FOR MEMBERS OF ELECTRIC COOPERATIVES OF MISSISSIPPI

TODAY IN MISSISSIPPI



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NOVEMBER 2026

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Listen to your body

I am sitting in my office writing this November column the day before I am scheduled to undergo heart bypass surgery.

If you are reading this, the operation is behind me, went well, and I am recovering.

That is not how I expected to begin a column this fall. But I am writing about it because somebody reading this may be doing exactly what I was tempted to do: explaining away a warning sign, putting off a doctor's visit, or deciding there is simply too much going on to stop and take care of yourself.

Over the past couple of years, I have worked hard to get healthier. I lost weight, paid closer attention to what I ate, and tried to make better choices. So, when I began to feel that something was not right, it would have been easy to convince myself that it could not be my heart.

But I knew my body, and I knew something had changed. I pushed to get in to see the doctor, and I pushed to have the test because the feeling would not leave me alone. The test confirmed what my body had been trying to tell me: several major arteries were badly blocked, and I needed bypass surgery. Had I ignored the warning and kept going, I could have been headed toward a fatal heart attack.

I had every excuse to wait my turn. Work has been demanding. Personal responsibilities have been heavy. Melissa, my wife, has been sick, and much of my attention has rightly been focused on her. There was always another meeting, another phone call, another problem that seemed more urgent than my own.

Waiting would have been easier. It also might have cost me my life.

One thing my doctor told me that has stayed with me: people who suffer fatal heart attacks often had warning signs they ignored. Maybe the signs seemed minor. Maybe they came and went. Maybe life was busy; someone else needed them, or they did not want to make a fuss. We can talk ourselves out of almost anything, especially when the alternative is inconvenient or frightening.

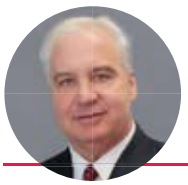
We know when something is different. We know when we are unusually tired, short of breath, or uncomfortable. We know when a familiar activity suddenly feels harder. Those signals do not always mean there is a serious problem, but they deserve our attention. If something feels wrong, say so. Call your doctor. Ask questions. If the concern continues, keep asking until you understand what is happening.

This is not about panic. It is about paying attention. Getting healthier matters, but good habits do not give us permission to dismiss new symptoms. A busy schedule is not a medical opinion, and waiting your turn is not a virtue when your body is sounding an alarm.

So, this month, I am asking you to do something that sounds simple but can be difficult: listen to your body. It will often tell you what it needs and when you need to act. Do not let work, pride, fear, or the needs of everyone around you persuade you to ignore it.

I do not know what the next few weeks will bring, but I am grateful that I listened, grateful that I spoke up, and grateful that the problem was found before it was too late.

Folks, listen to your body. It may be trying to save your life.



by Michael Callahan

Executive Vice President/CEO
Electric Cooperatives of Mississippi



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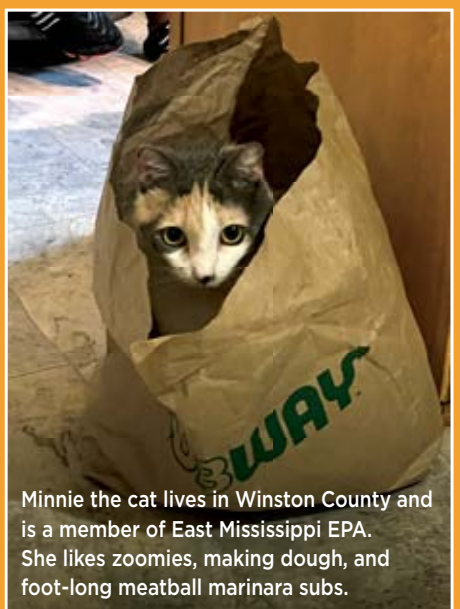
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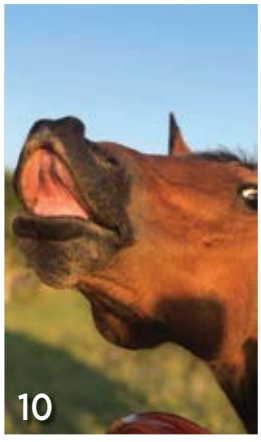
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Minnie the cat lives in Winston County and is a member of East Mississippi EPA. She likes zoomies, making dough, and foot-long meatball marinara subs.

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Central linemen first in state to participate in accredited training



(Back row left to right) Central Electric Apprentice Linemen Jacob Henry, Jayden Wilder, Erik Pullin, Brewer McLain, and Brandon Felton. (Front row left to right) Central Electric Apprentice Linemen TJ Yates, Brad Hunter, Chris Robins, John Dolores, and Bryson Norman. Not pictured: Matthew Scarbrough.

Eleven Central Electric Power Association apprentice linemen were the first in the state to participate in the Electric Cooperatives of Mississippi's (ECM) federally accredited Lineman Apprenticeship Program.

Although ECM's Lineman Apprentice Program has been around since 2014, in 2019, ECM Director of Education and Apprenticeship Training Chad Crockett worked to get the program accredited by the federal government and the state.

Today, the apprenticeship program is accredited by the U.S. Department of Labor and the Mississippi Apprenticeship Program.

There are close to 400 apprentices enrolled in the program. The 11 Central employees who signed the apprentice agreement recently are the first to have their co-op sign the employer's agreement with the U.S. Department of Labor. As a result, they will receive a completion certificate from the federal agency.

Crockett said the program has not changed, but the accreditation track adds the highest level of outside accreditation for the prestigious course.

The 4-year program was designed to train personnel in the construction, maintenance, and operation of an electrical distribution system. The program's training ensures future electric cooperative linemen in the state can effectively carry out overhead and underground line constriction, operations, maintenance, and restoration of service of electrical transmission, substation, and distribution systems.

Crockett also said the program can count as 30 hours of community college credit toward electrical line work associate degrees.

NRECA, CO-OPS RECEIVE $232 MILLION FOR GRID UPGRADES

Electric cooperatives have secured more than $200 million in federal funding to build and upgrade transmission infrastructure through the third round of the Department of Energy's $10.5 billion Grid Resilience and Innovation Partnerships (GRIP) program.

The new round, dubbed the Speed to Power Through Accelerated Reconductoring and Other Key Advanced Transmission Technology Upgrades (SPARK) initiative, will provide $87 million to a consortium made up of NRECA and five other co-ops to make transmission infrastructure improvements across a half-dozen states. Another six co-ops that were not part of the consortium were selected for $145 million in SPARK awards.

"Electric cooperatives are making substantial investments to strengthen the electric grid, which is critical to providing reliable and affordable power in rural communities," NRECA CEO Jim Matheson said. "These project funds will help co-ops get more capacity from existing transmission infrastructure while improving reliability and supporting economic growth."

The $87 million SPARK award will support the Unified Vision for Energy Resilience project. The NRECA-backed consortium is made up of five co-ops that will cover the remaining costs of the $174 million project: Basin Electric in Bismarck, North Dakota, Cooperative Energy in Hattiesburg, Dairyland Power Cooperative in La Crosse, Wisconsin, NW Electric Power Cooperative in Cameron, Missouri, and Withlacoochee River Electric Cooperative in Dade City, Florida.

The project consists of five transmission system upgrades across Arkansas, Florida, Missouri, Mississippi, North Dakota and Wisconsin that will reduce transmission congestion and increase power transfers from low-cost generation.

Overall, SPARK will support 31 grid improvement projects across 26 states with $1.9 billion in total federal funding.

The SPARK awards follow two previous GRIP rounds in which NRECA-led consortia were chosen for around $200 million in federal funding for projects totaling $337 million. The WARN consortium, composed of 35 co-ops, was awarded money under GRIP's first round for wildfire mitigation projects across the country. The second round of GRIP provided funds for the START consortium to build, rebuild, or reconductor transmission infrastructure and increase electric transfer capacity through advanced overhead conductors.

Altogether, more than 80 co-ops have received at least one GRIP award across the three rounds. Federal support for co-ops through the program so far has totaled $1.3 billion for a combined DOE and co-op investment of $2.3 billion.

The awards reflect NRECA's work with co-ops across multiple administrations to ensure they could successfully compete for federal funding opportunities, protect access to critical programs and keep projects moving forward.

CALADIUM FOLIAGE *brightens gardens*

There's something magical about a shaded garden that is still filled with color this time of year.

When I recently visited my friend, Maurice Hennis, at Twin Oaks Cottage in Laurel, one of the first things I noticed in his garden was his incredible display of caladiums. These beautiful foliage plants prove that you don't need flowers to create a spectacular landscape.

