



# THE CANTON NEWS

Your Community. Your News. Your Paper • February 5, 2026 • Vol. 12, No. 2 • Canton, Mississippi

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Canton News  
P.O. Box 1163, Canton, MS 39046

## canton calls for pasta: joining the "MARCH of the MAYORS" to feed our neighbors

Special to The Canton News

In a state where community means everything, the city of Canton is stepping up to ensure no plate goes empty this spring. As part of the annual March of the Mayors initiative, Canton has been issued a specific mission: Spaghetti Noodles.

Starting now and running through February 27, residents are encouraged to donate 1-pound bags of spaghetti noodles at designated drop-off sites throughout the city.



### From One Phone Call to a Statewide Movement

The story of this mission began in 2009 with a crisis. When a Hattiesburg food pantry ran completely out of supplies, restaurateur Robert St. John used his industry connections to ship a truckload of food directly to their door. That moment sparked a realization: hunger in Mississippi needed a sustainable, high-quality solution.

Thus, Extra Table was born. While the organization typically focuses on purchasing bulk, healthy proteins like tuna and peanut butter, the "March of the Mayors" event brings a touch of "Mardi Gras Magic" to the process. By assigning specific shelf-stable items to different cities, the program ensures that when all the donations are combined, they create complete, balanced food boxes for families in need.

#### How Canton Can Help:

Canton is focusing on a carbohydrate staple that provides the foundation for countless family meals. Cantonians' contribution stay local—food collected in Canton "parades" back out to Canton's own partner food pantries.

#### What to Donate:

- Item: Spaghetti Noodles
- Size: 1 Pound Bag

#### Where to Drop Off:

- Canton City Hall
- Canton Public Library
- Canton Police Department

### The Grand Finale: The Packing Party

The collection phase is only the beginning. During the week of March 2–6, Extra Table will host Mississippi's Largest Food Box Packing Parties across five regions.

Local Canton volunteers will gather on March 4 from 9 a.m. until noon at Christ United Church at 6000 Old Canton Road to assemble the boxes. It is a high-energy, high-impact event where the "magic" of the march truly comes together.

Canton has always been a city that looks out for its own. This February, residents are asked to do their part to fill the bins with pasta and show the rest of the metro area the size of the city's heart.

For more information or to sign up to volunteer, visit [extratable.org/march](http://extratable.org/march).

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## Morgan Faith Thompson named DAR Good Citizen for 2026



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Morgan Faith Thompson has been selected by Velma Jackson High School as the DAR Good Citizen for 2026. She was presented with a certificate, a DAR Good Citizen pin and a monetary

award by the Doak's Treaty Chapter in recognition of her accomplishment.

Pictured with Thompson are Betsy Sligh, regent, and Lynda Flynn, DAR Good Citizen Committee chairman.

Special to The Canton News

## CPSD Security Chief named to MASRO Region 5 Board



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Canton Public School District Chief of Security Robert Jackson was selected Jan. 23, 2026, as the Region 5 board member of the Mississippi Association of School Resource Officers.

District officials said the appointment reflects Jackson's leadership, dedication and commitment to school safety.

As a board member, Jackson will represent Region 5 and the Canton Public School District while supporting the mission of MASRO across the state.

School leaders congratulated Jackson on the appointment and expressed continued support as he serves in the new role.



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**Stacey sworn in as Canton Municipal Court Judge;  
Griffen named Judge Pro Tem**

All photos Special to The Canton News

Judge Marsha Weems Stacey was sworn in as the City of Canton's newly appointed Municipal Court judge during a recent ceremony officiated by Dr. Chuonna Anderson. Mayor Tim Taylor was present to witness the occasion. Stacey takes on the role as part of the city's municipal court, which handles misdemeanor offenses, traffic violations and other matters within the court's jurisdiction. City officials expressed their congratulations to Stacey as she begins her service on the bench. In a separate ceremony held Jan. 28, 2026, Judge Martina Griffin was officially sworn in as judge pro tem for Canton's Municipal Court. A judge pro tem serves in the absence of the municipal court judge and assists with court proceedings as needed. City leaders also congratulated Griffin and said they look forward to her continued service to the Canton community.

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[www.cantonnews.net](http://www.cantonnews.net) **ON THE TABLE****Grandma's Simple Sugar  
Cookies**

Makes about 3 dozen cookies, depending on cutter size.

**ingredients**

- 1 cup (2 sticks) unsalted butter, softened
- 1 1/2 cups granulated sugar
- 2 large eggs
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 3 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1/2 teaspoon salt

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Line baking sheets with parchment paper.
2. In a large bowl, cream together butter and sugar until light and fluffy.
3. Beat in eggs one at a time, then stir in vanilla.
4. In a separate bowl, whisk together flour, baking powder and salt. Gradually add dry ingredients to the wet mixture and mix until combined.
5. Divide dough in half, flatten into discs, wrap in plastic wrap and chill for at least 1 hour.
6. Roll dough out on a lightly floured surface to about 1/4-inch thickness. Cut into heart shapes (or your favorite Valentine designs).
7. Place cookies 2 inches apart on prepared baking sheets.
8. Bake for 8–10 minutes or until edges are just lightly golden. Do not overbake.
9. Cool completely before decorating with royal icing, buttercream or festive sprinkles.

## Madison County Youth Leadership completes second day of career exploration



Special to The Canton News

Madison County Youth Leadership students recently concluded Career Exploration Day 2 with a full day of hands-on learning, leadership development and career exposure across Madison County.

