



# PELAHATCHIE NEWS NETWORK



February 2025 ■ Volume 14, Issue 2 ■ Pelahatchie, MS

## East Rankin Patriot achieves career high



Special to Pelahatchie News

Senior patriot Jordan Porter reaches 1,000 career points.

## Local businesses honored, Crooked Letter wins



Photos special to Pelahatchie News

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### ERCO wishes to thank their supporters:

To our supporters, thank you for naming ERCO a Top 5 Rankin County Nonprofit 8 years in a row. We are truly amazed by your love and support! We're blessed to have served over 6,000 families (over 16,000 individuals) in 2024! With your continued support and our wonderful dedicated volunteers, we will do our best to continue reaching out to serve those in need.

Congratulations Gabby Strong for winning Top Nonprofit. This recognition is very well deserved & we pray it leads many more to learn about your work and support it. We pray God's blessings on you.

Wounded Warriors of Mississippi, The Mustard Seed, and Rankin County Junior Auxiliary - thank you for the work you do. We're honored to have been named a top nonprofit with you.

Thank you *Hometown Rankin Magazine* for your beautiful Rankin County Best of the Best Red Carpet Gala event that showcases the tremendous work being accomplished in our county. We're so proud of you and appreciate your work. You are a blessing to many.



Crooked Creek Animal Hospital was a finalist for Best Veterinary Hospital. Staff member, Dr. Jenny Sowell, was also a finalist for Best Veterinarian.



ERCO-Ever Reaching Community Outreach was a finalist for Best Non-Profit.

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## Pelahatchie HS Students Dive into the Future with Lobaki VR Partnership

Special to Pelahatchie News

Pelahatchie High School (PHS) seniors Sam Till and Ben Burnham are taking a giant leap into the future of education thanks to a unique partnership with Lobaki, a Jackson-based software design and development company specializing in virtual and augmented reality (VR/AR) technology.

The partnership began with a chance encounter at the Accelerate Mississippi Horizons Conference back in August. PHS College and Career Coach, Eric Brooks, met Lobaki's VP of Strategic Development, Alan Cole, and sparked a conversation about potential opportunities for students interested in software development.

Recognizing the potential benefits of Lobaki's immersive VR educational software, Brooks connected Cole with Sam and Ben, both of whom expressed a keen interest in software engineering. After a series of virtual and in-person meetings, the students were invited to partic-

ipate in Lobaki's Student Ambassador Program.

"During my tour of Lobaki's studio, I was blown away by the technology," said Brooks, who recently joined the Lobaki Ambassador Program himself. "I experienced firsthand how VR can transform

experiences. Training is set to take place this month for our Lobaki Ambassadors Sam, Ben, Brooks, Elizabeth Luker, Health Science CTE Educator; and Mrs. Kessie Key, CTE Department Lead and Computer Science CTE Educator.

"This is an invaluable opportuni-

ty for Sam and Ben," said Brooks. "They're not only gaining hands-on experience with VR technology but also getting a glimpse into their potential future careers."

Cole was equally impressed with the students' enthusiasm and knowledge. "We were so impressed with Sam and Ben's passion for technology that we offered them summer internships at Lobaki," he shared. "This will be a fantastic opportunity for them to further develop their skills and contribute to our company."

The partnership between PHS and Lobaki highlights the growing importance of integrating technology into education and providing students with real-world experiences that prepare them for the future workforce. Ben stated, "During my tour of Lobaki's studio, I had the opportunity to not only see where the technology is created but also to try out some of the software firsthand. In VR, I was able to explore the solar system, take virtual tours of American landmarks, see Newton's Laws in action, and even follow step-by-step instructions to build a computer. It's clear that Lobaki is helping to transform education by making it more engaging and offering students unique opportunities that may not be available in a traditional classroom setting."

As Sam and Ben embark on their journey as VR ambassadors, they are paving the way for a new era of learning at Pelahatchie High School.



learning – from exploring the solar system to building a computer in a virtual environment."

As Lobaki Ambassadors, Sam and Ben will receive in-depth training on the VR software and play a crucial role in introducing this cutting-edge technology to their fellow students and teachers at PHS. The Rankin County School District has invested in Lobaki's VR headsets, demonstrating a commitment to providing students with innovative learning

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## ERA Upper Band earns gold at State Clinic

Congratulations to the following East Rankin Upper Band Students for selection into the Gold Honor Band at the 2025 MAIS Bandmasters State Clinic held, January 11 on the campus of Hinds Community College in Raymond.



