania Rural Electric Association.

Today in Mississippi won first place in the Best Feature Design category for the May 2026 cover story on writer Eudora Welty and the re-release of her photography book, "One Time One Place."

The monthly statewide magazine also won second place in the Best Overall Magazine Design category.

The design team is led by Creative Director Alan Burnitt.

"Our team has amazing talent, and they work hard for the Electric Cooperatives of Mississippi (ECM) day in and day out," said ECM Vice President of Communications Lydia Walters.

"I'm just honored to work alongside these incredible artists," said *Today in Mississippi* Editor Steven Ward.

Today in Mississippi is ECM's statewide monthly magazine.



How NRECA's Electric Cooperative Youth Tour spawned a state leader

Nicole Akins Boyd serves in the Mississippi Senate today, representing Lafayette County and part of Panola County in the northwest part of the state. But four decades ago, she was a 17-year-old test case as the first delegate from Mississippi selected to participate in the Electric Cooperative Youth Tour.

In 1986, the statewide association, then known as the Electric Power Associations of Mississippi, chose Boyd, a student at Oxford High School, to attend the annual event and report back on whether the state's co-ops should join the 28-year-old program.

Boyd, whose family belonged to North East Mississippi Electric Power Association, traveled as part of the Tennessee delegation and about 900 other delegates from around the nation. When she returned, she presented her findings to cooperative leaders across the state.

"My job was to sell. I was all about everybody going to Washington because I just knew how important it was for me to see things bigger than my little postage-stamp perception of the world," she says.

Mississippi co-ops embraced the program, and this year's delegation numbered 84 students.

"It's fantastic to see how it's grown," she says. "In a day and age when there is a lot of cynicism out there, I love that they can continue to learn about cooperatives and the rural electric system."

The Electric Cooperative Youth Tour experience helped shape Boyd's interest in public service. After graduating from Mississippi State University and law school at the University of Mississippi, she

built a career in law and government before winning election to the Mississippi Senate in 2020.

"I came back wanting to make a positive change," she says. "I wanted to be part of the policymaking process, and I wanted to be part of the things that are good and are going to make our state and our country grow."

As a state senator, Boyd has seen firsthand how co-ops do more than provide electricity.

"They're about connecting people and that's not a partisan issue," she says. "They are absolutely essential to the workforce in this day and age. Broadband expansion had to be a critical component for the state of Mississippi to develop because that's one of the things that industries are looking at, and rural electric cooperatives are an essential part of that."

Four decades after her Electric Cooperative Youth Tour experience, Boyd still considers it unlike any other leadership program.

"I think this one's unique," she says. "I learned very early on about the need to understand very

important policy matters and that has stayed with me. I don't see anything around the country that does something like the Youth Tour for rural areas." – **NRECA**



EDITOR'S NOTE:

Today in Mississippi profiled State Sen. Nicole Akins Boyd in a February 2026 cover story, which you can read by scanning this code. ▶





Red flowers *turn up heat* in the landscape

If you want to turn up
the heat in your garden,
nothing makes a statement
quite like the **COLOR RED**.

Red flowers bring energy, excitement, and dramatic beauty to the landscape. Wherever they are planted, red-blooming plants create a bold focal point that draws attention.

One of the first plants to consider is Sweetheart Kisses verbena.

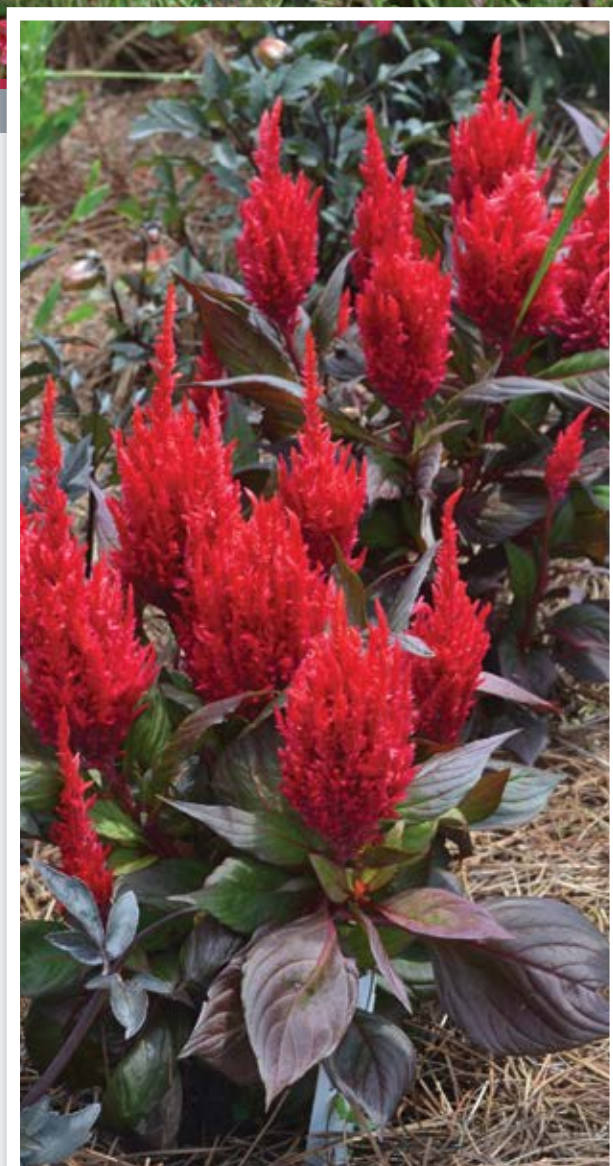
This beautiful variety produces clusters of vivid blooms in pink, solid red, and red with a hint of white. With its spreading, trailing growth habit, Sweetheart Kisses verbena is perfect for cascading over the edges of containers, hanging baskets, or spilling across the front of a flower bed.

One of the things I really love about verbena is how attractive it is to butterflies and other pollinators. The continuous display of blooms provides a valuable nectar source throughout the growing season.

To keep this plant looking its best, grow it in full sun with well-drained soil. Regular watering during dry periods and occasional feeding with a balanced fertilizer will help encourage nonstop summer color.

For a more dramatic garden statement, it's hard to beat Black Forest Ruby dahlia.

This variety combines rich, deep ruby-red flowers with striking dark foliage that can appear almost black in certain lighting. The contrast between the bold blooms and the dark leaves creates a sophisticated look that stands out in any landscape.



Dahlias are sun-loving plants that thrive when given at least six hours of direct sunlight each day. They prefer fertile, well-drained soil and consistent moisture, especially during periods of hot summer weather.

Black Forest Ruby dahlia performs beautifully in both containers and garden beds, producing an impressive display from late spring into fall. Regularly remove faded flowers to encourage even more blooms.

If you are looking for a plant that adds color and texture, take a look at Burning Embers celosia.

This eye-catching plant produces fiery red flower plumes that rise above deep burgundy foliage. This combination truly glows in the landscape. The upright growth habit adds height and interest, making it a great choice for the middle or back of flower beds or as a colorful container accent.

Celosia is a true summer performer, thriving in heat and humidity when many other plants begin to struggle. Once established, it is relatively drought-tolerant and requires little maintenance. Plant it in full sun and provide good drainage for the best growth and flower production.

Whether you choose the spreading blooms of Sweetheart Kisses verbena, the dramatic elegance of Black Forest Ruby dahlia, or the fiery texture of Burning Embers celosia, these red beauties can bring bold color and summer-long impact to your garden.

