

Pelahatchie High School receives silver medal

SPECIAL TO THE PELAHATCHIE NEWS

When Shannon Moore was named Rankin County School District's (RCSD) 2013 Teacher of the Year, she said, "Pelahatchie High School (PHS) is the best kept secret in Rankin County."

Today, it is no longer a secret. U.S. News & World Report released its 2013 Best High Schools in the United States list, and Pelahatchie High School (PHS) was one of the top scoring schools in Mississippi. PHS was ranked fourth in the state in the Silver Medal category.

In 2012, the school's graduating seniors received \$1,195,660 in scholarship offers; the highest amount ever offered at the school. For three of the past

six years, PHS students have had the highest Biology I scores in the district. Principal Shane Sanders is quick to give credit to the students, the teachers and the community.

"This recognition is a testament to the hard work our students, teachers, parents and community have put in over the past few years. The support we receive from the school

board as well as the district administration has been invaluable in making this award possible," said Sanders.

"This recognition is a testament to the hard work our students, teachers, parents and community have put in over the past few years. The support we receive from the school board as well as the district administration has been invaluable in making this award possible."

The Best High Schools rankings, which are available online only, are produced in conjunction with the American Institutes for Research (AIR), one of the largest behavioral and social science research organizations in the world. The

magazine publishes detailed information on more than 21,000 public high schools. The top 4,805 schools receive a gold, silver or bronze medal.

Assistant principal of PHS, John Bakelaar, said, "Pelahatchie is blessed to have a building leader, Shane Sanders, who lives for the continued success of this school. We come to work every day knowing we have the support and encouragement from Dr. Weathersby and the county office to do our jobs in a manner that will breed success."

"This achievement is just more proof that our RCSD schools are not only the best in the state but among the best in the nation," said RCSD superintendent, Dr. Lynn Weathersby.

Cross Roads Baptist Church holds benefit for Shearer family

BY: KRISTEN JONES

The date, September 24, 2012, was a turning point in the lives of the Shearer family. At an Upwards basketball game sponsored by their home church, Cross Roads Baptist Church, Michelle Shearer began to notice that her husband, Kenneth Shearer, was showing signs of hearing



Kenneth and Michelle Shearer at the Shearer Shindig Celebration. (Photo by: Kristen Jones)

loss.

Michelle Shearer feared that the hearing loss would affect her husband's performance at work. Kenneth Shearer had just taken a position teaching at a school in Leake County, and she was concerned that he would have trouble hearing the students and communicating with them. Michelle

- continued on page 5 -

Billy Watson seeks re-election as Ward 4 alderman

BY: BILLY WATSON ALDERMAN



Photo Special to The Pelahatchie News

for 44 years, where we raised our family.

My qualifications are as follows: graduate of Pelahatchie Attendance Center, graduate of Hinds Community College, veteran of the United States

I, Billy Watson, announce my candidacy for re-election as Ward 4 alderman. My wife and I are lifelong residents of Pelahatchie and have lived on Shields Street

Air Force, quality engineering supervisor for the Eaton Corporation for 33 years, member of Rehobeth Baptist Church, member of the American Legion Post 171 and alderman of Ward 4 for nine years.

My accomplishments are establishing a number of new businesses and buildings in both downtown Pelahatchie and the industrial park, which include: the new community center and library, the new streetscape, the remodeling of city hall and the fire department, purchasing the old wood yard, cleaning out the old wood yard and purchasing new police cars.

We still have some tasks ahead that I would like to help complete. They are projects such as completing — continued on page 6 —



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Mayor Knox Ross, Jr. inducted into the Keep Mississippi Beautiful Hall of Fame

BY: KRISTEN JONES

On April 18, Knox Ross, Jr. was inducted into the Keep Mississippi Beautiful Hall of Fame for his great service to the town of Pelahatchie. The induction ceremony took place during the Keep Mississippi Beautiful 20th Annual Award Luncheon held at the Jackson Country Club.