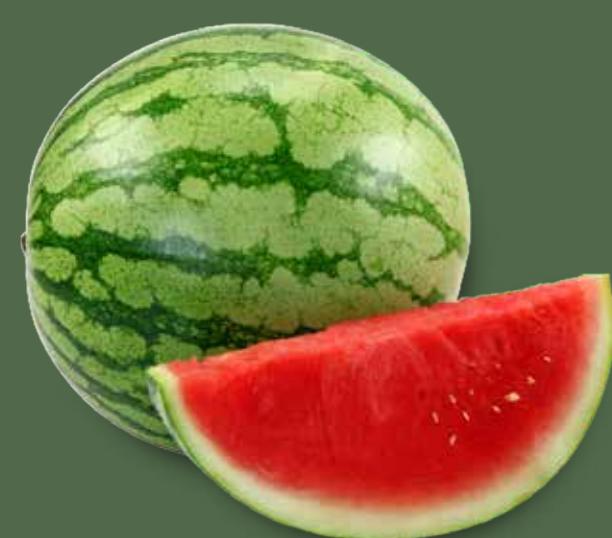
The day began with breakfast and a Leadership Compass self-assessment led by Candie Simmons, followed by a visit to Mad Genius and a session with Dr. Phyllis Johnson of the Mississippi Board of Nursing.

Students later visited Adams & Reese, where they heard from attorney Whit Kendall, participated in a time management leadership session with Amanda Fontaine, and learned about careers in journalism, television and meteorology from Chase Franks and Candice Bruce of WLBT.

The day concluded with a behind-the-scenes tour of the Piroline Cookie Factory, where students explored entrepreneurship and manufacturing operations.



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## Canton Board considers updates to firearm and garbage ordinances



By Courtney Warren

The Canton Board of Aldermen is moving forward with updates to City regulations involving public safety and local sanitation services. During the January 20 meeting, officials addressed a proposed amended ordinance regarding the discharge of firearms and the carrying of weapons on commercial premises. While the specific revisions to the weapons policy were not detailed in the agenda, the Board is reviewing these changes as part of an effort to update City code for local businesses.

In addition to safety regulations, the Board is considering a significant shift in how residential waste is managed within city limits. The proposed garbage and trash ordinance would increase residential service from once a week to twice a week. To accommo-

date this increase in collection frequency, the City is also looking to increase the associated fees for all residential units and premises. Furthermore, the Board has moved to approve a rate increase for garbage and rubbish at the City of Canton's Landfill. *The Canton News* will have more as this story develops.

In addition to authorizing several administrative and financial items, travel authorizations were granted for City officials and staff to attend professional development events, including the 95th Mississippi Municipal League Conference in Biloxi, the NLC Congressional City Conference in Washington, D.C., and various clerk and specialized training conferences across Mississippi and in Reno, Nevada.

The meeting concluded with an executive session to discuss personnel matters and litigation.

## MadCAAP exec. director Karen Robison announces retirement after nearly two decades

Special to The Canton News

Karen Robison, executive director of Madison Countians Allied Against Poverty (MadCAAP), has announced her retirement after nearly 20 years of service to the organization.

Robison shared the news in a letter to supporters, expressing gratitude for the donors, staff members, volunteers and sponsors who have supported MadCAAP's mission through the years.

"This organization's success has been made possible through the unwavering support of our donors, dedicated staff, compassionate volunteers, generous sponsors, and loyal supporters," Robison said. "Without each of you, MadCAAP would not be the steadfast and impactful organization it is today."

Robison will pass leadership to Lesley Dill, who has worked alongside her for the past 10 years. Dill will serve as executive direc-

tor, bringing what Robison described as compassion, leadership and business expertise to the role.

Erin Buchwald will serve as assistant director. Robison said she is confident the leadership team, along with staff members and volunteers, will continue to guide the organization toward growth and success.

During the transition, Robison will continue working behind the scenes to support the leadership team and help ensure a smooth handoff.

"Words cannot fully express my thanks to everyone I have met along this journey — each of you has played a role in making a meaningful difference in the lives of those less fortunate," Robison said.

