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Travis celebrates and gives back with Soup in the City



All photos by The Canton News

By Courtney Warren

When a person celebrates their birthday, the day is normally all about them. This isn't so for Ashley Travis of Canton. Each year for her birthday, Travis hosts Soup in the City, an event she began on

her birthday as a way to give back to her community.

Soup in the City took place on Hickory Street in downtown Canton, where free food, clothes, and hygiene supplies were given out.

"I want to give back to the city by do-

ing different varieties of soup. They can get different hygiene projects and anything we have to help the less fortunate. I started it last year for my birthday, and instead of giving gifts, I asked people to give donations. People were so great about giving donations," said Travis.

With live music and good food, Travis met the cold weather with a warm heart.

"I always give back in the Jackson area. Most of the time, I'll post about people in need, and I'll drive around to give those items out. People also will call

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McCarty named Canton Academy Head of School

By Courtney Warren

Canton Academy (CA) recently welcomed home Tripp McCarty as the new Head of School.

McCarty most recently served at Pillow Academy in an administrative role and as the head football coach for the past seven years.

With over twenty years of experience in the Midsouth Association of Independent Schools (MSAIS), including Presbyterian Christian School, Brookhaven Academy, and Madison-Ridgeland Academy, McCarty said he is aware that CA is like no other.

"Every school is different, and I'm learning how to work to make adjustments to anything that needs to be improved. I want to learn faces, names, duties and the feel of the school. There's a culture on every campus, and I want to make sure I'm aware of ours," he said.

"We're small enough that every child on this campus can have a great story, and we

can have more accomplishments in the classroom as well as on the field," he added.

McCarty is a CA graduate himself from the Class of 1995, and his wife May (McGee) of 2003. The couple has a four-year-old son named Stock who will start in CA's preschool in the fall.

Being a parent, McCarty said he has a further vested interest in seeing CA suc-



Special to The Canton News

Tripp, May, and Stock McCarty

ceed.

"We've got a lot of memories around every corner, and a lot of great people here took care of me. I wasn't valedictorian or somebody that a lot of teachers would have taken time on, but that was what was neat about this place," he said.

"I've always been invested in this school, as any of us should be as alumni. We should want to keep track of

our community and our alma mater," said McCarty.


With his return, McCarty is already filled with new ideas to ensure the success of each student.

"We are focused on the whole child every minute that we're with them. With things students see in the world today, we want them to properly develop, grow, and be prepared. However, as a small, nurturing environment, we can also have good boundaries and provide somewhat of a bubble of protection on the campus," he said.


McCarty is excited to get to know the teaching style of every educator at the school and better understand what makes CA teachers so wonderful.

"I don't expect all of our classrooms to sound the same. If they all operate the same, we aren't reaching every kid. As long as we're tied together and in agreement with our mission statement and goal,

cont. on page 9





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Kylie Melons produce grows in both size and love

By Courtney Warren

“It’s fun, faith, and food. That’s the atmosphere we really want it to be. When you come to Kylie Melons, you feel like you’re family,” said Eddie Warren, Jr., with a smile.

The Warren family has been on the corner of Highways 16 and 43 for generations now, and, just like any other family, they continue to grow.

Kylie Warren, the second son in the family, began selling watermelons during the summer out of the back of a pickup truck with the goal of making money for his tuition at Mississippi State University.

Since graduation, that watermelon business has grown into a full-blown produce shop with desserts, plants, homemade casseroles, fresh boiled peanuts, and more.

Recently, Kylie Melons closed for a couple of months for a grand renovation.

“We’ve done a lot, and we’re so excited about it all. We have taken out the old tile and had the existing concrete floor repolished. We also rearranged coolers and counters, so we could add more space in the store,” said Kylie.

There will also be a Grab n’ Go cooler with homemade chicken salad, pimento cheese, salads, sandwiches, and other quick items.

“When we open back up, people can expect strawberries. They’ll be in season and really great,” said Kylie.

Rather than being a simple corner store, Kylie Melons has taken on the idea that it’s more about family and community than business.

Tucked on the corner beside Warren Used Cars, it’s not unusual to walk into the store and witness a Warren praying with one of their customers or praising God after hearing wonderful news. In fact, those who look close enough will see an old clipboard with worn pages full of prayer requests.

“What makes this so much fun is the people. We really enjoy people coming to see us. When you come to Kylie Melons, you feel like you’re family,” said Eddie, Jr.

With his usual grin, Kylie readily gave credit to everyone but himself.

