



THE CANTON NEWS

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Canton Spirituals earn Governor's Arts Award

Special to The Canton News

The Canton Spirituals were recently honored with a Lifetime Achievement Award at the 2019 Governor's Arts Awards ceremony, which was held at the Old Capitol Building in downtown Jackson, Mississippi. The gospel singing group was founded in Canton in 1943 by Harvey Lee Watkins, Sr., and together they pioneered an urban sound which blends R & B and the blues with gospel. They have two gold-certified records to their credit and have either received a nomination or won most major music industry awards, including GRAMMY Awards, Stellar Gospel Music Awards, Dove Awards and Soul Train Music Awards.

In 1994, Second Street in Canton was renamed Harvey Watkins, Sr., Street in his honor. Later that year, Mr. Watkins passed away, but his son, Harvey Lee Watkins, Jr., has continued to front the group that is still per-

forming and is considered one of the nation's most popular and influential gospel groups. Other current members include Merlin Lucious, William Voss, Rodrick Jones, Paul Porter and Shannon Lee.

The Governor's Arts Awards is an annual ceremony that recognizes individuals and organizations that have made noteworthy contributions to the arts in the state of Mississippi. Schools, businesses, organizations, arts initiatives and events are eligible to receive Governor's Arts Awards, in addition to individual artists and supporters of the arts. Notable past recipients include John Grisham, B. B. King, Thalia Mara, the Craftsman's Guild of Mississippi and Malaco Records.

Award winners are nominated by members of the public and selected by a jury of community arts leaders and industry peers. Recipients are not required to be Mississippi residents, but they must have significant ties to the



Special to The Canton News

Participating in the Governor's Arts Awards (l to r) were, front row: First Lady Deborah Bryant; Reverend Andrew Cheairs; Governor Phil Bryant; and Harvey Watkins, Jr.; and back row: Merlin Lucious; William Voss; Rodrick Jones; Paul Porter; Shannon Lee; Steve Edds, MAC Board Chair; and Senator John Horn.

state through some years of residency.

The Governor's Arts Awards program signifies the important relationship between government and the arts. The arts combine vision and creativity while

enriching society's cultural horizons. Established in 1988, the Governor's Arts Awards recognize those who have made noteworthy contributions to, or achieved artistic excellence

Cont. on page 3

Madison County Library to launch new Bookmobile

Special to The Canton News

The Library Foundation of Madison County received a \$10,000 donation from Atmos Energy towards the library's bookmobile. Ashley Day, Linda Waters, Linda Collins, and Robert Lesley came from Atmos to give Tonja Johnson, Director of the Madison County Library System, the check that will be utilized towards the bookmobile. Patrons and businesses alike may make donations at any of the five branches of the Madison County Library System



Special to The Canton News

Pictured (l to r) are: Linda Waters, Manager of Public Affairs; Ashley Day, Executive Assistant; Wendy Collins, Senior Financial Analyst; Tonja Johnson, Madison County Library System Director; and Robert Lesley, Director of Public Affairs.

or by contacting Jacqueline Berry at Par' Excelon Marketing Group at 601-709-3744.

Atmos Energy is committed to investing in the communities that they serve, and they place a high priority on projects that focus on education and young individuals. The bookmobile project is expected to help all of Madison County, especially underserved communities that don't have access to a traditional library. Atmos officials say they are very happy to contribute to this effort, to inspire

Cont. on page 8

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Miller named Conservation Educator of the Year/2019



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Celia Miller, District Coordinator/Information Education Specialist for Madison County Soil and Water Conservation, was named Conservation Educator of the Year by the Mississippi Wildlife Federation. She received the award at the 59th Annual Conservation Achievement Award Luncheon, which was recently held at the Hilton Jackson. Pictured (l to r) are: Lieutenant Governor Tate Reeves; Celia Miller; and Mississippi Wildlife Federation President-Elect Jeanne Jones.