Front Row, L. to R.: Zoey Meeks, Sara Blake Thornton, Lily Kate Kanengiser, Claire Myrick, Addie Grace Weaver, Olivia Griffing, and Claire Miller. Middle Row, L. to R.: Samantha Gardner, June Camley, Leah Collipp, Regina Zheng, Zhiyi Zheng, and Vivian Hales. Back Row, L. To R.: Lydia Collipp, Corbin Cofer, Ben Tingle, Seth Neely, Tate Ogden, and Paige Mayatte.

Special to Pelahatchie News

# Pelahatchie ES Students Spread Kindness Through Community Projects

Special to Pelahatchie News

Students at Pelahatchie Elementary are making a significant impact in their community with two heartwarming kindness projects. The Pelahatchie Junior Beta Club has taken the initiative to create hand-made Valentine's cards, which will be delivered to residents of Peach Tree Village Assisted Living Home in Brandon. Our students wanted the residents to feel special and appreciated. They put their creativity to work before school started for a few days in January to get this completed. The results spoke for themselves through their card creations and the kindness that was written inside of each!

In addition to the Valentine's card project, the Chief Champions, a club focused on welcoming students and sharing kindness, are actively collecting items to send to troops stationed overseas for the school's annual Great Kindness Challenge. This effort not only supports the brave men and women serving the country but also fosters a sense of gratitude and connection among the stu-



Photos special to Pelahatchie News



dents. They also completed a project to show their gratitude

and thanks to members of our community for all they do to support our schools.

Our second graders are also preparing hand-made cards to share with Southern Pine linemen. Southern Pine will be distributing them inside the trucks



during the month of February.

These projects highlight the spirit of compassion and community engagement that Pelahatchie Elementary instills in its students, teaching them the importance of giving back and making a difference in the lives of others.



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## Bryant selected for MS Lions Band



Special to Pelahatchie News

The Pelahatchie Band would like to formally congratulate Kyra Bryant for being given the opportunity to be a member of the 2025 Mississippi Lions Band. She will be joining the MS Lions Band this summer as they prepare and travel to Orlando, Florida to perform in the International Lions Club Parade. The Pelahatchie Band is proud of Kyra for achieving this high musical honor.

# Crooked Creek Animal Hospital features Kissing Booth Cuteness



Photos special to Pelahatchie News

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# MC's Dean's and President's Lists Announced for Fall 2024

The Mississippi College Office of Academic Affairs releases the Dean's List after the close of fall and spring semesters each academic year. To be eligible for the Dean's List, a student must maintain a 3.5 grade point average, based on a 4.0 system. To be eligible for the President's List, a student must maintain a 4.0 grade point average, based on a 4.0 system. The students must take a full course load of at least 12 semester hours of undergraduate credit with all academic courses impacting their grade point average.

### Dean's List:

Margaret Wingo of Pelahatchie (39145)  
Maddie Walters of Pelahatchie (39145)  
Hudson Shotts of Pelahatchie (39145)

### President's List:

William Lytton of Pelahatchie (39145)  
Ava Vancor of Pelahatchie (39145)



Mississippi College, affiliated with the Mississippi Baptist Convention, is a private, co-educational, Christian university of liberal arts and sciences serving more than 4,100 students from approximately 35 states and more than three dozen countries. Founded in 1826, MC is the oldest institution of higher learning in Mississippi, one of the largest private universities in the state, and America's second-oldest Baptist college. MC offers 84 areas of undergraduate study, 45 degree programs in graduate studies, more than 10 certificate programs, two educational doctoral degrees, a doctor of jurisprudence, and a doctor of professional counseling. MC seeks to be a university recognized for academic excellence and commitment to the cause of Christ.

# Pelahatchie Library January Events

**FAMILY MOVIE NIGHT**  
THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 4:30 P.M.

WATCH A MOVIE AND ENJOY SOME SNACKS.  
CALL THE LIBRARY FOR DETAILS.



**SENIOR CITIZENS' SOCIAL**  
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 11, 11:00 A.M.  
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 25, 11:00 A.M.



