

Canton Christmas Festival underway: don't miss the magic!

By Courtney Warren

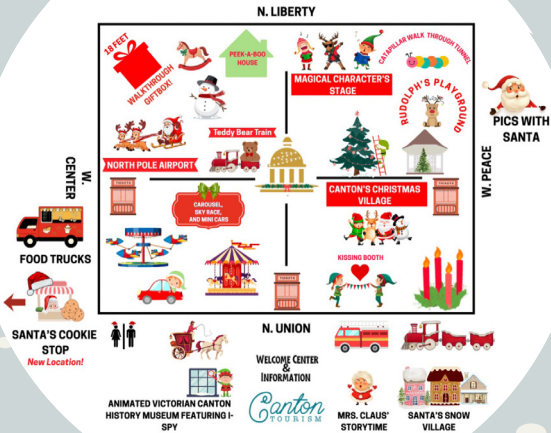
The Canton Christmas Festival, also known as the “City of Lights,” has officially kicked off its spectacular holiday run. The festival is open nightly from 5 p.m. to 9 p.m. and will continue through December 23, 2025, with a scheduled closure only from December 1 through December 4. Visitors will find a wide array of attractions around the Historic Canton Square, including Rudolph’s Playground, fire truck and train rides, an 18-foot walk-through gift box, and the iconic 3-story Christmas tree. New this year is the snowman 16-foot walk through, now located at 184 East Center Street, alongside the caterpillar 32-foot-long walk through and Santa’s Cookie Stop. The festival will also celebrate America 250 with patriotic displays throughout The Square.

Families are invited to immerse themselves in the festival’s interactive areas. The beloved storyteller, **Mrs. Claus**, is back and bringing extra Christmas magic this year. Her home has received an upgrade, allowing families to explore her beautiful new location, get cozy, and enjoy her magical tales away from the winter chill—a perfect little escape children will talk about all season long. Other immersive spots include the **Christmas Interactive Village** (featuring the **Reindeer Barn**, **Frosty’s House**, and **Rudolph’s House**) and **Santa’s Snow Village**, which offers a peek into Santa’s picturesque hometown. Children can also enjoy classic entertainment on the **old-fashioned carousel**, **antique cars**, and the **Sky Race**. For history buffs and animation lovers, the **Christmas**

Animation Museum and **I Spy** brings Canton’s history to life with Christmas magic, showcasing the **Elves’ Top 10 Favorite Toys**.

While the initial Merchants’ Open House Weekend has concluded, the town square will host several special events throughout December. The **Sing-along Fest with the Best** and **Photos with Santa** (at 137 West Peace Street) will return, running December 5-7, and again from December 12-23. Similarly, **horse-drawn carriage rides** around the Historic Square will be offered Friday and Saturday, December 5 and 6, as well as from December 12-23. Another event Cantonians are encouraged to mark their calendars for is the **19th Annual Holiday Sip ‘N Cider** on December 12, from 5 p.m. to 9 p.m., where participating merchants will offer warm cider and host competitions.

Access to many attractions requires tickets. Individual tickets cost \$2, but guests can purchase a sheet of 25 tickets for \$25. Rides like the fire truck, carousel, Sky Race, and antique cars require 2 tickets each, while the wagon train requires 3 tickets. The horse-drawn carriage rides and Christmas Village require 5 tickets per person. Attendees are reminded that only cash or major credit cards are accepted, and all ticket sales are final. For more information, visit **CantonTourism.com**.



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Jones talks entrepreneurship with students



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The Canton Public School District High School Equivalency Program is always looking for new opportunities to educate students on their future careers. Recently, they hosted Cassandra Jones Taylor, owner of Smoke'n Mir-

rors Salon in Flowood, who shared insights with students on entrepreneurship and cosmetology. The students say they were truly impressed to learn that her client roster includes notable celebrities such as Eric Cambell, Leandria Johnson and Cynthia Bailey.

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Letter from the editor: Millennials are slowing life down

By Courtney Warren

I was dropping my daughter's best friend off at her house after an afternoon of crafting, ice cream and the park. The weather was cool, and while the two played at Strawberry Patch, I sat on a park bench with a coffee and a book. It was absolutely wonderful. The leaves have changed and the wind blew, creating a perfect evening. As the sun dipped low, I was reminded of how wonderful life can be when you just slow down.

When we reached our friend's house, that topic came up once again, and both of us moms were quick to thank the Millennial mentality. For so long, everyone was focused on this glorified "hustle culture" and the endless digital scroll. However, something I am noticing more and more with my generation is the idea of embracing a quieter revolution - a movement in which we are deliberately slowing down and resurrecting the simpler joys of earlier decades like journaling, sewing and board games. While our generation is often defined by technology, and as the one who created social media, seeing us also bring back the love of all things vintage has been so refreshing.

The trend is visible in many other ways, from home decor to hobbies. Where we once were all obsessed with farmhouse chic, sad beige and minimalism, we are now seeing millennials reject those concepts and hunt for heirloom quality pieces. I personally have a rule in my house that if it doesn't have a story, it doesn't serve a purpose in my