Caladiums' large, heart-shaped leaves with intricate patterns of white, green, pink and striking shades of red brighten shady areas. Some leaves are delicately splashed with color, while others have bold veins and dramatic patterns that look as if an artist painted them by hand.

The effect is especially beautiful when sunlight filters through the trees above.

Instead of harsh, direct sunlight, the caladiums in Maurice's garden receive soft, dappled light that highlights the colors and patterns of their foliage. The result is a garden that feels tropical, with layers of color and texture tucked into the coolness of the shade.

What really caught my attention at Twin Oaks Cottage is the way Maurice incorporated caladiums throughout the landscape. Rather than confining them to a single flower bed or isolated area, they appear in unexpected places.

You'll find caladiums nestled beneath trees, growing alongside ferns, tucked around garden features and spilling from containers. As you move through the garden, your eye keeps discovering another splash of color. This creates colorful connections throughout the garden.



Consistent moisture is important for keeping caladium foliage lush and attractive during the heat of summer. This is especially important when growing them in containers.



Caladiums combined with ferns turned this traditional garden lamp into a beautiful focal point.



Rather than confining them to a single flower bed or isolated area, use caladiums in unexpected places. Colorful connections are made throughout the garden as the eye discovers splashes of color.

> One of the things I love about caladiums is the way their bold foliage adds color to the landscape. They are particularly useful in shady and filtered-light areas where many flowering plants do not perform their best.

One of the things I love about caladiums is the way their bold foliage adds color to the landscape. They are particularly useful in shady and filtered-light areas where many flowering plants do not perform their best.

Caladiums also give us wonderful opportunities to combine color and texture.

In his landscape, Maurice has planted them around a traditional garden lamp along with ferns, creating a beautiful focal point.

The lamp provides structure and height, while the caladiums provide bold shapes and vivid color. The finely textured fern fronds create a soft, feathery backdrop. Together, they create a much more interesting planting than either one would provide alone.

And don't overlook containers.

Caladiums are excellent choices for adding a splash of color to patios, porches, entryways, and anywhere you want to create a focal point. A container filled with colorful caladiums can brighten an otherwise quiet corner. Because containers can be moved, you can easily reposition them as your landscape changes throughout the season.

Caladiums prefer warm temperatures and rich, well-drained soil. They perform best in partial to full shade, although some newer selections can tolerate more sunlight, particularly when they receive adequate moisture.

Consistent moisture is important for keeping caladium foliage lush and attractive during the heat of summer.

I recommend monitoring plants closely during periods of extreme heat to make sure containers and other areas that dry out quickly receive adequate water. But avoid keeping the soil constantly soggy. Good drainage is just as important as adequate moisture.

Caladiums don't have to produce a single flower to command attention. That's an important lesson for all gardeners. When we think of adding color to a landscape, we often think first about flowers. But sometimes, the most spectacular color comes from the leaves.

If you have a shady area in your landscape, give caladiums a try. Their colorful foliage may be just what you need to turn a quiet spot into one of the most beautiful areas in your garden.



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.

A PRESIDENTIAL ADVENTURE

AN UNSUCCESSFUL HUNT SPAWNED A VERY SUCCESSFUL TOY

With Christmas approaching, people might want to buy children stuffed toys. One stuffed animal owes its existence to one of the most famous hunters in American history.

In 1902, U.S. President Theodore Roosevelt came to the Smedes Plantation near Onward in Sharkey County to hunt bears. As a guide, Roosevelt enlisted the aid of a legendary Mississippi bear hunter, Holt Collier from Hinds County. Even with Holt's help, Roosevelt couldn't bag a bear. Finally, Holt lassoed a bear and tied it to a tree so the president could shoot it. Roosevelt refused to shoot that bear tied to a tree.

Of course, the press accompanied the president. The *Washington Post* printed a cartoon showing Roosevelt and the bear. In the language of today, the incident "went viral." A toymaker made stuffed bears and called them "Teddy's Bears."

Collier became the first person inducted into the Mississippi Outdoor Hall of Fame, co-located in Leland with the Mississippi Wildlife Heritage Museum. Also, the Holt Collier National Wildlife Refuge in Washington County bears his name, the only NWR named for an African American.

Native to Mississippi, black bears became scarce after Roosevelt's time. However, the population continues to grow now.







"Bears are becoming more common in Mississippi," said Anthony Ballard, the Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries & Parks' black bear program leader. "We estimate about 400 to 500 bears in southwestern Mississippi with perhaps another 50 in southeastern Mississippi or Clarke and Lauderdale counties."

The highest bear concentration occurs in the Sharkey-Warren-Issaquena area. Bears also roam Wilkinson and Claiborne counties. In Mississippi, adult male bears typically weigh 150 to 400 pounds and females about 100 to 250 pounds.





"The largest bear we ever caught was a male that weighed 510 pounds," Ballard said. "We caught it near Onward. The largest female weighed 312 pounds caught in the same area."

An adult male requires about 20,000 to 40,000 acres of home range. Females usually need 5,000 to 10,000 acres. Cubs stay with the sow about 16 to 18 months. At a certain age, young male bears begin wandering to establish their own territories and find mates.

"We hear about bear sightings in most Mississippi counties," Ballard said. "Bears might pass through most counties in the state. Those wandering young males might show up anywhere."

Usually, people walking through bear country probably never see one. Bears detect humans and get out of the way. If a person encounters a bear, it will normally go in another direction. Leave cubs alone. It's not lost. Momma is near and won't like that.

"We've never had a bear attack reported in Mississippi," Ballard said. "Bears are curious animals, especially younger ones. Often, young bears might see a person for the first time and try to figure out what it is. If a bear comes close, make loud noises and raise your hands to scare it away."

Bears remain fully protected in Mississippi. However, as the population increases, the state might consider a bear hunting season in the future.

FOR MORE INFORMATION about the Mississippi Wildlife Heritage Museum, visit **mswildlifeheritagemuseum.com.** Visit **fws.gov/refuge/holt-collier** for more information about the Holt Collier National Wildlife Refuge in Washington County.



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.



Worthy Stables

Horses and human connection

by Steven Ward

Jessie Mathias will never forget the time she took ponies to a day care facility for medically fragile children last year.

In small groups, children were brought outside in wheelchairs or on the arms of caregivers so they could pet the ponies.

"We savored the smiles and laughter, and the surprised faces when they each got to pet our littlest ponies. Even the staff was overjoyed. I overheard one of the staff members say, 'That's everyone except James. He can't leave his bed,'" Mathias, the founder of Worthy Stables Therapeutic Horsemanship, said.

It turns out, the child who couldn't leave his bed got to experience exactly what the other children did.

"I told one of the caregivers that we could come to the bed. She explained that he was connected to many machines that make noise and would be alarming. I assured her that there is very little our ponies have not seen or heard and asked for the opportunity to step into the room. Our ambassador pony, Willow, walked straight to that young man, past hospital beds and equipment, past the beeping and sighing of machines, and put her head close enough that he could reach out and hold a fist of her mane. The smile on his face made every bit of the work I do totally worth it," she said.

Worthy Stables, based in Petal, provides equine assisted services to people with cerebral palsy, autism, Down Syndrome, visual or hearing impairments, spinal cord injuries, and developmental differences. They also serve trauma survivors, individuals with behavioral/mental health challenges, those in recovery from substance abuse disorders, and military veterans and their families.

"Although the goals are very different, the underlying power is connection. Horses meet people without judgement or expectation. Through a relationship with a very special horse, our participants practice communication, regulation, confidence, boundaries, and problem solving in ways that feel real and warm, rather than clinical," Mathias said.

Mathias, a certified therapeutic riding instructor, opened Worthy Stables in 2017. A 501c3 nonprofit organization, the group relies on individual donors. Worthy Stables also has a horse sponsorship program that allows individuals or businesses to sponsor a therapy horse. The money — which goes directly into the care of the horses — helps Worthy Stables provide services at below average cost or no-cost for lower income families.

"I founded Worthy Stables in response to a woeful, unacceptable lack of accessible activities for individuals living with disability, special needs, or other exceptionalities. It is our mission at Worthy Stables to facilitate horse/human interactions in empowering, enriching, and exciting activities," Mathias said.

Worthy Stables is a member of Dixie Electric.

"At Dixie Electric, we believe a strong community is built by people who genuinely care about making a difference in the lives of others. Worthy Stables is a beautiful example of that. Through the unique connection between horses and people, they're providing opportunities for healing, building confidence, and bringing joy to others, and that is something our entire community can be proud of," Amanda Mills, Dixie Electric's communications manager, said.