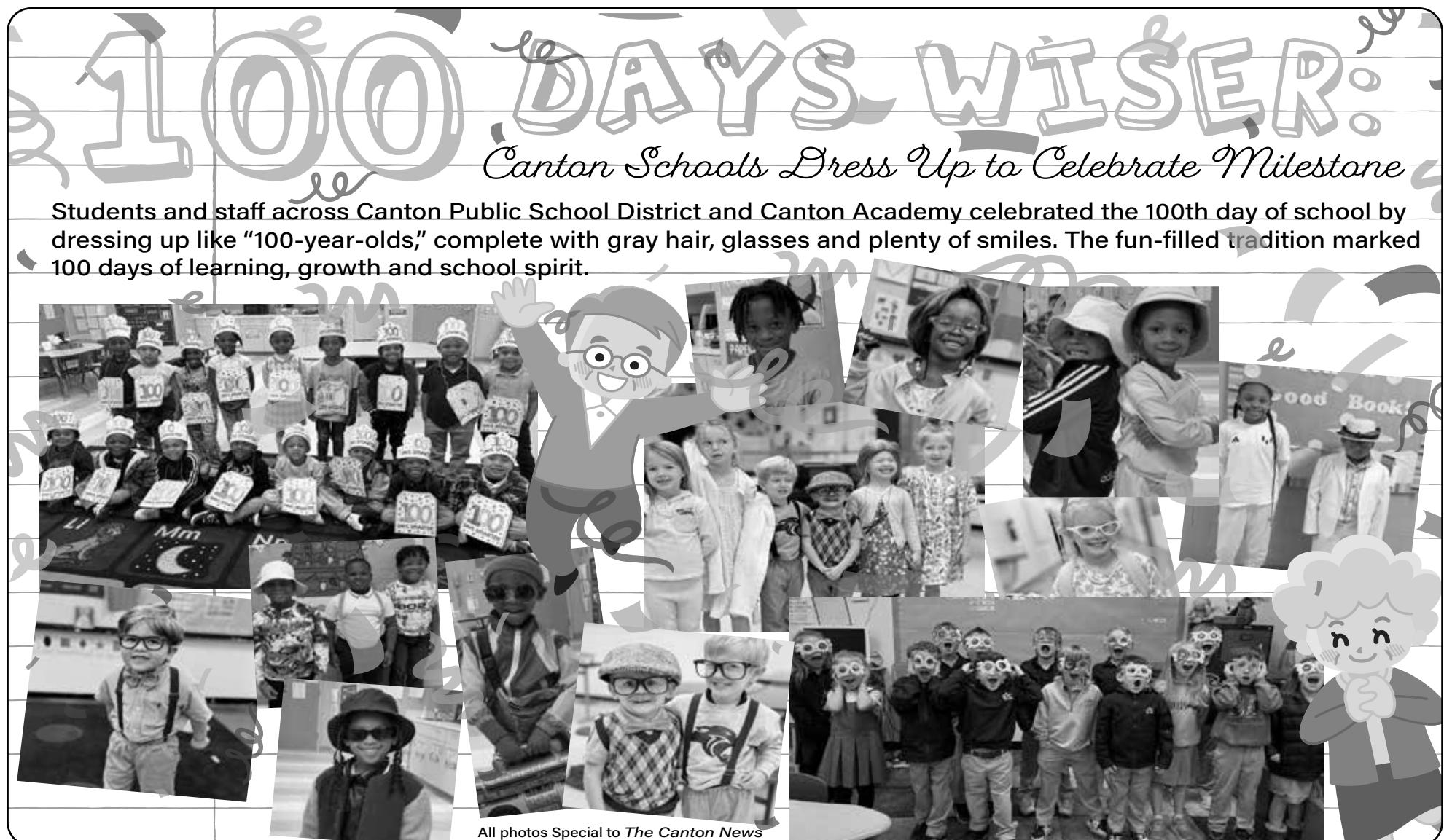
MadCAAP serves residents across Madison County through programs and services aimed at reducing poverty and supporting families in need.



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# 100 DAYS WISER: Canton Schools Dress Up to Celebrate Milestone

Students and staff across Canton Public School District and Canton Academy celebrated the 100th day of school by dressing up like "100-year-olds," complete with gray hair, glasses and plenty of smiles. The fun-filled tradition marked 100 days of learning, growth and school spirit.



All photos Special to *The Canton News*

## Did You Know? The Canton Public Library offers more than books

By Courtney Warren

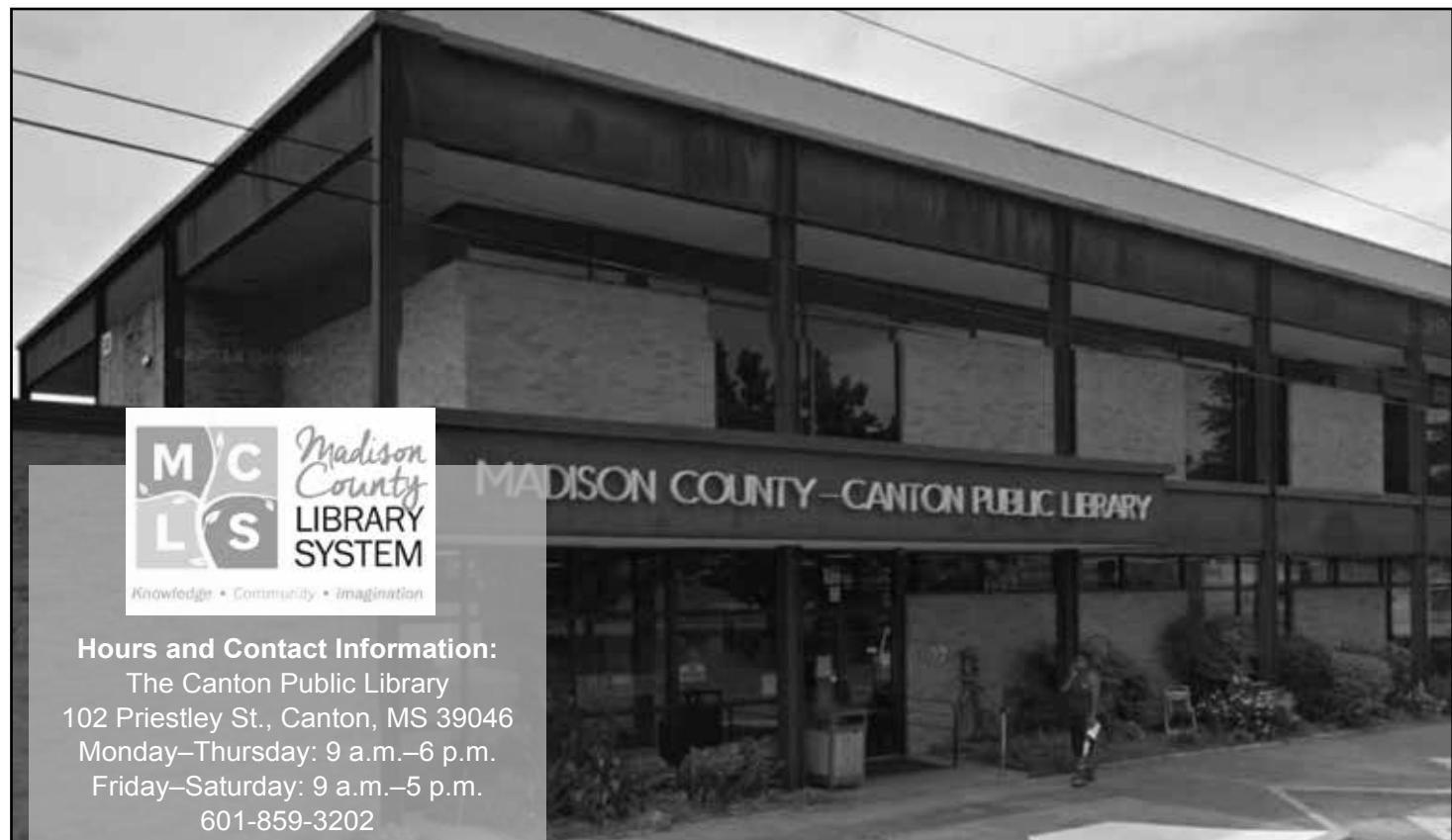
The Canton Public Library, part of the Madison County Library System, is housed in an impressive brick building at 102 Priestley Street in Canton, Mississippi. With a spacious interior and an inviting atmosphere, the library is a valued resource for the community's informational and cultural needs.