Adding a little red to your garden is a great way to turn up the heat. 🌸



by Dr. Eddie Smith

Southern Gardening columnist Dr. Eddie Smith, a gardening specialist and Pearl River County coordinator with the Mississippi State University Extension Service, is an internationally certified arborist, Produce Safety Alliance certified trainer, and one of the developers of the Mississippi Smart Landscapes program that encourages the use of native plants in the landscape.

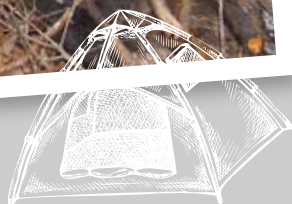


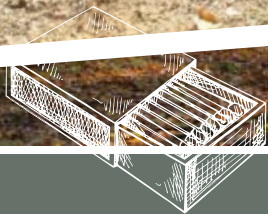
Get these essentials for an overnight adventure in nature

Growing up, I loved camping with my dad. One time, we headed to the forest on motorcycles with no tent or anything, except sleeping bags.

We built a fire, cooked our meal on sticks over it, and crawled into our sleeping bags on either side of the blaze. We planned to wake well before dawn. During the night, a severe cold front turned everything liquid into ice. The fire died down to embers. Still snug in our sleeping bags, dad and I stared at each other waiting for the other to get up first and throw some wood on the fire before our bladders burst.

Today, beginners can camp in relative luxury without breaking the bank. First, select a tent. The size depends upon how the person wants to use it and how many people it will house. A one-person pup tent should cost less than \$40, a good choice for hikers. A good small easy-to-erect dome tent would run less than \$60. Of course, the price goes up as tents get bigger. Some large tents could cost more than \$1,000.





Hikers want to keep it light, but many things fit into a backpack. Campers can buy a small, foldable stove for less than \$10. It weighs less than a pound. Add a can of Sterno, a flammable gel, for another \$4. The Sterno can fits inside the foldable stove, so people can heat a meal.

People camping near a vehicle would want a larger stove. The venerable two-burner Coleman stove probably cooked millions of meals over the past seven decades and remains essentially unchanged. It costs less than \$80, plus a can of fuel. Some burn liquid fuel. Campers can also choose to buy propane stoves.

Anybody could bundle up in blankets, but for more comfort, get sleeping bags. Sleeping bags come rated for different temperature ranges. Some come with liners that essentially make two bags in one for use in different conditions. For most situations in Mississippi, people wouldn't need a bag rated for sub-zero Arctic weather. A sleeping bag for typical Mississippi weather should cost less than \$60.



Air mattresses make sleeping much more comfortable. Invest in a heavy-duty mattress so it's less likely to spring a leak in the middle of the night. A good air mattress should cost less than \$20. Throw in another \$20 or so and buy a small battery-powered air pump to inflate it.

Cots keep people above the cold ground and allow storage space to place items beneath them. Some folding cots break down into small packages. A folding cot will run about \$60.

Campers also need flashlights, lanterns, ice chests, cooking pans, and utensils. After making the initial investments, camping costs very little. People can find many great places to camp in Mississippi.

Many state parks offer scenic places for primitive camping at reasonable costs. As campers gain experience, they might want to head off into the wilderness to "rough it" in places like national forests. Just check the regulations first. 🌲

Visit [visitmississippi.org/things-to-do/camping/](https://www.visitmississippi.org/things-to-do/camping/) to find places to go camping in Mississippi.



by John N. Felsher

John N. Felsher is a professional freelance writer, broadcaster, photographer, and editor who lives in Alabama. An avid sportsman, he's written more than 3,300 articles for more than 170 different magazines on a wide variety of outdoors topics. Contact him at j.felsher@hotmail.com.

History, nature come together *at Dunn's Falls*

by Lici Beveridge

Nestled amid 69 acres of natural beauty is a manmade waterfall that weaves the story of a once-burgeoning grist mill with the fabric of Mother Nature's bounty known as Dunn's Falls, just a stone's throw from Meridian.

Dunn's Falls is part of the Pat Harrison Waterway District, which operates nine parks in southeast Mississippi.

"People have always come and enjoyed the waterfall," park caretaker Lisa Brownlee said in a recent interview. "Mr. Dunn lived here from 1854 to 1904, when he passed away."

Adjacent to the waterfall is a water wheel that once powered the grist mill, founded in 1854 by Irish immigrant and entrepreneur John Dunn.

"He did reroute two streams coming off the park and into his grist mill," Brownlee said. "The water wheel rusted out a while back, but they are restoring it."

According to VisitMeridian officials, the mill was commandeered by the Confederacy in 1860 and was used to make blankets, hats, and knives. It is believed that one apprentice at the facility was John B. Stetson, the organization said. Stetson later made a name for himself with his high-quality cowboy hats. Records of his employment at the mill can be found in the Lauderdale County Courthouse in Meridian.

In addition to the mill operations, the facility at various times served as a distillery, a blacksmith shop and a place for carding wool used to produce clothing for soldiers.

“

It's just a beautiful,
peaceful place.

Everyone loves it when
they come. There's a little
something for everybody.

DUNN'S FALLS



The original mill is long gone, but a similar facility, the former Carroll-Richardson Grist Mill, built in 1857, now sits in its place. The newer mill was relocated to the Mississippi park from Cave Springs, Georgia.

“Pat Harrison and the state took it over and built this park that we have now in 1987, the year it opened,” Brownlee said.

While the mill itself is no longer in operation, visitors can see the machinery and see how the mill would have operated. The 65-foot waterfall was created by Dunn and still provides a blend of manmade and natural beauty.

“The mill is more like a museum than an actual functioning mill,” Brownlee said. “It’s just a representative. You can walk around in the mill. There are two floors that still have the old artifacts, and you can look around in there.”

The millhouse “provides visitors with a rare glimpse into 19th-century milling and daily life,” according to VisitMeridian officials.

A nearby pond was used to collect water to power the mill. Today, the pond is stocked with catfish, where fishing enthusiasts of all ages can try their hand at the sport. Picnic tables

and playgrounds dot the surrounding green spaces, and nature trails run throughout the park for hiking or leisurely walks in the woods. The park is home to the bluff oak, typically found along riverbanks and bluffs in the area.

“We do have one of the largest,” Brownlee said.

Alongside the falls is a wooden staircase, which visitors can use to descend to the Chunky River below for an up-close view and more fishing opportunities. Boaters also can use the facility for recreational activities.

Dunn’s Falls also offers primitive camping sites and a rental cabin for overnight stays.

“It’s just a beautiful, peaceful place,” Brownlee said. “Everyone loves it when they come. There’s a little something for everybody.”

Brownlee and her husband Terry have been caretakers at Dunn’s Falls for about four years. The couple lives on site, so they are at the facility year-round.

“We love the peaceful nature of it — just nature in general,” Lisa Brownlee said. “It’s just lovely out here.” 🌿



Dunn’s Falls is open year-round. Admission per day is \$5 for adults and teenagers, and \$3 for children 2-12. Children younger than 2 are admitted free. Additional rates apply for camping, fishing, and boating. The cabin rental can be reserved through the PHWD office by calling 800-748-9403. The park is located at 6890 Dunn’s Falls Road in Enterprise, off Interstate 59, about 15 miles south of Meridian.

For more information.....
visit phwd.net/parks/dunns-falls or call 601-655-8550.

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WARNING - WARNING - WARNING

If Your Hands, Arms, Feet, or Legs Are Numb - If You Feel Shooting or Burning Pain or An Electric Sensation - You Are at Risk Don't Let Creeping Nerve Death Ruin Your Life

Get The Help You Need - Here's What You Need to Know...

Purvis, MS - If you experience numbness or tingling in your hands, arms, legs, or feet or if you experience shooting or burning pain, this is important. Please read this carefully.

