

**Pelahatchie Chiefs perform
*The Little Mermaid Jr.***

See page 6

**Razmataz under new
managment**

See page 9

NEWS Pelahatchie

**February
2014**

**Volume 3
Number 2
Pelahatchie, MS**

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P.O. Box 771
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Trails at Milltown Park nearing completion

By: Kristen J. Rials

Even though winter has persevered with bitter temperatures and snowfall, the work on Milltown Park has progressed. The most recent advancement in the project has been the construction of a half-mile walking track that surrounds the park. The track provides walkers the ability to stroll through the park at a leisurely place while taking in the activities of the baseball fields, fitness stations, and playgrounds. For more scenic views, the walking track

winds by a lake, amphitheater, and creek.

While walking, park-goers can also peruse the plaques seen throughout the trail to learn more about the different trees that are present in Milltown. When the park-goers walk is complete, designated seating areas will provide relief and are located on each side of the park. The only aspect of the walking track construction that remains to be completed is the lighting. Entergy workers are actively installing lighting throughout the walkway.



Free trees for Rankin County Residents



FFA members wrap the roots of trees to be given away during Tree Week. (Photo special to The Pelahatchie News)

Special to The Pelahatchie News

In preparation for upcoming Arbor Day, the Rankin County Soil and Water Conservation District will hold a tree give-away, on Wednesday, February 5, at 8 a.m. Tree Week was organized in an effort to establish soil and timber conservation.

Future Farmers of America (FFA) from different schools in Rankin

County contribute to the efforts of Tree Week by voluntarily wrapping the tree roots before they are dispersed.

The trees will be available on a first-come, first-serve basis. All the trees are usually given away before noon.

For more information, contact the Rankin County Soil and Water Conservation District at 601-824-4601, ext. 3.

Legislative Issues: bill status updates



By: Tom Miles
State Representative

We have passed the first committee deadline, and a number of bills survived to be debated on the House floor. One of those is the first responders' death benefit increase from \$65,000 to \$100,000, House Bill 1433.

On the same day it passed out of committee, Thursday, January 30, I hosted a press conference in support of this effort with many of my House and Senate colleagues. We had Commissioner of Insurance Mike Chaney, MEMA Director Robert Latham and first responders from all over Mississippi at the Capitol to bring attention to the need for this benefit.

I was proud to welcome Ms. Betty Little and Mr. Alvin and Mrs. Sheila Seaney, who were on hand for the event. We paid our respects to the individuals who have died in the line of duty since this time last year. It is time



Pictured (l to r) Tom Miles, who represents Eastern Rankin County and Scott County in the Mississippi House of Representatives, and Katie Beth Simmons, 9th grader from East Rankin Academy, who has taken on school bus safety as a special project. (Photo special to The Pelahatchie News)

we increased this benefit to survivors of the brave men and women who selflessly serve us in times of our greatest need.

Also on January 30, Governor Phil Bryant and Mission Mississippi held the annual Governor's Prayer Luncheon at the Jackson Convention Center. I was very proud to attend this important event with other elected officials who understand that having our

continued on page 2



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From the Mayor's Desk



By Knox Ross, Jr.
Mayor of the Town of
Pelahatchie

The new year is off to a fast start. Basketball season is beginning to wind down, and our schools are looking forward to a successful post-season run. Our town is also off to a fast start, as well.

Our friends at MDOT are working hard to complete road projects on Hwy. 80 east and west of town and to Hwy. 43 south of town.

All of these projects make our town more attractive and make transportation safer and easier. We are working to complete the rebuilding of Brooks Avenue. The contractor has completed the base rebuilding and should start on the final resurfacing as weather permits. We will also be repaving Williams Avenue., McDonald Street, Moore Avenue, Teague Lane, McKay Circle, and Clayton Avenue in the coming months.

We have recently completed the rehabilitation of our principal water tank, and have now started the rehabilitation of sewer lines on the south side of town. This entails relining existing sewer lines with an epoxy fabric that



forms a new pipe within the existing pipe. We have been utilizing this process for many years with great success. This creates a much more reliable system that will last many years to come. We have also taken this opportunity to upgrade water lines on Moore Avenue and Grimes Street.

Milltown park also is beginning to move toward the completion of its first phase of development. Lighting is being installed on the ball fields, and playground equipment will be delivered soon for installation at the park. Also, Entergy will be installing lighting on the 1/2 mile walking trail.