One of Worthy Stables' biggest offerings is called Exceptional Equestrians, an adaptive/therapeutic riding program. They also offer unmounted, therapeutic horsemanship available for groups and one-on-one sessions. The current group offerings are available to organizations that serve at-risk youth, individuals navigating recovery from substance abuse, domestic abuse, and other trauma survivors.

The group also puts on an adaptive rodeo, The Pine Belt Round-Up. The rodeo is adapted and assisted so that guests with disabilities and special needs can participate alongside riders without disabilities. This includes assisted barrel racing, mechanical bull riding tailored to the ability of each participant, cowboy obstacles, and goat dummy tying.









"Every participant wears a back number, gets applause and encouragement, and is treated like the courageous athletes that they are. Each year, after the rodeo, a parent or guardian has sought me out, thanked me, and said, 'I never imagined this was possible.' They describe knowing they may never cheer for their child on the sidelines of a high school football game or watch their little girl do ballet, and they shed tears telling me that they never knew this event was within reach of their loved one, that hearing their name over the loudspeaker was a moment of unexpected, priceless joy," Mathias said.

Mathias said her staff works diligently to preserve a sense of safety and belonging.

"We want everyone who enters our gates to feel that freedom to come as they are and know that they are in a safe place."



From more in formation

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Seniors get new medical alert device

No contracts, no deposits and no monthly bills ever

FastHelp is the only Medical Alert device that won't break the bank. That's because it comes with no contracts, no deposits and no monthly bills ever – which makes FastHelp a great choice for seniors, students and professionals because it connects to one of the largest nationwide networks everywhere cell service is available for free. You don't need a cell phone or a land line.

And here's the best part. All those who already have an old style monitored medical alert button can immediately eliminate those monthly bills, which is why Universal Physicians is widely advertising this announcement nationwide.

So if you've ever felt a medical alert device was too complicated or expensive, you'll want to get FastHelp, the sleek new medical alert device with no monthly bills.

The medical alert device slugfest was dominated by two main combatants who both offer old style monitored help buttons that come with a hefty bill every month. But now Universal Physicians, the U.S. based heavyweight, just delivered a knockout blow sending the top rated contenders to the mat with the unveiling of FastHelp. It's the sleek new cellular embedded medical alert device that cuts out the middleman by instantly connecting you directly to highly trained 911 operators all across the U.S. There's absolutely nothing to hook-up or install. You don't need a land line and you don't need a cell phone. Everything is done for you. ■



■ **NO MONTHLY BILLS:** "My wife had an old style help button that came with hefty bills every month and she was embarrassed to wear it because it made her look old," said Frank McDonald, Canton, Ohio. "Now, we both have FastHelp™, the sleek new medical alert device that our grandkids say makes us look 'cool' not old," he said. With FastHelp, seniors never have to worry about being alone and the best part is there are no monthly bills ever.

Seniors born before 1964 get big boost

Instantly connects to free unlimited nationwide help with just the push of a button with no contracts, no deposits, and no monthly bills

Seniors born before 1964 get new medical alert device

Nationwide: Demand for new Medical Alert Device soars

The phone lines are ringing off the hook.

That's because for seniors born before 1964, it's a deal too good to pass up.

Starting at precisely 8:30am today the Pre-Store Release begins for the sleek new medical alert device that comes with the exclusive FastHelp™ One-Touch 911 Button that instantly connects you to unlimited nationwide help everywhere with no contracts, no deposits and no monthly bills ever.

"It's not like old style help buttons that make you talk to a call center, only work when you're at home and come with hefty bills every month. FastHelp comes with state-of-the-art cellular embedded technology. That means it works at home or anywhere and everywhere cell service is available whether you're out watering the garden, driving in a car, at church or even hundreds of miles away on a tour or at a casino. You are never alone. With just a single push of the One-Touch E Button you instantly get connected to free unlimited help nationwide with no monthly bills ever," said Jack Lawrence, Executive Director of Product Development for U.S. based Universal Physicians.

"We've never seen anything like it. Con-

(Continued on next page)



■ **FLYING OUT THE DOOR:** Trucks are being loaded with the new medical alert devices called FastHelp. They are now being delivered to lucky seniors who call the National Rebate Center Hotline at 1-800-221-2809 DEPT. FSTH238 today. Everyone is calling to get FastHelp, the sleek new medical alert device because it instantly connects you to unlimited nationwide help everywhere cell service is available with no contracts, no deposits and no monthly bills ever.

(Continued from previous page)

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sumers absolutely love the sleek new modern design and most of all, today's instant rebate practically pays for it and no monthly bills ever," Lawrence said.

FastHelp is the sleek new medical alert device with the best of combinations: a quality, high-tech engineered device that's also an extremely great value because there are no monthly bills ever. ■

The only device that makes you look important, not old

The problem with medical alert devices is, nobody wants to wear them because it makes them look old. Well, that's not the case with FastHelp. That's because it's the first state of the art medical alert device designed to make you look important, not old. Old style monitored help buttons you wear around your neck, or require expensive base station equipment or a landline are the equivalent of a horse and buggy, it's just outdated.

Millions of seniors fall every year and spend hours lying on the floor helpless and all alone with no help.

But seniors who fall and get immediate help are much more likely to avoid getting sent to a nursing home and get to STAY living in their own home independently.

Yet millions of seniors are still risking their safety by not having a medical alert device. That's because seniors just can't afford to pay the monthly bills that come with old style medical alert devices.

That's why seniors born before 1964 are rushing to cash in the whopping $150 instant rebate before the 21 day deadline ends.

So there's no need to wait for FastHelp to hit store shelves later this year because seniors born before 1964 can get it now just by using the $150 instant rebate coupon printed in today's publication before the 21 day deadline ends. If lines are busy keep trying, all calls will be answered. ■

Doctor urges seniors to get new medical alert device

Instantly connects you to free unlimited nationwide help with no contracts, no deposits and no monthly bills ever

Comes with new cellular embedded technology that works at home or anywhere you go so you are never alone

All seniors born before 1964 are getting a $150 rebate and cover just $149 making this deal too good to pass up

Nothing to hook up. You don't need a land line or cell phone. It's ready to use right out of the box

Seniors snap up new medical alert device that comes with no monthly bills

People don't always do what their doctor says, but when seasoned veteran emergency room physician, Dr. Philip B. Howren says every senior should have a medical alert device, you better listen up.

"Seniors are just one fall away from being put in a nursing home," Dr. Howren said. "With a medical alert device, seniors are never alone. So it keeps them living independently in their own home. That's why seniors and their family members are snapping up a sleek new medical alert device that comes with no monthly bills ever," he said.

Many seniors refuse to wear old style help buttons because they make them look old. But even worse, those medical alert systems come with monthly bills.

To solve these problems Universal Physicians, a U.S. company, went to work to develop a new, modern, state-of-the-art medical alert device. It's called "FastHelp™" and it instantly connects you to free unlimited nationwide help everywhere cell service is available with no contracts, no deposits and no monthly bills ever.



"This slick new little device is designed to look incognito to slip in your pocket. Seniors love them, because it actually makes them look important, not old," Dr. Howren said.

FastHelp is expected to hit store shelves later this year. But special promotional giveaways are slated for seniors in select publications. ■

Five Star Customer Reviews

Hurricane Help
"We had two hurricanes recently. I had no electricity for 6 days. I fell, so I pushed the button, and they came right out and picked me up off the floor. I tell many of my friends they need to get FastHelp!" - *Virginia, FL*

LIFESAVER
"When I got my FastHelp I never thought I'd have to use it, but when I fell and broke my hip it saved my life." - *Harold, OH*

Very appreciative of having FastHelp
"I did have an emergency. Help RESPONDED quickly and came in a few minutes." - *Irving, PA*

WE LOVE THE PRODUCT
"We bought it outright with no bills ever." - *Rosemary, NY*

Safe anywhere
"This little FastHelp device is my guardian angel. I'm so glad my daughter-in-law got it for me." - *Pete, FL*

A+ Rating: These are unsolicited consumer feedback from satisfied customers as reported to Universal Physicians.

HOW TO GET IT

BORN BEFORE 1964:
Use the rebate coupon to the right and call this Toll-Free Hotline:
1-800-221-2809
EXT. FSTH238

BORN AFTER 1964:
You cannot use the rebate coupon to the right and must pay $299
Call: 1-800-221-9773
EXT. ADFH1126

BOTTOM LINE:
You don't need to shop around. We've done all the leg work, this deal is too good to pass up. With the instant FastHelp rebate, it is a real steal at just $149 and shipping. There are no monthly bills ever.