**ADULT BOOK CLUB**  
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 11:00 A.M.  
DISCUSSING THE NEVER GAME  
BY JEFFERY DEAVER



**PELAHATCHIE PETALS GARDEN CLUB**  
THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 20, 5:30 P.M.  
THE PELAHATCHIE PETALS  
GARDEN CLUB MEETS THE THIRD  
THURSDAY OF EVERY MONTH AT 5:30 P.M.



# Irvin selected for All-Star team



Special to Pelahatchie News

Pelahatchie High School's Laterrion Irvin has been selected as a member of the Mississippi North/South All-Star Team. He will be competing in the prestigious All-Star Game at Mississippi College on March 15 at 1:30 PM.

**THE BRANCH**

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Rankin County Co-op

# City Beat: Mayor, Alderman meeting for January 6, 2025



By Shaun McInnish, Sr., City Beat  
Writer, Pelahatchie News

The Mayor and Board of Aldermen for the Town of Pelahatchie convened for their regular meeting on Monday, January 6, 2025, at 6:00 p.m. at Town Hall.

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Pelahatchie News

## Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance:

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Karl VanHorn, followed by the Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance. Roll was called, and all aldermen were present.

## Residents or Visitors' Business:

### 1. Fairway Liquor Store Permit:

A representative for Fairwood Foods and Fairway Liquor Store, an associate from the Harris Law Firm, addressed the board regarding their application for a permit to open a liquor store in the Heritage District, specifically in the old NAPA Auto Parts building. They argued that current zoning ordinances do not explicitly prohibit the establishment of a liquor store in this district.

City Attorney Kimberly Banks provided legal guidance, referencing Section 1302 of the zoning code, which outlines "land uses not permitted." She emphasized that this section makes no exceptions for liquor stores in the Heritage District. Additionally, she referred to the zoning ordinances of 2016 and 2022 for further context.

An associate of the Harris Law Firm, representing the liquor store applicant, suggested the board reevaluate the zoning ordinances. However, after discussion, the board decided to table the matter for further review. The motion to table was made by Alderwoman Hill,



seconded by Alderman Jones, and unanimously approved. The issue will be revisited at next month's meeting.

### 2. Pelahatchie Petals Garden Club:

The Pelahatchie Petals, Pelahatchie's local garden club, came before the board to request permission to beautify the town's four-way stops and possibly add more pots along Brooks Street and throughout downtown Pelahatchie. Jearleen Holly, president of the club, recognized the members present in the audience, showing the club's strong support and community involvement.

Dixie Thornton, GCM (Garden Clubs of Mississippi) and Natchez Trace District Director, spoke about

the role garden clubs play as partners with towns to enhance community spaces. She emphasized that this is a collaboration where garden clubs bring their experience and manpower to assist towns in beautification efforts. Thornton also noted that garden clubs can apply for state and national grants to fund their projects, though the clubs themselves must take the lead in applying for these grants.

Mayor VanHorn raised a question regarding liability issues in the event of injuries during the club's projects. Banks advised drafting a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to formalize the partnership and address any liability concerns. Thornton agreed.

After discussion, the board agreed to move forward with drafting the MOU. A motion to approve pending sponsorship of the MOU was made by Alderwoman Hill, seconded by Alderwoman Warren, and passed unanimously.

Additional information about the Pelahatchie Petals Garden Club and upcoming projects can be found at the Pelahatchie Public Library.

## Department Discussions:

**Police:** Pelahatchie Police Chief James Mahaffey came before the board to request permission to utilize funds from the department's CESE account to assist the town with covering some expenses incurred over the last few months. Chief Mahaffey explained that December saw an unusually high amount of vehicle maintenance and related expenses. These costs

*Continued on page 7*

## Crooked Creek Animal Hospital, Inc.



Charles M. Edwards II, DVM  
Staci L. Rhodes, DVM  
Jenny Sowell, DVM  
Katlyn Hennings, DVM  
Susan Thrash, DVM

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# City Beat: Town of Pelahatchie monthly leadership meeting

were due in part to incidents of serious vandalism on one of the department's police vehicles, in addition to regular maintenance needs.

He emphasized that using CESE funds for these expenses would help alleviate some of the financial burden on the town's budget. After a brief discussion, the board expressed their understanding of the department's needs and agreed to consider the request further. No dollar amount was mentioned.