Our town is also partnering with Multicraft International to purchase and rehabilitate their former facility at

continued on page 8

continued from page 1

Legislative Issues: bill status updates

hearts right is the first thing we need to do if we are going to serve all of the people of Mississippi. This organization celebrated 20 years of ministry last year, and we were honored to host them in Forest on Labor Day weekend as they carried a cross through Mississippi in witness to their vision.

School bus safety was the topic of a press briefing I hosted on Friday, January 31. House Bill 469, which I authored, addresses the need for providing schoolchildren who must travel in school buses the same safety restraint opportunities as riders receive in automobiles. Additionally, the bill encourages the installation of video cameras inside buses so that events can be recorded and bus drivers will have another tool to make their vehicle as safe as possible. Joining me were Lori and Andy Key, who lost their son Nathan to an inattentive driver trying to pass a stopped school bus. Also participating was Katie Beth Simmons of Scott County, a ninth grader from East Rankin Academy who has taken this issue on as a special project.

I intend to continue working on this safety issue. There should be reasonable ways that we can work out any obstructions that would stand in the way of this common sense measure.

I want to take this opportunity to thank our local first responders for the work they did for us during the winter storm on January 28 and 29. Other areas in the South were not so fortunate as we were. A big reason that we escaped the terrible hardships that others experienced was because our law enforcement, emergency management, dispatchers and fire service personnel were prepared and available. Many worked double shifts in miserable conditions. Please say thank you when you see one of our neighbors in uniform. They don't hear it often enough.

Last week, I handed over the gavel as President of the Forest Area Chamber of Commerce. Our work together over the past year to promote the benefits of our little corner of the world was a wonderful experience for me. We are blessed with incredible people who want to see our quality of life preserved and enhanced. We appreciate the virtues of living in rural areas where communities are close, and our neighbors treat us as family. Thanks to the Chamber for allowing me to serve.

Please feel free to contact me at 601-469-7886, or you can email tmiles@house.ms.gov about these or other issues.



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Pelahatchie Attendance Center Sports Calendar

High School Basketball

Feb. 4	Bogue Chitto	HS	Away	6:00
Feb. 7	Cathedral	HS	Away	6:00
Feb. 11	St. Aloysius	HS (Sr. Night)	Home	6:00
Feb. 14	Hinds AHS	HS	Away	6:00
Feb. 17-21	District Tourn. Bogue Chitto	HS	Away	4:00

Chieftain Community Club Resource Fair

By: Kristen J. Rials

The Chieftain Community Club of Pelahatchie Attendance Center invites everyone to take part in their annual free Information and Resource Fair for Parents on Thursday, February 6. The event will take place in the Pelahatchie Attendance Center Cafeteria from 6-8

p.m.

Over 30 different agencies and groups will be present and handing out resources and information to help support families in the Pelahatchie community. Refreshments and door prizes will be given away during the event. For more information, contact Katrina Phillips at (601) 672-6001.

Chiefs win Rural Rankin County Tournament



The Pelahatchie Chiefs Junior High Boys Basketball team won the Rural Rankin County Basketball Tournament. The league consisted of McLaurin, Pelahatchie, Pisgah, and Puckett. The Chiefs defeated Pisgah on January 13 and Puckett in the finals on January 17. The Chiefs are coached by Avery Nobles and assisted by Duncan Tucker. The Pelahatchie Junior High Basketball team consists of Jadarius Johnson, Jaymon Johnson, Camden Jones Booker Ficklin, Scott Guerringer, Wes Goss, Will Goss, Jake White, Blaine White, Josh Wilson, Javious Purvis, Quivonte Denson, Avery Lewis, Xay Taylor, Quay Archie, Gage Tucker, Adonis McCollum, Jason Collier, Gunnar Till, and Cameron Boyd. (Photo special to The Pelahatchie News)

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The Hot Spot: Fire Department News

By Jenny Coward,
Assistant Fire Chief

2014 has come in with a force, and it has kept the Delta District on their toes so far. January brought first the Red Flag Ban that turned into a county-wide burn ban for Rankin County. Every fire department within the Delta District has had grass and wood fires in their district since these conditions began; but with joint efforts of each department in the Delta District, these fires were handled without any fatalities, firefighter or civilian. Sure, a lot of vegetation, timber and even some structures were lost to these fires, but it is all replaceable. This is why we ask everyone to burn smart, as we have instructed in past articles. Do not burn anything outdoors during a burn ban. If caught doing so and should this result in a grass fire, you as a home owner can be fined from Rankin County. We ask everyone to watch the news for updates on the burn ban. If in doubt, call Rankin County Emergency Operations or your local fire department. They can advise you if it is safe to burn or not.

