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NEWS Pelahatchie

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Doug Till named PHS Parent of the Year

By Susie A. Wolfe

Doug Till is the Pelahatchie High School (PHS) Parent of the Year. He founded the Pelahatchie Touchdown Club, along with Coach Bill Ward, 26 years ago, and has served as its president 23 of the 26 years.

"Doug is the guy that is always willing to help," said Principal Bryan Marshall. "He is involved in the touchdown club and has also served as the representative for the school bond issue for Pelahatchie. He is willing to do anything above and beyond the call of duty for the Pelahatchie Schools."

A Pelahatchie native, both sets of Till's grandparents settled here. He participated in football, baseball and track as a student, and now supports his sons, Trey and Sam, plus nephews, Gunner and Noah, in school activities.

His wife, Kimberly, is the PHS secretary.

"I love Pelahatchie, and I love my school and the children," said Till. "The life blood of the town is the school."

In addition to providing meals for football players, the Touchdown Club helps buy equipment for the players and anything else the players need.

Till, formerly an operations technician with Gulf South Pipeline in Flowood, also served with O'Neal Steel for 17 years, but is now disabled. He also served as a Pelahatchie alderman for six years. His latest school activity was promoting the Rankin County School District bond issue that passed in March.



Photo by Pelahatchie News

The Till family pictured, (l to r) are: Trey, Sam, Doug, and Kimberly, with nephews Gunner and Noah.

Rachael Boyer named PES Parent of the Year

By Susie A. Wolfe

Rachael Boyer was named Pelahatchie Elementary School's (PES) Parent of the Year.

"Rachael hit the ground running as our Pelahatchie Elementary School representative on the steering committee for the district bond issue," said Principal Lisa Attkisson. "She accepted the challenge of getting this bond issue passed and encouraged others to do the same. Our community is blessed to have parents that truly care about our schools and the children we serve."

Though she was born in Natchez, Boyer was raised in Nashville, but went to college at Hinds Community College in Raymond, where she met her husband, Blake, in a physical education class where he was her country line dancing partner.

Boyer describes her life as "fun, full

and overflowing."

She is the mother of four, Katie Belle, 14, an eighth grader; Eli, 12, in the sixth; Branch, first; and Mary Chesney, a toddler. She is involved at PES in taking photos, fundraising, the PTO and promoted the bond issue this year.

She also operates a family photography business. Her husband is the owner of Ambiance Landscaping in Pisgah, and they live in the Holly Bush area in a log cabin he built in 2006. The family is active at Pinelake Church at the Reservoir.

Formerly a children's minister at the Florence Church of God, she said enjoys photography because, "it is a tool that brings people in front of you."



Special to Pelahatchie News

A family portrait of the Boyer family. Pictured (l to r) are, Eli, Branch, Blake, Mary Chesney, Rachael and Katie Belle.



Kathy Hill, FNP-BC

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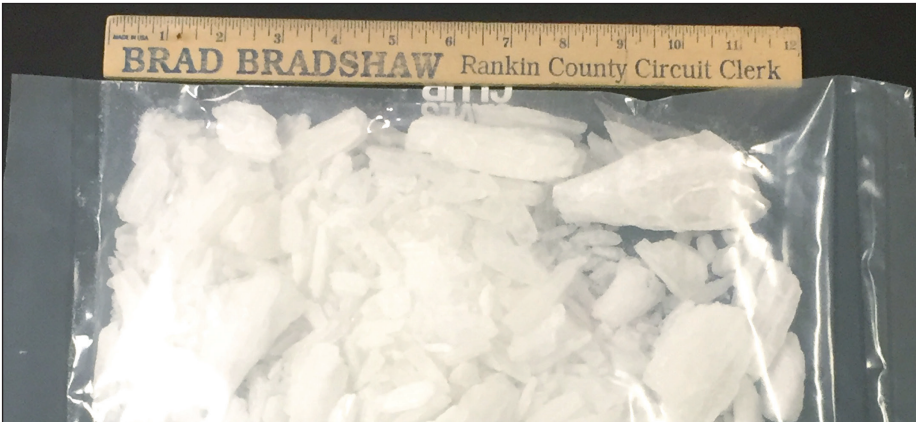
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Linda Brewer, RN, CFNP, CGNP

Chief's Comments: We are cracking down on drugs



Special to Pelahatchie News

The Pelahatchie Police Department made its largest drug bust recently, capturing \$100,000 in drugs, including 1.4 pounds of crystal meth, intended to be sold in the community.



By Guest Columnist
Chief Kevin Poole,
Pelahatchie Police
Dept.

The Department recently made the largest drug arrest in our history. We discovered 1.4 pounds of crystal meth at a house on Lady Catherine Street in April. Marijuana, hydrocodone

and oxycodone were also found in the known habitual offender and drug dealer's house. The value of these one-hit addiction drugs that were intended to be sold here was around \$100,000.

The investigation is not over, but I am so proud of our Department for taking these drugs off the streets of our town. And, I encourage all citizens to let us know of any suspicious activity.

Remember, we've got your back.

Dufour joins Pelahatchie Police

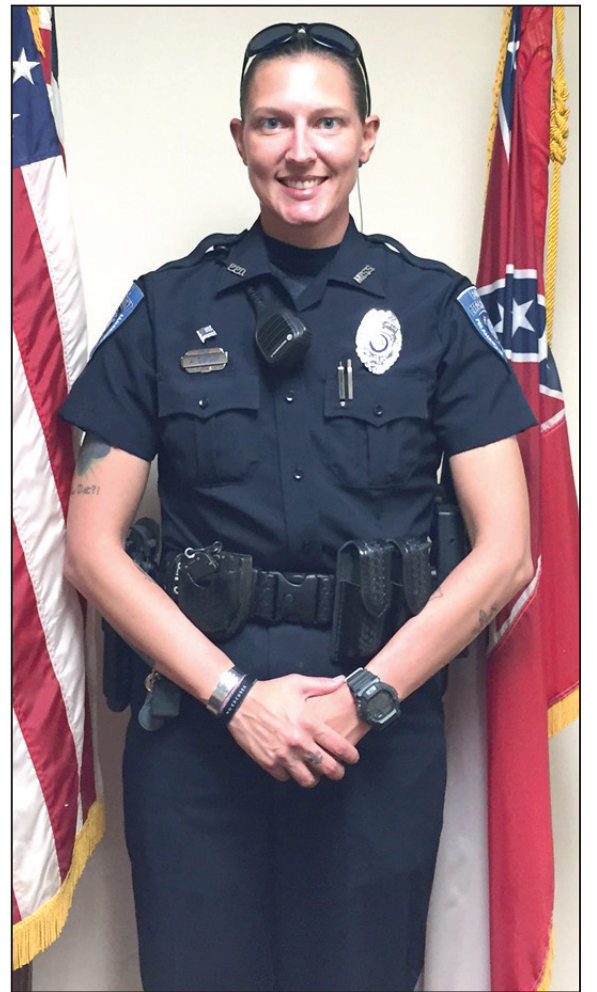
By Susie A. Wolfe

Allison Dufour has been named an officer with the Pelahatchie Police Department, according to Chief Kevin Poole. She was formerly a dispatcher at the Pearl Police Department.