“There’s no way we could do this without Jesus, first and foremost. I wouldn’t be able to do this without Momma, Daddy, and Papaw (Eddie, Sr.). There’s no way. And my brothers have been a part of this too, from making boiled peanuts to building furniture and painting. My brother and sister-in-law make a lot of our custom-built gifts. My beautiful wife Cassidy does a lot of our social media marketing. It really is a family business.”



Photo by Courtney Warren

Kylie Warren with Mayor Truly and his wife.

During the renovations, the Warrens said they missed seeing members of the Canton community each day.

“Coming from the back of the pickup truck to this, we’re having so much fun. We have a lot of new stuff coming on, and the people of Canton

are excited about it. This has been everything I originally wanted and more. The people of the Canton are so kind and supportive,” said Kylie.

For more information about Kylie Melons, visit their Facebook page or call 601-667-3478.





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Publisher

Clay Mansell
ClayMansell@CantonNews.net

Editor in Chief

Stephanie Tracy

Editor

Courtney Warren
News@CantonNews.net

Office Manager

Doris Bynum

Sales Representatives

Clay Mansell
Lori Lycette
Courtney Warren

Graphic Designer / Layout

Megan Smith

Designer@CantonNews.net

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For submission information, email news@cantonnews.net

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McCullough writes to bring a new change

By Courtney Warren

Sometimes, when people see a problem, they ignore it; and, other times, people see a problem in their community or country and want to do all they can to make it better.



Michquel McCullough

After struggling at the beginning of his post-high school education, Michquel McCullough decided to write a book to express his emotions in regards to urban education in America.

“I realized that I didn’t receive the same education as other students because of where I went to school. My road was longer and harder to travel, which made me want to tell my story and write this book,” said McCullough.

Urban Schools Clash with 14th Amendment: The Politics of Race and Culture gives a different “account of urban education in America,” according to the book description.

McCullough said he was inspired to tell his story after news broke in 2019 of wealthy celebrities bribing colleges to admit their children.

“They have the best of the best, and their parents are still trying to get their kids into the best college in the country. Coming from where I came from, that wasn’t even possible,” he said.

While McCullough experienced several life-changing teachers,

he said he felt like there needed to be a drastic change in the public school system to better assist both teachers and parents in educating their children.

“People want to blame parents, but the issue is this: when you’re dealing with parents from poor communities, they want better but don’t always know how to give it to their kids. We have to make sure we are all equipped to help students in the best possible way,” said McCullough.

McCullough used history, including Dr. Mar-

and that every student has the right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness but that all students need to have the same opportunities.

McCullough said he believes pursuing a better future begins in the classroom.

“When it comes to teachers, we need to pay attention to who is in the classroom and ensure we have the best of the best. Principals need to put a good vetting system in place for their teachers. Social media should be taken into account when choosing who is teaching within the schools,” he added.

All in all, McCullough said he wants his community to strive for a better education for the youth.

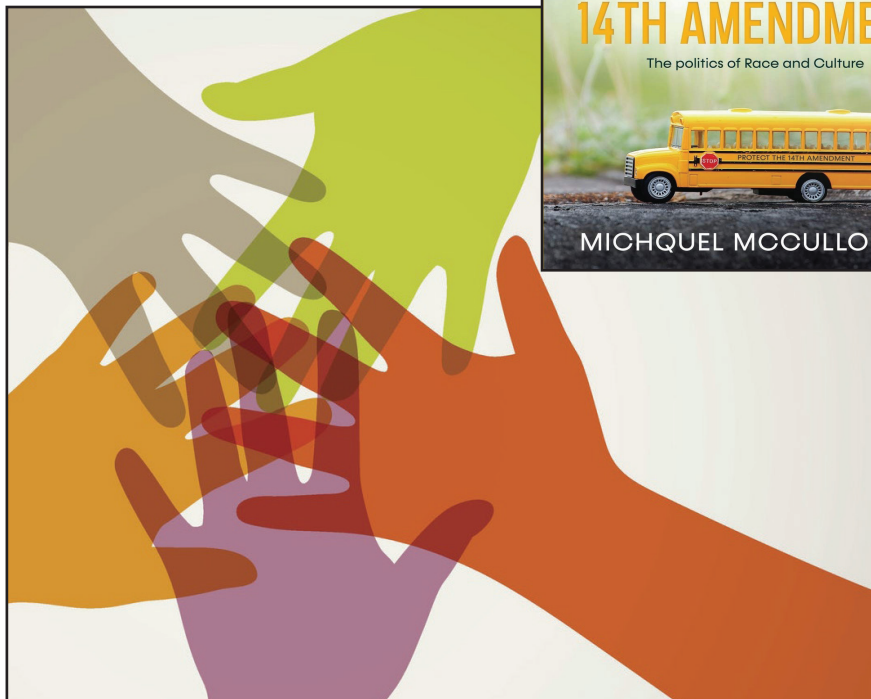
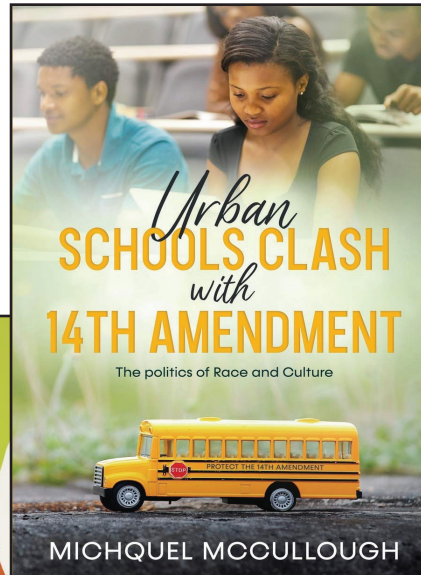
“I want these kids to see that we are passionate about education and giving them the best education possible. We want to let them know that there is more after graduation, and we want them to be ready for what comes next,” he said.