A lot of training has begun with the Delta District members. We have some members that began taking an Emergency Medical Responders (EMR) class at Robin Hood Fire Department, and some members began taking a Firefighter Certification I class at Pelahatchie Fire Department in January. Both Classes are 10-week classes where students go two nights a week. March will begin another round of classes for the Delta District with Fire Ground Resource Tech at Pelahatchie Fire Department, Rope Rescue I at Leesburg Fire Department, Engine Company Operations I at Evergreen Fire Department and another Emergency Medical Responder at Lake Harbor Fire Department. Seven more classes are scheduled to be held throughout the year, and this is all on top of inner department training held each month. So you see, 2014 is going to be a busy

busy year for the members of the Delta District.

The month of January 2014 brought on 158 calls responded to by 4 departments:

- Langford 53 calls
- Lake Harbor 42 calls
- Pelahatchie 38 calls
- Walters 25 calls

For the year of 2013, 1,060 calls were responded to by 4 departments in the Delta District:

- Pelahatchie 498 calls
- Lake Harbor 277 calls
- Walters 165 calls
- Evergreen 120 calls

The end of 2013 was celebrated by naming Dennis "Papa D" Jackson as Pelahatchie Fire Department's *Firefighter of the Year*. Papa D has held this title for the past five years. He ran 344 calls out of 498 that Pelahatchie responded to in 2013. Papa D is a man that runs wide open and head strong into the wind. He has

a giving heart and a willingness to help his fellow man.

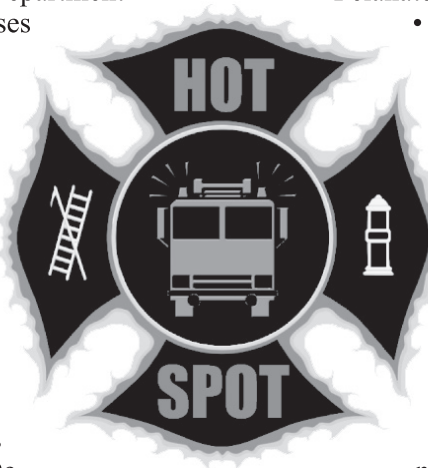
Walter's Fire Department *Firefighter of the Year* is Glen Slade. Glen is a man you can always count on, and he is always willing to help where needed. You can always count on being met with a big smile and friendly handshake when you encounter Glen. I would describe Glen as a "quiet man with loud actions."

Since the new year has started off with a big bang, the Delta District is in need of new members to help out. If you are interested in joining your local fire department, please contact them.

If you are interested in joining Pelahatchie Fire Department, you can reach them at 601-854-5995. Leave a message, and someone will get back with you or drop by and see us.

With the cold temperatures, please keep watch on the elderly and make sure they have adequate heat. Please remember to check your heating equipment, your smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors.

Until next month, try to stay warm, stay safe and remember help is only 3 numbers away - 9-1-1.





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Tips for finding the right school for your child



By: Andrew Campanella,
President of National
School Choice Week

If you'd like to send your child to a different school next year, now's the time to start the process of researching your options.

As Mississippi prepares to commemorate National School Choice Week later this month at 30 events across the state, many parents will begin evaluating the educational opportunities that are available for their children.

Believe it or not, seats in schools are already beginning to fill up for the 2014-2015 school year. Interest in school choice – the process of actively choosing a public, charter, magnet, private, or online school – is high. That means that waiting until the spring or the summer to begin researching schools for your children could restrict your options.

No handbook or tipsheet can truly guide parents through the entire process of selecting a school, because choosing schools is an individual ex-

perience that will be unique to every family.

However, parents can start by making a list of the attributes that they hope to find in an ideal school. Ask yourself: what's most important to you and to the academic, social, and emotional well-being of your child? Is it the academic performance of a school, school safety, the instructional methods, the qualifications of teachers, the school's educational theme, a school's shared values, or other factors?

Once you've identified what matters most, start looking into the options available to you. In addition to the local public school, you may be eligible to send your child to a school outside of your zip code, or in a different school district. Look into nearby charter schools and magnet schools. Don't leave private and faith-based schools off your list! You might be able to find scholarships to cover the costs of tuition. And for some families, online learning and homeschooling work best.