Peripheral Neuropathy is when small blood vessels in the hands, arms, feet or legs become diseased and tiny nerves that keep the cells and muscles working properly shrivel up and die.

Early-warning symptoms include tingling and numbness, mild loss of feeling in your hands, arms, legs or feet, inability to feel your feet, which increases your risk of foot-injury and falling.

More Advanced Symptoms Include...

- Loss of coordination & dexterity, which puts you at increased risk of accidents.
- Inability to feel clothing like socks and gloves.
- High risk of falling, which makes walking dangerous, and makes you more dependent on others.
- Burning sensations in your arms, legs, hands or feet that may start mild, but as nerves and muscles die, may feel like you're being burned by a blow torch.

Ignore the early warning signals long enough and you risk progressive nerve damage leading to muscle wasting, severe pain, loss of balance and a lot of staying at home wishing you didn't hurt.

When every step is like walking on hot coals, sitting still may be the only thing you feel like doing. But there's little joy in sitting still all day long.



Without treatment, nerve degeneration that begins with slight tingling or numbness may lead to a hot burning sensation and intense pain. Without treatment muscle wasting, loss of mobility and loss of independence is often the next step.

Now here's the scary part....

- Nerve damage CAUSES cell damage.
- Cell damage SPEEDS UP nerve degeneration

Without treatment this can become a DOWN-WARD SPIRAL that accelerates.

The damage can get worse fast. Mild symptoms intensify. Slight tingling, numbness or lack of feeling can turn into burning pain.

Before you know it, damage can become so bad you hurt all the time.

Unless this downward spiral is stopped and nerves return to proper function - the damage to nerves and cells in the affected area can get so bad your muscles begin to die right along with the nerves and cells. And that sets the stage for weakness, loss of mobility, disability, and dependence on others.

If you have early warning signs of peripheral neuropathy, (tingling &/or numbness, loss of feeling or pain) it's CRITICAL you get proper treatment.

It's critical, because with proper treatment you can improve your symptoms. Without it, you are playing Russian Roulette with your health.

Once your nerve loss reaches 85%, odds are there's nothing any doctor can do to help.

The most common method your doctor may recommend to treat neuropathy is prescription drugs



Drugs like Gabapentin, Lyrica, Cymbalta, & Neurontin are often prescribed to manage the pain. But, damaged nerves and dying cells do not heal on their own.

Pain pills do not restore healthy nerve function. They just mask the pain as the nerves continue to degenerate and cells and muscle continue to die.

Taking endless drugs and suffering terrible side effects that may damage your liver & kidney and create even more problems, is not a reasonable path. You deserve better.

Three things must be determined to effectively treat neuropathy. 1) What is the underlying cause? 2) How much nerve damage has been sustained? 3) How much treatment your condition will require?

With proper treatment, shriveled blood vessels grow back & nerves can return to proper function. How much treatment you may need depends on your condition.

At **Purvis Chiropractic** we do a complete neuropathy sensitivity exam to determine the extent of your nerve damage. The exam includes a detailed sensory evaluation, extensive peripheral vascular testing, & a detailed analysis of the findings.

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ASK *a* MANAGER



PEARL RIVER VALLEY ELECTRIC CEO

Matthew Ware

Q *Why don't all the electric cooperatives get together and agree to start using metal power poles instead of wood? I know the cost would be greater, but this could be done in increments. I believe metal poles would withstand our severe storms and hurricanes better than wood.*

A This is an excellent question, and it's one we hear from time to time, especially after major storms or hurricanes. At first glance, replacing wood poles with metal poles may seem like an obvious solution. While metal poles do offer advantages in certain situations, the decision is much more complex than simply choosing one material over another.

When comparing different types of poles, a key factor to consider is the significantly higher costs associated with metal poles versus wood. At Pearl River Valley Electric, we maintain more than 6,300 miles of power lines supported by well over 100,000 utility poles across our 12-county service area. An average treated wood distribution pole costs around \$200, while a comparable metal pole can cost in excess of \$1,200. When you multiply that difference across thousands of poles, the additional investment quickly reaches into the millions of dollars, and these costs would ultimately be borne by our members.

Even replacing poles gradually over time isn't as straightforward as it sounds. Utilities generally don't replace poles simply because they reach a certain age. Instead, poles are replaced when they no longer meet safety standards, when they are damaged, or when system upgrades require a stronger or taller structure. Replacing a perfectly sound wood pole years before the end of its useful life would not be a responsible use of our members' money.

That said, we do use metal poles where they make the most sense. Pearl River Valley Electric has replaced wood poles with metal poles in certain locations that are especially difficult for our line crews to access. Because these areas can be challenging and time-consuming to reach, installing a stronger, longer-lasting metal pole can reduce the likelihood of future replacements and minimize the need for crews to return to those remote locations. This targeted approach allows us to take advantage of metal's benefits where they provide the greatest value.

Another important, and often overlooked, benefit of wood poles is their remarkable durability. Many people are surprised

to learn that properly treated wood poles can remain in service for 40 to 60 years, and often longer depending on environmental conditions. These poles have served electric utilities reliably for generations and continue to be the industry standard for most distribution systems across the country.

To ensure our poles remain dependable, Pearl River Valley Electric has an extensive pole inspection and maintenance program. Contract crews regularly inspect poles throughout our system, testing them for decay, damage, and structural integrity. Poles that no longer meet our standards are scheduled for replacement before they become a reliability concern. This proactive approach allows us to maintain a safe, reliable system while making the best use of our members' investment.

It's also worth noting that no type of utility pole is completely hurricane-proof. During the strongest storms, damage is often caused by falling trees, flying debris, saturated soil, or extreme wind forces that can damage virtually any structure. Whether a pole is wood, metal, or concrete, severe weather can still result in outages. Furthermore, when it comes to power restoration, wood poles are lighter and much faster to replace after a major storm or hurricane, helping restore power to members more quickly.

At Pearl River Valley Electric, reliability is always our top priority. Rather than replacing every wood pole with metal, we focus on a balanced approach: inspecting and maintaining our existing infrastructure, replacing poles when necessary, strategically installing metal poles where they provide the greatest long-term benefit, strengthening our system, and investing in technologies and equipment that improve reliability while keeping electric service affordable.

Every dollar we spend comes from the members we serve. Our responsibility is to make decisions that provide the greatest long-term value, ensuring a safe, reliable electric system not just for today, but for generations to come. 

Have a general question

about the world of electric cooperatives that all members around the state would like to hear the answer to? Email your question to news@ecm.coop and look for the answer in a future issue.



PENNINGTON'S NEXT CHAPTER *continues to embrace* JOY *in* LIVING



Pennington pictured above

“

I've loved all the people I've worked with. I met so many people who are still my friends today.

Newly-retired Pontotoc Electric Power Association (PEPA) Employee Michal Pennington has always lived life to the fullest. She remembers as a young child being excited for the opening of Walt Disney World. Her father owned an airplane, and he arranged to fly his family to Orlando to enjoy the brand-new theme park.

Pennington said her mother had it all planned out, even down to the hats they were going to wear! “She had a Donald Duck hat for me. Donald was my favorite. She picked out a Mickey Mouse hat for my brother. His name was Mickey, and she thought that was the perfect choice. Of course, my 15-year-old brother did not agree!”

Pennington's father Dr. Jack Stokes passed away after a tractor accident. Pennington was almost nine years old and about to start the fifth grade. She said Mickey was 17, and she remembers it being a tough time, but her mother raised them by herself and never let them know if she was having any difficulty. Pennington said her mother was “so strong.”