Ross, who originally had not planned to attend the event, was shocked when he was also presented an award at the luncheon.

"I was really surprised," said Ross. "I was not expecting to receive anything at all."

Ross said that he gives all of the credit to the great people of Pelahatchie.

"It is the people of Pelahatchie who work hard to keep our town clean and beautiful," said Ross. "The recog-

niton should really go to the people of Pelahatchie."



Photo special to The Pelahatchie News

Pelahatchie player selected to play in all star game



SPECIAL TO *THE PELAHATCHIE NEWS*

Andrew Gough, a Senior at Pelahatchie High School, was recently selected to play in the Crossroads Diamond Club 1A, 2A and 3A All-Star Game in June. Gough plays catcher for the Pelahatchie Chiefs, and as of press time, Gough has a record of five home runs and 40 runs batted in (RBI) for the Chiefs.

Photo Special
to The Pelahatchie
News



P.O. Box 771
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Volume 2 Issue 5

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The Pelahatchie News is published on the first Tuesday of every month in Pelahatchie, MS

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Pettus named as East Rankin Academy's STAR Student

SPECIAL TO THE PELAHATCHIE NEWS

Drew Pettus has been named as East Rankin Academy's (ERA) STAR Student for the 2012-2013 school year by the Mississippi Economic Council's M.B. Swayze Educational Foundation, sponsor of the STAR program. The ERA Senior chose his mother, Regina Gray Pettus, as his STAR Teacher.

Drew has served as ERA's

Student Council president and Mu Alpha Theta's state president. Pettus is also a member of Mississippi's Mathematics Honorary Society, and he plans to attend Mississippi State University to study Mechanical Engineering.

Drew and Regina Pettus were honored on April 11 during the annual Education Celebration at the Jackson Convention Complex.



Pictured (r to l) Drew Pettus and Regina Gray Pettus. (Photo special to The Pelahatchie News)

ERCO receives recognition from Representative



Representative Tom Miles recognized Ever Reaching Community Outreach (ERCO) Ministry on April 13 for their hard work and service. Miles specifically thanked them for being a great organization dedicated to helping those in need and presented ERCO with a Proclamation from the Mississippi House of Representatives.

Pictured (r to l) Tom Miles, Tammy Thompson Brun, Van Brun, Joseph Oster and Louie Parkman. (Photo Special to The Pelahatchie News)



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Former Pelahatchie Chief prepares for New York mission trip

BY: KRISTEN JONES

C.J. King, former Pelahatchie Chieftain and Mississippi Valley State University (MVSU) student, is a miracle in the walking. During his time playing baseball for the Chiefs, King experienced an accident that resulted in him severely injuring his leg. Doctors said that King would not ever have the ability to play baseball again. However, King did not give up that easily. He worked hard, and he came back to play for the Chieftains. Now, he is playing college baseball at MVSU.

"I am so proud him," said Brandi King, King's mother. "It is such an inspiration to see him playing baseball."

Now, King is taking his powerful story to New York. During the summer, King will be working with Athletes in Action Sports Ministry to share his incredible story with others.

"I am excited about this opportunity," said King.

King and his family are still working to raise money for his trip to New York, and they are currently selling silicone bracelets for \$2.00. If you



C.J. King sporting the Chieftain uniform.
(Photo special to The Pelahatchie News)

are interested in giving a donation or purchasing a bracelet, contact Brandi King at (601) 540-0015.

ERA student serves as page for Mississippi House of Representatives

SPECIAL TO *THE PELAHATCHIE NEWS*

Katie Beth Simmons recently served as a Page in the Mississippi House of Representatives during the 2013 Mississippi leg-

islative session for representative Tom Miles. Simmons is an eighth grade honor student at East Rankin Academy. She is the daughter of Chris and Jennie Simmons of Lake.