"Dufour is a dedicated officer who takes pride in her job," said Poole. "She is a good fit, and we are happy to have her as part of the team."

A graduate of Madison Central High School and Mississippi State University, Dufour is a self-sponsored graduate of the Southern Regional Public Safety Institute at Camp Shelby. She is also in the 113th Military Police Company in the Army National Guard in Brandon. Her company most recently worked the Presidential Inauguration in Washington D.C.

Dufour is from a law enforcement family. Her father is retired FBI, and her grandfathers on both sides of the family served in World War II.



Special to Pelahatchie News

Officer Allison Dufour comes from a law enforcement family.


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PHS Band gets superior rating at band festival



Photo by Pelahatchie News

The 30-member Pelahatchie Band is pictured (l to r), front row: Abby Dawson, Brenna Renfro, Emarie McGill, Malori Scherer, and Gracie Thompson; second row: Zach Trest, Iyana Newsome, Telaiah Lewis, Syelri Goldman, Holden Gray, Caleb Watkins, Chloe Walters, and Devon Day; third row: Denver Sturgill, Emmie Hoard, Katie Boyer, Brandyn Luke, Anna Scherer, Josh Jenkins, Olivia Sirmon, and Sandra Lewis; and back row: Tyia Hoard, Kim Flores, Cam Emmons, Jullian Willingham, Anthony Tyner, and DeMarkyus McNair.

By Susie A. Wolfe

The Pelahatchie band attended the East Central Community College's Band

Festival in April and were awarded a "1" or superior for their concert performance. The categories included tone quality, rhythm, technique and musicianship.

The comments from the judges included, "Can't believe you sound this good for a 2-year band," "Very outstanding throughout concert," "Amazing job!"

"Awesome! Great training," and "Such beautiful clarity." Helen Echazabal, serves as the band director.

ERA students win district art awards



Special to Pelahatchie News

East Rankin Academy (ERA) ninth – twelfth graders recently won district MAIS art awards. Pictured (l to r) are, front row: Second Place District Winners Anna Lindsey, Katie Butts, and August Ann Thornton; and second row: First Place District Winners Destiny Register and Jaimee Poole; First Place District and First Place Overall State Winners Lane Burgess and Rachel Sikora; and First Place District Winner Jessica Ries.

ERCO opens in-town location

By Susie A. Wolfe

Ever Reaching Community Outreach (ERCO) has been working out of its Rehobeth Road location for five years, and serves multiple counties each month with food, clothing, household items, furniture, and even appliances when available. They receive donations of these items and, when a family is in need or suffers a sudden loss, such as fire or tornado, the items are freely given. Since 2012, ERCO has helped families throughout the state of Mississippi.

As of May 1, ERCO added an in-town Pelahatchie location to serve both their and Scott Walters' ministries out of the former First Assembly of God Church building on Brooks Avenue. Joe Hedgepeth and Steve Garrett of Country Boys Farm Construction & Supplies purchased the property when the church moved, and donated it to Walters who asked ERCO to join him. The facility is now a combination of outreach programs to benefit the area and surrounding communities.

Walters is involved in many ministries in Pelahatchie and the surrounding area: The Morton Nursing Home Ministry (May 12, June 23 and July 28); the Homeless Ministry in Jackson, every second and fourth Saturday; the annual Hands & Feet Missions Week (June 19-25); Mexico mission trips (May 25-29 and July 13-16); and the Pelahatchie kids' sack lunch program, every Wednesday (May 28 to July 26). Walters & ERCO partner together in the Pelahatchie food ministry and provide food boxes each month to local veterans, elderly and underprivileged families. The next dates are May 10, June 21 and July 12.

According to Tammy Brun, one of the ERCO founders and board members, "Our vision is a community center that brings together different mis-



Photo by Pelahatchie News

Tammy Brun and KathyJo Latham of ERCO are shown in front of the former First Assembly of God building on Brooks Street, which is the new in-town location of ERCO and Scott Walters' ministries.

sions and pools the resources of area businesses, churches and other organizations. We've been praying for years for something like this," said Brun. "We knew we needed somewhere else to grow and continue to be God's hands and feet."

She said ERCO partners with several ministries such as pregnancy centers to provide baby clothes and items to young mothers so the choice will be easier to keep their baby; domestic shelters to help provide items for families to set up a new home and leave that abusive environment; Wounded Warriors of Mississippi; Christian Women's/Men's Job Corp; The Wingard Home; Why Not Now; and several other ministries; and they work with the Bridge2Independence programs, such as the ARC of Mississippi and L.I.F.E., and at times handle home repairs for their clients.

ERCO also partners with Mary and Roy Callahan of HandsUp Outreach, a ministry of the Rankin County Baptist

Association. Last year, they blessed ERCO with computers to offer free GED classes, and they'll be providing computers at the Pelahatchie location. Individuals can come and work at their own pace to prepare to take the GED exam, and ERCO will pay the cost of the test. "Our mission is to create independence, not dependence. We want to help individuals become self-sufficient, so that they can provide for themselves and their families," said Brun.

ERCO's Facility Director KathyJo Latham joined the nonprofit last May, and is excited to be in town to be able to reach out for volunteers and be closer to resources. "It's more convenient for those with limited transportation or time," said Latham. "Our clients have lots of needs, not all material. They need hope, love and support in addition to material needs. We want to be a resource for area churches by providing for their benevolence needs, and first responders by having food, clothes and more readily available for emergen-

cies.

We pray that local churches will give of their time to help minister to our neighbors, and we need pastoral volunteers to offer their services for clients struggling with many issues."

"We're not your regular food bank. We're different," said Latham, who previously was the Facility Director of the Scott County Crisis Center. "There are so many opportunities to make a difference, if we just grab them."

"Now that we have a worship facility, we're in the development stages of holding a Third Sunday 3 p.m. service that's not traditional," she said. "We want to offer a service that will meet the needs of those who don't usually attend church because they don't have the proper clothes or shoes, or they have disabled children, or whatever the reason. We'll meet them where they are and shine our light for Jesus."