McCullough said he hopes his book inspires parents, teachers and others to “vote with their feet” on local, state, and national levels to better

the education system.

McCullough is a native of Canton and earned his bachelor of arts in English from Tougaloo College, master’s in Public Policy from Jackson State University and a law degree from Mississippi College School of Law.

His book, *Urban Schools Clash with 14th Amendment: The Politics of Race and Culture* is available for order on Amazon, and he hopes to see it in local bookstores soon.



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Berit Warren had a Frozen-themed photoshoot.

Canton girls catching snow flurries.

All photos Special to The Canton News

A flea market birdhouse

All of the stores in the downtown historic district of Canton closed their doors during this cold weather.

J.D. Kelly writes name in snow.

Cousins Allie Hart Lyon and Bella Clark turn a summer toy into a sled.

Semaj Peel, Jr. makes snow angels.

Kendall Spell, with her children Paxton and Brooks, enjoyed some sledding fun.

The Canton Courthouse became a winter wonderland.

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UP's Merit Health Madison's presence real 'win-win' for patients

Special to The Canton News

Convenient access to care in multiple specialties is available for residents of Madison County and surrounding areas in clinics staffed by University of Mississippi Medical Center surgeons and specialists.

University Physicians (UP) has moved its clinic operations next to Merit Health Madison into Suite 204 of Merit's medical office building at 163 River Oaks Drive in Canton. The hospital is a short drive off the Nissan Parkway from Interstate 55.

Providers offering clinic appointments there at this time include Dr. Scott Berry, breast surgery; Dr. Jonathan Carroll, Dr. Thomas Helling and Dr. Jenetta Thompson, general surgery; Dr. Barbara Craft and Dr. Grace Shumaker, breast oncology; Dr. Jim Hurt and Dr. George Russell, adult orthopedics; Dr. Patrick Wright, pediatric orthopedics; Dr. Channing Twyner, pain management; Dr. Marc Walker and Dr. Jared Davis, plastic surgery; Dr. Charles Pound and nurse practitioner Nichole Owens, urology; and Dr. James Wynn and Dr. Praise Matemavi, dialysis and vascular access.

Additional specialties and providers

may be added at a later date.

"Our Merit Health Madison vision in the Department of Surgery has been years in the making," said Dr. Christopher Anderson, James D. Hardy Professor, and chair of the department. "We're excited to open this new clinic to help support our UMMC surgical services in that hospital."

University Physicians offers general surgery services at Merit Health Madison in addition to surgery specialties that include adult and pediatric ophthalmology, breast and breast oncology, dental, oculoplastics, oral and maxillofacial, adult and pediatric orthopedics, pain management, pediatric ENT, plastic surgery, oncology, urogynecology, urology, and dialysis and vascular access.

Amanda Laura serves as University Physicians' surgery nurse manager at Merit Health Madison.

"Our clinic at Merit (Health) Madison gives our patients access to University Physicians in a location that is easily accessible and closer to home," said Margaret Head, UMMC chief ambulatory officer for adult services.

Merit Health's location just north of Jackson "puts many of our surgeons in a more convenient location for our patients in the north metro area, in addi-



Special to The Canton News

tion to those traveling from the northern area of the state," said Anderson, who also serves as a chief perioperative physician. "We are committed to continuing growing the specialties we offer at this location."