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Know Your Neighbor: Dr. Susan Riddell

By Guest Columnist Jim Ritchie

Few present Canton residents can claim membership in an iconic Canton family that has existed in Canton for 109 years at the time of this writing. It's important that the impact and importance of this family's contribution to Canton's history is understood before introducing you to this month's neighbor.

In 1910, Buttross Department Store was opened by David Buttross, who at age sixteen arrived in New York with five dollars in his pocket, migrated to Louisiana and then to Canton. He and his wife, Freada Saab, produced eight children among whom were Edward and Ernest. The two sons worked in the business and became owners of the store when David retired in 1954. Edward later retired, and Ernest, along with his wife, Mariam, and two of their daughters ran the store until his death in 2011. One has only to review Ernest's accomplishments and awards to realize what a positive impact he and Mariam had on Canton's cultural, economic and political environments. They were a blessing to the community and instilled their values of honesty and service in their eight children.

Meet the third eldest of those children, Dr. Susan Buttross Riddell. Mother of five, grandmother

of ten, physician, counselor, department administrator, book author, regional, national and international conference speaker, radio program host, artist and avid gardener.

Susan was born in the old King's Daughter's Hospital in Canton and attended public school here, graduating from Canton High School aspiring to become a veterinarian. She then attended Mississippi State University, graduating with a degree in chemistry. She ultimately decided to attend medical school at the University of Mississippi Medical School and upon graduating there, completed her residency in pediatrics at the University Medical Center and the University of Texas Medical Branch in Galveston. After practicing in Galveston and San Antonio, she returned to Mississippi in 1986 to assist expanding the Child Developmental Center for behavioral needs at the University of Mississippi Medical Center. Her awards and achievements since that time are too many to list here, but some of the following are indicative of the recognition she has received from her peers.

Susan has served on numerous committees and held several offices for the state and national American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP). Currently, she is a spokesperson for the AAP and has been the recipient of grants to study sleep disorders, autism, tobacco use in adolescents, speech and language disorders, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder and fetal alcohol spectrum disorders. She has received the Special Achieve-

ment Award from the American Academy of Pediatrics twice and has been selected as one of the best doctors in America for the last eight years! She has numerous publications in the area of child development and authored the book, *Understanding Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder*.

Susan retired in 2017, but she says she "failed retirement." She is still the Medical Director of the Developmental Center and she hosts the program *Relatively Speaking* on Mississippi Public Radio each Tuesday at 11 a.m. She is also working on a large grant as the principal investigator to help expand early child development services in Mississippi. Susan is married to Robert Riddell, a member of another family that has been crucial in Canton's history and development. She's also teaching herself to paint, and she loves her gardening. Her future is wide open to new things, but one thing about her past is certain... There are hundreds of grateful children and parents who are extremely thankful that Susan did not become a veterinarian.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Jim Ritchie is a published author, storyteller, entertainer and grandfather of eleven. He is amazed at the number of talented and accomplished people who live in the Canton area, and he thinks local citizens should know about some of them. Ritchie and professional artist wife, Perry, live in the Shocco community out from Canton. View their work at www.southernstories.com.

cont. from front page

Canton Spirituals earn Governor's Award

in, the state of Mississippi. The awards event is presented each year by the Mississippi Arts Commission in partnership with the Governor's Office. Donor

contributions help make the Governor's Arts Awards a special occasion for those honored.

After the Governor's Arts Awards were held, Mississippi

Public Broadcasting aired the event on television and radio. The selection process for 2020 award recipients will begin Summer 2019.

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Population density's potential in Canton, Mississippi

By Guest Columnist Joy Foy



Special to The Canton News

Accepting as a fact that population density and people hugely impact a local economy, let's take a look at things Canton has working in its favor. From my visits and work around town, I am reporting the available opportunities I see to attract people to come to Canton. This article certainly is not a complete list of opportunities or all that is happening.