PROS: It's the sleek new medical alert device that comes with the exclusive FastHelp One-Touch 911 Button that instantly connects you to free unlimited nationwide help with no contracts or deposits. It connects you to the vast available network of cellular towers for free and saves seniors a ton of money because there are no monthly bills ever making this deal a must have. Plus it's the only medical alert device that makes seniors look important, not old.

CONS: Consumers can't get FastHelp in stores until later this year. That's why it's so important for seniors born before 1964 to call the National Rebate Center Hotline within the next 21 days. For those who miss that deadline, the sleek little medical alert device will set you back over $300 bucks.

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2Y **RE:** FSTH238 **DLVY:** ML2077R-1 1 OF 1

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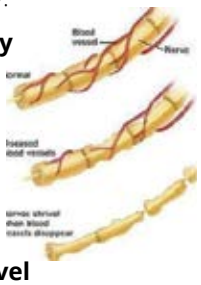
WARNING - WARNING - WARNING

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 stop.

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.
Dr. Rob Acord, D.C. will be offering this complete neuropathy sensitivity exam for **$47**. This special offer goes away at the end of this month as we have a limited number of exam appointments available.

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PEPA gives back through collection of pantry staples

Peanut butter and jelly are a classic combination, but if someone is hungry, they can be lifesaving. Beginning on National Food Bank Day, Sept.4 and running throughout the month of September, PEPA's employees took donations of the pantry staples at their offices in Pontotoc and Bruce.

To make the peanut butter and jelly drive a little more appealing, PEPA's resident "PB and Jay" (Collections Manager Mary Williamson and Collections Assistant/Receptionist Charlotte Ledbetter) once again "raced" to the finish line in a fun Facebook video to encourage members to give.

Why peanut butter and jelly? Not only is it an easy meal that even children can prepare for themselves, it's also a nutrient-dense food rich in healthy fats, protein, vitamins and minerals. Combine it with jelly, and it's a tasty way to have a meal on a tight budget.

Food insecurity means people don't have enough to eat and don't know where their next meal will come from. PEPA Human Resources Manager Jennifer Johnson said Mississippi has one of the highest rates of food insecurity in the United States.

PEPA has a goal to take on a project like this every year. This is the second year the co-op has collected peanut butter and jelly. In the past, they've had school backpack drives and collected items for overnight bags for children going into foster care.

"We feel so blessed to be a part of our communities. We try to do something each year that can be a blessing to those who need it," Johnson said.

At the time of publication, the drive was ending, and the donations were headed to food pantries in Pontotoc and Bruce.



PEPA's customer portal grows to 10,000 USERS

PEPA celebrated reaching 10,000 customer portal users recently. General Manager Frankie Moorman and a group of office employees commemorated the day with a Facebook video.



Warm plates to fight chilly days

Cooler temps are the perfect time to enjoy comfort food! Give these a try the next time you want a satisfying meal on a cool evening.

Cheesy Sausage and Potatoes

- 1 pound smoked sausage
- ½ of a white onion, chopped
- 1 bag of shredded hashbrowns (26 ounces)
- ¾ cup sour cream
- 1 can cream of chicken soup
- 1 cup Mexican blend cheese, shredded
- 1 teaspoon onion powder
- 1 teaspoon Cajun seasoning
- Pepper to taste

Preheat oven to 375. In a skillet, cook sausage and onion until browned. Add the rest of the ingredients and combine well. Place in a greased baking dish and cook uncovered for 45 minutes.



Ground Beef Cobbler

1½ pounds lean ground beef
4 tablespoons melted butter
1 box Cheddar Bay Biscuit mix (11.36 ounces)
2 cups milk
12 ounces frozen mixed vegetables
1 cup chicken broth or beef broth
1 can cream of chicken soup (10.5 ounces)

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Brown the ground beef over medium heat until cooked through. Drain any excess liquid or fat. Spread the melted butter over the bottom of a 9 x 13 casserole dish. Place the ground beef and frozen vegetables evenly over the butter. Whisk together the biscuit mix, including the spice packet, and two cups of milk. There may be some lumps, but that is okay. Pour the mixture over the beef and veggies. Do not mix.

Whisk together the cream of chicken soup and chicken broth. Pour mixture over the casserole. Do not mix. Bake for 40-50 minutes or until the sides are bubbling and the top starts to brown. Let sit 5-15 minutes to set, then serve.



Easy Yeast Rolls

1 teaspoon sugar
¼ cup butter, melted
3 cups biscuit mix, divided
¾ cup warm water (98 – 105 degrees)
1 package dry active yeast (1/4 ounce)

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Dissolve yeast in water. Put the 2 ½ cups of biscuit mix in a large bowl; stir in the sugar. Add the yeast mixture, stirring vigorously. Sprinkle the work surface generously with the remaining ½ to 1 cup biscuit mix. Turn the dough out onto the surface and knead well, 15 to 20 times. Shape the dough as desired. (I shape heaping tablespoons of dough into balls.)

Place on a lightly greased baking sheet, cover with a damp cloth, and let rise in a warm place for 1 hour.

Just before putting into the oven, brush rolls with melted butter. Bake for 12 to 15 minutes, or until golden brown. Brush the rolls again with melted butter while they're hot. Makes about 15 rolls.

Apple Dumplings

2 cans crescent rolls
2 Granny Smith apples
2 sticks butter
1 ½ cups sugar
1 teaspoon vanilla
7 ounces lemon lime soda

Peel and core apples. Cut each apple into 8 slices. Roll each apple slice in a section of crescent rolls. Place in a 9 x 13 buttered pan. Then melt butter, add sugar, and barely stir. Add vanilla and pour the entire mixture over apples. Pour soda all around edges of apples. Bake at 350 degrees for 40 minutes.



Lineman PROMOTIONS

Because of their hard work and tenacity, three Pontotoc Electric Power Association linemen moved up in the apprenticeship program. Larkin Gillespie moved to year two, and Eli Hatcher and Richard Hernandez moved to year three. The apprenticeship program is a combination of skills training, book work, and on-the-job training. Each level takes about a year to complete.







Congratulations to our linemen!

Left to right: Larkin Gillespie, Eli Hatcher, and Richard Hernandez

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HAPPY THANKSGIVING

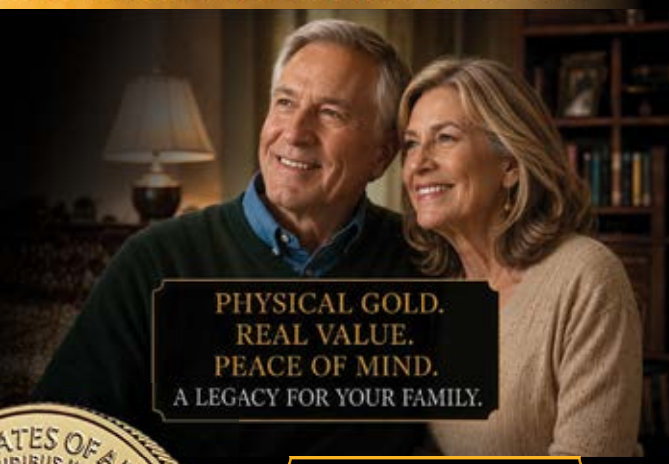
from Pontotoc Electric Power Association!

Our offices will be closed Nov. 26 and 27.