"We are excited to provide orthopedic care for our patients at Merit (Health) Madison," said Russell, James L. Hughes Chair of Orthopaedic Surgery. "The new medical office facilities, combined with the hospital facilities, will allow us to expand our services."

Madison retiree Morise Moore Hines, one of Helling's patients, said she's

glad for the opportunity to receive her care from him at Merit Health Madison. She saw Helling Feb. 11 in anticipation of scheduling surgery.

"It's so convenient," Hines said. "It takes me about fifteen minutes if that. It's a straight shot on the interstate."

"To just park in front of the building and get out and walk in the door ... that's like putting down the red carpet," Hines said.

For appointments with University Physicians at Merit Health Madison Suite 204, call 601-815-9006 for orthopedics and 601-496-6376 for all other specialties.



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Grant money allocated for Canton's historic jail restoration

By Courtney Warren

The historic jail is getting a much-needed facelift.

Recently, the Board of Trustees of the Mississippi Department of Archives and History (MDAH) awarded nearly \$3 million on behalf of the Community Heritage Preservation Grant program to eighteen preservation and restoration projects from across the state.

The grant allocates \$250,250 for rear wall repair and roofing.

The jail is currently used for flea market activities in May and October, as well as by The Wool Dusters, who rent the building during the year for a gathering of their members. Groups can rent the building, and Canton Tourism runs tours of the building.

According to Maureen Simpson, president of the Canton-Madison Historical Society, "Since the jail was built in 1870, you can understand that there would be some necessary rehabilitation along the way. It has a self-guttering system that, over the years, with the aging of the unusual roof structure, has caused problems, that being roof leaks."

While there have been patches and routine maintenance done over the years in the 100-year-old building, there is a concern about the moisture in the walls due to roof and gutter problems.

Simpson explained specifically what

the grant will be for and said, "The Community Heritage Preservation Grant will be used to repair and repaint a portion of the south wall of the cell-block. This also will address a portion of the roof and the drainage, away from the building, that is contributing to the deterioration of the south wall."

Once the Mississippi Department of Archives and History approves the plans for rehabilitation, the bidding process can begin.

"Canton prides itself on the historic nature of our community. The Madison County Courthouse was built in 1852 and is the center of our Historic Square. It was placed on the National Register in 1980 after the tornado of 1976, and now our entire courthouse square is on the National Register of Historic Places," said Simpson.

Simpson has a great love and appreciation for the history in Canton and said, "Having worked for the City of Canton for thirty years, I do not think of history in terms of ten to twenty years, but in terms of fifty to one hundred years, and Canton has many structures that are one hundred fifty to two hundred years old."

Mrs. Ike Edwards went on to say, "The Historical Association was organized to promote the purchase of the county jail and to renovate it as a museum. Mrs. Homer Casteel selected a group of cit-



Photo by Beth MacNeill

izens whom she knew to be interested in preserving our history and heritage."

"That remains our goal today," added Simpson. "It was recognized as a Mis-

issippi Landmark in 2020. The older I get, the more important history becomes, especially of Canton, which is so rich in history."

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Word of Prayer: Opossums in the attic

By Kristi Cook

We live in an era that is filled with the illusion that we are more connected than ever before because of technology. Right at our fingertips, we hold devices that can connect us to people all over the world.

Yet a vast number of studies show that we feel lonelier and more disconnected than ever before. The amount of aimless time we spend on social media can directly be related to feeling spiritually numb.

Scrolling for hours can lead us spiraling into an addiction of wasted time. Pinning recipes we will probably never cook, screenshotting home improvements that we can't afford, pictures of seemingly perfect families, reading comments of those fighting with each other all over the world without ever meeting face to face can lead us to a place of extreme discontent.

We are bitter, we are bored and we are restless, yet at the same time comfortable.

Years ago, we lived in a historic home in downtown Laurel. Every

night, like clockwork, I would hear something come from under the house, up the wall clanging the pipes, and, with one loud swoop, enter the attic. This went on for months until my husband finally met the culprit eye to eye, a huge opossum.

We didn't know how to get him out, so we got used to him invading our attic - until the day we noticed water damage on our den ceiling. Long story short, our roof was not leaking, but our opossum was using our attic as a personal bathroom!

It seemed easier to let the opossum stay in the attic, yet that was ridiculous and honestly embarrassing. When we realized the absurdity, the opossum was safely removed by an exterminator the very next day!

Like the opossum in the attic, we allow the enemy to invade our lives every day. We get comfortable allowing the enemy into areas of our lives. It seems easier to aimlessly scroll social media, when we could be scrolling God's Word.