After graduating from Pontotoc High School, Pennington went on to Northeast Community College for a year, followed by three years at Ole Miss. She considered a career in nursing, but after some discussion with her husband (the late Bob Pennington), she ultimately chose the accounting path.

Over the years, Pennington's family grew to include three daughters: Lauren, Mary Ann, and Kristen. She is proud to say her girls all “married Mississippi boys.” She noted that she and Bob always enjoyed having their family around as much as possible, especially during holidays and on their yearly beach trips. Tailgating at Ole Miss games with friends and their daughters' friends were other wonderful times spent together.

Sadly, Bob died in 2018, but Pennington said she will never forget how hard he worked over the years to take care of them. “He took such good care of our girls when I was in school, so I could get my degree. He worked out of town in Memphis and traveled back and forth, so he could take care of our family.”

continued on page 18



ELECTRIC COOPERATIVES OF MI

Youth Tour of



LEARN. GROW. EXPERIENCE.

A group of 83 rising high school seniors from across Mississippi traveled to Washington, D.C. in June to attend the 2026 NRECA's Electric Cooperative Youth Tour. The trip was the culmination of the delegates' participation in the Electric Cooperatives of Mississippi's Cooperative Youth Leaders program.

The program instills leadership skills in the delegates, informs them about the electric cooperative form of business, and teaches them about the democratic form of government at both the state and federal levels.

During a February workshop in Jackson, the delegates had the opportunity to meet and hear from state legislators.

While in Washington, D.C., the delegates and adult advisors visited historic sites, monuments, museums, and had an opportunity to learn about the impact electric cooperatives have on their communities.

The delegates met with U.S. Sen. Cindy Hyde-Smith of Mississippi and took photos with her. The Senator shared with the students about her experiences in the U.S. Congress and her path to get there.

The delegates also had an opportunity to tour Capitol Hill with former U.S. Congressman Gregg Harper of Mississippi. The highlight of the tour was a visit to the chamber of the U.S. House of Representatives.

The delegates attended a Washington Nationals pro baseball game and experienced an evening cruise on the Potomac River.

The delegates were chosen by their local electric cooperative.

The Cooperative Youth Leaders program is fully funded — including the trip to D.C. — by the local electric co-ops as a commitment to molding future leaders for Mississippi, so they can impact the state and local communities.

MISSISSIPPI'S

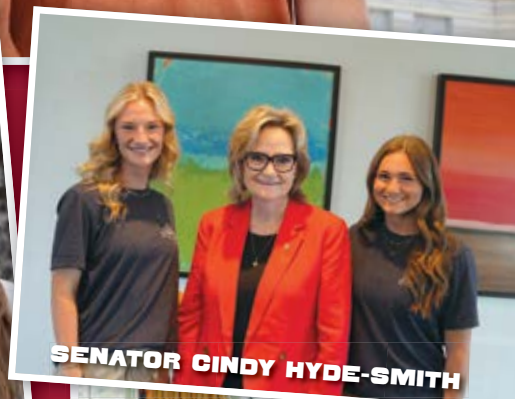
D.C.



CAPITOL STEPS



FDR MEMORIAL



SENATOR CINDY HYDE-SMITH



PEOPLE'S HOUSE



AIR FORCE MEMORIAL

LEAH FIELDS
SOUTH PONTOTOC HIGH SCHOOL

MARY ALEX KAKALES
BRUCE HIGH SCHOOL

"I had an absolute blast on youth tour! I learned so much about our nation's past as well as the events occurring today. I got to experience how Washington, D.C. operates firsthand and gained so many true friendships along the way."

Leah Fields

Pennington said her daughters have been a huge support to her as she has navigated the loss of her husband. "I could not have made it through life without them. I'm so proud of them."

Those three daughters have families of their own now, so Pennington loves spending time with them, their husbands, and her six grandchildren at every opportunity. She said her girls each have very special qualities, have worked hard, and are wonderful mothers.

Her first job was working as a secretary to Phil Jones at Brookwood Furniture. Pennington said she did not have a lot of experience as a recent college graduate, and she was grateful for the opportunity. She then worked at Pontotoc Hospital for three years, where she handled insurance and data processing. She said that was a memorable time since she was working with a few people who had worked with her father.

Her next stop was PEPA. She started as an accounting clerk and later moved into a general accountant role. She said she has enjoyed each place she's been employed. "I've loved all the people I've worked with. I met so many people who are still my friends today."

She said things have changed a lot over the years since she started her job at the utility. "Years ago, we mostly used paper and ledger books. Then we got into computers. I remember using Lotus 123 when I first got here. We slowly progressed to doing more on the computer and into different programs. I had to learn new ones from time to time. It's been a good learning process throughout my time here."

Pennington has always enjoyed traveling. She's been to Hawaii, Italy, Great Britain, France, and Spain, and hopes to continue traveling now that she starts this new chapter in her life. She said she wonders how she found the time to work all these years, since she can't believe how busy she is now. She said, "It's very true, the statement that you'll wonder how you ever worked!"

She has some sage advice for others who are nearing retirement age. "Retire when you can and do what makes you happy. You never know what tomorrow might bring."

And for those not yet to that point in their lives, she has some wisdom to pass on to them. "Find a positive in every situation. God places us where we need to be in life. I feel blessed to have worked with many wonderful people throughout my career. God surrounds us with people we need in our lives."



“

Find a positive in every situation. God places us where we need to be in life. I feel blessed to have worked with many wonderful people throughout my career. God surrounds us with people we need in our lives.



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A weekend in **Starkville**

by Steven Ward

Back in 2014, the Mississippi State Bulldogs beat three Top 10-ranked football teams which got them off to a 6-0 start that season. That beginning led to the team's first ever No. 1 ranking. They remained No. 1 in college football for five weeks.

The team was led on the field then by Dallas Cowboys quarterback Dak Prescott.

"This isn't you're your grandma's Starkville. Sometimes we say this is the Starkville Dak built," said Paige Hunt, the director of tourism at the Greater Starkville Development Partnership.

Although "the new" Starkville was not literally built by Prescott and the team, that was the time significant development in the city grew to new heights. The national visibility certainly played its part.

Not just an SEC football city anymore, there's much to do and see in Starkville these days. If you've only been to Davis Wade Stadium to watch the Bulldogs, Dudy Noble Field for a baseball game, or Humphrey Coliseum (The Hump) for hoops, you may have missed some hidden jewels.

All the time Mississippians need to play catch up on Starkville's latest and greatest is a weekend.

Mayor Lynn Spruill said she always hears the same message from visitors following a trip to "Starkvegas."

"Hospitality. People feel like they are so welcomed here," Spruill said.

Spruill, a Starkville native who graduated from Mississippi State, came back to her hometown after six years as a pilot in the U.S. Navy and retiring from Delta Airlines after 19 years.

Spruill was the first woman in the history of the U.S. Navy to qualify as an aircraft carrier pilot in 1979.

Spruill had more than 50 take offs and landings on carriers.

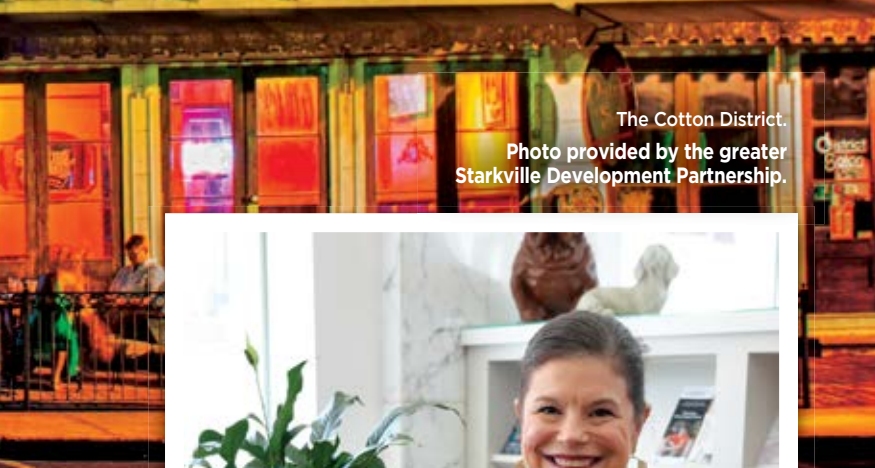
Following a time as mayor of Addison, Texas from 1985 to 1993, Spruill came back home to run the family businesses, Spruill Property Management. She has been mayor of Starkville since 2017.