Pictured (l to r) are: representative Tom Miles, Katie Beth Simmons, and house speaker Phillip Gunn. Pictured (r to l) (Photo special to The Pelahatchie News)



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Rogers chosen as Pelahatchie High School's STAR Student

SPECIAL TO *THE PELAHATCHIE NEWS*

Kristopher A. Rogers was named STAR Student for the 2012-2013 school year by the Mississippi Economic Council's M.B. Swayze Educational Foundation, sponsor of the STAR program. Each STAR Student is asked to designate a STAR Teacher, the teacher who has made the greatest contribution to the student's scholastic achievement. Rogers chose history teacher, Jason W. Smith.



Pictured (r to l) are Kristopher Rogers and Jason Smith. (Photo Special to The Pelahatchie News)

Cross Roads Baptist Church holds benefit for Shearer family

— continued from page 1 —

Shearer called the Mississippi Department of Rehabilitation Services' office of Vocational Rehabilitation, and the Shearer family scheduled a time to meet with Dr. Brian Clay to assess the situation. At the time, Clay prescribed steroids for Kenneth Shearer's condition, and he was told to return for a check-up at the beginning of November. During the check-up, Clay told the Shearer family that something was not right, and he scheduled Kenneth Shearer to undergo Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI).

From the MRI, Michelle Shearer discovered that her husband had a softball-sized tumor growing from his left inner ear. The Shearers met with Dr. John Lancon, a neurological surgeon at St. Dominics Hospital, to discuss their options.

“Dr. Lancon told us that he normally sits down and talks about options, but he told us that we did not have a choice,” said Michelle Shearer. “He said Kenneth would die without the surgery, and he would die soon.”

On November 13, Kenneth Shearer underwent a 12 hour surgery. After the surgery, Kenneth Shearer experienced many complications including strokes and blood clots.

“After the surgery, there was not a section of his body, practically, that did not go unaffected,” said Michelle Shearer. “We stayed in the ICU from Nov. 13 to Jan. 3.”

After spending nearly two months in the Intensive Care Unit (ICU), Kenneth Shearer was moved to

Methodist Rehabilitation Center. Within the first week, the staff recommended that Kenneth Shearer should be placed in a nursing home to better accommodate all of his medical needs.

“I told them absolutely not. My husband is 39-years-old. He has a Master’s in Education,” said Michelle Shearer. “I told them that I was just not going to do that.”

Michelle Shearer began encouraging her husband everyday, and she told him that his goal was to get better. By the time they could return home, Kenneth Shearer had dramatically improved in speech and strength. However, their home in Johns, Miss. was

not handicap accessible, and since his release, the Shearer family has been living with Michelle Shearer's parents in

Clinton, Miss.

To help with the cost of much needed items, Cross Roads Baptist Church has put on a few events. The previous event was a hamburger plate benefit that resulted in the Shearers purchasing a handicap friendly van to transport Kenneth Shearer around from place to place. On April 20, Cross Roads hosted the Shearer Shindig Celebration where they sold chicken plates and provided live entertainment to raise money for the Shearer family. The money from the benefit is going to help the Shearers make their home in Johns, Miss. handicap accessible.

“We are ready to come home,” said Michelle Shearer. “We love Pelahatchie, and we are ready to get back to our community and our church.”

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Billy Watson seeks re-election as Ward 4 alderman

— continued from page 1 —
Milltown Park and the Brooks Street's overlay, building bike trails, upgrading the sewage systems for south Pelahatchie and paving some streets. My

goals are to provide our residents with a clean and safe place to raise families while providing excellent city services. Your vote and support will be greatly appreciated!

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Legislature update

By: TOM MILES
STATE REPRESENTATIVE



(Photo special to The Pelahatchie News)

Now that I am home from the regular 2013 legislative session, I am happy to again participate in our community events and work at home to help improve our communities.