Ephesians 1:17-18: "I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know Him better. I pray also that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which He has called

you..."

Paul "keeps asking" as a reminder to us to pray continually. Prayer is to our spiritual lives as breathing is to our bodies. Paul's prayer for the Ephesians in 1:17 was for them to gain access to the blessings available to them. To know Him better, the Ephesians needed the same blessings we need today.

The blessings of wisdom and revelation will give us spiritual direction, discernment and divine truth revealed by God. If we allow Him to "open the eyes of our heart," we gain a supernatural glimpse that can't be seen with physical eyes. It's an enlightening vision that allows us to be spiritually aware. The enemy wants us spiritually blinded and distracted. But God wants us to see with wisdom and revelation.

1 Thessalonians 5:6: "So then, let us not be like the others, who are asleep, but let us be alert and self-controlled." My prayer for you today is to know "the hope to which He has called you." Christians, let's wake up from our scrolling and get the opossums out of the attic.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Kristi Cook is the author of the Bible study "Ephesians Sealed in Christ." She is the wife of Dr. Jay Cook, who is the pastor of First Baptist Church of Canton.

cont. from front page

Soup

and let me know about people in need," said Travis.

Her community service doesn't stop with Soup in the City. Travis is also in the Order of the Eastern Star, began the dance studio Dynamic Divas in Canton, and cooks for daycare full time.

"It takes a community to do something like this. People bless other people with soup. I just turned 38, and I want to do this every year," she said.

Travis thinks the biggest blessing to receive on her birthday is community.

"It's so nice to see the community come together. We're a small town, and it's not about the next person; it's about whatever you can do to bless someone else. I want to uplift others rather than tear them down. By us coming together, it really makes my day," she said.

Travis is also a member of Pine Grove M.B. Church and is involved in the youth praise ministry and owns Creations of Love and Catering Soul LLC.

"I enjoy the talents that God blessed me with, and I most enjoy serving others," said Travis.

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Cantonnites give anonymously during storms



Special to The Canton News

An anonymous donor gave the food, an anonymous restaurant cooked the food, and Kinoy Brown braved the freezing weather to distribute it all to those in need. According to Brown, "Those that helped wanted to remain anonymous, and I went out to exit 119 in Canton with cooked food to give to those who really need a meal."

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With more businesses opening up, the Madison County Library System (MCLS) continues to bring more offerings to patrons while taking great lengths to ensure the safety of everyone. While there is a small section available for browsing, patrons are invited to choose books for checkout online using their library card. Patrons can log in, choose their books, choose the library for pickup, and pull into a curbside spot. A library card is required to reserve and check out books. MCLS also offers access to ebooks via Libby. Computers are available by appointment. For more information, visit mclsms.org.

cont. from front page

McCarty

we will reach every kid," he said.

CA Board President Clay Taylor said the Board of Directors is looking forward to this new transition.

"Coach (Ron) Jurney left CA in such a great position that Tripp could take it to new heights. We looked at several resumes, and it became more and more evident that Tripp was the best choice," Taylor said.

"It's great that Tripp can come back to his home and rear his children in the same place he and his wife were reared," he added.

Ron Jurney announced his retirement in the fall, beginning the search for a new Head of School.

Jurney had a longstanding relationship with Canton Academy and a successful career in football before his retirement.

Jurney started his football career in 1978 at Woodland Hills. From there, he went to Jackson Academy (JA) and was named the District Coach of the year in 1979.

After he coached at JA, he was the head coach at Brandon Academy (BA), where he was also named District Coach of the year. While at BA, he defeated Jackson Prep, as well. Jurney also coached at the collegiate level, including at the University of Mississippi, Liberty University, University of West Georgia, and Millsaps College for a total of twenty-four years.

At Millsaps, he was inducted into their

College Sports Hall of Fame. Finally, Jurney came to Canton Academy in 2006 and served as the Head Football Coach for nine years.

His overall record at Canton Academy is 70 wins and 38 losses. He also won three District Championships and one State Championship. His record against Canton Academy's two biggest rivals was versus Tri-County with eight wins, two losses, and against Leake, four wins and four losses. Overall, Jurney was a five-time District Coach of the Year for high school, a one-time State Coach of the Year for high school, and a one-time College Conference Coach of the Year.

During his coaching career, he had 37 former high school players go on to play college football and seven former college players go on to play in the NFL.

After being Head of School for six years and 13 years on staff overall, Jurney has passed the torch to McCarty and said he has many fond memories of his time at CA.