For more information on providing donations, volunteering or seeking services, call ERCO at 601-665-5720.



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Pelahatchie students graduate from Youth Leadership Rankin



Special to Pelahatchie News



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Gabi Walters from Pelahatchie High School (top) and Kaeleigh Thompson (bottom) from East Rankin Academy are shown at the Youth Leadership

Rankin graduation recently.

Both were selected for the Leadership Class in their sophomore year, and participated as juniors. Students are shown with Rankin Chamber President Mandi Arinder.

Taylor signs with MC



Special to Pelahatchie News

Dyllan Taylor (right) signed to play basketball at Mississippi College. The District 6 2A Basketball Player of the Year is the son of PHS Chiefs' head coach Rod Taylor.



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Firefighters are certified



Special to Pelahatchie News

Newly-certified volunteer firefighters for the Pelahatchie Volunteer Fire Department pictured, (l to r) are: Sean Peters, Billy Pickle, Lt. Austin Brunt, Lynda Chrestman and Assistant Chief Kevin Hall.

Spend time reading this summer



Special to Pelahatchie News

Mrs. A. did kiss Frank the Camel at Chief Madness. PES staff, kids and parents all had fun at the first annual event.



Special to Pelahatchie News

By Guest Columnist
Lisa Attkisson,
Pelahatchie Elementary
School Principal

As the 2016-17 school year comes to an end, our minds and our hearts are filled with excitement. It is time to say so long to our students, staff, parents, and community. We have had a fantastic year filled with learning and events that have brought us closer together. We would like to thank you for your ongoing support throughout the year. We could not offer such a rich education to our students without the continuing effort and support that you all give to our school. We appreciate all of our volunteers for the countless hours spent helping our school be all that it can be.

Summer break is very important in the academic lives of our children. If students continue to learn over the summer and reinforce their knowledge, they will be well equipped to handle the next school year. The research is clear that children who don't read during the summer can lose up to three months of reading progress, and that loss has a cumulative, long-term effect. We encourage you to spend time

reading with your children throughout the summer.

What is the purpose of summer reading?

- To strengthen reading behaviors and habits
- To develop a love of reading
- To pursue interests and learn
- To find enjoyment in reading

What are the expectations for summer reading?

- Read the summer reading book for the grade level.
- Discuss the book with parents, relatives, and friends.
- Build stamina and strength as a reader.
- Be prepared to discuss summer reading with the teacher and classmates.

Reading is the most important life-long skill we can help our students to learn and practice. Along with the National Council of Teachers of English, we believe that reading is not just a skill one learns in elementary school but a developmental and continual process throughout life.

Our summer reading list is coming soon!!! We will send information home in a couple of weeks.

Wishing you the best summer ever,
Mrs. A.



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Winstead signs with Hinds CC



Special to Pelahatchie News

Katie Winstead signed to play softball with Hinds Community College. Pictured, (l to r) are: Coach Steve Atkins, Winstead, and Coach David Price.

Jones signs with Belhaven



Special to Pelahatchie News

Haley Jones is Pelahatchie High School's first collegiate soccer signee. She signed to be a Belhaven Blazer. Pictured, (l to r) are: Jean Cooper, Jacey Cooper, Jones, Joseph Cooper, and Coach Patrick Creel.

Magee and Collier rule PHS Prom



Special to Pelahatchie News

The Pelahatchie High School Prom was held April 8 at The Cotton Market. Jacobly Magee and Janae Collier were named king and queen.

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Mayor Ross helped move Pelahatchie forward in his 16 years



**Thank you
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Sharon Bray
Assistant Vice President
Branch Manager
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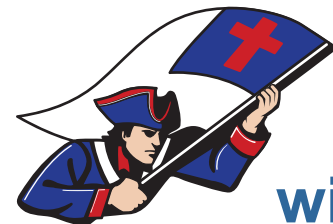
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**ERA
will miss
you Knox Ross!**



**Thanks for all
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The community and businesses share their thoughts about Mayor Ross

Special to Pelahatchie News

I met Knox during his first term as Mayor of Pelahatchie. It was not long after I met Knox that I realized I was working with a forward thinking, hardworking, go-getter kind of a mayor. Knox was passionate about Pelahatchie and wanted to make big changes to improve the quality of life for not just the citizens of Pelahatchie but the surrounding area as well. And that he did. I will certainly miss working with Knox and wish him only the best."

Mitzi R. Stubbs

Community & Economic Development Coordinator, Central Mississippi Planning and Development District

great mayor that understands the entire position and has done a great job promoting and building up the city of Pelahatchie."

Bryan

Marshall,
Principal Pelahatchie High School

"As an educator, I am so grateful to Mayor Knox Ross. His steadfast commitment to the students of our community has been beyond the call of duty. He made students a priority both personally and in his professional role as a civic leader. I will be forever grateful for his leadership."

Thanks,
Dan R. Boyce, Headmaster
East Rankin Academy

"First, I would like to say that I was born and raised in Pelahatchie. Early in my career at Rhodes and Robby Drugs, I saw the changes that were beginning to transform our town. When Knox Ross was elected mayor, I realized that we were blessed to have a "home-grown" man to tackle the job. Knox has proven that he loves this town and has made remarkable strides in the overall downtown appearance and improvements. We will miss his business acumen and friendly hospitality. I would like to personally thank him for a job well done."

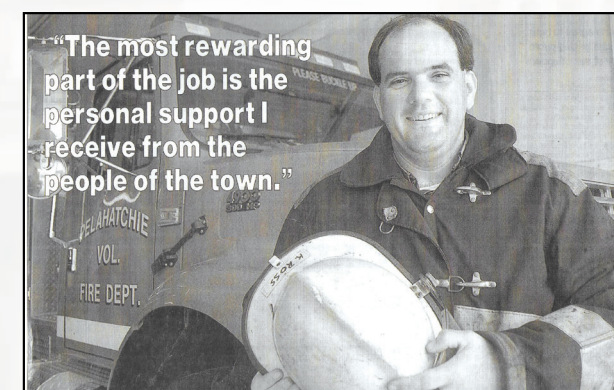
Jack Rhodes
Owner Rhodes and Robby Pharmacy

"Mayor Ross has been pivotal in the success of Pelahatchie High School. He understands that a strong school system attracts families and build property values. He has truly been a

"Knox is the epitome of service. I can remember when he was the only daytime responder for the Pelahatchie volunteer fire department. His paying job was accountant and I recall his caring and professionalism, EVEN on "tax eve." I remember him working wrecks and catching medical calls on April 14th, when most accountants were "too busy," but Knox was out there, taking care of folks."