To find the options available to you, look at information from the Mississippi Department of Education, as well as information on state-based education

reform or school choice organization websites. For states with charter and magnet schools, there are often state-based associations that provide directories of these types of schools, along with application information. Private schools and scholarship programs can be researched through state chapters of the Council on American Private Education or the National Association of Independent Schools, or through local places of worship (for faith-based schools).

For a directory of most schools in your area, along with parent rankings and some performance metrics, parents can visit greatschools.org.

With your list of requirements and your list of schools in hand, start making appointments to visit the schools. Ask to sit in on classes, and make sure to ask as many questions as possible of teachers, the administration, and support staff. You'll want to find out what motivates the adults in the building, while also seeing how the students in the classes respond to their teachers. Ask yourself: is this a place where I'd want to send my child for most of his or her weekday waking hours?

Finally, make sure to talk with oth-



Graphic special to The Pelahatchie News

er parents – and to your own children. Ask parents how the schools' administrators treat parents, and whether they welcome, or discourage, parental involvement. And most importantly, ask your children about their perceptions of the schools that you've visited. Find out what excites and motivates your child at school, but also ask about their worries, concerns and apprehensions.

Making the decision to change schools certainly isn't easy. And switching schools isn't a piece of cake, either. But if you start now, and plan out the journey, you'll find that the destination – a great school for your child – is well worth the diligence and effort.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Andrew R. Campanella is the president of National School Choice Week. National School Choice Week is America's largest-ever celebration of educational opportunity. Andrew lives in Miramar Beach, Florida.



East Rankin Academy Sports Calendar

Basketball

Feb. 4	Lamar	HS	Home	6:00
Feb. 5	South AAA Tourn	JH	Home	6:00
Feb. 6	South AAA Tourn	JH	Home	6:00
Feb. 7	MRA	HS	Home	6:00
Feb. 8	South AAA Tourn	JH	Home	6:00
Feb. 10-15	AAA Div. II Tourn.		Home	TBA
Feb. 18-22	Class AAA State Tourn.		MRA	TBA

Boys Soccer

Feb. 4	Lamar	Home	5:00
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Pelahatchie Chiefs perform *The Little Mermaid Jr.*

Special to The Pelahatchie News

On January 23 and 24, Pelahatchie Attendance Center students, with help from Pelahatchie Elementary students, performed *The Little Mermaid Jr.* at the Pelahatchie Attendance Center auditorium.

Vicki Mercier, Jr. High and High School Choral Director and Elementary Music Teacher, stated, "I am very proud of our students for their dedication to our show. They worked so hard, and it all paid off. Some of our students are theatre veterans, while others are newcomers to the theater experience. It was great to see the excitement on

their faces on opening night. There is so much talent in Pelahatchie, and I love watching our students develop and grow each year. The two performances were well attended by the community, and we are grateful for their support. I want to thank the parents, faculty members, and community members who volunteered many hours to make the show a success and to one very special volunteer, Robby Scucchi, who directed. His expertise and creativity are the reasons the musicals are so successful. He is not a Pelahatchie resident, but we have all adopted him. Our students have a very special place in his heart and he in theirs."



(Photos special to *The Pelahatchie News*)





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NEW HOMES / RENOVATIONS / REPAIRS

continued from page 2

From the Mayor's Desk

our industrial park. As a result of this project, Muticraft will make a major financial investment in our town, create at least 50 new permanent jobs, and locate its corporate offices in downtown Pelahatchie.

We are also planting thousands of flowering bulbs all over town. These bulbs were given to us by Keep Mississippi Beautiful. We are grateful to Keep Mississippi Beautiful and our employees for making this happen.

We have many great things happen-

ing in our town. This is only possible if you continue to support our local businesses. Our sales tax revenues continue to track ahead of last year.

Thank you for giving our local businesses a chance to earn your business. These businesses not only provide revenue for our town, but they also support our schools, churches, and civic organizations.

As always, please come by City Hall and visit us if we can help in any way. We are here to serve you.