"I am confident that the school is positioned for continued success," Jurney said.

For more information about Canton Academy, visit cantonacademy.org.

Canton Academy has existed for some fifty-four years and has a long-standing tradition of excellence in both academia and athletics.

FINAL HOMESTEAD EXEMPTION NOTICE

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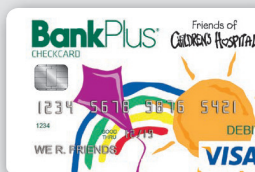
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ON THE TABLE: OATMEAL CREAM PIES

By Courtney Warren

I have never been one to cook or bake, so I was surprised when a Kitchenaid stand mixer showed up at my house in November.

I was in a season of grief and put the box in our spare bedroom, closed the door, and forgot its existence.

Work picked up, life picked back up, and the seasons changed, but it was two months later when I found myself in the same place again. I was shrouded in grief once more and alone in my home for days on end.

I'm not one that sits still and, as I'd read every fiction book in the house, I finally picked up a few cookbooks off our coffee table. Like I said, I was desperate.

When I saw a recipe for oatmeal cream pies in *Magnolia*, I was intrigued; so I pulled the mixer out of the box. I baked my way through that cookbook

in two days.

I made everything I had ingredients for, and, by the time my family came home, the kitchen was filled with cookies, pies, meats, appetizers, and sweets. I put that grief into action and poured it into the mixing bowl right beside the powdered sugar. I tucked it into the dough with the eggs, and I baked it into the cookies at 375 degrees. I created something when I felt the most broken.

Out of that sadness, I was able to make something that my students request on a regular basis. I have students I've never taught come into my room for a good morning hug and a cookie. They have brought about conversation when I could hear only silence.

I've never been one to bake, but I am one to compartmentalize. I've put my sorrow in a box, but, in that sorrow, I've found this one small thing I do well, and I'm glad to share it.

Oatmeal Cream Pies

Ingredients:

- 1 ¼ cups unsalted butter at room temp
- 1 cup packed light brown sugar
- ½ cup granulated sugar
- 1 large egg at room temp
- 2 tsp pure vanilla extract (I've used almond before as well)
- 1 tsp dark molasses
- 1 ½ cups all-purpose flour
- ½ tsp salt
- ¼ tsp ground cinnamon
- 3 cups of quick-cooking oats

Filling:

- ¾ cup unsalted butter at room temp
- 1 tsp pure vanilla extract
- 2 ½ cups powdered sugar
- 1 tbsp milk

Preparation:

1. Preheat the oven to 375 degrees, and line three baking sheets with parchment paper.
2. Cream butter, brown sugar, and granulated sugar on medium speed until light and fluffy. Slowly beat in the egg, vanilla, and molasses, and mix until smooth.
3. In a medium bowl, whisk together the flour, baking soda, salt, cinnamon, and oats until combined. Then slowly add this mixture to the creamed butter until combined.
4. Use a spoon to portion out the dough and roll it into balls. Place those on the cookie sheet. I make about 12 per sheet.
5. When you get the first sheet done, put it in the fridge. As you fill each cookie sheet, refrigerate it.
6. Take your first cookie sheet out, and place it in the oven for 8 minutes. After 8 minutes, turn the cookie sheet sideways and bake for 2 more minutes. This is a trick my mother-in-law taught me, and I have no clue why it works - but it makes the cookies soft.
7. Once the cookies are done, let them completely cool.
8. While cookies bake, make the filling. Cream the butter on high until light and fluffy, then beat in the vanilla.
9. Lower the speed, and beat in the powdered sugar a little at a time. I always add more than the recipe calls for. Beat in the milk. When it's smooth, increase the speed and mix until it's fluffy.
10. When your cookies are completely cooled, make your sandwiches by putting the filling in between two cookies.

This makes about 36 sandwiches.



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Ella Latrice Collier

Canton Elementary School
Angelica Wells

Jimmie M. Goodloe Elementary School
Michaela Barnes

Huey L. Porter Middle School
Courtney Knight-Luckett

Nichols Middle School
Gabrielle Spencer

Canton Ninth Grade Academy
Jennifer Gunn

Canton High School
Aleatrice Liddell

Canton Career Center
Wayne Day

Canton mayor and aldermen distribute bottled water



Special to The Canton News

By Courtney Warren

After freezing temperatures and an ice storm left Canton residents under a boil water notice and without water, Canton Mayor William Truly and the Board of Aldermen, with the help of Canton Municipal Utility, Canton Police Department, and others, took matters into their own hands and distributed water to residents.