"We have so much to do here. Everything at the university, great museums and restaurants, just a lovely atmosphere," Spruill said.

Spruill said she enjoys seeing visiting teams and their fans respond to the charms of the smallest city in the SEC.



The Cotton District.
Photo provided by the greater
Starkville Development Partnership.



The Starkville Favorites
mural on East Main Street.



The renovated pool area
at the Far Out Motel.



Director of Tourism Paige Hunt



Photos by Whitley Daughtry

What to See and Do

Starkville Art Murals

Thanks to a growing public art scene, there are more than 28 murals spread across downtown, the Cotton District, University Drive near Mississippi State's campus, and beyond.

Bring a phone with a good camera. The self-guided mural walking tour includes the Greetings from Starkville mural on Russell Street, the StoryBook Stairs on the corner of North Lafayette and Main Street, The Starkville Favorites mural on East Main Street, the Starkvegas mural on Russell Street, — the latter three created by artist Deborah Mansfield — the Cotton District Street mural at the intersection of University Drive and Maxwell Street, and the Belle's Gives You Wings mural on Russell Street.

 starkville.org/news/public-art-murals

The MAFES Cheese Store

If you've lived in Mississippi long enough, you've heard of — and probably tasted at some point — the famous Mississippi State “cannon ball” Edam cheese.

An MSU symbol for more than 80 years, the artisan cheese springs from students from the Mississippi Agriculture and Forestry Experiment Station (MAFES) who milk up to 200 cows, twice daily, 365 days a year. The MAFES Custer Dairy Processing Plant produces 50,000 three-pound balls of Edam cheese each year. The cheese is aged for three months before sale.

The cheese and other kinds of dairy products are sold at The MAFES Cheese Store on campus.

It's not just about cheese, either.

About 25,000 gallons of ice cream are produced each year by the MAFES processing plant. Muscadine Ripple, a popular favorite, is produced with muscadine grapes grown and harvested at the South Mississippi Branch Experiment Station. It takes 150 gallons of muscadine juice to produce a year's worth of Muscadine Ripple, one of seven flavors sold by cup in the MAFES Sales Store. The store also offers half gallon and three gallon sizes in 11 flavors.

 msucheese.com

Cotton District

Once a substantial cotton mill site, Dan Camp had an idea to develop student housing in the early 1970s with townhouses and cottages that would use the historic architectural styles of New Orleans, Vicksburg, Charleston, South Carolina, and Alexandria, Virginia.

The area — adjacent to the university — includes Lummus Drive and Holtsinger and Maxwell Streets.

Restaurants, bars, and some shopping areas make up the Cotton District along with hundreds of residential units filled by students and young professionals.

You can't leave Starkville without taking a stroll in the Cotton District.

 cottondistrictms.org

The Ulysses S. Grant Presidential Library

Mississippi State houses Ulysses S. Grant's presidential library. Mississippi State is one of only six universities in the country to host a presidential library.

The Ulysses S. Grant Presidential Library consists of a 21,000 square-foot facility that offers the largest single collection of Grant papers and items in the world, contains 15,000 linear feet of correspondence, research notes, artifacts, photographs, scrapbooks, and memorabilia, along with 4,000 published monographs.

Visitors rave about the artifacts from Grant's life, including letters written to family members, specially commissioned China from his daughter Nellie's White House wedding, and a copy of his death mask. Visitors also enjoy the interactive touch screen exhibits and the four life-sized models of Grant throughout his life.

 usgrantlibrary.org

PKL ROW

Open since July of this year, PKL ROW is an indoor pickleball club and lounge off Airport Road.

Although PKL ROW offers memberships, the courts are open to the public daily.

The facility includes 12 pro-level courts, reversable court times, a pro shop, and clinics. The club also includes a multi-sport simulation bay where the public can practice their golf swings from a selection of golf courses from around the world.

PKL ROW also boasts The Hangar, a pickleball bar and lounge that offers spirits and a bar menu.

 pklrow.com



Pickleball enthusiasts compete in a match at the new PKL ROW.



The StoryBook Stairs mural at the corner of N. Lafayette and Main Streets.



A fried catfish lunch and the outside of The Little Dooley on Fellowship Street.



Where to Stay.....

Far Out Motel

Look up for the big yellow star in front of the Far Out Motel on Martin Luther King Jr. Drive.

Formerly an official motel for parents visiting students at the university, the Far Out Motel has been renovated with an emphasis on retro vibes.

The boutique motel features an outside bar and barbecue area. The former pool has been transformed into a groovy hang out area with oversized chairs and games for the kids.

 faroutmotel.com

Hotel Chester

Hotel Chester, on North Jackson Street in downtown Starkville, was built in 1925. Today, the 36-room boutique hotel is known for its historic and stylish atmosphere and its proximity to the university and the world of downtown.

 historichotelchester.com

Where to Eat

The Little Dooley

100 Fellowship St.
662-323-6094

 littledooley.com

Known for its barbecue, Southern favorites like fried catfish, shrimp, and homestyle sides, The Little Dooley is a longtime SEC tradition.

Restaurant Tyler

100 E. Main St.
662-324-1014

 eatlocalstarkville.com/restaurant-tyler

A downtown Starkville staple since 2008, Restaurant Tyler is known as a foodie favorite. Check out the blue plates for lunch and the shrimp and grits, Lamb Gnocchi, and duck burger for dinner.

Oby's

504 Academy Road
662-323-0444

 obys.net

Look out for Oby's traditional and grand Coca-Cola mural when heading to one of the city's best restaurants. In operation since 1976, Oby's features Cajun po-boys, traditional po-boys, wraps, Southern comfort platters, and spuds.

BIN 612

612 University Drive
662-324-6126

 eatlocalstarkville.com/bin-612

BIN 612 is the epicenter of the historic Cotton District. Try the made from scratch pizza, gourmet burgers, and tacos.



With a year-around population of 26,000 that doubles when the students descend to the city, Starkville is more than a place to visit for a football game.

"Folks have come here for Mississippi State football and other sporting events, but I think exploring our downtown and Cotton District... there's so many restaurants, shops, nightlife spots, all within walking distance. Multiple hotels. So, it's a great opportunity to experience a very walkable and fun college town," Hunt said.

Starkville also is the perfect place for Mississippians to visit for a day trip or weekend, Hunt said.

"Mini vacations are great. Exploring our state for a weekend getaway is always a great opportunity." 

For more information

 **about a trip to Starkville,
visit starkville.org**

Mississippi's 2026-2027 HUNTING SEASONS

For a complete list of hunting seasons, bag limits, and other legal restrictions, go to www.mdwfp.com.