Library cardholders have access to Hoopla and Libby by OverDrive, which provide free e-books, audiobooks and more. The library also offers senior social hours and after-school events for children and teens, giving residents of all ages opportunities to learn and connect.

At the Canton Digital Lab, visitors can explore technology and creativity using a 3D printer, sound booth, wide-format printer and laminator.

Library staff also provide a range of reference services, helping patrons with research, legal questions, medical and genealogical information, and other inquiries. The library offers archival and local history resources, audio CDs, and adult and juvenile DVDs, as well as programs and classes that appeal to all ages — from LEGO fans and teens to adults and seniors.

**Why Library Funding Matters:** Public libraries depend on reliable funding from local, state and federal sources to maintain services, technology and staffing. Without sufficient funds, libraries may struggle to keep up



Special to The Canton News

with community needs for internet access, educational programs and digital resources. According to the American Library Association, public funding instability — including cuts to federal grant programs that support libraries nationwide — can directly affect the level of services libraries are able to offer. Ex-

perts have warned that reductions in key funding streams could force libraries to cut hours, staff and essential programs that benefit rural and underserved communities.

Local support is critical to sustaining these community hubs, especially as they serve as free access points for

information, technology and lifelong learning for residents of all ages.

From digital resources to hands-on programs, the Canton Public Library continues to be an invaluable and free resource for Madison County residents — a resource worth supporting for years to come.

## Canton Career Center recognizes two Students of the Month



Pictured are Trina Nichols, Jeremiah McGee, and Michael Ellis



Pictured are Trina Nichols, Keiston Fleming, and Michael Ellis

Special to The Canton News

The Canton Career Center recently recognized two students as Student of the Month for their achievements in work-based learning and career and technical education programs.

Senior Keiston Fleming was named Work-Based Learning Student of the Month and received a \$100 gift card sponsored by Duane Matthews, a

member of the Madison County Business League and Foundation and former AWS employee. Fleming plans to attend the University of Mississippi, major in business administration and enlist in the U.S. Air Force.

Junior Jeremiah McGee was recognized as Automotive Services Student of the Month and received a \$100 gift card sponsored by Rochelle Thompson, a member of the Madison Coun-

ty Business League and Foundation and a representative of the American Lung Association. McGee is enrolled in the Automotive Services program and plans to pursue a career as an automotive mechanic.

The awards were presented by Canton Career Center Director Michael Ellis and Work-Based Learning instructor Trina Nichols, who praised both students for their dedication and

commitment to their educational and career goals.

The Student of the Month program connects local businesses and organizations with students in career and technical education programs. School officials said the initiative helps develop essential workforce skills while supporting student success and strengthening the local workforce in Madison County.

## On the Shelf: Black History Month book picks

By Courtney Warren

It is February, and that means it's the month of love and Black history. Black History Month is a great time to explore powerful stories by and about Black authors and experiences.

In 2014, only eight percent of children's books published in America were written by authors of color, according to the Cooperative Children's Book Center (CCBC) at the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