On Saturday, April 12, I had the opportunity to attend the Ever Reaching Community Outreach (ERCO) Spring Carnival at Muscadine Park and presented them with a Proclamation from the Mississippi House of Representatives. This group was recognized for their hard work in the community and for helping those in need. This is a great organization that is based in Pelahatchie, and if you are looking for an organization to volunteer with, this is a great place to start. Check out their Facebook page at www.facebook.com/EverReachingCommunityOutreach.

Here is an update of some of the laws that will become effective July 1.

“Erin’s Law” is a landmark piece of legislation to protect our children. Erin’s Law is a program designed to teach sexually abused children how to defend themselves against their abusers and how to ask for help. It requires that schools offer students instructions on how to handle these situations. It also establishes a task force to determine the best curriculum to offer to our K-5 students. The task force has until January 1, 2015 to bring forth its recommended curriculum.

Erin Merryn and I worked with Senator Nancy Collins of Tupelo to inform the media and our colleagues about the terrible threat of sexual assault on our children. The bill passed both houses unanimously, and I am very grateful to the many people who worked hard to make Erin’s Law a reality in Mississippi.

Several bond bills passed this session. Senate Bill 2913, a multi-million dollar bond bill, will provide funding for much-needed building repairs and renovations at our state colleges and other facilities. Another bond bill we passed dealt with the Nissan plant expansion. This bond bill is supposed to bring another 1,000 jobs to Missis-

issippi. Earlier in the session, we passed the bond bill in Rankin County dealing with the outlet center, which will bring another 1,600 jobs to central Mississippi. I was glad to support these bills to bring more jobs to Mississippi.

Mississippi is a part of a national effort to protect our second amendment right to bear arms, and we passed a number of protection measures. House Bill 485 exempts the names and addresses of people who have concealed carry permits from being a matter of public record. House Bill 2 clarifies language affecting citizens licensed to carry concealed weapons in Mississippi. Even if the weapon is holstered and not totally hidden, this law protects people who have a permit to carry a concealed weapon. House Bill 1139 allows hunters to use a weapon of choice for deer hunting on private land after November 30, 2014. SB2048 will also make it legal to use a crossbow during bow season. As a member of the National Rifle Association (NRA), I was proud to support each of these measures.

House Bill 91 provides that our Department of Public Safety will not

recognize traffic fines resulting from automated recording equipment or systems of another state unless that state is a member of the Driver License Compact states.

We passed a number of measures aimed at protecting our loved ones. “Lenora’s Law,” Senate Bill 2732, amends the sex offender registry law. Upon release from prison, a sex offender must register his/her place of residence. This law requires offenders to wear a GPS tracking device upon release from prison to prevent evasion of the registry law. An amendment was added to prohibit sex offenders from living within 3,000 feet from a school.

House Bill 481 revises the use of an ignition-interlock device for DUI offenders. Its aim is to strengthen laws against drunk driving. If a person has alcohol on their breath, the device prevents the vehicle from starting. I am proud of this innovative approach to reducing the number of highway deaths due to impaired driving.

We addressed a number of school issues this session. HB 369, “The Mississippi Charter Schools Act of 2013,” allows limited charter schools — *continued on page 10* —



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Ladies Bible Study • Couples Support Group
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Community Spotlight: Cross Roads Baptist Church

BY: KRISTEN JONES

In the year 2016, Cross Roads Baptist Church (CRBC) will be celebrating its 100 year anniversary; since 1916, many things have changed. Before it was a place of worship, the current church site was a place of education, specifically, a school. Cross Roads School was a simple educational facility where several students in the Walters/Crossroads community attended, and in 1959, Cross Roads merged with the school that is known today as Pelahatchie Attendance Center. The Cross Roads School building and gym was left vacant, and the land reverted back to the family who originally donated the property. However, the building did not lay unoccupied for long. Soon, the church bought the property and began making plans for their new place of worship.

"The church tore down the original school building because it was in bad shape, and the current Church building was occupied in 1989," said John Vaughn, Senior Pastor of CRBC. "However, the gym was saved and is still standing."