MIGRATORY GAME BIRDS			
SEASON	DATES	DAILY BAG LIMIT	POSSESSION LIMIT
Sept. Teal	Sept. 19 - Sept. 27	6	18
Sept. Canada Geese*	Sept. 1 - Sept. 30	5	15
Woodcock	Dec. 18 - Jan. 31	3	9
Snipe	Nov. 14 - Feb. 28	8	24
Gallinules (Common & Purple)	Sept. 1 - Sept. 30 Nov. 22 - Dec. 31	15 Singly or in aggregate	45 Singly or in aggregate
Rails: Clapper and King	Sept. 1 - Sept. 30 Nov. 22 - Dec. 31	15 Singly or in aggregate	45 Singly or in aggregate
Rails: Sora and Virginia	Sept. 1 - Sept. 30 Nov. 22 - Dec. 31	25 Singly or in aggregate	75 Singly or in aggregate
Mourning and White-winged Doves (Statewide)	Sept. 5 - Oct. 4 Oct. 24 - Nov. 22 Dec. 26 - Jan. 24	15 Singly or in aggregate	45 Singly or in aggregate
Crows	Nov. 7 - Feb. 28	No Limit	No Limit
Ducks, Mergansers, and Coots**	Nov. 27 - Nov. 29 Dec. 4 - Dec. 6 Dec. 9 - Jan. 31	See below**	See below**
Geese: Canada, White-fronted, Snow, Blue, Ross', and Brant	Nov. 13 - Nov. 29 Dec. 4 - Dec. 6 Dec. 9 - Jan. 31	Canada Geese: 5 Snow, Blue, & Ross': 20 White-fronted: 3 Brant: 1	Canada Geese: 15 Snow, Blue, & Ross': No limit White-fronted: 9 Brant: 3
Youth, Veterans, and Active Military Waterfowl Days	Feb. 6 - 7	Same as regular season	Same as regular season
Light Goose Conservation Order*** (Special Permit Needed)	Oct. 1 - Nov. 12 Nov. 30 - Dec. 3 Feb. 1 - Feb. 5 Feb. 8 - Mar. 31	No Limit***	No Limit***



SMALL GAME		
SEASON	DATES	DAILY BAG LIMIT
Youth Squirrel*	Sept. 24 - 30	8
Squirrel - Fall Season	Oct. 1 - Feb. 28	8
Squirrel - Spring Season	May 15 - June 1	4
Rabbit	Oct. 17 - Feb. 28	8
Bobwhite Quail	Nov. 26 - Mar. 7	8
Frog	April 1 - Sept. 30	25/Night
Raccoon	July 1 - Sept. 30 Oct. 17 - Feb. 28	1 per Party/Night
Opossum, Raccoon, and Bobcat	Nov. 26 - Mar. 7	5/Day; 8/Party No Limit
Trapping	Nov. 1 - Mar. 15	No Limit

*On private lands, authorized state and federal lands, and open public lands only in those areas open for squirrel hunting.

**Youth: 15 and under

DEER ZONES



BAG LIMITS

ANTLERED BUCK DEER:

The statewide bag limit on antlered buck deer is one (1) buck per day and three (3) per annual season. One (1) of these three (3) may have hardened antlers that do not meet the unit legal antler requirements on private land and Holly Springs National Forest. Only one antlered buck may be harvested during the September archery velvet season (counts toward the annual bag limit). For youth hunters fifteen (15) years of age and younger, hunting on private land and authorized state and federal lands, all three (3) of the three (3) buck bag limit may be any antlered deer. Antlered buck bag limit in the North Central Deer Management Unit (DMU) is one (1) buck per day and four (4) per annual season. No antler restrictions apply to this DMU. All four bucks may have any sized hardened antlers.

ANTLERLESS DEER:

Private lands: The statewide annual bag limit on antlerless deer is five (5). The antlerless bag limit for private lands in the North Central DMU is ten (10) antlerless deer per season. Antlerless deer are male or female deer which do not have hardened antler above the natural hairline. Only three (3) antlerless deer may be harvested from the Southeast Unit. There is no daily bag limit on antlerless deer in the North Central, Hills, and Delta units. Only one (1) antlerless deer per day may be harvested in the Southeast DMU.

U.S. Forest Service National Forests: The bag limit is one (1) per day, not to exceed five (5) per annual season except in the Southeast Unit, which is three (3) per annual season.

WHITE-TAILED DEER

DELTA, NORTH CENTRAL, AND HILLS DEER MANAGEMENT UNITS

METHOD	SEASON DATES	LEGAL DEER
Archery	Sept. 11 - 13	Only one (1) Legal Buck. Special permit, mandatory reporting, and CWD sampling required. Private Land and authorized state and federal lands.
	Oct. 1 - Nov. 20	Either-Sex on private and open public lands.
Youth Season (15 and under)	Nov. 7 - Nov. 20	Either-Sex on private lands, authorized state and federal lands, and open public lands.
	Nov. 21 - Jan. 31	Either-Sex on private lands. On open public lands, youth must follow legal buck criteria.
Antlerless Primitive Weapon	Nov. 9 - 20	Antlerless Deer Only on private lands.
Gun (with dogs)	Nov. 21 - Dec. 1	Either-Sex on private land and Holly Springs NF (excluding portions in Yalobusha County). Legal Bucks only on open public land.
Primitive Weapon	Dec. 2 - 15	Either-Sex on private and open public lands. Weapon of choice may be used on private land with appropriate license.
Gun (without dogs)	Dec. 16 - 23	Either-Sex on private land and Holly Springs NF (excluding portions in Yalobusha County). Legal Bucks only on open public land.
Gun (with dogs)	Dec. 24 - Jan. 20	Either-Sex on private land and Holly Spring NF (excluding portions in Yalobusha County). Legal Bucks only on open public land.
Archery/Primitive Weapon	Jan. 21 - 31	Either-Sex on private land and Holly Springs NF (excluding portions in Yalobusha County). Legal Bucks only on open public land. Weapon of choice may be used on private land with appropriate license.

SOUTHEAST UNIT

METHOD	SEASON DATES	LEGAL DEER
Archery	Sept. 11 - 13	Only one (1) Legal Buck. Special permit, mandatory reporting, and CWD sampling required. Private Land and authorized state and federal lands.
	Oct. 15 - Nov. 20	Either-Sex on private and open public land.
Youth Season (15 and under)	Nov. 7 - Nov. 20	Either-Sex on private lands, authorized state and federal lands, and open public lands.
	Nov. 21 - Jan. 31	Either-Sex on private lands. On open public lands, youth must follow legal buck criteria.
	Feb. 1 - 15	Legal bucks on private and open public lands.
Gun (with dogs)	Nov. 21 - Dec. 1	Either-Sex on private land. Legal Bucks only on open public land.
Primitive Weapon	Dec. 2 - 15	Either-Sex on private and open public land. Weapon of choice may be used on private land with appropriate license.
Gun (without dogs)	Dec. 16 - 23	Either-Sex on private land. Legal Bucks only on open public land.
Gun (with dogs)	Dec. 24 - Jan. 20	Either-Sex on private land. Legal Bucks only on open public land.
Archery/Primitive Weapon	Jan. 21 - 31	Either-Sex on private land. Legal Bucks only on open public land. Weapon of choice may be used on private land with appropriate license.
	Feb. 1 - 15	Legal Bucks only on private and open public land. Weapon of choice may be used on private land with appropriate license.

SPRING TURKEY

SEASON	DATES	BAG LIMIT
Youth (Private, authorized state and federal public lands, and open public lands. Youth 15 and under)	Mar. 8 - 14	Resident: One (1) adult gobbler or 1 gobbler with a 6-inch or longer beard per day, 3 per Spring season. Hunters 15 years of age and younger may harvest 1 gobbler of choice (any age) per day, 3 per Spring season.
Spring *	Mar. 15 - May 2	Non-Resident: One (1) adult gobbler or 1 gobbler with a 6-inch or longer beard per day, 2 per Spring season, <u>but only 1 before April 1</u> . Hunters 15 years of age and younger may harvest 1 gobbler of choice (any age) per day, 2 per Spring season.