Linda Brewer
St. Dominic's Family Medicine

"Having served as Town Attorney from 2001 to 2013 alongside Mayor Knox Ross, it was my honor and privilege to occupy a front row seat to many incredible accomplishments achieved under his leadership. Pelahatchie owes a debt of gratitude to Mayor Ross for his unwavering commitment to the betterment of his



Special to Pelahatchie News

Mary Ann Griffin
Griffin Family Medical Clinic

"I have known Mayor Knox Ross for many years. He and his family are very special to me! I will miss him as our Mayor, but I wish him the best of luck with his future endeavors."

Sharon Bray
Trustmark National Bank, Pelahatchie, Brandon

hometown, and his tireless efforts to make progress happen when others proclaimed it impossible...including the lawyer. As I make my way around Mississippi speaking to municipal and county officials about matters of local governance, I routinely cite examples of Mayor Ross's leadership as Mayor of Pelahatchie as the model to emulate.

Craig L. Slay, Board Attorney,
Rankin County Board of Supervisors

"Knox has been outstanding Mayor for Pelahatchie and has represented them well here in Mississippi and all across the country. His desire and efforts for always wanting the very best for Pelahatchie will be missed. I wish Knox and his family success in all future endeavors. Thanks, Knox."

David Farris
President, Priority Bank,
Pelahatchie, Morton

"He's done an awesome job for Pelahatchie. For a small town, you couldn't ask for a better leader."

"These past sixteen year with Mayor Ross has been an unbelievable journey! His dreams and goals for Pelahatchie at times seemed impossible but with his expertise, passion and drive he made sure it happened! His quest for new ideas never ceased, he would be traveling either on business or pleasure and would constantly be sending photos saying "we need to do this, see what you can do!!" "Thanks Mayor Ross for making Pelahatchie the place to prosper!!!"

Bettye Massey
Pelahatchie Town Clerk

"Knox and Jamie are dedicated servants of the Town of Pelahatchie and Pelahatchie Baptist Church. He is committed to his faith, family, and friends. Knox's leadership has been visionary and he will be greatly missed as mayor."

Pastor Guy Hughes
Pelahatchie Baptist Church

Ross: There's something special about Pelahatchie

By Susie A. Wolfe

Knox Ross grew up in Pelahatchie and opened a CPA firm in town. He joined the volunteer fire department and made medical calls with Chief Glenda. He also did the books and audits for the Town, and knew the interworkings. After Mayor James Ray Townsend decided not to run again in 2001, Knox became a candidate. And, after 16 years of working to improve his hometown, he is turning over the reins to someone with new ideas.

When asked what he is most proud of in his 16 years leading the town, Ross said it is the relationships with others who had the same goal of making the town better.

"There's something special about Pelahatchie," said Ross. "Every town has a personality and Pelahatchie's is the goodness of the people who immediately help those in need without a second thought."

People are the central theme in the success of his administration, the good people and relationships made that impactful "whole group of people." He said that he is most

proud of that things worked better off than when he started is a testament to a lot of people that did a good job selling Pelahatchie.

"I worked with the aldermen and city staff, and mayors of other cities and advisers at Central Mississippi Planning and Development District (CMPDD), and it all came together," he said. "They were fantastic to work with on Muscadine and Milltown Park, Town Center, and other projects. They work hard and are dedicated to the town."

Pelahatchie is in good shape financially, infrastructure, good per-

sonnel, equipment, but it's time for new ideas according to Ross. "I was able to bring people together marshal resources that made it better in a way that was respectful for everyone," he said. "The biggest challenge is the EPA regulations. We've started, but the challenge is meeting new regulations."

He said he enjoyed the job, that it was an interesting education on town planning, water and sewer and zoning, but, what he will miss most is interacting with the people daily. He has no plans to move, and will be here on weekends.

Ross' tenure brought grants and awards

Special to Pelahatchie News

During Ross' tenure as mayor, the Town of Pelahatchie received more than \$ 5 million in grants from various funding agencies across the state to make improvements with the sewer system, Town Hall, the Fire Station, Community Center, downtown streetscape, Milltown and Muscadine Parks, and the Industrial Park.

The Town has also had many Mississippi Municipal League recognitions. A 2001 Mississippi Municipal League Excellence Award for Public Safety; 2004 and 2005 Awards for

City Spirit; 2011 for Best Overall Award; and 2012 Award for City Spirit.

A partial list of grants awarded the Town include:

- 2005 Community and Development Block Grant combined with company investment of \$5 million creating 50 new permanent jobs
- 2006 Community and Development Block Grant to contract improvements to the downtown
- 2007 Community and Development Block Grant to develop a

Streetscape Enhancement Plan for the Pelahatchie Historical Overlay District

- 2007 Community and Development Block Grant (CDBG) Katrina - Go Zone
- Bike Plan for a total project cost of \$2,952,935.00 to partially funded a community center, town hall, and streetscape improvements.
- 2007 Small Municipality and Limited Population County to renovate and expand the existing Town owned building to accommodate the relocation of the Pelahatchie Library.

- 2007 Safe Routes to Schools grant to build and construct street, sidewalk and crosswalk improvements that will address public safety and provide access for pedestrians and bicyclists.
- 2009 Construction of improvements to the Pelahatchie Fire Station.
- 2010 Community and Development Block Grant for construction of a playground at a Milltown Park.
- 2010 Recreational Trails Funding Program trail in Milltown Park.

Mayor Ross helped move Pelahatchie



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 Mayor Ross!**



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Ross: There's something special about Pelahatchie

By Susie A. Wolfe

Knox Ross grew up in Pelahatchie and opened a CPA firm in town. He joined the volunteer fire department and made medical calls with Chief Glenda. He also did the books and audits for the Town, and knew the interworkings. After Mayor James Ray Townsend decided not to run again in 2001, Knox became a candidate. And, after 16 years of working to improve his hometown, he is turning over the reins to someone with new ideas.

When asked what he is most proud of in his 16 years leading the town, Ross said it is the relationships with others who had the same goal of making the town better.

"There's something special about Pelahatchie," said Ross. "Every town has a personality and Pelahatchie's is the goodness of the people who immediately help those in need without a second thought."

People are the central theme in the success of his administration, the good people and relationships made that impactful "whole group of people." He said that he is most

proud of that things worked better off than when he started is a testament to a lot of people that did a good job selling Pelahatchie.