The Canton Garden Club's tour of upstairs apartments last year certainly opened my eyes. We were treated to a tour of five apartments on the second floor of our historic square. Of those apartments, most are used for second homes, but two are available for full time residents, and a third is set up for bed and breakfast. This not only adds to the

population base, but those living or staying there are a readymade market for restaurants, retail and downtown entertainment.

Brownstone Residential Management recently gave me a tour of the old Canton High School, which now contains eighty new apartments, with Phase 1 being 90% occupied and Phase 2, 80% full. The blending of the historic architecture and the new construction is beautifully done in the old school building, and the amenities include an indoor playground complete with Astro-turf, a meeting space for family gatherings and a computer learning center.

In 2018, the Links Apartments added 600 new units in an expansion known as the Trails of Madison County for a value of thirty-one million dollars, according to Jimmy Smith, Canton's new Director of Building and Development. Last year's building permits also included two single family permits for a total value of \$553,000. The City has issued a permit for the

new John Deere store, and plans have been presented for a new Burger King at 1445 West Peace Street, which is the location of the old Marathon gas station at the interstate. The Burger King developer is going to remove the underground fuel tanks, demolish the existing building and construct a new one.

The shops on the Historic Canton Square offer a wide variety of merchandise. One offers a collection of different vendors, including boutique and vintage clothing, handcrafted "Made in Mississippi" gift items and jewelry, while others carry one-of-a-kind merchandise, furniture, interior design consultation services, antiques and clothing. Several of the shops will offer special events and refreshments throughout the year to draw and entertain customers, including scavenger hunts, wine tastings and free beverages. A bourdon distillery is in full operation, with three bourbons created off the west side of the square.

Dave Danaher and his wife,

Suzanne, have purchased the two-story building at the south corner of Peace and Liberty Street. They plan to open a family-oriented restaurant/bar offering breakfast, lunch and dinner. Their plans also include offering ice cream, coffee and drinks to lure shoppers in for an afternoon break. Dave tells me that the upstairs will be converted into a bed-and-breakfast apartment. They see the B&B as a way to accommodate and capitalize on all the wedding venues operating and opening in Canton and to give an exceptional overnight option for the many who come for our festivals and special events hosted by Canton Tourism.

Canton Tourism has already had tourists from nineteen states this year, while visitors from forty-eight states are on record from last year. Ann Stringer and Charlotte Wilson, who work at the Welcome Center, tell me that they have exciting stories weekly from tourists about their var-

continue on page 7

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CMU participates in this year's CCC Career Fair



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Pictured (l to r) are: Arthur Eldridge, Electric Department; Carlos Tate, Water Department; Earnest Davis, Gas Department; A'Sadisia Archie, Administrative Department; Tammy Price, Administrative Department; Kaliya Brown, Administrative Department; Rickey Brown, Meter Technician; La'Patrick Brown, Electric Department; and Greg Stanley, Wastewater Department. Employees not pictured who also assisted with 3D models for displays are: Jermaine Henderson, Electric Department; James Walker, Electric Department; Justin Mowdy, Electric Department; Hernando Brown, Gas Department; Fredrick Jenkins, Water Department; and Lonell Bacon, Wastewater Department.

Special to The Canton News

Canton Municipal Utilities (CMU) participated in the 2019 Career Fair that was recently held at the Canton Career Center (CCC). They have been participating in the career fair for over ten years, but this year CMU's employees wanted to give a more visual picture of their daily duties

by showing 3D working models to the students. They also explained what it actually takes to receive services at their homes as well as the local businesses. This is the first year they had actual models of each service that is offered to the Canton community. The students had many questions about the qualifications needed to join the CMU team.



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CMU's General Manager Stephen Thompson and Vice President of Operations John Garrett were also present for the event.



CMU Wastewater Department's Greg Stanley

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APRIL 13, 19, and 20

- Each participating Merchant has plastic eggs filled with candy, discounts, and door prizes! Each customer gets an egg with a purchase at any of our participating Merchants. Who knows what's inside! There will be silver and golden eggs with Downtown Canton Gift Cards to merchants inside valued at \$25 and \$50.