“The city of Canton, like many other cities, suffered personal harm, anguish,

and stress as a consequence of this act of God. It was a never-before-seen event for so many of our citizens. Water pressure was low, personal needs unavailable, and water unavailable...but there were those of us working night and day to address this problem and make the lives of our citizens better,” said Truly.

An emergency proclamation was issued, allowing the Board to issue drinking water to citizens. Water was handed out at the Canton Multipurpose Complex.



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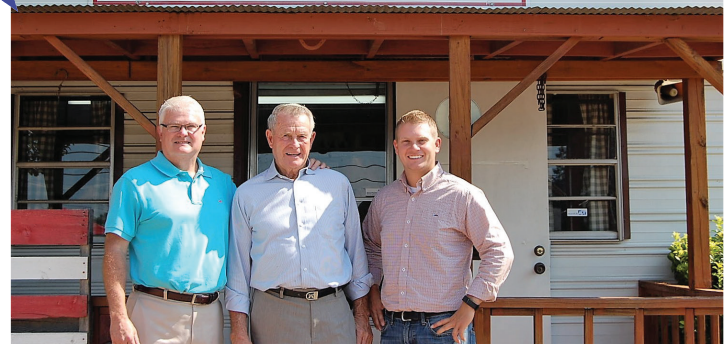
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Where Customers Become Friends

Canton Academy students use math in the real world

Special to The Canton News

Seventh- and eighth-grade math students at Canton Academy finished up a lesson on unit price with a trip to the Piggly Wiggly in Canton where they compared items to find which was the best deal. "It's fun to see students use math lessons we've learned in class out in the real world," said Mrs. Martin.



Special to The Canton News

Seventh-grader Adyn Reams uses his math skills to figure out a good deal.



Special to The Canton News

Pictured (l to r) are, front row: Katelynn Carroll, Mylee Thomas, Sam Martin, Ian Choppala, Andrew Willis and Dankera Ford; and back row: Bradley Watson, Josiah Smith, Ethan Whitt, Cruz Johnson, Noah Gardener and William Pace.

"Queen Be" Empowered movement blesses in style



Special to The Canton News

Amos encourages everyone to support Queens

By Courtney Warren

Pastor Kathy L. Amos was inspired to start using her "Queen Be" T-shirt line as a ministry to bless women "who are Queens but have been broken, battered, crushed, and left to fight alone by friends, family, and or loved ones."

With 12 designs available online now and at least 40 new ones yet to be created, Amos said, "I feel that they'd be worn best by women that

truly need to be encouraged, inspired, and celebrated."

All proceeds of Queen Be T-shirts will go towards the purchase of a t-shirt for a Queen who truly needs to feel loved and special. The T-shirts will also go to women organizations that minister to broken women ages 18 and older.

Visit www.sheshops.us to nominate someone to receive a free "Queen Be" shirt and learn more about the mission behind this organization.



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Letter from the editor: This Mega House

By Courtney Warren

I love to know things, especially the facts and history of my home. I knew everything there was to know about Bolivar County as I pounded the pavement for *The Bolivar Commercial*. Moving from Cleveland, Mississippi, to Canton was one of the hardest seasons of my life, because I knew I had found my forever home on South Leflore in the Delta.

My daughter Berit has a book called *The Little House* that we love to read before bed. It tells the story of *Little House* when it was built in the 1800s and up to the point when it was surrounded by skyscrapers.

Little House is sad, because it can't watch the stars anymore and everyone rushes by. It also can't smell the apple trees. Eventually, the great great granddaugther finds *Little House*, and, because it was so well-built, she's able to move it back to the country. *Little House* is happy again, because it can enjoy the slow life.

I get attached to my homes and like to think of them as *Little House*. When we moved from our tiny rental into our home on South Leflore, we named it Mega House. It was huge! Just like me actually, because I was seven months pregnant at the time.

Our house belonged to the late Dorothy Shawhan, former Delta State University English professor, author of *Lizzie*, and so many other wonderful titles. She held

her last class of each semester on her screened-in porch filled with plants. I took her creative fiction and non-fiction courses, so those classes consisted of reading our work. She was always encouraging, even when my writing was trash.

I like to think of Mega House as quiet and calm during those days. It soaked in the stories told and the stories she wrote in her living room surrounded by books. It kept her warm and safe and comforted.

Mega House was also very well read.

A few years after I graduated, I had the opportunity to interview Ms. Dorothy in the living room of Mega House for *Spotlight magazine*, as I had become the senior staff reporter for *The Bolivar Commercial*. After she passed, Mega House became available.