A dispatcher for PEPA will be on duty for outages or emergencies.
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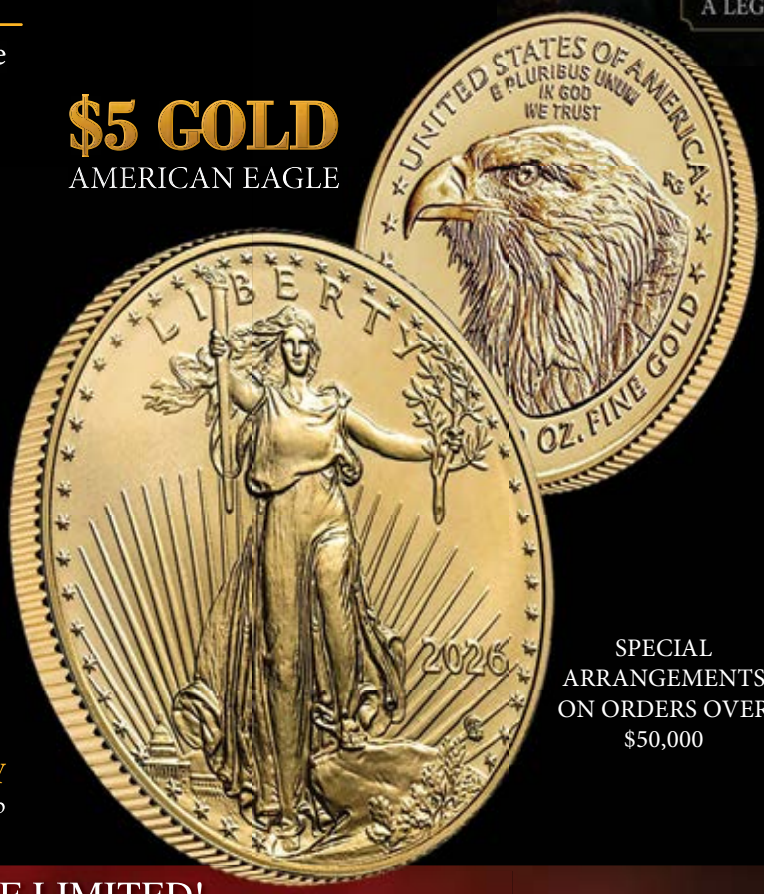
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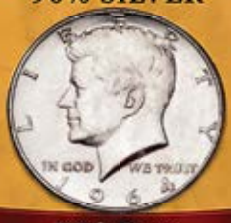
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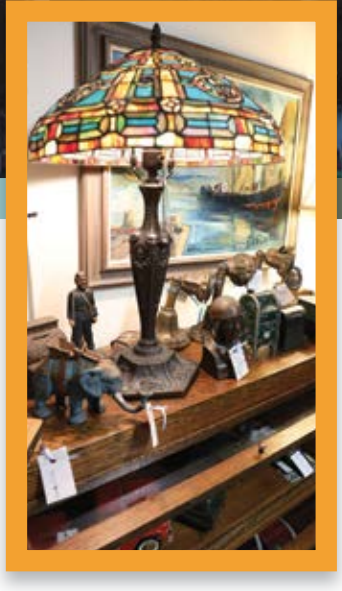
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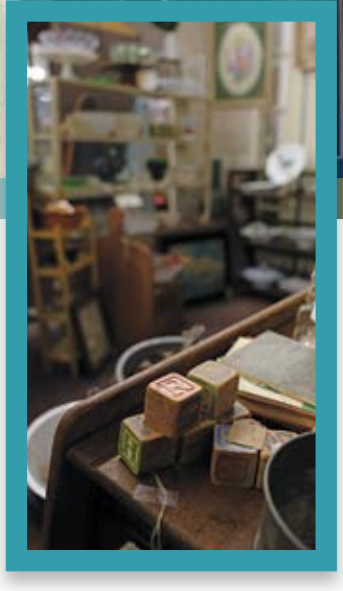
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Photos by Whitley Daughtry









Summit's DOWNTOWN *vintage* VIBE



Step onto the sidewalk in downtown Summit and stride into a past where Pyrex persists, uranium glass glows, and dainty china teacups recall the social customs of simpler times.

by Sherry Lucas

Within a two-block stretch of Robb Street, bisected by U.S. 51 and a sole traffic light, a cluster of at least seven businesses cater to a nostalgia for bygone days — a remarkable concentration for a tiny town that barely topped 1,500 in the 2020 census.

Historic buildings on both sides of Summit's main street are just the start. Cross several thresholds and the vintage feel multiplies exponentially, driven by dozens of vendors packed inside. The density has made Summit a shopping destination for traces of yesteryear.

First Thursday in November ignites the Christmas rush with Mistletoe & Magic, presented by the Pike County Chamber of Commerce. It kicks off with extended hours to 8 p.m., treats, discounts, and more at participating businesses on Nov. 5, for what some store owners deem their biggest night of the whole year, Pike County Chamber of Commerce Program Director Charla Coley said. The fun continues with regular shopping hours Nov. 6-7.

Country Home and ANTIQUES



Nostalgia is turbo-charged as Christmas nears, but antique and vintage stores tap into fond memories year-round.

"We're just a drawing card because there are so many right here on one street," said Stephanie Johnson, whose Southwest Vendors Upscale Market opened July 2006, among the first. She watched the arrival of a second vendor market, just two years later, with trepidation. "I'm going to be honest. …. I thought, 'This is going to hurt my business.'"

Turns out it did the opposite, and in the years since, Robb Street lured more vendor markets to its historic commercial district. Artists, craftsmen, and cottage industry producers fold into the mix, too, at some stores.

"It started developing, kind of like out in the Old West," said Carolyn McKay, whose Things Left Behind is among Johnson's vendors. "You've got one saloon, and then you've got two saloons and now there are, what?" More than half a dozen ply a trade in remnants of the past.

"The more that came, the more that it gave a reason for people to come to Summit," Johnson said. There were not a lot of shops when she moved in. "Now, we're just a thriving little town, and people can't wait to get a spot. They can't wait to get a vendor's spot, honestly, in any of the stores."

> "Now, we're just a thriving little town, and people can't wait to get a spot. They can't wait to get a vendor's spot, honestly, in any of the stores.

RUSTIC Charm





Self-labeled "vintage soul" Lavena McEwen sensed a kinship on Robb Street and hopped on the chance to locate her Vintage Style Coffee & Marketplace there just over a year ago. It filled a need many saw for a coffee break/light lunch spot and brought more traffic.

Nine chandeliers ("so far," McEwen notes) light up the café space where guests linger and revive over coffee drinks like her hit Caramel Cream, pastries, ice cream, soup, or sandwiches, then get back to shopping as close as the booths in back of her store, or right next door.

"The joy of this is, there is an awning over the entire strip," McEwen said. "It can be raining; it can be hot; it can be cold even, and you feel like you're protected, and you can walk from store to store. And that's another joy, that you don't have to get up and drive from this one to that one. You can just walk the entire thing."

Southwest VENDORS







At Rustic Charm, owner Christina Boyanton keyed into Robb Street's retro vibe with peace sign earrings and a Pink Floyd tee. Her shop defies any specialty or antique store label. "It's just everything," she said, from pottery and fragrances to antiques, women's wear, men's hunting attire and tools, even an outlet for animal lovers. Booths by ASAP (Aiding Shelter Animals Project) support the McComb Animal Shelter.

"Some of the stuff in here, you're not going to find at a big retail store, like a Walmart. Let's just say, you had a daughter who wanted Grandma's dishes because that's something she remembers. You have some, but you don't want to give 'em to her," Boyanton said with a knowing chuckle. "She can come down here, and, more than likely, she's going to find them."

Further along the sidewalk, big storefront windows beckon to the variety inside Unique Treasures. "You never know what you're going to find in here," owner Beverly Jackson rightly said of her store, where about 50 vendors peel back the decades to showcase vintage, primitive and farmhouse finds, from frilly ruffle vases to old-timey washboards and everything in-between.

Unique Treasures won Mississippi Magazine's readers poll for 2026 Best of Mississippi Flea Market, becoming a magnet for out-of-towners. "It didn't just help me; it helped the whole town," said Jackson, who hands newcomers a sheet she made listing all the town's vendor malls.

Surprises and stories are shoppers' bread and butter. "It's like you're on a scavenger hunt or a treasure hunt," said Sandy Myers, manager at Country Home Antiques & Gifts on Robb Street's southern side. "I try to find out, or ask my vendors to find out anything about a piece's past. … People want to know the history."

Myers aims for a Southern home feel in the shop with vignettes, so shoppers can visualize things in their own homes. That helps nudge items into buyers' hands and out the door. "It just gives everything a chance to have another life, instead of a landfill."

She sees groups pop over to Summit from camping trips at nearby Percy Quin State Park. “Some men come with their wives and you can tell they’re like the game warden when they’re hunting. They tell them, ‘We don’t need that’ or ‘I can make that.’” Myers chuckled. “I think it’s a lot more fun when it’s just women, all together.”

Summit Mercantile owner Kenneth Fitzpatrick credits the peaceful small-town atmosphere and his shop’s focus on pure antiques, with some vintage, for its reach to Louisiana customers in New Orleans, Baton Rouge, Hammond, and more. “About 70% of our market comes from outside of our area,” he said. Folks are drawn to things that tell a story about how people grew up and how their parents and grandparents lived. It brings back a lot of great memories.”