APRIL 20

- Easter Egg Hunt on the Square
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CMSC holds March meeting

Special to The Canton News

The Canton Music Study Club (CMSC) recently met at the First United Methodist Church in Canton.

President Kathy Hammack called the meeting to order and led club members in the club ritual. Following a brief description and the singing of the “Together We Sing”

hymn “Eternal Father, Strong to Save,” a short business meeting was held. Sarah Waters presented a book study program on “My Soul is a Witness - the Message of

the Spirituals in Word and Song” by Marsha Hanson. In the study, Mrs. Waters presented the book’s discussion of the development of spirituals during the enslavement

years, and the socio-logical perspective of the spirituals. Many of the tune’s composers were unknown, but the songs were a union of word and song. Mrs. Waters also led the group in singing “Give Me Jesus” and

“Balm in Gilead.” Following the close of the program and meeting, hostess Anne Stubblefield served refreshments.



Special to The Canton News

Pictured are Sarah Waters and Charlyne Jones, program chairman.

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Population density’s potential creating options for Canton

ied reasons for visiting Canton.

The Canton Lions will host “Canton After 5” events beginning April 9, to give people another option to enjoy being downtown. The Canton Parks and Recreation Department and the Garden Club have big plans to use the city’s \$25,000 grant to spruce up downtown. Keep Canton Beautiful is very busy with the demolition of neglected property and designating cleanup days each month for our residents. We have ample space and a huge historic advantage to attract people to our town. It was fun to see the excitement from everyone that I talked to for this article. Spirits are high, volunteers are willing, a variety of exclusive shopping is available, outside investors are investing and our merchants are working alongside Tourism to attract clients.

I am a strong believer in the adage that “If you build it, they

will come.” Canton has new housing options, new jobs and new entertainment choices to attract more people. I have touched on only some of the exciting things happening in Canton, but looking around, you can see Spring has sprung, and the potential is here.

All of these “new” things for Canton can add to Canton’s population density and grow the local economy. I hope you, like me, love living here and will help to spread the word of the positive things about living and shopping in Canton.

EDITOR’S NOTE: Joy Foy is married to James Foy and is a retired Economic Developer with the Mississippi Development Authority. Foy is an active participant in the community of Canton. She is a member of the Lions Club and on the Keep Canton Beautiful Committee.

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Bello named Hall of Famer

Special to The Canton News

Southwest Mississippi Community College (SMCC) baseball players Paco Bello and Tyler White have left their marks on the field while playing for the Bears. But, having been named to the school's Hall of Fame, they have made sure they will be remembered for more than just their athletic ability.

Bears head coach Ken Jackson said "We're very proud and excited for these two young men. Both of them are very well deserving (of this honor). They're not only great baseball players, but, more importantly, they are good people (and) they're good students." Jackson said Bello and White are "community-service people who have taken care of their business" and

reiterated that "they're very well deserving of the (awards) that they've been given."

A pitcher/utility player from Canton Academy, Bello had a 3.923 GPA as a freshman. He was on the President's List for the Fall 2017 semester and the Dean's List for the Spring 2018 semester. He was an MACJC Distinguished Academic All-State and NJCAA All-Academic 2nd Team recipient. Bello recorded a 3.733 GPA for the Fall 2018 semester and named to the Dean's List. His current cumulative GPA is 3.870.

Bello said he was "kind of surprised at first" at his latest accolade, "but, I'm really happy that I was voted into (the Hall of Fame). It means a lot. I never thought I'd receive something like that, but I did and I'm thankful." Majoring in oil and gas production, Bello plans to end his playing career at the end of the 2019 season and, addressing his future plans, said that "For now, I want to get a good job and go to work offshore somewhere."

cont. from front page

Madison County Library to launch new Bookmobile

young people and to help Madison County achieve even more success in the 21st century. "We not only serve Madison County, we live here as well," said Robert Lesley, a spokesperson for Atmos Energy. "It's exciting to support and to be a part of the great things that the Madison County Library System is doing."