Not long after, Brett and I sat in the floor of Mega House, our very own home, with not even close to enough furniture to fill it, and were giddy. It was unthinkable that we could own something so special. So amazing.

I think Mega House stretched its wooden bones and woke up that day. It had much to be excited for, with a new baby and new adventures. We painted and cleaned, swept, and laughed.

I placed *Lizzie* on a stand in the dining room, a treasure to both myself and Mega House.

I think Mega House laughed, too, and showed that when the ginkgo tree once



Special to The Canton News

again produced bright yellow foliage after having been dormant since Ms. Dorothy left.

Mega House was excited!

In the middle of the night, it comforted a tired mom during nursing sessions.

In the day, it held strong to the sticky

notes of prayer placed all over the walls for that same anxious new mom. Months later, when little hands and feet began to explore the floors, I like to think Mega House provided a little extra cushion for some of those falls.

cont. on page 16



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REMEMBER WHEN: MEMORIES OF HESTA PIERSON



Hesta Foy Pierson, 1913-2009

Special to The Canton News

Hesta Foy Pierson was born in Canton, Mississippi, on January 7, 1913. She was the Rob, Hettie and Rachel - and also had a stepbrother, Ray W. Cox. Pierson was educated in the Canton Public Schools; and, after graduating from a business school in Jackson, became an auditor for the Internal Revenue Service. After retiring from the IRS, she spent hours searching the genealogy of her family, even making several trips to Ireland. Some of her findings are documented in the Madison County history book, *The Land Between Two Rivers*. Pierson passed away on July 14, 2009. The Canton News is pleased to be able to publish some of Hesta Pierson's memories in this and upcoming issues.

By Hesta Pierson

When I was a child, the biggest cash crop in the Canton area was cotton. I remember picking cotton with my dad. Everyone in the family would pick cotton by hand from early until late.

We picked and put the cotton into long cotton sacks that were swung over one shoulder and pulled behind. We emptied our full sacks into a big cane cotton basket. When the basket was filled, the cotton was stored in a little house located in the field that my daddy made for the purpose of keeping the cotton until four to six bales of cotton were picked before going to market.

A bale of cotton weighed 1,500 pounds, and, once the bales were picked, the cotton house was emptied onto a cotton wagon.

The cotton was taken to Forest, Mississippi, to sell. This was a long trip for a wagon pulled by a team of horses. Several neighbors would go

along with my dad to help, in case the wagon and team of horses got stuck in the mud. The neighbors would unhook the wagon from the team stuck in the mud, and one of their teams would be hitched to the wagon for pulling it out of the mud.

Forest was so far from Canton, the group had to spend one night on the road.

For years, my daddy kept geese to eat the grass out of the cotton. Mother and I would drive the geese to their pens, where we could catch them one at a time to pluck their feathers. This was a very hot job, not only because of the weather, but also because those geese would bite and scratch with their feet to get away. They did not like us picking their feathers, and oh, how they would fight.

Mother used the feathers for pillows and for feather beds. Boy, was I glad when we had all the feather beds and pillows we needed and daddy sold those geese.

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Virtual learning with a smile



Special to The Canton News

Kaleb Amos from Ms. Jena Perry's first grade at Rueben B Meyers School of Arts and Science isn't bothered by the snow and ice outside. Instead, he's excited to have a class with his friends and meets them with a grin.

cont. from page 13

Mega

Mega House gave us our first Christmas, our first bath, our first steps. Mega House laughed as we held celebrations, danced, sang, and played. Mega House kept us safe when we were sick or scared, and gave us that same cushion when we fell to our knees in prayer during difficult seasons in our lives.

I've never done something as hard as packing up Mega House. I think Mega House cried along with me. I packed up our memories, swept the floors, and ran my fingers across the place where my baby took her first steps for the very last time. We went room to room and said goodbye to Mega House. We sat on the porch, and everyone cried when we closed the door to Mega House one last time.

I know people say a house is not a home and what matters are the people, but after loving and living in Mega House, I have

to disagree. Mega House loved us, too. Mega House laughed and played with us, it protected us, it listened to our stories.

We left Mega House and moved into Fancy House—a newborn home in Canton that will grow with Berit through the years. I'm thrilled to learn more about our home through my position at *Canton News*.

While I look forward to the memories to come, pieces of our favorite family members are here.

One of the doors removed during renovations sits in the living room corner with a wreath.

The brick we used to prop open the swinging kitchen doors is on a shelf in my bedroom.

We won't ever forget Mega House. I'd like to believe Mega House won't forget us, either.

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