"I worked with the aldermen and city staff, and mayors of other cities and advisers at Central Mississippi Planning and Development District (CMPDD), and it all came together," he said. "They were fantastic to work with on Muscadine and Milltown Park, Town Center, and other projects. They work hard and are dedicated to the town."

Pelahatchie is in good shape financially, infrastructure, good per-

sonnel, equipment, but it's time for new ideas according to Ross. "I was able to bring people together marshal resources that made it better in a way that was respectful for everyone," he said. "The biggest challenge is the EPA regulations. We've started, but the challenge is meeting new regulations."

He said he enjoyed the job, that it was an interesting education on town planning, water and sewer and zoning, but, what he will miss most is interacting with the people daily. He has no plans to move, and will be here on weekends.

Mayor Ross helped move Pelahatchie



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hatchie forward in his 16 years

The community and businesses share their thoughts about Mayor Ross

Special to Pelahatchie News

I met Knox during his first term as Mayor of Pelahatchie. It was not long after I met Knox that I realized I was working with a forward thinking, hardworking, go-getter kind of a mayor. Knox was passionate about Pelahatchie and wanted to make big changes to improve the quality of life for not just the citizens of Pelahatchie but the surrounding area as well. And that he did. I will certainly miss working with Knox and wish him only the best."

Mitzi R. Stubbs

Community & Economic Development Coordinator, Central Mississippi Planning and Development District

"First, I would like to say that I was born and raised in Pelahatchie. Early in my career at Rhodes and Robby Drugs, I saw the changes that were beginning to transform our town. When Knox Ross was elected mayor, I realized that we were blessed to have a "home-grown" man to tackle the job. Knox has proven that he loves this town and has made remarkable strides in the overall downtown appearance and improvements. We will miss his business acumen and friendly hospitality. I would like to personally thank him for a job well done."

Jack Rhodes

Owner Rhodes and Robby Pharmacy

"Mayor Ross has been pivotal in the success of Pelahatchie High School. He understands that a strong school system attracts families and build property values. He has truly been a

great mayor that understands the entire position and has done a great job promoting and building up the city of Pelahatchie."

Bryan

Marshall,

Principal Pelahatchie High School

"As an educator, I am so grateful to Mayor Knox Ross. His steadfast commitment to the students of our community has been beyond the call of duty. He made students a priority both personally and in his professional role as a civic leader. I will be forever grateful for his leadership."

Thanks,

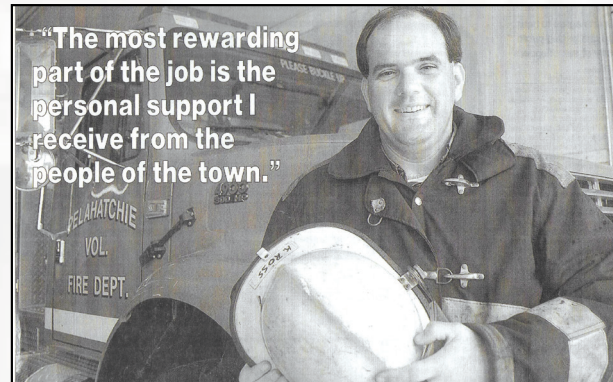
Dan R. Boyce, Headmaster
East Rankin Academy

"Knox is the epitome of service. I can remember when he was the only daytime responder for the Pelahatchie volunteer fire department. His paying job was accountant and I recall his caring and professionalism, EVEN on "tax eve." I remember him working wrecks and catching medical calls on April 14th, when most accountants were "too busy," but Knox was out there, taking care of folks."

Linda Brewer

St. Dominic's Family Medicine

"Having served as Town Attorney from 2001 to 2013 alongside Mayor Knox Ross, it was my honor and privilege to occupy a front row seat to many incredible accomplishments achieved under his leadership. Pelahatchie owes a debt of gratitude to Mayor Ross for his unwavering commitment to the betterment of his



Special to Pelahatchie News

hometown, and his tireless efforts to make progress happen when others proclaimed it impossible...including the lawyer. As I make my way around Mississippi speaking to municipal and county officials about matters of local governance, I routinely cite examples of Mayor Ross's leadership as Mayor of Pelahatchie as the model to emulate.

Craig L. Slay, Board Attorney,
Rankin County Board of Supervisors

"Knox has been outstanding Mayor for Pelahatchie and has represented them well here in Mississippi and all across the country. His desire and efforts for always wanting the very best for Pelahatchie will be missed. I wish Knox and his family success in all future endeavors. Thanks, Knox."

David Farris
President, Priority Bank,
Pelahatchie, Morton

"He's done an awesome job for Pelahatchie. For a small town, you couldn't ask for a better leader."

Mary Ann Griffin
Griffin Family Medical
Clinic

"I have known Mayor Knox Ross for many years. He and his family are very special to me! I will miss him as our Mayor, but I wish him the best of luck with his future endeavors."

Sharon Bray

Trustmark National
Bank, Pelahatchie, Brandon

"These past sixteen year with Mayor Ross has been an unbelievable journey! His dreams and goals for Pelahatchie at times seemed impossible but with his expertise, passion and drive he made sure it happened! His quest for new ideas never ceased, he would be traveling either on business or pleasure and would constantly be sending photos saying "we need to do this, see what you can do!! "Thanks Mayor Ross for making Pelahatchie the place to prosper!!!"

Bettye Massey

Pelahatchie Town Clerk

"Knox and Jamie are dedicated servants of the Town of Pelahatchie and Pelahatchie Baptist Church. He is committed to his faith, family, and friends. Knox's leadership has been visionary and he will be greatly missed as mayor."

Pastor Guy Hughes

Pelahatchie Baptist Church

Ross' tenure brought grants and awards

Special to Pelahatchie News

During Ross' tenure as mayor, the Town of Pelahatchie received more than \$ 5 million in grants from various funding agencies across the state to make improvements with the sewer system, Town Hall, the Fire Station, Community Center, downtown streetscape, Milltown and Muscadine Parks, and the Industrial Park.

The Town has also had many Mississippi Municipal League recognitions. A 2001 Mississippi Municipal League Excellence Award for Public Safety; 2004 and 2005 Awards for

City Spirit; 2011 for Best Overall Award; and 2012 Award for City Spirit.

A partial list of grants awarded the Town include:

- 2005 Community and Development Block Grant combined with company investment of \$5 million creating 50 new permanent jobs
- 2006 Community and Development Block Grant to construct improvements to the downtown
- 2007 Community and Development Block Grant to develop a

Streetscape Enhancement Plan for the Pelahatchie Historical Overlay District

- 2007 Community and Development Block Grant (CDBG) Katrina – Go Zone
- Bike Plan for a total project cost of \$2,952,935.00 to partially funded a community center, town hall, and streetscape improvements.
- 2007 Small Municipality and Limited Population County to renovate and expand the existing Town owned building to accommodate the relocation of the Pelahatchie Library.

hatchie Library.