Madison County Library System is bringing their wealth of resources such as online databases, story times, books, periodicals, a reference collection, language learning software, career building tools, ACT, SAT and other practice test and tools, technology through laptops, chrome books, high speed internet and more through the high

tech mobile library to enrich the lives of those in Madison County. Albert Einstein said, "The definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over again but

expecting different results." The Madison County Library System employees believe they can't deliver information the same way they always have and expect different results. They have to meet the people where they are, and they believe they will

be able to do just that through the bookmobile. The ribbon cutting will take place at the Canton Library on April 9 at 4:30 p.m., followed by the Business Open House, including a tour of the Digital Innovation Lab.



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BankPlus partners with Canton Career Center

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BankPlus has been Canton's Partner in Education for twenty-five years, offering rewards to deserving students and creating opportunities to recognize faculty and staff contributions. Desiring to provide additional support for education, a few years ago, BankPlus asked for the name of a school that might need support.

Simon Collier, BankPlus Assistant Vice President, quickly submitted Canton Career Center (CCC) as a deserving school. BankPlus began giving CCC a monthly donation of \$833 to provide services such as support for leadership organizations, student incentives for improvement, transportation for business/college tours and other educational expenses not covered in the school's budget. Simon Collier also serves the school by speaking to students about their financial responsibilities, encouraging students to become professionals and recognizing scholastic

achievement.

BankPlus also feeds the faculty and staff at Christmas and at the end of the year. This lunch provides an opportunity for the faculty to recognize those who have earned advanced degrees, are retiring or have experienced something special in their lives. BankPlus also recognizes the outstanding students in each career and technical area for three nine-week terms during the year.



Coach goes extra mile



Photo by Lori Lycette

Pictured (l to r) are, front row: Jadarious Esco and Jahiem Dudley; Second row: Alderwoman Daphne Sims, Coach Timothy Epps, Mayor William Truly, Alderman Rodriguez Brown; Third row: Alderman Fred Esco, DeAnthony Lewis, DeAndre Lewis, Mareco Baldwin, Raul Jones, Traquan Walker; and back row: Alderman Andrew Grant, Alderman Eric Gilkey, Alderman Les Penn. Not pictured: Alderwoman Vickie McNeil.

By Lori Lycette

About two years ago, Nichols Middle School PE/Health teacher Timothy Epps saw a need for mentoring youth in the Canton area and began the Canton Cavaliers Elite Basketball team. He had begun teaching three years prior at Forest Hill High School in Jackson and started an elite team there as well. "What the mentorship does is provide students in the Canton, Mississippi, area the tools and resources to become the best students they can possibly be. The program provides tutoring and lifelong lessons that the school system doesn't pro-

vide, like alternatives to going to jail. Since I've been in Canton for the past two years, several of the boys who were always in trouble and couldn't get their academics in tact, are now on the honor roll," said Epps. They recently travelled to Memphis to compete in the Presidents' Day Tournament, where each grade 6-9 won a first place trophy. While in Memphis, they also toured the Martin Luther King Museum. Coach Epps is planning to start a girls' team as well. The City of Canton contributed money to help pay for their uniforms. To contact Coach Epps, call 769-257-9944 or timepps2008@gmail.com.



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CA students recognized



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In a recent Canton Academy elementary chapel, several K3 through 2nd grade students were recognized for their character traits of kindness and 3rd through 6th graders for fairness. Pictured (l to r) are, front row: Isabelle Lundy, K3; Jolene Belote, K5; Abbey Lacey, K4; Addie Tody, 1st; Ava Hughes, 2nd; and back row: Cooper Purvis, 3rd; Owen Lin, 4th; Jack Coon, 5th; and Sam Martin, 6th.