*** Non-residents Turkey Hunting on Public Lands:** Non-residents cannot hunt any public land in Mississippi before April 1 unless drawn for either a Non-resident Public Lands Turkey Permit or WMA Draw Hunt. During youth season on public land, any non-resident accompanying adult must be permitted/ drawn.

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with Vicki Leach

The key word is ‘easy’

I had such high hopes for catching up this summer.

My plans to clean closets and wash drapes and rugs were thwarted. The reasons are all over the place, but the birth of my sixth grandchild was the best one that kept me a little sidetracked. So, I used the summer to pull out old family recipes and give them another ring around. And what better month than September for sharing a few with you. I think you'll find them to be family friendly, versatile, and quick. The Beefy Noodle Bake can be done in an hour and can be adapted with the addition of a few Italian herbs and a little mozzarella. Completely kid friendly, I use it in culinary camps frequently. The Chicken and Rice Alfredo is fabulous to feed a crowd but takes a little while to cook, so build it in about 5 minutes and hold it until you're ready to bake it off. Lastly, a classic little raisin scone to scoop up for breakfast or dinner. You could grab a kiddo to help you put it together. Brush with plenty of butter while they are hot. Whenever you find yourself sidetracked in your life, at least you can eat well! 



by Vicki Leach

Vicki Leach is a full-time chef/culinary instructor at Mississippi State University in the Department of Food Science, Nutrition, and Health Promotion. She teaches Science of Food Preparation, Foodservice Organization, and Quantity Food Production. She lives in a 130-year-old farmhouse that speaks to her old soul.

Easy Beefy Noodle Bake Serves 6

Add a cup of shredded mozzarella to the cheese mixture and a couple of teaspoons of your favorite Italian seasoning to the ground beef as it cooks with a little extra in the cheese mixture.

INGREDIENTS

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1 ½ pounds ground chuck | ½ cup sour cream |
| 24 ounce can tomato sauce | 1 ½ cups small curd cottage cheese |
| ½ teaspoon salt (<i>extra as needed</i>) | ½ cup sliced green onions (<i>optional</i>) |
| ½ teaspoon coarse ground black pepper | 2 cups grated sharp cheddar cheese |
| 8 ounces egg noodles | |

Preheat oven to 350 degrees.

Brown ground chuck in a large skillet. Drain fat, then add tomato sauce. Put in ½ teaspoon of salt and plenty of freshly ground black pepper. Stir, then simmer while you prepare the other ingredients.

Cook egg noodles until al dente. Drain and set aside.

In a medium bowl, combine sour cream and cottage cheese. Add plenty of freshly ground black pepper. Add to noodles and stir. Add green onions and stir.

To assemble, add half of the noodles to a baking dish (roughly 9x13). Top with half the meat mixture, then sprinkle on half the grated cheddar. Repeat with noodles, meat, then a final layer of cheese. Bake for 20 minutes, or until all cheese is melted.

Serve with crusty French bread.



Easy Chicken and Rice Alfredo

Serves 4-6

I increase this recipe by using 2 cups of rice and adding an additional ½ cup each of broth and cream. Adding another pack of veggies and another couple of thighs makes it a dish for a crowd.

INGREDIENTS

- | | |
|------------------------------|--|
| 1 cup converted rice | 12 ounces frozen vegetables |
| 1 ½ cup chicken broth | 4 to 6 boneless, skinless chicken thighs |
| 1 ½ cup heavy whipping cream | 1 ½ cup shredded cheese, mozzarella, or another favorite |
| 1 cup Italian salad dressing | |
| 2 teaspoons minced garlic | |

Spray a 9x13 casserole with pan spray. Spread rice across the bottom of dish. Pour chicken broth, cream, and salad dressing over the rice. Sprinkle garlic and vegetables on top. Nestle the chicken thighs into the rice and liquid mixture. Spread the chicken thighs out instead of leaving in bundles.

Cover with foil and bake for 1 hour at 375 degrees. Remove from oven, uncover, top with shredded cheese, and bake uncovered for an additional 15-20 minutes until rice is tender and chicken is at 165 degrees.



Raisin Scones

Yield - 15 to 18 scones

INGREDIENTS

- | |
|--------------------------------|
| 4 cups all-purpose flour |
| 1 cup sugar |
| 2 teaspoons baking powder |
| 1 teaspoons salt |
| ½ teaspoon nutmeg |
| ½ cup shortening |
| 4 ounces (½ stick) cold butter |
| ¾ cup raisins |
| 2 eggs |
| ⅔ cup milk |

Sift the dry ingredients together and set aside. Stir the eggs into the milk to blend well. Cut the shortening and the butter into the dry ingredients until it is the texture of course meal. Add the raisins. Stir in the liquid. Do not over-mix; stir only until moistened (it'll be a shaggy dough).

Using a small cookie scoop, drop mounds of batter onto a parchment lined baking sheet (or an ungreased baking sheet). Bake at 400 degrees until lightly browned and set. Remove from baking sheet to cool. Brush with extra melted butter.



Events open to the public will be published free of charge as space allows. Submit details at least two months prior to the event date. Submissions must include a phone number with area code for publication. Email to news@ecm.coop. **Events are subject to change.**

Quali Forever's Mid Mississippi Chapter Banquet.

Sept. 17. Jackson. A night of conservation and camaraderie. The event begins at 6 p.m. at the Mississippi Agriculture and Forestry Museum, 1150 Lakeland Dr. Quali Forever and Mississippi Department of Wildlife and Fisheries biologists will be in attendance. Details: Email ldowdy@alfains.com.

7th Annual Mississippi Songwriters Festival

and Songwriters Hall of Fame Induction. Sept. 17-20. Ocean Springs and Gautier. Featuring 150 songwriters at 14 venues. All events are free. This year's inductees include rockers 3 Doors Down and blues legend Son House. Details: msafestival.org or email adalgo@att.net

Gulf Coast Stamp Club Fall Stamp and Postcard Show.

Sept. 25 and 26. Biloxi. Twelve dealers will have stamps, postcards, albums, and stamp supplies for viewing and sale. There will be free stamps for kids and dedicated volunteers to show them how to organize and mount stamps in an album and answer any questions about stamp collecting. Doors open at 9:30 a.m. with the event running to 6 p.m. on Friday and 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Saturday. Admission and parking are free. St. Martin Community Center, 15008 Lemoyne Blvd. Details: 228-238-5433.

Harrisville Day. Sept. 26. Harrisville. From 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Harrisville Community Park, 1767 Hwy 469. The event will have activities for children, food vendors, live music, ball tournaments, games, and a car show. Details: 601-927-0445 or 601-942-1480.

The 34th Annual Clarke Fest: A 250th American Celebration.

Sept. 26. Quitman. Enjoy competition for the best jams, jellies, pickles, and honey. Demonstrations and shows of quilts, crafts, and horse shoeing. Food and craft vendors, a kid's area, a car show, and live music at 6 p.m. \$5.00 per car at the gate. Tickets for the concert are \$25. Details: 601-776-5701.

17th Annual Picayune Writers Group's Writers Symposium.

Sept. 26. Picayune. From 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Crosby Memorial Library. Sessions will include talks on finding space to write in everyday life, where to share your writing, and working with your rough draft. There will also be panel discussions on idea formation and marketing for introverts featuring symposium guest speakers and Picayune Writers Group members. Admission is free and includes a continental breakfast and lunch. There will also be a Parade of Prizes and opportunity to browse books by local authors. Preregistration is appreciated but not required to attend. However, you must preregister to be included in a drawing for books by PWG authors. Send your full name and email address to picayunewritersgroup@gmail.com with the subject: REGISTRATION. Details: 518-586-6843 or email bspangel@hotmail.com.