- 2007 Safe Routes to Schools grant to build and construct street, sidewalk and crosswalk improvements that will address public safety and provide access for pedestrians and bicyclists.
- 2009 Construction of improvements to the Pelahatchie Fire Station.
- 2010 Community and Development Block Grant for construction of a playground at a Milltown Park.
- 2010 Recreational Trails Funding Program trail in Milltown Park.

AT THE LIBRARY IN PELAHATCHIE

Adult Book Club

Wednesday, May 17, 9:30 - Discussing Jennifer Crusie's Agnes & the Hit Man

Sign up for K-6 summer reading program

beginning Monday, May 22.

Free books from Friends' Book Sale

extended through Thursday, May 18.

Obituaries

NAME	AGE	CITY	DOD	Arrangements
Billy Haralson	83	Conehatta, MS	4/19/2017	Wolf Funeral Serv.
Willie Holifield	65	Morton, MS	4/9/2017	Wolf Funeral Serv.
Cleo Kelly	86	Pearl, MS	4/11/2017	Wolf Funeral Serv.
Annie Pinter	63	Jackson, MS	4/19/2017	Wolf Funeral Serv.
Jesse Puckett	92	Forest, MS	4/8/2017	Wolf Funeral Serv.
Bradford Wallace	70	Polkville, MS	4/2/2017	Wolf Funeral Serv.
James Worley	83	Morton, MS	4/7/2017	Wolf Funeral Serv.

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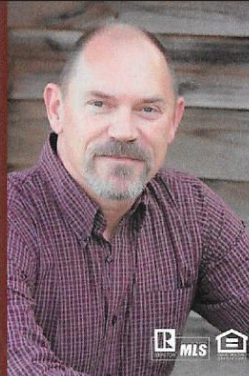
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Staci L. Rhodes, DVM

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 NEWS
Pelahatchie

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Coach Bill Ward has plans for retirement

By Stephanie Goss

Ask any Pelahatchie resident if they know Bill Ward, and they'll tell you he is the immensely successful football coach at Pelahatchie High School. After 33 years, however, Coach Bill Ward is hanging up his whistle and passing the torch.

Bill Ward never planned to coach. His goal after high school was simply to go to college. He had never thought about coaching. When his professor at Holmes Community College in Goodman asked him what his major was, he didn't have an answer. She asked what he liked to do, and his answer was "I like to play sports." His professor put him as a PE teacher, and soon Bill Ward was on his way to being a coach.

Surprisingly, Ward is not originally from Pelahatchie. He attended French Camp Academy and Weir High School, where he played every sport he could, from football and baseball to basketball and track. After high school and Holmes, he finally completed his degree at Mississippi State University in 1979. He began his post-college coaching at Mantachie as the head girls' basketball coach and assistant football coach. He coached there for two years before

moving to Kosciusko, where he continued coaching girls' basketball and assisting in football for the next three years. Ward finally made the move to Pelahatchie and never looked back. He quickly worked his way up, first serving as an assistant football coach under Jack French, and then under William Wall. In 1988, Ward was named Pelahatchie High School's head football coach.

Coach Ward said, "The Good Lord has a way of putting you where He wants you to be." Luckily, Pelahatchie was where the Good Lord wanted Bill Ward. His accomplishments are numerous and impressive. His 20 playoff appearances, two undefeated regular seasons, a state championship, and an outstanding overall record of 201-131 speak volumes about what a tremendous coach he is. His awards gained during his tenure coaching display what others think and know of Coach Bill Ward:

In 1997, Coach Ward was the Bernard Blackwell North/South All-Star Football



Special to Pelahatchie News

Assistant Coach.

In 1998, he led the Pelahatchie Chiefs to the District 1-A State Championship playoffs where they were the runner-up. That same year, he also served as the Mississippi/Alabama All-Star Football Assistant Coach.

In 2001, he led the Chiefs back to the State 1-A Championship, and they returned as victors.

In 2001, *The Clarion Ledger* named him Metro Coach of the Year.

In 2010, he was the recipient of the 2010 Garcia Outstanding Coach Award.

He served as a MAC Board Member from 2000-2013, MAC Vice President 2013-2014, and MAC President 2014-2015.

Yet, if you ask Bill Ward what his greatest accomplishment was, he'll say humbly with tears in his eyes, "Well, records and championships are nice and all, but what I cherish the most are the relationships I have built through this job. I wouldn't trade those for anything in this world."

Coach Ward said he has been blessed to have worked with some of the greatest assistant coaches around, including Johnny Bishop, Chris Courtney, Larry Harms and Jeff Duvall, to name a few. He wants other coaches to know that they need to know their players and their community. It is imperative to build lasting relationships with players, families, other coaches and the community.

Recently married, Coach Ward has his new wife, Ruby; two children, son Bryan and his wife Jennifer, and a daughter, Jennifer, who passed away in 2008. He has four grandchildren: Keegan, Ayden, Mason and Aliya Ward; and three step-grandchildren: Ryan, Madden and Kaylee Renfroe. Coach Ward plans to spend his retirement watching his grandsons play ball in Rankin County. With Ruby by his side, he'll endure a long overdue knee surgery before trekking across the county looking for a game to watch.

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Pastor's Perspective: Seeking good counsel



By Guest Columnist John Vaughn, Pastor, Cross Roads Baptist Church

Special to Pelahatchie News

May is the month for graduations. Either you or somebody you know will be experiencing the joy and thrill of "walking." From kindergarten to middle school to high school to Community College to Technical school to university to graduate degrees, all those who are graduating at any level are to be congratulated for their achievement.

I've had the privilege of graduating from several levels of education as well. But one of them almost didn't happen. After completing an associate degree at East Mississippi Community College, I went on to Mississippi State to pursue a degree in Business Administration, concentrating in personnel management.

My first semester at Mississippi State was a disaster for me. I had graduated with honors from high school and community college without a great deal of effort. But Mississippi State was a whole new situation for me. I found myself struggling in my classes

and discouraged. In fact, I went to see my advisor to ask him to sign my withdrawal from school form. I had given up. I was ready to quit.

My advisor was Dr. Dennis Ray, the Dean of the Business School. I didn't know him before the day I walked into his office. He listened to me as I shared my struggles, and he heard my decision to withdraw from school. He asked about my long term goals and plans. He looked at my schedule and talked with me about each class. Then he did something I didn't expect. He told me he would not sign the form for me to withdraw from school!