Alderman Jones made a motion to approve, Alderman Harvey seconded the motion, and the motion passed with all in favor.

### New Business:

1. The board discussed, considered, and voted to approve the minutes from the previous regular board meeting held on December 2, 2024. Alderman Jones made the motion and Alderman Hill seconded. The motion passed with all in favor.

2. The board discussed, considered, and voted to approve the payment of the unpaid claims docket. Alderman Jones made the motion, and Alderwoman Harrell seconded. The motion passed with all in favor.

3. The board discussed, considered, and voted to approve a payment of \$1,157.41 to Morgan and White Insurance as secondary coverage to Blue Cross Blue Shield. Alderman Jones made the motion, and Alderwoman Hill seconded. The motion passed with all in favor.

4. The board discussed, considered, and voted to approve a bank draft payment of \$9,002.63 to Blue Cross Blue Shield. Alderman Jones made the motion, and Alderman Hill seconded. The motion passed with all in favor.

5. The board discussed, considered, and voted to approve a payment of \$5,911 to EMC Insurance for property insurance. Alderman Jones made the motion, and Alderwoman Hill seconded. The motion passed with all in favor.

6. The board discussed, considered, and voted to approve and ratify the payment of payroll for December 2024, with totals as follows:

- General Fund: \$108,218.76
- Enterprise Fund: \$37,812.90

Alderwoman Jones made the motion, and Alderman Harrell seconded. The motion passed with all in favor.

7. The board discussed, considered,

and voted to approve a new public records request form. Alderman Jones made the motion, and Alderman Harrell seconded. The motion passed with all in favor.

8. The board discussed, considered, and voted to approve renting county election equipment for the upcoming election. Alderman Jones made the motion, and Alderwoman Harrell seconded. The motion passed with all in favor.

### Executive session:

The agenda made note of executive session, but there was no executive session tonight.

### Discussions:

#### Alderman Discussions:

Alderwoman Hill inquired about the status of tornado sirens and whether the town was exploring any grants to replace the current ones, which are no longer operational.

Alderwoman Harvey raised concerns about the progress of repairing and replacing streetlights. Mayor Vanhorn responded, stating that Entergy had informed him of issues with the subcontractor responsible for the streetlights.

Additionally, Entergy has been under extra demand due to recent severe weather.

Alderman Jones thanked the town for addressing tree removal efforts recently. Mayor Vanhorn added that the town is limited in how many trees can be cut down due to the town's easement restrictions, as they only have so many feet of easement to work within.

Mayor VanHorn addressed the tornado sirens issue, explaining that tornado sirens are primarily intended to warn individuals outdoors during storms. He recommended that residents register for the "Respond" app at [www.rankin-county.org](http://www.rankin-county.org) for additional weather alerts and safety updates.

Mayor VanHorn also announced that a contractor had approached the town with a proposal to build an apartment complex in Pelahatchie. The contractor currently owns the property and has requested it be rezoned. He stated that advertisements regarding the proposal will run in the local paper, and a public hearing will be held soon to gather community input. Banks will draft the public notice for posting and encouraged residents to attend the meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 6:42 p.m.

## Fusion Martial Arts

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# Southern Pine Electric Honors MLK with Cooperative Day of Service

Special to Pelahatchie News

Southern Pine Electric employees joined together in a spirit of service to honor the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., by participating in the Cooperative Day of Service. Across our districts, teams worked to make a meaningful impact in our communities.

In the Taylorsville District, employees from the district office and headquarters came together to serve hot soup and cornbread to senior citizens and community members at the Raleigh Senior Center. The event brought warmth and connection to over 75 attendees who enjoyed a hearty meal and a friendly visit.

The New Hebron District employees rolled up their sleeves to clean up Ferguson Mill Road, tackling a four-mile stretch of roadway. Their efforts resulted in the removal of 74 bags of trash, leaving the area cleaner and safer for the community.

The Brandon District and Newton District employees focused on fighting hunger by hosting Stuff-a-Truck food drives in their respective communities. Brandon's event was held at Ramey's Grocery Store, while Newton's drive



Photos special to Pelahatchie News

took place at Garvin's Cash Saver. Both trucks were filled to capacity with food donations, thanks to the generosity of Southern Pine's members and local community members. The collected food will be distributed to local food pantries in Brandon and Newton, providing essential support to families in need.