The gym has been renovated and is used to house Upward basketball games and other church activities. The church has managed to keep much of

the original architecture, and some historical items have been maintained to keep the history of Cross Roads School alive.

CRBC has undergone a great deal of expansion and renovation



(Special to The Pelahatchie News)

to adapt to their growing membership. CRBC has two Sunday worship services to accommodate the 300 plus worshippers. The Sunday, 8:30 a.m., worship service is comprised of a live praise team that leads the worship with contemporary Christian music. During the 11 a.m. service, the tone of the worship is a blend of contemporary and traditional songs and music. The sermon is the same in both services. Sun-

day School for all ages is held at 10:00.

Some physical expansions have taken place to cope with the increasing congregation size. CRBC has added on to their current building, and the added-on section houses the new fellowship

hall, industrial kitchen and 18 new Sunday school classrooms.

As a new and upcoming feature for the youth group at CRBC, the church has begun to renovate the previous fellowship hall into a full functioning Student Ministry Center that will host a student worship center, lounging area and game area that will be more conducive to the needs of the younger generation.

Due to the extensive nature of the renovations and construction that has taken place, CRBC has been keeping their ministering opportunities close to home. However, this summer, CRBC will be taking a mission trip to West Liberty, Ky. West Liberty was devastated by a tornado that left the area in shambles, and the CRBC team will be venturing there to help with the reconstruction of the church and local areas.

"We will be working on individual private homes as well as the church itself," said Vaughn. "We will also be participating in some children activities like Backyard Bible Club."

Even if mission trips are not your forte, CRBC provides their church members with many other opportunities to serve. From children to senior citizens, there is a place for everyone.

"It is important to remember that the church is a body, and everyone has a job to do," said Vaughn. "We all have something that we are called to do, and God wants to use every believer in ministry through His body, the church."

To find out more information about Cross Roads Baptist Church or how to get involved, contact them at (601) 546-2297, or visit their web page at www.crossroadspel.org



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BY: GUY HUGHES
PASTOR OF PELAHATCHIE BAPTIST CHURCH

Roots to Grow, Branches to Bear

"I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing." ~Jesus in John 15:5

Have you noticed that plants grow in two opposite directions? They can grow downward and rooted inward to the ground. Also, they can grow upward, free and swaying in the breeze. Proper spiritual growth cannot take place without this downward or inward growth and upward or outward growth.

First, we must look within to be sure that we are rooted and grounded in faith. We must ask ourselves what principles we are allowing to guide our life. Are they true and right? Are they pleasing to God, our Creator? There are biblical principles that should guide our lives. Because of those distinct biblical beliefs, Christians are often accused of being "closed-minded". Perhaps,

there is equal danger in being so "open-minded" that our brains fall out. Unwise choices are made because we have no guiding principles.

Second, we must look upward and outward like a branch reaching for the sky. We need to be rooted, but we also need to show equal growth in an outward direction. Rooted faith without fruitful work is a dead tree. We need to ask ourselves. What are we doing to put our faith into action? What risks are we willing to take above ground? Will we bend or break when the storms of life come?

One day, Jesus was walking along a road and came upon a fig tree that bore leaves but no fruit. He said, "May you never bear fruit again." Immediately, the tree withered and died.

In Matthew 3:8, John the Baptist challenged us, "Produce fruit that proves your change of heart."

God grant us balance as we grow inward and outward!

Legislature update

— continued from page 8 —

in D and F districts. Senate Bill 2347 seeks to make sure that our students are achieving at grade level before being promoted past the third grade. Senate Bill 2395 provides for pre-k pilot programs for the first time in Mississippi. The most important measure of all, to some of us, is Senate Bill 2633, "The Mississippi Student Religious Liberties Act of 2013," which protects a student's right to religious expression on school property in specified circumstances.