Instead, he signed a form for me to withdraw from the class I was having the most difficulty with, even though the official drop date had already passed. He arranged for me to meet with a graduate assistant to work on study habits. He encouraged me and helped me see the bigger picture of my life and not just my present struggles.

I'll forever be indebted to Dr. Ray. I did stay in school. And each semester, my grades got better until I was on the President's list my last semester. When I graduated from Mississippi State, I went by to see Dr. Ray to thank him for



Special to Pelahatchie News

his wise counsel and encouragement. Surely without it, my life course probably would have been much different.

We all have times in life when we are discouraged and frustrated with our current situations. At those times, it is important to seek a trusted advisor to help us through the difficulties. Sometimes we are so focused on the current struggle that we can't see the bigger picture.

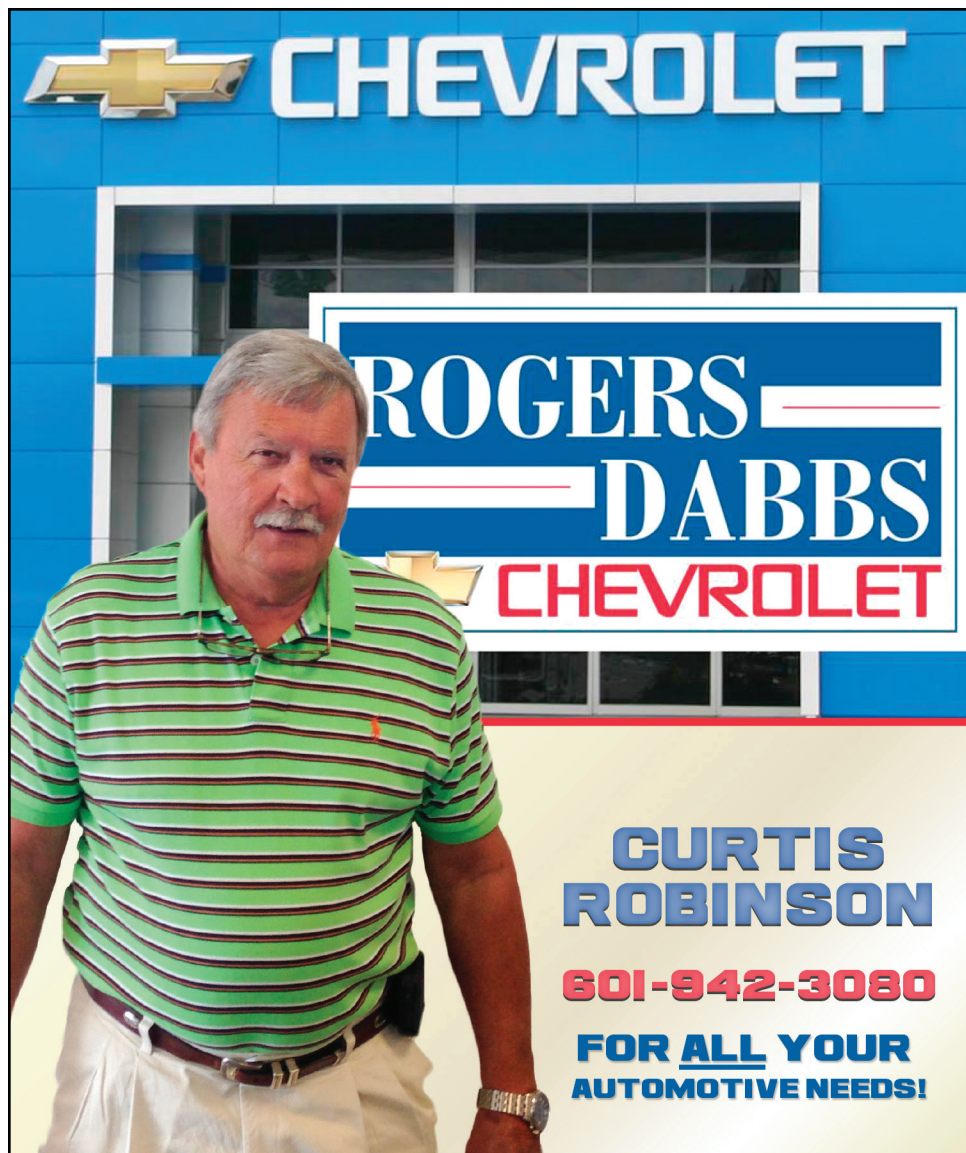
Listen to Proverbs 12:15, "The way of a fool is right in his own eyes, but a wise man listens to advice." And Proverbs 15:22 says, "Plans fail for lack of counsel, but with many advisers they

succeed."

And, of course, Jesus promised that the Holy Spirit would be our ultimate counselor in John 14:26, "But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you."

So let me encourage our graduates, and all the rest of us, to always seek out wise counsel from those who are interested in our success and to let the Lord through His Holy Spirit guide us throughout life.

Have a great day, and be sure to take your family to church on Sunday!



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ERA elementary students go to quiz bowl

Special to Pelahatchie News

Third – sixth grade East Rankin Academy (ERA) students recently participated in elementary quiz bowl camp

that tests players on a wide variety of academic subjects. During camp, students are read questions and try to score points for their team by buzzing first on a quiz bowl buzzer system and

responding with the correct answers. Teams with correct answers then work together on team bonus questions. Students gained exposure to a broad range of school and cultural subjects along

with the opportunity to increase higher level thinking and speed skills. Quiz bowl camp participants also developed their abilities to cooperate and work in teams.



Special to Pelahatchie News

Third and fourth grade elementary camp students pictured (l to r) are, front row: Evan McIlwain, Jessica Boman, Emily Williams, Chloe Pierce, Makayla Bell Gainey, Savannah Smithers, Jensen Baker, Paige Mayatte, Rylie Lucroy, and Marlee Rakinic; second row: Lydia Collipp, R.T. Tate, Cole Thompson, Chase Adcock, Michael Kanengiser, Tate Ogden, Abram Rowell, Will Burrow, Brody Hill, Hudson Hawk, and Lane Riemann. Not pictured are Dalton McDill and Luke Patrick; and back row: Abigail Smith, Brooke Shedd, Audrey Hawk, Rosa Garcia, Kameron Jordan, Rachel Smith, Mackenzie Richmond, Audrey Mayatte, and Delia Hillard.