"Dr. King's life was a shining example of service, and we are proud to honor his legacy by giving back to the communities we serve," said Chris Rhodes, President & CEO of Southern Pine Electric. "The Cooperative Day of Service is a meaningful opportunity for us



to live out our cooperative values and show appreciation for the members and communities who support us."

Southern Pine Electric remains committed to making a positive difference

in its 11-county service area. By coming together on Cooperative Day of Service, employees demonstrated the cooperative spirit that is the foundation of everything they do.

For more information about Southern Pine Electric and its community efforts, visit [southernpine.coop](http://southernpine.coop) or follow them on social media.



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## Wade, RCSD Substitute of the Month

Special to Pelahatchie News

Pelahatchie High School celebrates district substitute of the month, Mrs. Angela Wade.

Pelahatchie is excited to honor Mrs. Wade, who has been an integral part of the Tribe for many years. Her dedication to serving the students and stepping in as a familiar face when faculty is away means more than words can express. Mrs. Wade's ability to connect with every student, remember names, and build meaningful relationships speaks to the heart of what makes the school community so special.

The students and faculty love having Mrs. Wade in the classroom, and this well-deserved recognition from the district is a testament to her hard work and commitment. Thank you, Mrs. Wade, for your unwavering support in making the Tribe better today than it was

yesterday. Congratulations on being named district substitute of the month.



Special to Pelahatchie News

Mrs. Angela Wade (Left)

## East Rankin Academy's Jewel Baker breaks indoor 1500m state record



Photo by Harrison Wampler

Jewel Baker

By Bennett Ferguson, Milesplit Mississippi

Over the weekend, we witnessed our fifth state record of the season fall! At the Bama Showcase, Jewel Baker from East Rankin Academy delivered a dominant performance and walked away as a state record holder.

Leading up to the race, Jewel faced unexpected challenges. Traffic delays left her with almost no time to prepare or warm up. She went straight from the car to the track, even missing her original heat. Fortunately, she managed to secure a spot in a different division and did what she does best: race.

With the change in divisions, Jewel had to scrap most of her original race strategy. Her only focus was to leave it all on the track, and she did exactly that. When she crossed the finish line, the leaderboard displayed an astonish-

ing 5:08.90--shattering the Mississippi indoor state record by nearly ten seconds. Oh, and did I mention she's only in the 7th grade?

At the time of writing, Jewel is the fastest 7th grader in the nation for the 1500m race. Based on her standout 2024 cross-country campaign and her already exceptional 2025 track season, Jewel is well on her way to becoming one of Mississippi's all-time greats.

When asked about her performance, she said, "...during the race my legs were aching, but I knew that was all part of a good time. After the race I felt like I had done what I needed to do and that my coach would be proud."

If that's not the mindset of a true athlete, I don't know what is. Keep an eye on Jewel Baker as she hunts down even more records this outdoor season!

## PELAHATCHIE NEWS NETWORK



## PAST HEADLINES

### 2015 - 10 years ago

- "Coach Bishop remembered as giving man"
- "Attorney General Jim Hood announces \$3.8 million multistate settlement with Sirius XM"

### 2020 - 5 years ago

- "Weather runs in patterns and cycles, yet is unpredictable"
- "Critical retirement choices-paying for healthcare"

### 2024 - Last Year

- "Local businesses receive Best of the Best Top 5 honors"
- "Engineering students get help with projects from visiting CTE advisor"

## PHS Powerlifters place at district



Special to Pelahatchie News

Congratulations to our PHS Chiefs Powerlifters for a great day on Thursday as we hosted the Boys Powerlifting District Meet. Korbin Boydston - 1st place in 181 at class. Broke the region 3 bench record with a lift of 280 lbs. Lucas Gardner finished 2nd in the Super Heavyweight class.

## Tornado Sirens in Pelahatchie Remain Silent Despite Recent Tornadoes



Special to  
Pelahatchie News

By Shaun McInnish, Sr.,  
City Beat Writer,  
Pelahatchie News

Concerns over public safety have grown in Pelahatchie as several of the town's tornado sirens remain nonfunctional. For more than two years, residents have voiced their frustration over the issue, which has yet to be addressed. The urgency to resolve this problem has only increased following two tornadoes that struck the area within a month.