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Nissan Resume Challenge for future leaders

Special to The Canton News

In an effort to prepare the black history makers of tomorrow, Nissan North America partnered with six chapters of the 100 Black Men of America organization in February to host its sixth annual Nissan Resume Challenge and Summit in Nashville.

Over two days, sixty high school students from six cities (Atlanta, Chicago, Dallas, Nashville, Jackson and Washington, D.C.) met with Nissan leadership and participated in workshops to help prepare them for future success. "Black History Month is a time to celebrate black heritage and culture, but at Nissan we don't want to only reflect on the past. We want to look to the future to help prepare tomorrow's black leaders today," said Jeffrey Webster, Nissan's Director of Diversity and Inclusion. "Our partnership with 100 Black Men of America introduces black teens to a corporate environment as well as the tools they need to succeed as they plan their future." Summit participants first participated in a

resume and interview challenge with representatives from their local chapter of 100 Black Men of America. Those students with a strong resume and interview skills were invited to attend the 2019 Nissan Resume Challenge and Summit at the automaker's expense. With the tagline of "What they see is what they'll be," 100 Black Men of America is a men's civic organization founded in 1963 to educate and empower African-American children and teens. Since then, it has formed more than one hundred chapters around the country. Nissan is proud to have a longstanding relationship with this organization. While in Nashville, the young men participated in leadership and development workshops and toured Nissan's North American headquarters.

They also visited the Nissan Smyrna Manufacturing and Assembly Plant, which builds the Nissan LEAF, Rogue and Altima. At both locations, they met with Nissan leadership and had the chance to ask questions. Additionally, the students visited Nissan Stadium



Special to The Canton News

where they met Tennessee Titan's cornerback Logan Ryan. They also participated in a panel discussion, "Heroes and Legends," with four African American music industry leaders presented in conjunction with the National Museum of African American Music. The museum is scheduled to open in Nashville later this year. Also during Black History Month, Nissan is launching a digital campaign, "Woven in Tech" with Sheila Rashid, a fashion designer whose career has been heavily influenced by technology. The digital vignettes will capture Sheila's creative process as she uses the Nissan Rogue crossover SUV as her inspiration.

These vignettes will debut in February on Nissan USA's digital and social channels.

Nissan North America's operations include automotive styling, engineering, consumer and corporate financing, sales and marketing, distribution and manufacturing. Nissan is dedicated to improving the environment under the Nissan Green Program and has been recognized annually by the U.S Environmental Protection Agency as an ENERGY STAR® Partner of the Year since 2010. More information on Nissan in North America and the complete line of Nissan and INFINITI vehicles can be found online at www.NissanUSA.com

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Saturday - 11am-9, Sunday - 11am-7

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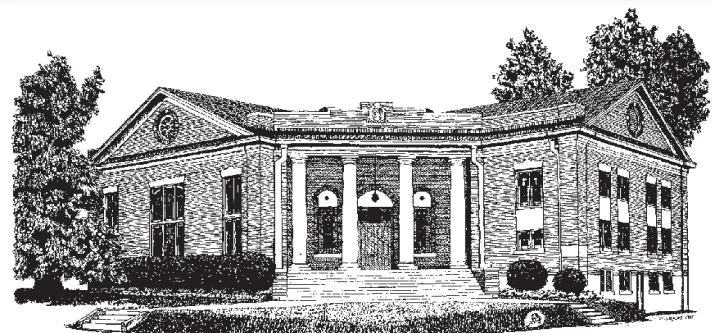
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*Weekly Worship
Schedule*

SUNDAY SERVICE 10:30 A.M.
SUNDAY SCHOOL 9:30 A.M.