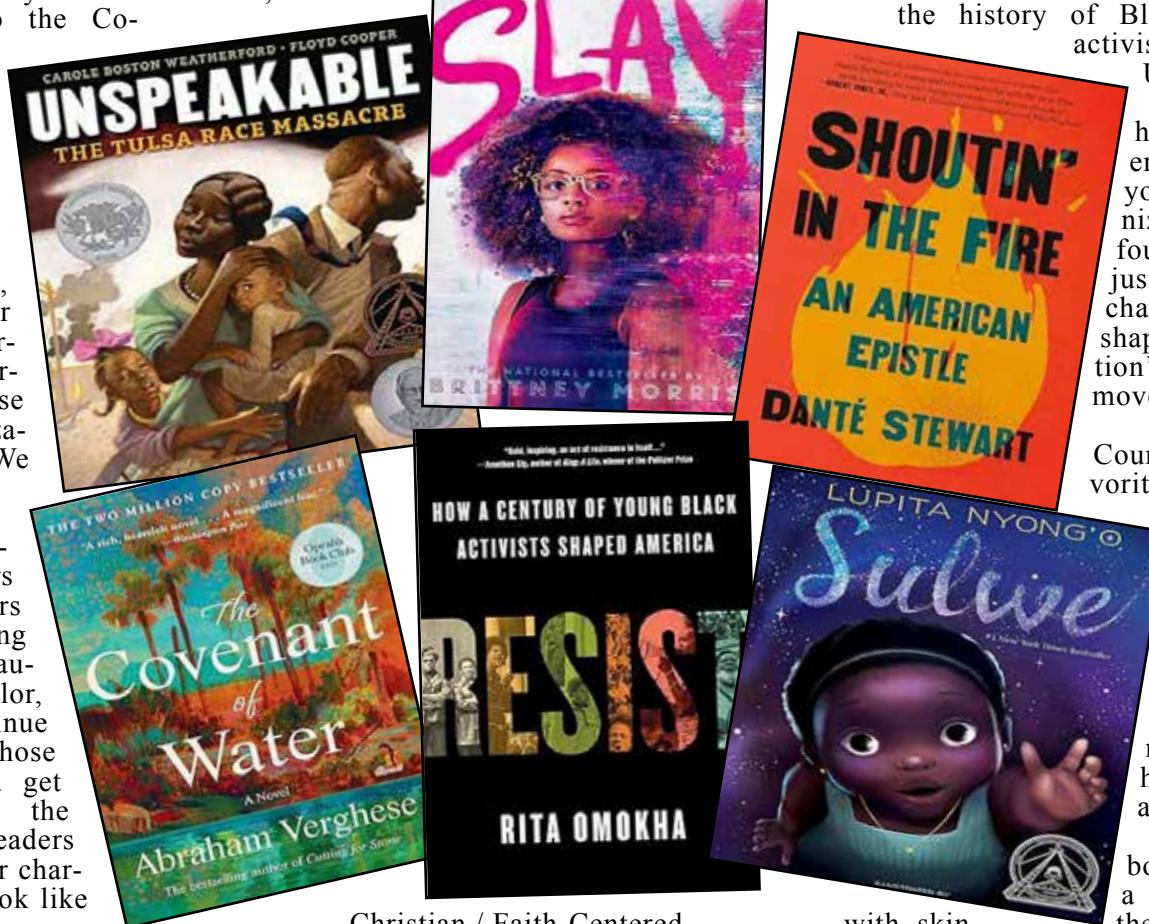
But, by 2023, this number jumped to forty-seven percent. Because of organizations like We Need Diverse Books, as well as amazing educators and readers alike pushing books by authors of color, we can continue to improve those numbers and get books into the hands of readers who yearn for characters that look like them.

For Children  
**Unspeakable: The Tulsa Race Massacre**, by Carole Boston Weatherford, illustrated by Floyd Cooper (2019)

A lyrical picture book that sensitively introduces young readers to the Tulsa Race Massacre through vivid poetry and striking artwork. It's a meaningful way for children to begin understanding an important part of Black history.

Young Adult  
**SLAY** by Brittney Morris, (2019)  
 This YA novel tells the story of a

Black high school student who creates a virtual reality game celebrating Black culture. When controversy erupts around the game, the protagonist must navigate questions of identity, community and belonging both inside and outside the game world.



Christian / Faith-Centered  
**Shoutin' in the Fire: An American Epistle**, by Danté Stewart (2021)

A thoughtful and personal reflection on Black identity and faith, this book blends spirituality, history and cultural commentary, offering readers a faith-based perspective on justice, hope and resilience.

Fiction (Adult)  
**The Covenant of Water**, by Abraham Verghese (2023)

This sweeping multigenerational novel weaves together love, family, medicine and societal change in southern India. While not solely

focused on American Black history, its wide-ranging narrative and acclaim make it a noteworthy pick for adult readers during Black History Month.

Nonfiction

**Resist: How a Century of Young Black Activists Shaped America**, by Rita Omokha (2024)

This nonfiction work chronicles the history of Black youth activism in the U.S., highlighting how generations of young organizers have fought for justice and change and shaped the nation's social movements.

Courtney's Favorite:

**Sulwe** by Lupita Nyong'o

I will never not love this book with my entire heart. It is a children's picture book about a young girl with skin the color of midnight who feels insecure about her dark complexion compared to her lighter-skinned family. Throughout the story, she learns how incredibly beautiful she is and truly designed by God. In a world where we are constantly bombarded with influencers urging us to change our appearance in order to be beautiful by today's standards, it's more informative than ever to let children know they are fearfully and wonderfully made by our Father, who knew them before they were knit in the womb and has their names written on the palms of His hands.

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## G.A. Carmichael Health Center, Red Cross assist residents after ice storm



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G.A. Carmichael Family Health Center partnered with the American Red Cross of Mississippi to assist residents affected by a recent ice storm that impacted communities across the state.

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The collaborative effort provided blankets, cots, generators and other essential supplies to individuals and families in need. Officials said the re-

sponse reflected a shared commitment to supporting communities during times of hardship.

Health center leaders expressed appreciation for the cooperation and leadership of community partners who

helped make the relief effort possible, noting that collaboration plays a key role in creating meaningful impact.