We discussed a number of issues that did not make it through the session, but I am anticipating that they will eventually become law. Before

measures are successful in the Legislature, sometimes, it takes a number of attempts on bills to adequately educate the members, make adjustments for valid concerns and gain public support. I believe that taking a measured, orderly and educated approach to something as important as writing our state's laws is the best way to accomplish good for our citizens.

I look forward to seeing you around our communities during the "off season" and will be updating you on issues. Please, feel free to contact me at 601-469-7886 or email me at tmiles@house.ms.gov. It is an honor to serve as your Representative in District 75.

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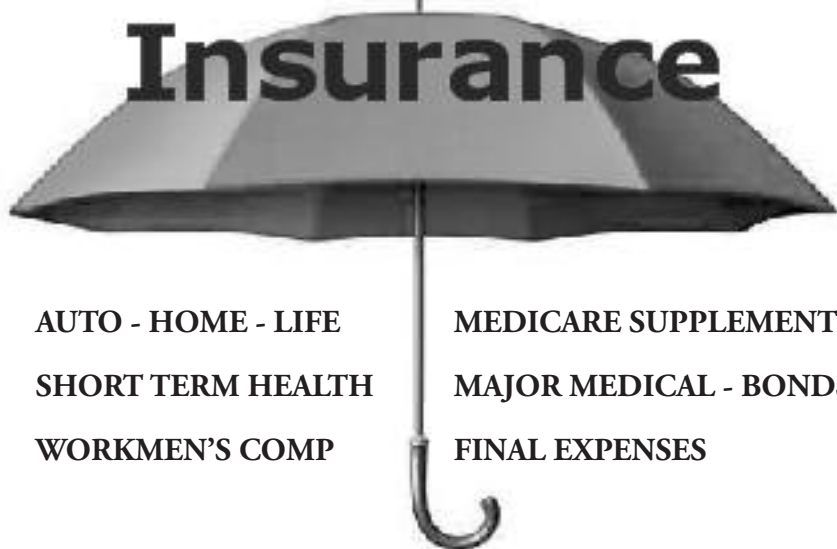
525 Second Street
Pelahatchie, MS

Hope to see you soon!!!

Mother's Day is just a couple weeks away, we will have a variety of mixed arrangements (may include some roses or tulips) and some beautiful hanging baskets (blooming and green). We will deliver in town and out of town.

Call us if we can be of any assistance to you or yours, 601-854-5154.

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Pelahatchie Baptist Church children and youth compete in Bible drills

SPECIAL TO THE PELAHATCHIE NEWS

During the month of April, Pelahatchie Baptist Church had many children and youth who competed in Bible

drill competitions. On Sunday, April 28, all of the participants were recognized during the morning worship service.



Pictured (l to r) are, front row: Calvin Trigg and Caleb Hughes; and back row: Brooke Cunningham, Leah Cunningham, Knox Ross and Rouse Boyce. (Photo special to The Pelahatchie News)



Pictured (l to r) are, front row: Bailey Miller, Morgan Davis, Karlie Coghlan, Lauren Ashley Gardner and Jordan Graves; and back row: Hayden Sistrunk, Jean Ross, Bo Giordano, Rebecca Ross and Chloe Cunningham. (Photo special to The Pelahatchie News)

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Alderman-at-Large

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Dependable

Experienced

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- ★ Married for 41 years to former Mary Ann Edwards
- ★ Resident of Pelahatchie for 37 years
- ★ Two grown children: Clay and Dee
- ★ Daughter-in-Law: Kim
- ★ Two Grandchildren: Ethan and Olivia
- ★ 16 years experience as Alderman
- ★ Bachelor of Science Degree in Psychology
Minor in Sociology and Criminal Justice
from University of Southern Mississippi
- ★ Member of Pelahatchie Baptist Church
- ★ Member of Pelahatchie Lions Club

*Vote Tuesday,
June 4, 2013*



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Pelahatchie – **The Place to Prosper.**"*



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DOWNTOWN PELAHATCHIE