Magnolia State Gem, Mineral, And Jewelry Show.

Sept. 26 and 27. Ocean Springs. From 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. on Saturday and 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Sunday. Ocean Springs Civic Center, 3730 Bienville Blvd. (Hwy 90). Adult admission is \$5 and children 12 and under are free with a paying adult. Door prizes and more than 20 vendors. There will be fossils, gemstones, jewelry, minerals, beads and more to purchase. Details: 601-947-7245 or 228-238-9900 or visit mgcgms.org/facebook.

Barn Sale - Antiques and Collectables.

Oct. 16 and 17. Oak Grove. More than 85 collectors with trailer loads of antiques and collectables. From 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. each day. 4799 Old Highway 11, Purvis. \$5 parking per car. Good for both days. Details: 601-818-5886 or 601-794-7462.

Mississippi Wildlife Rehabilitation Trunk-or-Treat.

Oct. 17. Hernando. Win a prize for best trunk. Food trucks, photo opportunities, birds of prey, creepy crawlies, and scaly friends. Local businesses sign up for free at [events@mswildliferehab.org](http://mswildliferehab.org). 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. Dub Patton Campground at Arkabutla Lake. 3905 Arkabutla Dam Rd. The event is free. Details: 662-292-6133.

Byrd's Chapel Church Fall Festival.

Oct. 24. Carriere. From 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. 26 Byrd's Chapel Rd. The event will feature a country store, bake sale, craft booths, a raffle, a silent auction, food trucks, and games. Details: 601-799-6606.

Zion Hill No. 1 Baptist Church's Honoring Veterans.

Nov. 8. Natchez. Registration starts at 7:30 a.m. at 349 Lower Woodville Road. The procession of veterans starts at 8 a.m. with a special service dedication to veterans, along with gifts, door prizes, and brunch. Joe W. Pickett is the pastor. Details: Email zionhill349@yahoo.com or call 601-442-2782

Puckett Methodist Women's Missions Market Place.

Nov. 14. Puckett. The event starts at 8 a.m. and goes to 1 p.m. at Puckett Methodist Church, 6412 Hwy 18 downtown. Proceeds go to fund our Friends in Need campaign to help those with cancer and other medical expenses and to help children on the autism spectrum attend the Center Ridge Outpost summer camp. The event features vendors with handmade items, a rummage sale, raffle items, and a soup lunch café for \$5 a bowl. This year will also include a car show from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Frozen casseroles and pies will also be sold. Table space is available for \$30. Details: 601-214-7834.

Holy Land Tour.

Nov. 28 to Dec. 7. Israel. Join Ronnie and Beverly Cottingham on a 10-day life changing tour of the Holy Land. Details: 601-770-1447 or email rbcottingham@bellsouth.net.

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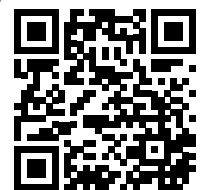
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Flip the page



One of my recollections about going from August into September was tearing a page off the calendar. Well, at least I distinctly remember *one* particular year of tearing the page off the calendar.

I had an uncle who was kind of a braggart and show-off. It's all a little fuzzy. This was a long time ago. Anyhow, mama made a comment about how it was already September, probably preceded by lamenting all the things that still needed to be done to get us kids ready to go back to school. With a flourish, this uncle grabbed the calendar off the wall and made a big show of how he was the master of time and could make the month change "Just by doing this!" He ripped the August page off and behold, suddenly it was September!

I was appropriately amazed with the power that obviously only he had — his ability to move time and make months change at will. He was delighted that I was impressed until I told him, "Do it again!" Obviously, I still had a lot to learn about the order of things. For instance, you can only make time fly at the speed of life. And life dictates that another page can't be ripped off the calendar until the beginning of the *next* month. It's only later that we learn how quickly the months come and go — and how the pages seem to fly off the calendar by themselves without ever having to touch them.

On the other hand, my wall calendar is likely to still be showing last month's page for a week or so. Time flies by so fast I forget to change it. It's not that I'm behind the times. My wall calendar is more of a decoration, anyway. I keep track of the years and months the same way I keep up with the hours and minutes — with my smart phone.

We had this visiting preacher at our church one Sunday night. He told us a story about his seven-year-old grandson who was pitching a fit with his mom and dad because they wouldn't let him have a smart phone. So, the lad appealed to the "Court of Last Resort" — his grandfather. And the preacher disappointed his grandson and agreed with his parents. He was too young for a smart phone. The youngster then tried his final argument by demanding of his granddad, "Well? How old were YOU when you got *YOUR* first smart phone?" If he's like me, I figure he was probably in his mid 50s.

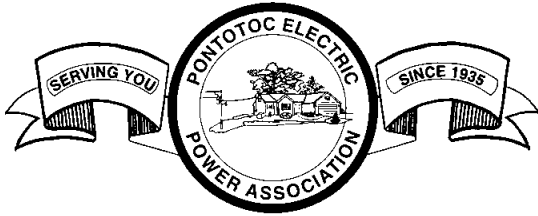
The point is time marches on. That's why we've had Halloween decorations in the stores since the 4th of July and why Christmas decorations are already popping up. So, we won't get left behind by the season.

That's also why *my* Christmas tree may still be decorated in the living room in mid-March. Time passes TOO quickly for me in some instances. 🌸



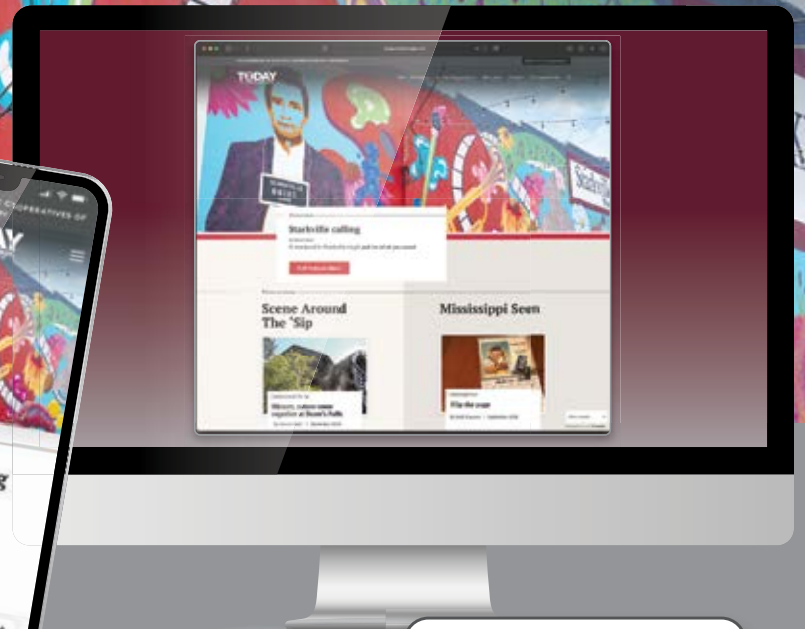
by Walt Grayson

Walt Grayson is the host of "Mississippi Roads" on Mississippi Public Broadcasting television and the author of two "Looking Around Mississippi" books and "Oh! That Reminds Me: More Mississippi Homegrown Stories." Walt is also a reporter and 4 p.m. news anchor at WJTV in Jackson. He lives in Brandon and is a Central Electric member. Contact him at walt@waltgrayson.com.



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