Volunteers included April Jones (American Red Cross), Candice Bush, Pickens Police Chief Joe Davis, Alder-

man Tucker, Alderman Edwards, William Banks, G.A. Carmichael Director of Facilities, Tyler Payton, G.A. Maintenance Crew, Bryson Stevenson, Mr. George Jones Maintenance Crew and Pickens Mayor Edwards.

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# Letter from the Editor: Finding joy in the whimsy

By Courtney Warren

It's cold out there! With temperatures showing numbers younger than I am, the news reading like a scene from an apocalypse movie, and absolutely no end in sight, I am turning to the whimsical to hide my woes. I've emailed the reps, I've made the comments, I've reached out to friends, and now it is time to reboot.

So, I began watching a fun documentary series called *The World According to Jeff Goldblum*. Each episode has Jeff exploring quirky concepts that fascinate people, bringing the same gentle curiosity and comforting nostalgia as those classic moments where Mr. Rogers explained how crayons were made in the Crayola factory.

And that's when it hit me. Why are we so obsessed with tiny things, blind boxes and mini collectibles? Why do we go wild over Labubus figurines or Jellycat stuffed animals that are impossibly soft, ridiculously small and sold out everywhere? There's something about holding a tiny object that sparks joy, a feeling that's pure and uncomplicated.

Maybe it's the control factor. Tiny things fit neatly in our hands and in our lives, reminding us that some things can be simple and complete. Maybe it's the surprise element of



Special to The Canton News

blind boxes, where joy comes from not knowing exactly what you'll get. Or maybe it's simply softness and tactile comfort, like a Jellycat bunny that melts in your arms and makes all your cares feel a little lighter.

Whatever the reason, these small

joys matter. In a world that feels overwhelming, where news cycles spin endlessly and our schedules leave little room for wonder, it's okay - even necessary - to revel in the miniature, the collectible, the soft and snuggly. They remind us to

pause, to smile, to cherish a small miracle that exists purely for delight. I am currently on the hunt for a vintage letter tray, so I actually have a place to put all of my cute and tiny things.

And have you heard of dopamine decor or dopamine dressing? It's my new favorite concept. I do this and didn't even realize it. It is the idea of wearing clothing or decorating your home with things that bring you joy. They make you happy for whatever reason, rather than follow a trend. Over the last year, I have done away with almost everything in my house that doesn't have a story. If you can't pick it up while you're exploring my home when I'm 87 years old and ask me where it came from only to be told to sit down for a spell because I have a story? I don't want it.

So, if you've got a Labubu on your desk, a Jellycat on your bed, or a tiny blind-box figurine peeking out of your bag, give it a squeeze. You deserve that moment of joy. In fact, maybe the secret to surviving this cold, chaotic world is exactly that: to keep your heart open, your hands soft, and your eyes on the little things that make you grin.

Because joy doesn't always come in grand gestures. Sometimes, it's tiny, soft, and perfectly squishy.

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## Canton's Shamira Morton named McDonald's All-American Game nominee



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Canton High School standout Shamira Morton has been named a nominee for the prestigious McDonald's All-American Game, one of the highest honors in high school basketball.

Morton joins Sydnei Barber of West Harrison and Eva Young of Ridgeland as Mississippi nominees for the nationally recognized game, which showcases the top high school basketball players in the country.

The McDonald's All-American

Game highlights elite student-athletes for their performance on the court as well as their achievements in the classroom and community. Nomination places Morton among an elite group of players considered for selection to compete on the national stage.

Morton's recognition brings pride to Canton High School and the broader Canton community as she continues to represent the city through her athletic accomplishments.

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## Canton High soccer seniors honored during Senior Night ceremony



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Senior members of the Canton High School soccer team were recognized during a special Senior Night ceremony celebrating their contributions to the program.

The event honored the seniors for their dedication, hard work and com-

mitment to representing Canton High School and the district with pride throughout their athletic careers.

School officials thanked the players for their leadership and encouraged them to continue pursuing their goals and striving for excellence in all their future endeavors.



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**Saturday, February 7<sup>th</sup>**

Time: 11:30 am - 1:00 pm



**Mississippi Urban League**  
2548 Livingston Road, Suite 1  
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**In-person or virtual** 

**Saturday, February 28<sup>th</sup>**

Time: 11:00 am - 1:00 pm



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**MORE INFO**



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## Thompson honors Nichols Middle students for winning Congressional App Challenge



Special to The Canton News

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Congressman Bennie Thompson visited Nichols Middle School to recognize three students who won the 2025 Congressional App Challenge.

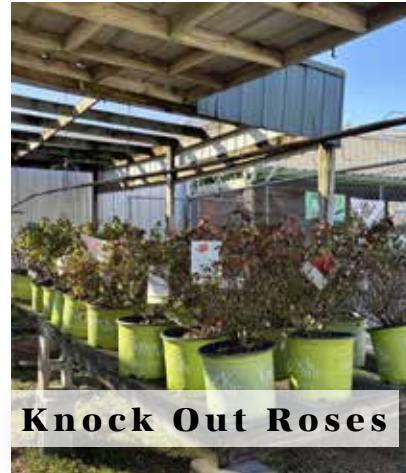
LyNiah Henderson, Jalore Myles and Tristian Brown were honored for developing Mental Moji, an app created during the summer through the Tougaloo Talent Search STEM Program. The app is designed to help students regulate their emotions before reacting negatively in challenging situations.

Mental Moji also provides users with access to professional contacts and community resources to help address personal and emotional concerns.

School officials expressed appreciation for the Tougaloo Talent Search STEM Program for its role in supporting students' academic and personal growth. Special recognition was given to Dr. Edna Drakes-Washington, a former Canton Public School District Teacher of the Year and current assistant director at Tougaloo, for her continued commitment to student success.