He likened Summit’s vendor malls to sisters and brothers, each a little bit different. “We operate, in my opinion, like a family down here. … It’s about sharing a love for something people have, and they come from all over to visit and see it.”

Interest among younger shoppers is encouraging, and he pointed out a dining set with heart cutouts that is a current fave for that set. Nearly a third of his followers are younger than 44, he said. “They want to mix their decoration with some new and some old ,and we don’t have a problem selling it at all.”

Fitzpatrick is fond of telling customers, “If you can’t find it in downtown Summit, you must not need it. Because it’s here. Somewhere.”

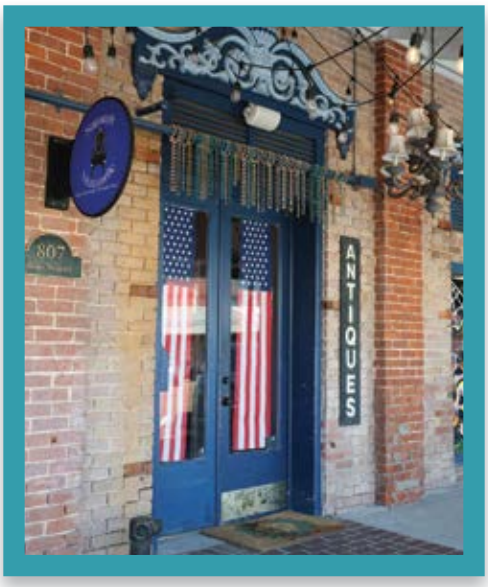
Vintage Girls and That Guy owner Michele Hartz also sees a trend back to furniture and decor that were part of parents’, grandparents’ and great-grandparents’ homes, for emotional attachment but also practical concerns. “We can’t deny that things that were made a long time ago are much more quality than what they are now.”

Younger girls are buying crystal dishes for vanities, now back in vogue, and brides want actual china for their rehearsal dinners, Hartz said. “I guess the last 20, 30 years has been kind of the whole Ikea generation. We put things together, but you know what? None of those pieces are still standing around. But the furniture from 50 or 100 years ago is still going strong.”

Vintage linens are targets for upcycling. Hartz picked up a table runner and draped it like a scarf to show how old things turn into new fashions. Vendors and consignments hold the allure of the past, while multiple platforms — Whatnot live shows, eBay, Etsy, Mercari and Facebook Marketplace as well as the Summit store — keep old but good items circulating in the present.

With a career in corporate sales and marketing, Hartz saw potential in Summit’s location, within a day-trip drive of Jackson, Hattiesburg, Natchez, Baton Rouge, and New Orleans, and in its small town charm. She moved Vintage Girls and That Guy to a downtown building she bought in June and hopes to double its space by spring.

“It’s still evolving,” she said of the scene in Summit, “and I still see so much potential.”







UNIQUE *Treasures*



Summit MERCANTILE





VINTAGE Style Coffee & marketplace

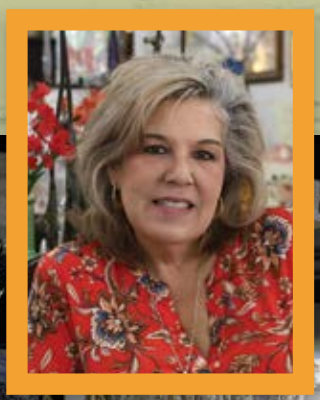








Vintage Girls & That GUY







DOT EASTERWOOD MURPHY

One of Mississippi's best



Dot Easterwood Murphy is arguably one of the best female athletes in our state's history. Several things that stand out on her resume as an athlete are that she was a two-time all-state basketball player, three-time All-American college basketball player, and a player for the USA team in the World University Games in 1973. She was named by *Sports Illustrated* as one of the top 50 Mississippi athletes of the 20th century. NFL films did a documentary about her coaching at Hinds Community College. Murphy was named the greatest athlete in the history of the Mississippi University for Women and was inducted into the "W" Sports Hall of Fame, Hinds Junior College Sports Hall of Fame, National Junior College Sports Hall of Fame, and the Mississippi Community College Sports Hall of Fame. In 1999 the Mississippi Sports Hall of Fame inducted her as a basketball player.

Until recently, women never thought they could coach football at any level. Murphy was the first woman named to coach junior college football in America.

Hinds Junior College head football coach Bill Buckner kept teasing Murphy about coaching football. "That is all I thought it was — that Coach Buckner was joking around," Murphy said. But one day he told her husband, Gene, who was the defensive coordinator, that he was serious about her coaching wide receivers. Buckner then went to Hinds President Clyde Muse, who signed off on it. Murphy ended up coaching more than 30 years at Hinds. Hinds won five state championships in her coaching career.

Those involved with the Hinds football program over three decades will tell you Murphy's biggest impact is the mark she left on her players and coaches. "I really didn't realize the impact I might have on others when I took the job at Hinds. Coaching football was no different than coaching basketball: it is about results that you teach," said Murphy.

Growing up, Murphy thought basketball was her love. Her dad, Thad Easterwood, was a high school football coach, so she was around the sport, but never visualized being involved with football.

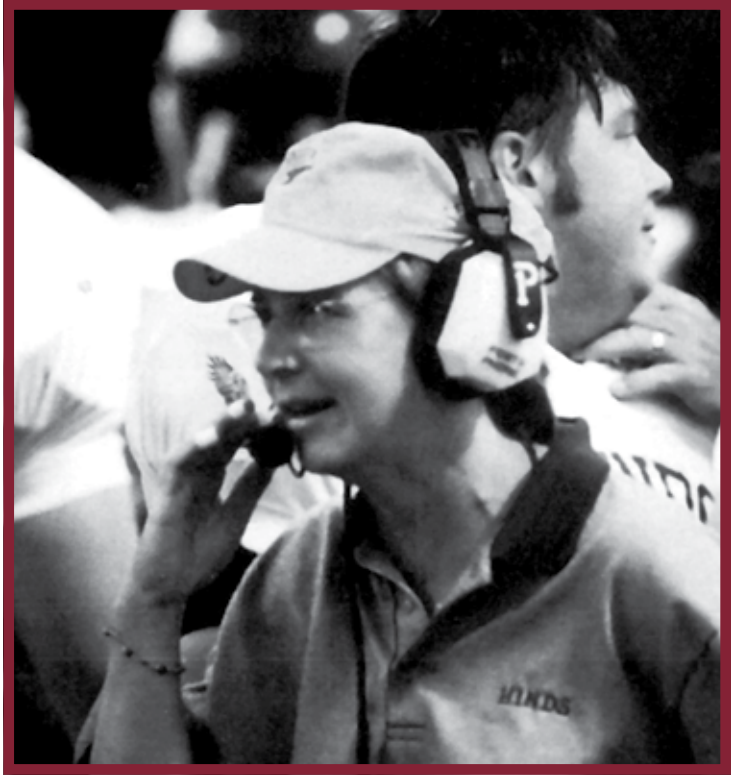
She was born in Jackson when her dad was coaching at Pelahatchie. Her dad also had coaching stops at Louise and Mize. The family finally settled in the Starkville area when her dad was elected Superintendent of Education for Oktibbeha County in 1960.

After playing two years at Maben, she transferred to Starkville when she was entering the 10th grade. "Starkville had a very talented team and was one of the top teams in the state," Murphy said. Back in the 1960s, all girl teams in Mississippi played three offensive players on one end of the court and three different defensive players on the other end. She played defense her first year at Starkville but moved to offense her junior year and was a rover her senior season. The Lady Yellowjackets won state titles in both her sophomore and senior years.

The summer following her senior year, she was named the Most Valuable Offensive Player in the Mississippi Association of Coaches All-Star basketball game.

As a college freshman she made an immediate impact on the team's road to the National Invitational Intercollegiate Basketball Tournament's national championship. The following year, the team finished fourth in the first-ever AIAW tournament. She was the first player to score 1,000 career points at the "W" and averaged over 22 points per game in her college career. "The 'W' was a blessing for me," Murphy said.





She earned a spot on the USA team in 1973 in the World University Games. The 1973 USA team defeated Cuba, Mexico, Bulgaria, Romania, and France before losing to host Russia. They won a Silver Medal. Murphy's roommate both years was former Tennessee basketball coach Pat Summitt.

Murphy was honored by the city of Starkville with a parade after her outstanding basketball playing days at the "W". She was also the youngest at that time to be presented the Mississippi Outstanding Citizen Award for 1973.

After college she was an athletic trainer at Mississippi State University before moving into coaching at UT Martin for one year. She then was hired at Itawamba Junior College for one year before heading back to Columbus as the head coach of her alma mater.