On December 28, 2024, an EF1 tornado moved through Pelahatchie as part of a larger outbreak across central Mississippi, causing significant damage to trees and power lines near Lake Road and Highway 80. Just days later, on January 5, 2025, another EF1 tor-

nado, a practice that has since lapsed.

The January 5 tornado further highlighted the risks posed by the malfunctioning sirens. In at least one instance, a local business hesitated to direct employees to safety because no siren had sounded, despite the tornado being on the ground nearby. Fortunately, no injuries occurred, but the incident underscored the potential consequences of the system's failure.

Emergency sirens remain a critical component of public safety, particularly for individuals who may not have immediate access to smartphones, weather radios, or other alert systems. During the January 5 storm, some residents temporarily lost cell service, raising concerns about how they would receive warnings in the absence of functional sirens. While text alerts from the National Weather Service and Rankin County provide an additional



nado, with winds reaching 105 mph, touched down near Shiloh Road at 7:11 p.m. traveling over 11 miles before dissipating near Leesburg Road at 7:28 p.m. Along its path, the storm uprooted trees, damaged chicken houses near Gulde Road, and brought down power lines. In one instance, a freight train struck a fallen tree, leading to a minor injury of the train operator.

Despite these severe weather events, several of the town's tornado sirens did not activate, leaving many residents unaware of the immediate danger. Reports indicate that only two sirens—one near the Industrial Park/Bakery on Highway 80 and another at Hurdle/Highway 43—are partially operational. Meanwhile, sirens located near Crossroads, Kirby Avenue, Lake Road, and the town's fire department remain inoperable due to their age and the lack of replacement parts. Rankin County officials have indicated that the cost of replacing the outdated systems is prohibitive and that repairs are no longer feasible. As a result, Pelahatchie is left without a fully reliable warning system at a time of year when extreme weather is becoming increasingly frequent.

Some residents have expressed frustration over the lack of response from county leadership, noting that repeated calls and emails over the past two years have not led to action. Many residents recall that the town once conducted routine siren tests at the beginning of each

layer of protection, many believe that sirens and digital alert systems should complement one another rather than serve as replacements.

Rankin County's decision not to replace the outdated sirens has drawn criticism from residents who believe that ensuring an effective warning system should be a priority. Some community members have begged other town residents to reach out to Rankin County officials to advocate for improvements.

Those seeking additional ways to receive alerts can sign up for Rankin County's notification system that provides emergency updates and severe weather warnings. To enroll, residents can visit the Rankin County website at <http://www.rankincounty.org>, create an account, and sign up for weather alerts that can be delivered via email and text messaging. Other options include NOAA weather radios and smartphone weather apps, both of which provide emergency notifications.

As severe weather becomes more frequent, ensuring a reliable emergency alert system remains a crucial priority for Pelahatchie. While residents continue to advocate for improvements, the hope is that local and county leadership will take action before the next storm puts the system to the test. Until then, it might be wise to keep an eye on the sky—and maybe invest in a good old-fashioned weather radio, just in case.

## ARCHERY SCHEDULE



4 FEBRUARY	<b>HS TOURNAMENT</b> @ Brandon 4:45PM
5 FEBRUARY	<b>MS TOURNAMENT</b> @ Brandon 4:00 PM
10 FEBRUARY	<b>MS ARCHERY</b> @ Brandon 4:00PM
11 FEBRUARY	<b>HS ARCHERY</b> @ Brandon 5:30 PM
20 FEBRUARY	<b>MS AND HS VS PISGAH</b> Home 4:30 PM
27 FEBRUARY	<b>HS ARCHERY</b> TBA
3 MARCH	<b>MS RCSD TOURNAMENT</b> @ Pisgah 6:00 PM
4 MARCH	<b>HS RCSD TOURNAMENT</b> @ Pisgah 6:00 PM
17-20 MARCH	<b>MS &amp; HS SOUTH STATE QUALIFIER</b> @ Forreest County Multi-Purpose Center TBA
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# Crops and the effects of cold injury by season



By Doug Carter, Rankin County Extension Agent

Special to Pelahatchie News

Winter's cold injuries can lead to future plant problems. Many garden plants will be feeling the effects of this winter's cold weather for months or even years to come. Problems may appear at any time, from June through September and even in spring of next year. Wilting leaves or a thinning canopy may be seen next summer. These symptoms may have been caused by this winter's hardships.