Pelahatchie PTO fundraiser winners



The top five sellers from Pelahatchie Elementary's PTO fundraiser received cash prizes. Pictured (l to r) are Benjamin Burnham, 4th place; Lawton Burnham, 1st place; Hart Adams, 3rd place; and Autumn Adams and Skylar Ousby, tied for 3rd place. (Photo special to The Pelahatchie News)



Valentine's Day Father Daughter Dance

February 22, 2014
7:00 - 9:00 pm
 (Photos at 6:30 pm)

Refreshments
Music
Games
Prizes

Pelahatchie Community Center

Tickets: \$25 per couple
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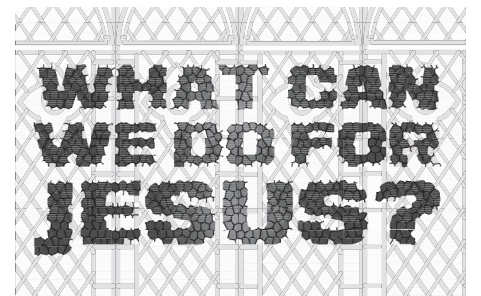
The Pastor's Perspective: what can we do for Jesus?

By: Rev. Lynette Little, Pelahatchie/
Gulde United Methodist Church

Reverend Callie Crawford, Pastor of Rayne Memorial United Methodist Church in New Orleans, tells a story about a woman who had been taking her dogs to dog school to train them to be her bodyguards, to protect and rescue her if needed. One night, on her way home with her dogs after a training session, she picked up a movie and a pizza. Home at last, she settled down to watch the movie with the pizza box open on the coffee table. She suddenly remembered the assignment the trainer had given them, one which would test whether the dogs had learned their lessons. The assignment was to fake a seizure, fall on the floor, scream for help, and see if the dogs would come to her aid. So she stood up, grabbed her heart, fell to the floor, screamed for help, and then peeked through the corner of her eye to see what they would do. The dogs looked at her. The dogs looked at each other. Then they went straight for the pizza. Oh, well. Thank goodness it was just a test! Otherwise their master would have been abandoned in her hour of need.

The two dogs remind us of the two disciples, James and John, who one day asked Jesus, "Teacher, we want YOU to do for US whatever we ask of you." After all those lessons on loving and serving, James and John can think only of themselves. Like the dogs, they go straight for the pizza. In the end, they will abandon their master in His hour of need.

Whenever I hear someone say, "I'm looking for a church that will meet my needs" or "I come to church to be fed," the voices of James and John ring in my ears, "We want YOU to do for US whatever we ask of you." I wonder what difference it might make in us and in our churches if instead we said, "Teacher, We want to do for YOU whatever YOU ask of US." WOW! There would be no stopping us!



KINDERGARTEN

PRE-REGISTRATION

THURSDAY / **8 AM - 1 PM**
MARCH 20 / **5 PM - 7 PM**

For more information
contact the elementary
school that your child
will be attending:

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FLORENCE	Steen's Creek Elem.	601.845.5724
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	Northshore Elem.	601.992.5279
	Oakdale Elem.	601.992.5442
	Highland Bluff Elem.	601.992.5168
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Razmataz under new management



The Prestages (Photo by: Dana Blakeney of Photos by Dana Blakeney)

Special to The Pelahatchie News

In November 2013, Joshua Prestage and his wife, Jennie Prestage, were given the opportunity to buy the store Razmataz, which is located in downtown Pelahatchie.

On December 9, 2014, after serious consideration, Prestage and his family officially purchased the business from the original owners, Michelle Johnson and Debbie Thompson.

This was a huge decision for them. Jennie Prestage is a full-time nursing student, and Joshua Prestage holds another full-time job. They also have four children; Bailey, Jaylin, Brooklyn and Logan.

Mayor Knox Ross was on their side, as he did not want to see the small business come to an unfortunate end. Also, the proud new owners felt that the small town of Pelahatchie de-

served for Razmataz to stay open to continue to give patrons a unique and inspiring place to shop.

Razmataz offers a variety of gifts, collectibles, clothing, jewelry, home-made crafts and candles, and much more. The Prestage's are excited to say they have many new plans lined up in the months to come for the gift and boutique store. The store is in the process of being remodeled in an effort to open it up for more merchandise, and to make it bigger and better than ever. They are also excited to announce that they will add more clothing, including: baby, juniors, women, plus sizes, menswear, and so much more.

Prestage and his family are enthusiastic and dedicated to the prosperity of the town of Pelahatchie, and to their customers. They understand that without either of those the success of Razmataz would not be possible.