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# OBITUARY



John  
Carlyn  
White  
October 24,  
1937 - Janu-  
ary 24, 2026

John Carlyn White, 88, of Kosciusko, Mississippi, passed away peacefully on January 24, 2026. He was a devoted husband, father, grandfather, great-grandfather, and faithful servant of God. John's legacy is one of deep faith, steadfast love for his family, hard work, and quiet strength.

Visitation will be held at Kosciusko First Baptist Church at 9:30 a.m. on Thursday, January 29, 2026, with services to follow at 11:00 a.m. A family burial will follow at Parkway Cemetery.

Born on October 24, 1937, in Zama, Mississippi, to Mr. and Mrs. Bilbo C. White, John learned early the value of hard work, education, and commitment-principles that guided every season of his life. He lived with integrity, humility, and a strong sense of responsibility to God and family.

John graduated from Mississippi State University with an undergraduate degree in Mechanical Engineering and his Master's in Education Administration. His career spanned from the defense industry to the education arena. He was an administrator for Holmes Community College for many years and played an integral part in the building and opening of the Ridgeland branch of HCC.

John married the love of his life, Melba Burden White, in 1962. Together they built a home rooted in love, faith, and service to the Lord. As a father, he led by example-always consistent-teaching his children the importance of faith, perseverance, and doing what is right, even when no one was watching.

He leaves behind his beloved wife, Melba and his children, Deborah White Martin (David), Michelle White Nowell (Glennis), Mike White, and Jason White (Jolynn). They will forever treasure the wisdom, encouragement, discipline, and unconditional love of a father who prayed for them daily and took great pride not only in their accomplishments, but in their personal walk with the Lord.

John was especially grateful for his grandchildren and great-grandchildren, who brought him immense joy. He is survived by grandchil-

dren Lindsey Claire Tomlinson (Jared), Will Martin (Cameron), Laura Kathryn Taylor (Ryan), Sam Martin (Hart), Lexie Caroline Brown, Linley White Wicker (Devon), Sara Burden White Hill (Latham), John "Clayton" White, John Hubbard White, Lauren Hope Nowell, and Carlyn White; and great-grandchildren Mae Elizabeth Martin, John "William" Martin, Luna James Taylor, and Henry Burgess Martin. He is also survived by his sister, Bettye Robinson and a brother, Rayborn White.

A lifelong Christian of the Baptist faith, John was an active member of Kosciusko First Baptist Church until his health no longer allowed. He faithfully served as a deacon and Sunday School teacher and had a deep love for the Gospel and for missions. That love carried him across this country serving on mission trips, helping to build churches and serving others. His children remember rarely missing church—"every time the doors were open"—and how he consistently gave thanks to the Lord for every blessing.

A true outdoorsman and farmer, John raised cotton, soybeans, corn, cattle, timber, and legendary vegetable gardens. He taught his children and grandchildren to love the land, respect hard work, and give back by caring for what God had provided. Some of his happiest moments were spent outdoors with his grandchildren, passing down lessons that required no words.

Those who knew John also knew his quiet humor. He was a gentle jokester and one of his family's most told legendary stories is when he and a couple of his college friends placed a skunk under the visitors' bench during the Kentucky vs. Mississippi State basketball game—an act that caused quite a stir and many lasting laughs.

John's life will be remembered as that of a godly man who loved Mississippi, his country, his family, and a good plate of fresh vegetables with cornbread.

In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made to Kosciusko First Baptist Church Acts 1:8 Missions Initiative.

As his family reflects on a life well lived, they hold close his favorite Scripture: "If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land." - 2 Chronicles 7:14

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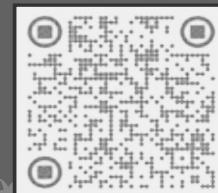
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## New Nissan Frontier fuels Habitat ReStore's Mission in Jackson



All photos Special to The Canton News

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Nissan Canton Vehicle Assembly Plant and Habitat for Humanity Metro Capital Area (HFHMA) recently announced a new milestone in their long-standing partnership with the donation of a Nissan Frontier pickup truck - built at the Nissan Canton Vehicle Assembly Plant - to the Habitat ReStore in Jackson, Mississippi. The gift marks a celebration of the ReStore's fourth anniversary and will directly support Habitat's mission to build strength, stability, and self-reliance through affordable homeownership.

The donated Frontier will be used by the ReStore team to pick up do-

nated furniture, appliances, and building materials from across the metro Jackson area. These items are resold at affordable prices, with proceeds helping fund Habitat's homebuilding and repair programs for local families.

"Supporting the communities where our employees live and work is at the heart of Nissan's commitment to Mississippi," said Josh Scott, Director, Manufacturing Operations. "The Habitat ReStore plays a vital role in strengthening neighborhoods, reducing waste, and helping families achieve safe, affordable housing. We're proud that this Frontier will help expand their impact for years to come."