She met her future husband Gene at Mississippi State, and they married in 1976. The Murphys have three children, Kelly, Ashley, and Jennifer, along with seven grandchildren.

It's not what you take with you, it's what you leave behind that is so important. Murphy's successful trailblazing has left a legacy that will give hope to women in the future.



by Dale McKee

Dale McKee is a Waynesboro native who has been writing about sports in Mississippi since 1973. He is a member of Dixie Electric. Contact him at ddmckee18@yahoo.com.



The Farmhouse Kitchen

with Vicki Leach

Avoid a CHARLIE BROWN THANKSGIVING with these desserts

Remember when Snoopy made Charlie Brown and his buddies a Thanksgiving dinner of popcorn, jellybeans, and toast?

Remember how unhappy Peppermint Pattie was at the prospect of being invited to dinner and being subjected to such a ridiculous array of snack foods? She was looking for turkey, mashed potatoes, and pumpkin pie. Never mind that she'd invited herself to dinner, or that a dog was in charge of the menu. She was ticked. When I was a kid, I thought she was just plain rude. Thank goodness for Marcie who called her out and helped her see the error of her ways. In the end, everybody threw themselves into the family station wagon and headed to Grandmother's house. The day and dinner were saved. Thank goodness for Grandmothers.

In all the years I've been married, I can only remember one where I wasn't the one making Thanksgiving dinner for everybody. Through the years — to try to alleviate my own boredom with my own food — I have thrown a couple of different dishes into the mix; but I believe I've already mentioned what happens when I do. Ultimately, having learned the error of my ways, I stick to the program. Except when it comes to dessert.

Years ago, in a cookbook far, far away I found a recipe for a French Raisin pie. I loved it then. I love it now. It tastes like the holidays to me. I recently heard it called Smokey Mountain pie. Another easy peasy pie that has just enough caramel flavor to make me happy is a freezer caramel pie. Lastly, this apple muffin recipe is my favorite, and a standard in my teaching kitchen and my home kitchen. I hope you'll try them, pecans and all.

Whatever you do for Thanksgiving I hope you enjoy yours. And save the popcorn for the Charlie Brown specials.

French Raisin Pie/ Smokey Mountain Pie

Makes one 9" pie

INGREDIENTS

- 1 frozen pie shell, unbaked
- 1 stick butter, melted
- 1 cup granulated sugar
- ½ teaspoon cinnamon
- ½ teaspoon nutmeg
- 1 teaspoon vinegar
- 1 cup raisins
- 1 cup chopped pecans
- 2 eggs, a little abused

Combine all in a mixing bowl. Pour into pie shell. Place on a parchment lined baking sheet to prevent overflow. Bake in preheated, 350-degree oven for 30-35 minutes until not jiggly on top. Remove from oven and allow to cool completely before cutting.



Freezer Caramel Pie

Makes one 9" pie

INGREDIENTS

- 1 frozen deep-dish pie shell*
- 8 ounces softened cream cheese
- 16 ounces heavy whipping cream
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- ¾ cup jarred caramel sauce, chilled

Bake your pie shell until toasty brown.* Whip whipping cream until stiff peaks form. In a separate bowl, beat together the cream cheese, caramel, and vanilla until smooth. Fold half of the whipped cream into the cream cheese mixture until blended. Spread into cooled pie crust. Top with remaining whipped cream.

Freeze for at least an hour. If freezing for several hours, pull 20-30 minutes before cutting and serving. Drizzle with extra caramel sauce for garnish.

*To 'blind' bake or par bake your pie shell, use a fork and prick the bottom of an unbaked frozen/homemade pie crust - just a few times. Lay a piece of parchment paper or aluminum foil across the bottom, overhanging the sides of the crust, then fill with dry beans or pie weights (I use and reuse dry pinto beans). Bake for 20 minutes; pull from oven and carefully remove the foil and beans (set aside to cool and save for baking again. Don't try to cook a pot of beans with these). Bake pie crust and additional 5 - 10 minutes until crust is completely done.





Apple Muffins

Makes 24

INGREDIENTS

- 2 cups brown sugar
- 1 cup + 2 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 2 eggs
- 2 teaspoons baking soda
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- 3 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 ½ cups peeled, cored and diced apples
- 1 tablespoon vanilla
- 1 cup buttermilk
- 1 cup pecans

Combine sugar, oil and eggs. Beat well. In a separate bowl, combine buttermilk, soda, salt, and vanilla. Fold the flour into the sugar mixture, alternately with the buttermilk; do not over-mix. Fold in the apples and nuts. Divide the batter into greased muffin tins (two 12-cup). Bake at 350 degrees until a toothpick comes out clean, 25-30 minutes.

NOTE If you use dark muffin pans (like I sometimes do) bake at 325 degrees for about 30 minutes — higher temps have a tendency to overcook in dark pans.



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.

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.**

Greene County Festival. Nov. 7. Leakesville. From 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Greene County Rural Events Center. Festival will include children's activities, a car show, arts and crafts, live music, food vendors, and a ranch rodeo. Details: 601-770-3017 or 601-394-7029.

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 dedicated 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

Forrest/Lamar County Forestry Association Annual Meeting. Nov 12. Hattiesburg. Starts at 6 p.m. at the Forrest County Extension Office. Food, networking with forest landowners, door prizes, and an educational opportunity. The event includes dinner. Registration is $20. Registration is due by Nov. 6. Send a check or money order to P.O. Box 191 Purvis, MS 39475. Wild turkey populations and improvements across the state will be discussed. Details: 601-794-3910.

The National Folk Festival. Nov. 13 to 15. Jackson. With over 300 artists performing across six stages, and dozens of craft demonstrators and artisans showcasing their craft in the Mississippi Folklife Area and the Festival Marketplace, festival attendees can expect a feast of delights anywhere they turn. The downtown festival will run along Capitol Street with large, open-air stages anchoring each end. The event kicks off at 6 p.m. on Friday and noon on Saturday and Sunday. Some of the artists include Cedric Burnside and the Rising Stars Fife and Drum; bluegrass legend Jerry Douglas, and Southwest Louisiana's The Savoy Family Band. Details: Visit NationalFolkFestival.com/schedule or go to facebook.com/NFFJackson.

The 21st Annual Polkville Day. Nov. 14. Polkville. The theme this year is "Celebrating 250 Years of American Veterans." The event will take place at the Polkville Civic and Multi-Purpose Center from 9: a.m. to 6:30 p.m. There will be an antique tractor and car/truck show with awards and prizes at 1 p.m. There will also be live music, arts and crafts, food and desserts, a cakewalk at 1: p.m., raffles, door prizes, and a kid's zone. The event will also feature a veteran's program and recognition at noon. Fireworks at 6:30 p.m. The event will be held rain or shine. No entry fee. Details: 601-537-3115 or email rwmiles@gmail.com.

Purvis Street Festival. Nov. 14. Purvis. The downtown event is family friendly and begins at 9 a.m. and ends at 4 p.m. The festival will include food vendors, a pie contest, two music stages, arts and crafts, and a car show. Details: 601-270-9081.

Cotton Gin Festival. Nov. 14. Kewanee. The festival will be held from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at The Simmons-Wright Company at 5493 Highway 11 and 80. The festival will feature live music on the Cotton Gin stage, vendors, food, and more. Details: 601-632-1884.

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.

Landrum's Homestead Sugar Cane Syrup Making. Nov. 14. Laurel. From 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. at 1356 Highway 15 South. Watch as syrup is made the old-fashioned way using a mule-powered cane mill and an antique syrup pan, just like in the early days. Guests can also enjoy free biscuits with fresh syrup samples, along with tasty festival favorites like corn dogs, lemonade, and homemade ice cream. Admission: is $12 while children 3 and under get in free. Details: 601-649-2546 or visit landrums.com.

Highland Games and Celtic Music Festival. Nov 14 and 15. Gulfport. The festival is at Harrison County Fairgrounds, 15321 County Farm Rd. The event features two full days of Scottish culture, food, music, and athletics including sanctioned Highland athletic competitions on both days as well as three award-winning bagpipe bands. Two stages will feature Celtic music and dance. There will also be jousting competitions and axe throwing. Visit various clan tents to learn about your heritage. Details:228-380-1642 or email mshighlandsandislands@gmail.com.

The 72nd Annual Pre-Thanksgiving Gospel Singing Show. Nov. 21. Laurel. The show begins at 6:30 p.m. at Oakland Grove Baptist Church, 2475 Pleasant Grove Rd. Featuring The Kingsmen Quartet, Tim Frith & the Gospel Echoes, Jason Runnels, and Revelations. Details: 601-906-0677 or 601-720-8870.