Plans underway for Law Enforcement Appreciation



Special to The Canton News

The county economic development support organizations are making plans for the 2019 Madison County Law Enforcement Appreciation Week, which takes place May 12-18. This is the fourth year that the organizations have collaborated to sponsor the event throughout Madison County which celebrates and commemorates the outstanding work of the municipal and county law enforcement officers and first responders. The business community, schools, churches, organizations and individuals are invited to participate in recognizing law enforcement officers for their dedication and commitment to the protection of the citizens of Madison County. Pictured (l to r) are: Kristy Daniels, Ridgeland Chamber of Commerce; Chris Chapman, Ridgeland Tourism; Paige Petersen, Madison County Chamber; Elizabeth Fulcher, Madison the City Chamber; Jan Collins, Madison County Business League and Foundation; Vonda Allen, Flora Area Chamber; and Jana Padgett, Canton Tourism.

Lions to host “Canton after 5” beginning April 9

Special to The Canton News

Beginning in April, the Canton Lions Club will host “Canton after 5” at the Trolio Hotel on the Square. On the second Tuesday April, May, June and August, the Lions Club will host a guest presenter, along with light refreshments, beginning at 5:30 p.m. Downtown merchants will offer extended hours and specials for attendees’ shopping enjoyment.



The series will feature:

- **April 9** - David Rich, owner of Rich Grain Distillery, will showcase signature cocktails and a tasting of his locally distilled bourbons. Cost is \$15 per person.
- **May 14** - Sherry LaCour and Wanda Baldwin will present butterfly gardening, and those attending will have the opportunity to engage in a plant swap. Cost is \$10 per person.
- **June 11** - Braley Reed with the Madison County Library will explain how to utilize the enriching tools of social media to advance a businesses, connect with friends and family, sell unwanted items and enhance lives while enabling security features for safety. Cost is \$10 per person.
- **August 13** - Erin Noble and Jane Foster will kick-off football season with a tailgate setting for refreshments. Tailgating recipes will be shared with those attending. Cost is \$10 per person.

All events listed are open to the public, and tickets may be purchased by calling the Canton Tourism office at 601-859-1307, at cantontourism.com or at the door. Tickets are \$15 for the first event and \$10 for the remaining features, with all profits going toward the Lions Club’s cleanup

projects around town.

As an added enhancement for the May 14 “Canton after 5,” Two Rivers Catering will be hosting dinner at their Events Venue. The upscale buffet will include a carving table featuring prime rib, two side items and dessert. Tea will be provided, and patrons are encouraged to bring their choice of cocktails. The kitchen will provide appropriate glassware. Pre-paid reservations are required for the dinner and can be made by calling 601-862-5911. The cost of \$43.10 per person includes tax and gratuity.

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Dual Enrollment Program



Special to The Canton News

CPSD salutes the following students who will graduate in May with more than twelve hours of college credit: Darrius Dortch, 15 hours; Alashija Johnson, 16 hours; Morgan Williams, 15 hours; and Derrick Bailey, 18 hours.

DSU representatives visit CA



Special to The Canton News

Delta State University representatives recently visited Canton Academy to speak to CA juniors and seniors about the DSU admissions process and college life. Pictured (l to r) are Aja Buckhalter, DSU admissions recruiter and Canton Academy alums Mia Riley and Chris Clanton, who are currently DSU Freshmen.



Diabetes Prevention program will start in April at Merit Health Madison. Open House at 6pm on Tuesday, April 16 at Merit Health Madison's Multipurpose room. If you have questions, please call **Shelia Spann, Pharmacist and Diabetes Specialist**, at 601-855-4032 or email: shelia.spann@mymerithealth.com



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Local radio personality entertains Rotary Club



Special to The Canton News

Local radio station owner Jerry Lousteau (right) was the guest speaker at a recent Canton Rotary Club meeting. He gave presentation on a wide range of topics, such as the latest happenings in the Canton community, Canton and New Orleans restaurants that have opened recently, 2018 NFL Playoff game debacle and a few jokes. Lousteau can be heard every weekday morning beginning at 7 a.m. from WGMO Radio Station on the Canton Square, 1370 AM on the dial. Lousteau is pictured with Canton Rotary Club President David Overby (left).