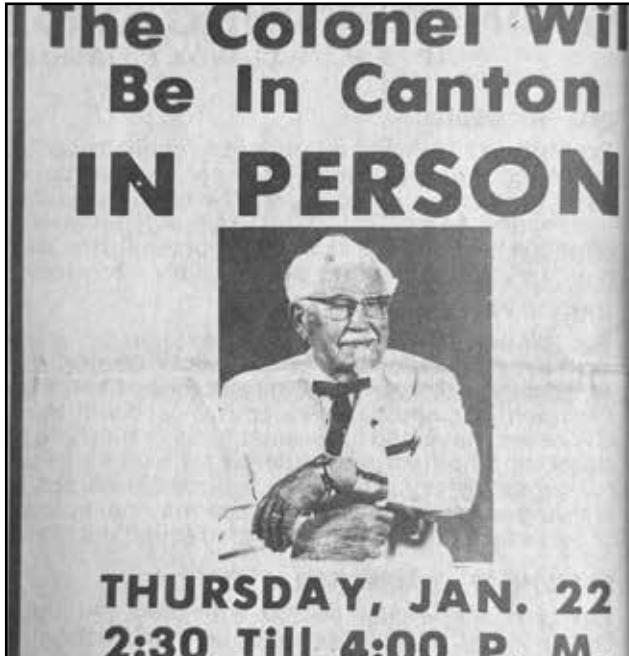
Since opening in 2022, the Habitat ReStore has diverted thousands of pounds of usable materials from landfills and generated essential revenue to support Habitat's mission. The addition of the Frontier will allow the ReStore to increase donation pickups, improve operational efficiency, and better serve donors and customers.

"Our long-standing partnership with Nissan allows Habitat to direct more of our fundraising toward what matters most - building safe, decent, affordable homes for families in our community," said Merrill McKewen, executive director, Habitat for Humanity Mississippi Capital Area. "The addition of a new Nissan Fron-

tier for use by the ReStore, as well as our construction staff, once again strengthens our ability to do good works for those we serve. When the ReStore has donation pickups, it is a point of pride to drive up in a new Nissan truck, assembled right here in central Mississippi!"

Nissan and Habitat for Humanity International have partnered for nearly two decades, with Nissan contributing millions in funding, thousands of volunteer hours, and more than 150 vehicles to Habitat affiliates across the United States. The donation to the Metro Capital Area ReStore continues this legacy of collaboration and community investment.

## Way back when: When fried chicken went to war on Peace St.



Courtesy of the Canton-Madison County Historical Society

In January 1976, the Birmingham-based restaurant, Jack's, opened its 68th location at 182 E. Peace Street in Canton (now Picante's Tacos & Tequila).

The arrival of the franchise brought

significant fanfare and local media coverage - even the restaurant's six-foot mascot, QuarterJack, made an appearance.

Jack's opening, however, provoked a "military response" from rival Kentucky Fried Chicken down the road at 707 E. Peace Street (now Penn's Fish House).

On January 22, 1976, Colonel Sanders himself arrived on the streets of Canton to bolster morale and rally the defense.

But at age 85, the old Colonel had become critical of KFC's direction, remarking that cost-cutting measures diminished the quality of KFC's food. He would later say that his chain's mashed potatoes and gravy tasted like "wallpaper."

Indeed, Mr. Sanders chose to dine at The James Brothers Restaurant while in Canton.

Although this deep-fried feud between restaurants produced no casualties, a measurable blow to Canton's cholesterol was recorded by those who know such things.

## CA Tillie Oglesbee reaches 1,000 career points



Special to The Canton News

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Tillie Oglesbee recently scored her 1,000th career point during the Lady Panthers' comeback win over New-

ton County Academy. She reached the milestone with a corner 3-pointer to surpass the 1,000-point mark.

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## Lady Panthers win championship at Central Hinds Elementary tournament



All photos Special to The Canton News

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The Canton Academy Lady Panthers elementary girls' basketball

teams recently competed in the Central Hinds Elementary Tournament, highlighted by a championship win from the sixth-grade team.

The sixth-grade Lady Panthers captured the tournament title with a 16-8 victory over Central Hinds and a 10-9 overtime win against Tri-County.

Sixth graders Landry Burton, Ally Jerome, Kinsley Lynch and Lee Lee Stacey were selected to the All-Tournament team.

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## Canton Academy chess team competes at MAIS Tournament



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The Canton Academy chess team recorded a strong performance at the MAIS Chess Tournament on January

8, 2026.

Individual highlights included a third-place tie for Dylan Gilmer, who competed in the fourth- through sixth-grade division, and a fourth-

place tie for Kash Toten, who competed in the first- through third-grade division.

Team members included Jackson Bowering, fifth grade; Kate Parker,

fifth grade; Brantley Cheatham, third grade; Stock McCarty, third grade; and Luke Parker, second grade.

The team was recognized for its strategy, focus and sportsmanship.



### FLONZIE BROWN WRIGHT

Flonzie Brown Wright became involved in the civil rights movement after moving back to Madison County in 1962. Focusing on voting rights, she served as director for the local chapter of the NAACP. In 1968, she ran for county election commissioner, winning a narrow victory against the White incumbent, making her the first Black female to be elected to this position in the state of Mississippi. While in office, she significantly increased the number of local Black registered voters.

“

What I tell young people is whatever you do, do it for the right reasons. Because if it's not for the right reasons, you cannot last. You won't last. You can't.”

@cantontourism

## Canton Academy students dissect porcine hearts in anatomy class



Special to The Canton News

Students in Coach Moseley's Human Anatomy and Physiology class at Canton Academy are getting a hands-on look at the car-

diovascular system.

The class recently dissected porcine, or pig, hearts as part of their study of human anatomy. Because pig hearts are closely similar to human hearts, the lab



All photos Special to The Canton News

gave students a real-world view of the heart's structure and function.

The exercise allowed students to identify major components of the heart and better understand

how the cardiovascular system works. School officials said the activity provided an engaging, up-close learning experience that connected classroom instruction with practical application.

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