The 58th Annual Trees of Christmas at Merrehope. Nov. 22 to Dec. 31. Meridian. The event features more than 70 Christmas trees and displays in a 20-room neoclassical mansion. Merrehope is at 905 MLK Dr. There are daily tours, group tours, and special events. Details: 601-483-8439 or visit merrehope.com.

43rd Annual Christmas at Landrum's Homestead. Nov. 28 and Nov. 29. Laurel. From 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. on Saturday and 2 p.m. to 9 p.m. on Sunday. 1356 Hwy 15 South. Enjoy photos with Santa, live entertainment, a Civil War re-enactment, dulcimers, clogging, wagon rides, pony rides, gem mining, and a gift shop filled with unique treasures. Stroll through acres of dazzling holiday lights, watch skilled artisans like blacksmiths, wood carvers, and chainsaw artists. Treat yourself to holiday favorites such as kettle corn, funnel cakes, homemade ice cream, and more. Admission: is $15 while children 3 and under get in free. Details: 601-649-2546 or visit landrums.com.

Oxford Christmas Galleria. Nov. 28. Oxford. The event will take place from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. at The Jefferson, 365 Highway 6 East. The event will bring together more than 50 local and regional artists. The event will feature artwork, handmade goods, unique gifts, food, drinks, music, and holiday shopping. Details: 615-18-7843.

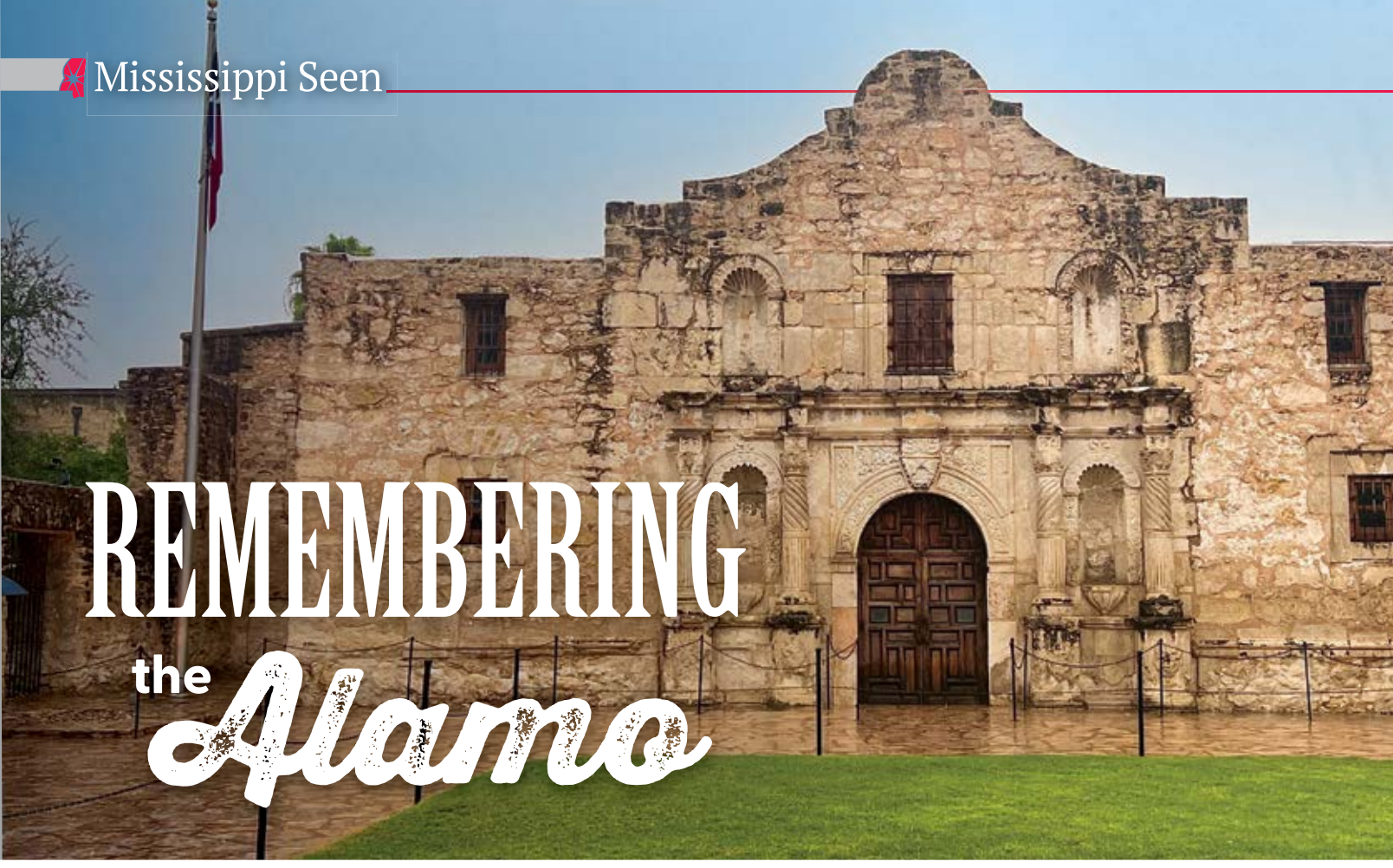
Cleveland Farm Toy Show. Dec. 4 and 5. Cleveland. 5:30 p.m. to 8 p.m. on Friday and 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Saturday. The show will be held at the Willard Samuels Gymnasium, 700 North Chrisman Ave. Details: 662-588-0677 or cbandrewsfarm@gmail.com.

Christmas Lights at Landrum's Homestead. Dec. 4, 5, 11, 12, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, and 23. Laurel. From 4 p.m. to 9 p.m. at1356 Hwy 15 South. Step back in time and experience the magic of Christmas with thousands of lights and candlelit pathways. Beautiful Christmas music, photos with Santa, a marshmallow roast, wagon rides, funnel cakes, beignets and hot chocolate will be available. Admission is $15 while children 3 and under get in free. Details: 601-649-2546 or visit landrums.com.

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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REMEMBERING the Alamo

So, we were in San Antonio for a wedding and got there a few days early to look around. Naturally, I wanted to see the Alamo. I mean, being in San Antonio and not seeing the Alamo is like going to San Francisco and not seeing the Golden Gate Bridge. Or going to Cooperstown, N.Y. and skipping the National Baseball Hall of Fame Museum. (Which we actually did. We visited the Colonial Farm Museum instead. The Cardiff Giant is there! Whole 'nuther story. Look it up.)

Back to the Alamo — we got to San Antonio just in time for the floods of early October. So, when we went to the big rotating restaurant at the top of the 800-foot tower downtown, all we saw were a few buildings near us and fog. Now they know what it would look like if they replaced the windows with frosted glass.

But the Alamo is nearby. And even though it was still raining like crazy, we decided to take a shot at it — mainly because too many times in the past, I've had good intentions of coming back later to see something or do something when it would be more convenient but never made it back.

So, Miz Jo and daughter Tammy circled the block (although the Alamo is free, the only parking lot we found was 30 bucks!) while son-in-law Brad and I went in. I got the photo I came to get and sent a text of it to daughter Keri back home. Her response, "What's the name of that building? I don't remember."

And then we saw people going inside. Going inside never occurred to me. But since it was free, we went in, too.

The interior looks like any Spanish Mission built in that era (1718 — about the time Fort Rosalee was built at Natchez.) The Alamo's fame came as a fortress in the Texas Revolution when it was overrun in 1836 and all of the defenders were killed. That piece of history made instant martyr heroes of icons like Jim Bowie and David Crockett (Not Davy. Crockett never used any other name but David in his lifetime. "Davy" came from a set of almanacs published after his death. But primarily, "Davy" came from the Walt Disney movie and TV show.)

There is a memorial inside commemorating the Mississippians who died in the siege. I found four Mississippi names on the plaques. Another Mississippi connection, the knife Jim Bowie made famous in a duel on a Natchez sandbar was invented by his brother, Rezin Bowie, who is buried in the Catholic cemetery in Port Gibson.

Although the Battle of the Alamo was a resounding defeat for the proponents of Texas independence, in a very real way, it won the war. Because the battle birthed the cry, "Remember the Alamo" which spurred on the successful Texans at the decisive Battle of San Jacinto; the victory which won Texas its independence from Mexico.

So, when you are down, you may not be out. Just "Remember the Alamo."



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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