Families First for MS participates in Job Fair



Special to The Canton News

Families First for Mississippi Workforce Coordinators Nancy McRight, Bubba Weir and Roy Balentine recently participated in the recent Nissan Job Fair. There were over 200 people in attendance. Families First helped with resumes on site as well as job searches. Pictured are Workforce Coordinators Roy Balentine, Nancy McRight, and Bubba Weir.

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The Church should meet people where they are

By Guest Columnist David Lowery



Special to The Canton News

Reverend David Lowery

I read many articles as they cross my desk about the decline of the church. They cover all schools of thought, opinions, theological interpretations and just flat out wrong information about the church. The truth is that the church is made up of human beings; imperfect, strong willed, loving, controlling, hurt, broken, seekers, right, wrong, disappointed, joyful children of God. I think the first step to leading people into a relationship with Jesus is to make "the Church" relevant

to people's lives. How can we be a congregation offering Christ if we lead them to believe that they need "the church," when all the while it is a relationship with Christ that makes the difference in their lives. In making the church relevant, people have to know how much we really care about them, before they will come to receive the message we are delivering.

In order to make the church relevant, we have to meet people where they are, and yes, sometimes in the middle of their mess. Jesus modeled this throughout his life and ministry.

Jesus saw people and listened. Jesus also held people accountable and offered them a better way to live. The church becomes relevant when we begin to see people as Jesus saw people.

The truth is we won't always get it right, and some folks will refuse to yield themselves to God's plan, some folks will disappoint us and our efforts, but as the church, we continue to be a congregation offering Christ.

I believe part of our decline as the church is because we are being taught to change, adapt, and bring ourselves in line with what will be acceptable in the eyes of society, knowing all the while that the message does not change. At times, our methods of presenting that message could be updated, but the basic message is timeless. "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved." Acts 16:31

I've been in church most of my life, and when I wasn't, I always knew that it was important. But what it boiled down to was this:

It was my relationship with Christ that was important, and it was best lived out in the church of Jesus Christ. I needed to be in community with other Christians who loved me, supported me and surrounded me in my times of greatest need.

That's the message people need to hear, and sometimes we fall short because of our wants, wishes and desires. God loves us and longs for us to be in relationship with Him, as any parent would of their child. Thanks be to God for His unconditional love.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Reverend David Lowery is the pastor of the Canton First United Methodist and Thornton Chapel United Methodist Churches. He has been serving here since July 2015.

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T-BALL (AGES 5-6)
COACH PITCH (AGES 7-8)
10U SOFTBALL (AGES 9-10)
12U SOFTBALL (AGES 11-12)
13+ SOFTBALL (AGES 13-15)

Registration ends Friday, April 5th.

COACHES & SPONSORS NEEDED

CPNR relies on our community of volunteers and sponsors. Volunteers can sign up to be a head coach or an assistant coach. Sponsoring a team is a great way to give back too. Sign up to coach or sponsor at the Canton Recreation Office or email denia@cantonparksandrecreation.com.

IN PERSON REGISTRATION

You may also register in person at Canton Recreation Office from 9am - 5pm or you can email denia@cantonparksandrecreation.com. For more information or questions, please call (601) 859 4358 or (601) 540 7605.



OPENING DAY IS MAY 9TH!

Easter Egg Hunt

Saturday, April 20 at 10am

Fun and Games

Easter Egg Hunt

SAAB Park

337 North Union Street, Canton, MS 39046

Live Music, Games, Face Painting,
and Egg Decorating

KIDS 12 & UNDER



Two Rivers Events Venue has ribbon cutting



Photo by Lori Lycette

Johnny Stewart cuts the ribbon to his new Two Rivers Events Venue, located at 116 Commercial Parkway in Canton, directly behind Two Rivers Restaurant and Catering. The new venue has been remodeled, which includes the addition of a large screen if needed for meetings or to watch a movie. There is also a stage for entertainment. The space can be rented for special occasions such as rehearsal dinners, family reunions or business meetings.

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