Unlike animals that can escape to safety when temperatures drop, plants withstand whatever comes their way. Plants prepare for colder weather by reducing the amount of free water in their water (xylem) and food (phloem) carrying vessels.

If plants don't reduce the amount of free water, ice forms between the plant's cells. The ice draws water from the cells themselves, causing the cells to weaken or collapse.

Injured phloem will carry fewer nutrients to the roots, stunting root growth. Injured xylem will carry less water to the branches and leaves. Both of these problems limit the supply of much needed water and salts to the leaves.

Plants that had little time to prepare for cold temperatures will be more severely injured than those that cooled more slowly. Plants that formed tender leaves in response to late prunings or a fall application of ni-



trogen are particularly susceptible to cold damage, as are plants that have been under stress, such as drought.

Weakened plants may seem to emerge from dormancy and flower just fine. Because those buds were formed last year, and the plant set aside necessary nutrients. Once the plant uses up those resources, symptoms may occur.

Symptoms of cold damage may be worse in hot summer weather. Foliage needs extra water during hot weather to help keep the plant cool. In a cold-injured plant, not enough water and nutrients can make it past the injured areas to replace this water. Such damage

may appear in branches here and there.

Signs of cold damage may appear in almost any plant part. Roots, especially young feeder roots, may be discolored and rot away. Twigs, branches, or the trunk may have split bark, separation of the bark from the cambium layer, and even sun scalding. Leaves or needles may show tip burn. Fruit may be smaller.

The most serious kind of freeze damage is cambial browning. The cambium layer is immediately under the bark, between the woody xylem on the inside and the phloem towards the outside. It brings about continued plant growth. If you look inside a cold split or an exploratory bark and you see browning or even worse, smell a sour smell, the plant is seriously damaged and will likely not live.

Now it is important to protect the plants from further stress. This means proper watering, proper fertilization, and pruning. Provide enough moisture through the dry periods of the year. If leaves show signs of wilting in summer's heat despite adequate soil moisture, misting the foliage will help. Just make sure you do not over water the plant.

Check for cold damage signs this spring as you clean your garden. Remove affected branches and limbs. Prune dead wood back to healthy areas once leafing has occurred. This will not only improve the looks of the plant but keep out insects and diseases.

Source: *The Plant Doctor*; "Cold Injury", Mississippi State University Extension, Alan Henn, Information Sheet 1663



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## Beeman MVP at MLK Showcase



Special to Pelahatchie News

Pelahatchie Chiefs Junior Tyson Beeman was selected as MVP at the MLK showcase tournament at Lanier HS.

# Pelahatchie band attends RCSD Honor Band Clinic

Great job to all of the band students today in the RCSD Honor Band Clinic. Pelahatchie had students representing all portions of the clinic: middle school, jazz band, and high school.



Middle School Honor band participants Lennon McFadden (Left) and Kali Redmann (Right).

Congratulations to the following students for their placement in the RCSD Honor Band.

**High School Honor Band**

- Natalie Hand - 6th Chair
- Maren McCartney - 10th Chair
- Brooklyn Williamson - 12th Chair
- Rayden Piner - 17th Chair
- \*Kyra Bryant - 1st Chair
- \*Madeline McFadden - 1st Chair
- Sara Myers - 4th Chair
- Jack Herrington - 2nd Chair
- Branch Boyer - 3rd Chair
- Danielle Windham - 9th Chair
- Jaci Smith - 10th Chair

**Middle School Honor Band**

- \*Lennon McFadden - 1st Chair
- Kali Redmann - 4th Chair

**Jazz Honor Band**

- Cameron Henley - Drumset



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# Pastor's Perspective: Love Who? When love is not easy



By Guest Columnist  
Spencer Sullivan, Pastor,  
Pelahatchie Baptist

Everyone loves a great love story. Even as you read that sentence, it's possible that your favorite love story just came to mind. Perhaps it's from your favorite book. Maybe it's from one of your favorite movies. "The Princess Bride" anyone? (Shameless plug: If you haven't seen it, go watch it. You'll be glad you did!) But even novels and movies outside of the romance genre, more times than not, include engaging love stories between the main characters that support the main plotline. When it comes to the music we listen to, approximately 2/3 of all songs are primarily written about love. We even have a holiday this month that celebrates love. To genuinely love someone and to be genuinely loved in return is one of the greatest gifts we can experience in this life.