Special to Pelahatchie News

Fifth and sixth grade elementary camp students pictured (l to r) are, front row: Lulu Davis, Bailey Baumann, Alex Tullos, Charity Johnston, Lanie French, Abigail Stevens, Lana Jones, and Milla Pace; second row: Allison Thompson, Mason Jordan, Max Gainey, Owen Axley, Colin Sarrett, Mary Kellan Sartin, and Anna Lee Johnston; and back row: Grayson Blair, Jace Denson, Curt Burkes, John Luke Johnston, Dylan Davis, Landen Prestage, and Weston Whittington.

Control fire ants in your yard this summer



By Doug Carter, Rankin
County Extension Agent

Fire ants are the most common insect pests of home lawns. They occur practically in every lawn in the state. Even if

you manage to achieve a fire ant free yard, it probably won't stay that way long, because newly mated fire ant queens will quickly recolonize it. Fire ant control is a never ending battle in the Southeast, but there are steps you can do to reduce the number of mounds in your yard.

The easiest, cheapest, and most effective thing you can do to control fire ants is to use baits. Use baits properly, and you can reduce the number of mounds in your yard by 80 to 90 percent. For even better control, you can supplement your baiting program, spot treating mounds that survive the bait treatments.

We apply baits as broadcast treatments, instead of treating only individual mounds. You will never win the battle against fire ants by only treating individual mounds. If we only eliminate the big mounds, the small colo-

nies will thrive, because they have less competition, and they will quickly grow into large mounds.

Early spring is the best time to apply fire ant baits, because fire ants are actively foraging for food at this time. If you are going to treat only one time per year, do it in the spring. But, you can improve control by treating again in midsummer and a third time in the fall. We can use the holidays, Easter, Independence Day, and Labor Day, to remind us when it is time to put out fire ant bait.

If you can't wait four weeks for a bait treatment to control fire ant mounds, individual mound treatments containing contact insecticides provide much quicker control than bait treatments. There are two basic methods of treating individual fire ant mounds: liquid drenches and dry mound treat-



Special to Pelahatchie News

ments.

The liquid drenches provide the quickest control, however they are time consuming to mix and apply. The dry mound treatments are easy and convenient to use, but are less effective.

Another method to control fire ants is by using broadcast insecticide treatments. Broadcast insecticide treatments are contact insecticides that are applied over the entire lawn. These are more costly to use than baits. They are usually applied to highly managed areas, such as athletic fields and golf courses.

Don't confuse granular contact insecticides with granular baits. Baits are impregnated with oil and a small amount of slow-acting insecticide. The worker ant actively collects the bait granules and carries them back to the colony.

Granular insecticides are simply granules that are impregnated with insecticide. The insecticide in the granules moves into the soil and controls foraging ants and newly settled queens by contact activity.

For more information on controlling fire ants, visit your Mississippi State University Extension Office, 601 Marquette Road, Brandon, MS.

OBITUARY

Virgie Mae Kennedy — , July 22, 1930 — April 10, 2017

Funeral services for Mrs. Virgie Mae Kennedy, 86, were held at 12 p.m. on Thursday, April 13, 2017, at Ott & Lee Funeral Home in Brandon. Reverend Holley Tennison officiated. Interment was made in the Rehobeth Cemetery in Pelahatchie.

Mrs. Kennedy, 86, went to her Heavenly Home on Monday, April 10, 2017, at Brandon Court Nursing home, following an extended illness. She was born on July 22, 1930, in Corinth (Alcorn County) Mississippi to Walter and Gertrude Wilson.

She was preceded in death by her husband, John Henry Kennedy, Jr., her son, James Louis Kennedy, her parents, and three brothers H.T. Wilson, Gene Wilson, James McCulloch, Ver-

non McCulloch and Jerry McCulloch.

Survivors include four daughters, Laura (Benny) Robertson of Columbus, MS, Ann (Jimmy) Briggs of Brandon, MS, Wanda (Rick) Gates of Oklahoma City, Oklahoma; and Bonnie (Dan) Armstrong of Brandon, MS; two sons, Johnnie (Judy) Kennedy of Cicero, Illinois; Chuck (Laura) Kennedy of Bolling Brook, Illinois; two brothers; Lester McCulloch of Tennessee, David McCulloch of Kentucky; and one sister, Faye Lester of Tennessee; 17 grandchildren, 35 great grandchildren and 16 great-great grandchildren and a number of nieces and nephews.

Pallbearers and Honorary Pallbearers were her grandsons and great grandsons.

Ott & Lee Funeral Home in Brandon was in charge of the arrangements.



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Sunday Schedule

8:30 - Contemporary Worship Service
10:00 - Bible Study for all ages
11:00 - Blended Worship Service
6:00 - Evening Worship

Wednesday Schedule

6:00 Family Dinner
7:00 - Children's Mission Activities • Student Worship
Ladies Bible Study • Couples Support Group
Prayer Meeting and Bible Study

104 Crossroads Road • Pelahatchie, MS 39145
(601) 546-2297 • www.crossroadspel.org

Cross Roads Grill & Store expands

By Susie A. Wolfe

One of Pelahatchie's dining establishments, Cross Roads Store & Grill, is four miles south of town on Highway 43 in the Cross Roads community. Known for its hand-pattied hamburger and hamburger steak, the 5-year-old grill has just doubled its seating and expanded its menu to include crawfish, shrimp, bar-b-que and smoked ribs.

The Cross Roads Store & Grill is also known for its family atmosphere, according to owner Diana Key, who said, "it's like having a big family in your living room."

Run by the Key family, Diana and her husband, Tommy Jr., do most of the organizing and cooking, while their kids, Drake, Austin and Leilani, help on the weekends with their families. They even bring the grandkids, Austin and Kessie have Bailey, 5, and Olivia, 2, and Drake and Kalia have Aubrianna, 5. Leilani, a sophomore at Pelahatchie High School, is still in training, according to her mom. The store, which also makes special occasion cakes and does catering, also has salads, ice cream and milk shakes on the menu. They post daily specials on the store Facebook page. Their first major

catering event will be the Pelahatchie Athletic Banquet for approximately 100 people to be held at Cross Roads Baptist Church on May 5.

Diana, who had a business decorating cakes, including wedding cakes, before they opened the store, said she mostly learned it as a hobby on YouTube, but found she "loved it."

The Cross Roads Store & Grill hours are Monday 8-2, Tues.-Thurs 8-7, and Friday and Saturday 8-8. They are closed on Sunday. For more information, call 601-546-2255.



Special to Pelahatchie News

Cross Roads Store & Grill added extra seating outside in February to more than double their space. Pictured are Tommy Key, Jr. and Diana. Inset: Shown is a bridal cake designed by Diana Key.



Photo by Pelahatchie News

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