Pelahatchie Elementary receives a bonus check from Kona Ice



Kona ice, one of the vendors during the PTO Fall Festival held in October 2013, contributed 20 percent of their sales to Pelahatchie Elementary. Pictured (l to r) are Dana Lee, Rena Blaylock, Cooper Sirmon, Ashley Gaddie, Mijia Ward, Robin Sanders, Payton Sanders, Andrea Rives, Vonnelle Anderson. (Photo special to The Pelahatchie News)

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Sunday Schedule

8:30 - Contemporary Worship Service
10:00 - Bible Study for all ages
11:00 - Blended Worship Service
5:00 - Cross Clubs for Children & Students
6:00 - Evening Worship

Wednesday Schedule

6:00 Family Dinner
7:00 - Children's Mission Activities • Student Worship
Ladies Bible Study • Couples Support Group
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Chiefs receive post season football awards



All Region 3 1A, pictured (l to r) are Antonio Taylor-Beeman, Austin Nelson, Mitchell Tagert, Desmond McGee, Tony Moore and Zac Varner. (Photos by: Juleah Boyd)



Zac Varner was also selected as an All State offensive lineman.



Region 3 1A Honorable Mention, pictured (l to r) are Alfred Jones, Cameron Moore, Billy Ray Holly, James Lock and Kobi Gordin.



Cameron Moore was a 2nd team All Metro selection as a defensive back.



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Chiefs participate in the Rankin County Hot Chocolate Classic 5k



Participants take-off at the Hot Chocolate 5K. (Photo special to The Pelahatchie News)

Special to The Pelahatchie News

On January 25, Rankin County Schools participated in the Fifth Annual Hot Chocolate Classic 5K Walk and Run. The Hot Chocolate Classic supports scholarship funding for students and various education-related causes of the Foundation for Rankin County Public Schools, Inc. The 5K begins at the Rankin Land-

ing on the Ross Barnett Reservoir, and continues down Spillway Road. Walkers and runners eventually make a u-turn to head back to the start. Once a walker or runner crosses the finish line, they are placed with a digital clock. Participants are awarded with refreshments provided by various vendors - including hot chocolate - and a Hot Chocolate Classic 5K t-shirt to commemorate the event.

Pelahatchie Chiefs Student of the Month and Citizenship awards



Nov. and Dec. Student of the Month recipients, front row (l to r) are Gracee Bonner, 7th; Makia Lewis, 8th; and Alecia Harvey, 9th; back row (l to r) are Leah Jackson, 12th; Maggie Bowman, 10th; and Desmond McGee, 11th. (Photo special to The Pelahatchie News)



Nov. and Dec. Citizenship award recipients (l to r) are Jessie Jones and Jacob Henderson. (Photo special to The Pelahatchie News)

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REBECCA EASLEY & ALAN DUKES- 3/8/14
BRITTANY CANTERBURY & JOSH MASSEY- 3/8/14
BRITTANY CLARK & CHASE SMITH- 3/22/14
TAMEIKA MOORE & PAUL GULLNER- 3/25/14
ALLISON RIEMER & JONATHAN PRINCIOTTA- 3/29/14
LINDSEY LEE & DUSTIN HERR- 3/29/14
KASSIE DUVALL & BEN WILSON- 4/5/14
EMILY ECKERSON & NICK TORRENCE- 4/12/14
DENEAL WYATT & COREY DEAR- 4/26/14
KATIE MCLAURIN & BRANDON WYNN- 4/26/14

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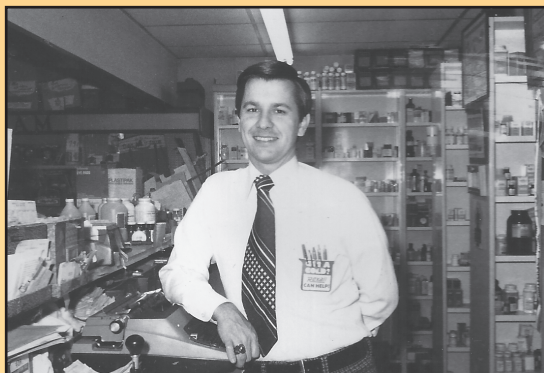
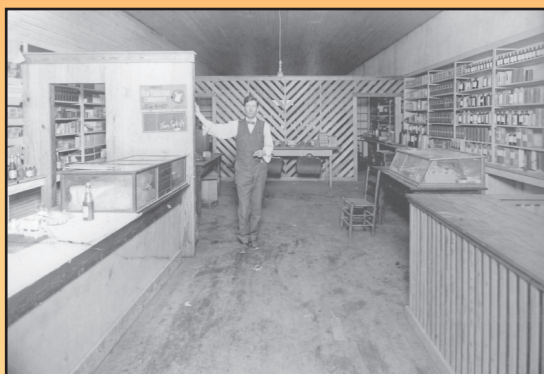
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