When we think of love, especially around Valentine's Day, we most often think of romantic love. However, today I would like us to consider love beyond just romantic love. As God is the One

who created us in His own image (Genesis 1:27) and as the One who Himself personifies love (1 John 4:8), I want us to consider what God has to say about love and what He has to say about who we are to love.

1 Corinthians 13 is often referred to as the "the Love Chapter" in the Bible. Read this description: "Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth." These words are truly beautiful, which is why they are often read or displayed at weddings or anniversary celebrations. If you have experienced deep love relationships, these words should also resonate with you, whether you are familiar with them or not. Biblically, loving someone else means putting your needs and desires to the side and considering the needs and desires of the other person as more important than your own (Philippians 2:3-4).

There's so much more that could be written or said about how God describes love in His Word and also how He models and expresses it. But, since space is limited, I'd like to also recognize from His Word just who we are to



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love. This is where it could get really uncomfortable. These are Jesus' words: "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you" (Matthew 5:43-44). Did He really say we are to love our enemies? Yes, you read that correctly. Whether or not you have anyone in your life you would consider an actual enemy or not, in our culture today, division and animosity towards those that think or believe differently from one another is easy to see. Our real enemy, Satan, is constantly sowing seeds of discord, resentment, and hatred toward one another. He is the original rage baiter. But Jesus clearly instructs us to love everyone, even those who don't love us

back. We are to love those with whom we disagree. We are to love those with worldviews that are different from ours.

No doubt, this command is hard to even understand, much less obey. But, Jesus doesn't just teach it. This is how He Himself loved people on earth and how He continues to love people today. He healed one intending to arrest Him after Peter cut his ear off (Luke 22:51). He asked His Father to forgive those that crucified Him while He hung on a Roman cross (Luke 23:34).

But, what about us? In a very real sense, as sinners against a holy God, we are His enemies. And yet He made the conscious choice to love us anyway (Romans 5:8). When we disagree with Him and think we know better, instead of hating us, He continues to love us. When we rebel against Him, instead of resentment, He extends grace and forgiveness. How different would our world and society be, if we obeyed Jesus and made the conscious choice to love the way He loves and love who He told us to love rather than only what comes naturally?

I challenge you to love differently. Love like 1 Corinthians 13. And I challenge you to take steps towards making the conscious choice to love your enemy.

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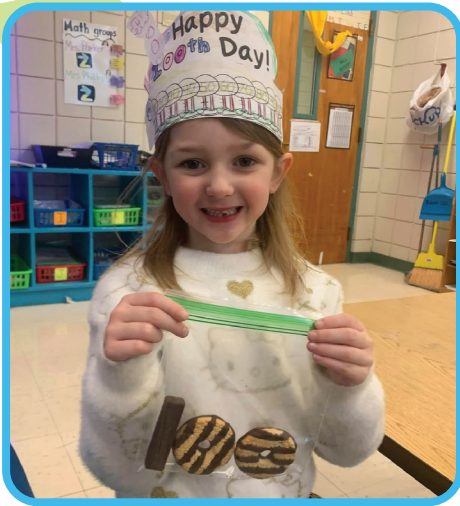
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# Pelahatchie Elementary School celebrates 100 days brighter

Students and staff showed off by dressing in their brightest clothes and completing activities involving 100 for the 100th day of school!



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Junior High Lady Patriots finish season as district 2-5A runners-up.

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# MDWFP sponsors student art contest Pasqua places first in poster contest

Special to Pelahatchie News

The Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks (MDWFP) is inviting students across Mississippi to get outdoors and participate in the 2025 Bob Tyler Fish Hatchery Youth Art Contest.

Each student must submit a portfolio including entry form and artwork to the Visitor Education Center (VEC) by May 10, 2025.

The contest is sponsored by the Foundation for Mississippi Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks. Winners in four age categories will have their work published in the Mississippi Outdoors magazine and will receive a complimentary copy of the magazine displaying their work. Winners will also receive gift cards and have their work posted on MDWFP's website.

For more information on entry forms and rules please visit Youth Art Contests | Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks.



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Congratulations to Anna Pasqua for winning first place in the RCSD Bullying Awareness Poster contest. Anna placed first in the district for 6th-8th grade.

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