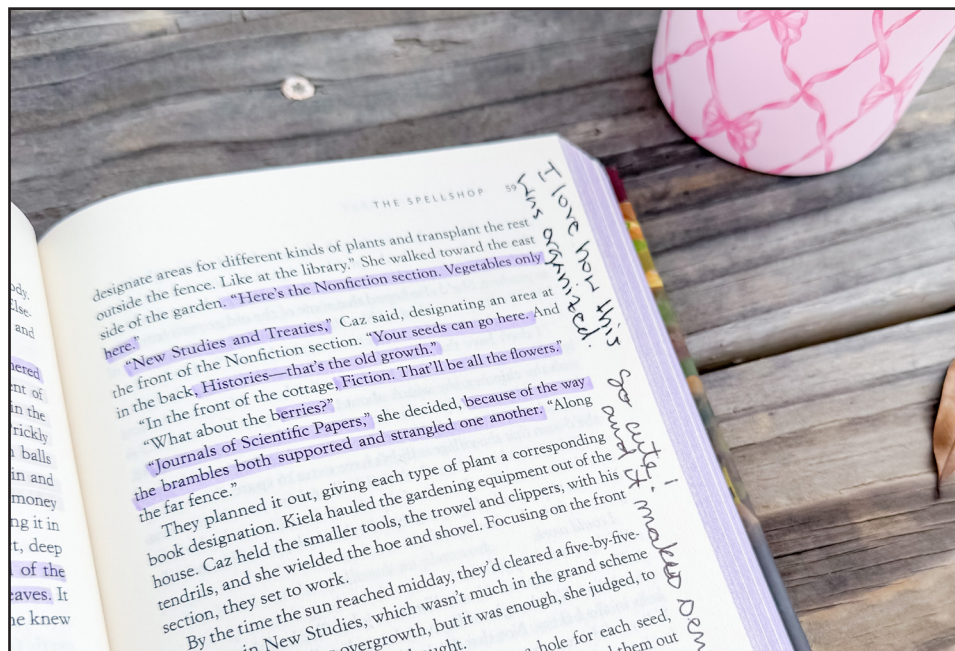


Photo by Courtney Warren

My view at the park while the girls played.

home. No Kirklands or Hobby Lobby allowed. This fascination has even extended to technology, with vinyl records, film cameras, and the rebirth in popularity of the good ole Tamogatchi.

More importantly, I love that this movement is rejecting the "always on" mentality that defined the early days of the digital explosion. There was such a frantic pace - more followers, more life, and being chronically online. However, more and more people are rejecting their Apple watches for their own family heirlooms (myself includ-

ed) in an effort to be less accessible and more present. Why is it that productivity is praised over presence?

In a world where AI could easily take over - we have all seen the robot movies, it's beautiful to know that patience is coming back in style. In our generation that was so focused on acceleration, the greatest luxury is now time. We are more focused on creating a modern life that feels rich and more grounded. So, if you'll excuse me, I have an embroidery piece to finish and a mahjong game to attend.

Way back when: Howes' Great London Circus

Courtesy of The Canton-Madison County Historical Society

The days before the holidays often hold a magic of their own. The anticipation, the preparation, and the traveling - these moments are heightened by the sense of something special on the horizon.

A century-and-a-half ago, that period of excitement included the Largest Show Upon Earth: Howes' Great London Circus, which visited 'Canton, Canton, Canton' on Monday, November 22, 1875. The ONLY First-Class BIG SHOW Ever South!!

The show's arrival was nothing short of a spectacle. Billed as '100 times more grand' and boasting a staggering \$1.5 million capital investment, the circus promised wonders from every corner of the globe. Audiences marveled at Howes' Great London Circus and Grecian Hippodrome, Sanger's English Menagerie with its thirty cages and dens of wild animals, extraordinary acrobatic pyramids from the renowned Iroquois Indian Troupe, and dazzling equestrian performances.

The show featured exotic beasts, African lion acts, a magnificent wardrobe display, trained animal exhibitions,



Photo courtesy of The Canton-Madison County Historical Society

and a full menagerie transported exclusively by railroad.

For one remarkable day, Canton was home to a world of marvels—10,000 wonders of earth, sea, and sky—wrapped in music, color, and spectacle.

It was the kind of excitement that lit up the season.

Today, the Canton Square glows from Thanksgiving through Christmas, keeping that holiday magic ready whenever you are.

First graders bring book characters to life with pumpkin project



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First graders in Ms. Young’s class at Goodloe Elementary School recently completed a Literacy Pumpkin Character Project, blending reading comprehension with creativity.

For the project, students selected a favorite story, read it and then designed a pumpkin to represent the book’s main character. The hands-on activity helped students build comprehension, practice creativity and foster a love for reading.

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McNeal Elementary hosts Alcorn State's "Ag is Lit Tour"



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The "Ag is Lit Tour" is an agricul-

tural literacy program that provides students across Mississippi with interactive stations and real-world

agricultural experiences. Second-through fourth-grade students at McNeal participated in the pro-

gram, which aims to educate children on the importance of agriculture.

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CPSD staff holds team building retreat for professional development



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"Excellence in Action," was designed to strengthen the CPSD team as they work to provide essential services to students and community stakeholders.

Special to The Canton News

Canton Public School District (CPSD) attendance clerks, secretaries, business office leaders and other district personnel recently participated in a team building retreat at the Jackson Convention Center.

The event, themed "Excellence in Action," was designed to strengthen the CPSD team as they work to provide essential services to students and community stakeholders. The two-day retreat included professional development training on topics ranging from the Central Access Stu-

dent Administrator Manager (SAM) system to accounting protocols and procedures, as well as a session focused on the Ethics Commission rules.

Superintendent Dwight Luckett, Sr., conducted a team-building exercise to emphasize that every team mem-

ber is valued and essential to the district's optimal functioning. He explained that achieving the district's mission requires a unified effort. Superintendent Luckett thanked Tony Foster, CPSD Executive Director of Business and Finance, and his team for organizing the conference.

Mahjong Madness: The game taking Mississippi by storm

By Courtney Warren

A familiar, rhythmic clicking sound is echoing across social halls and living rooms, signaling the resurgence of mahjong, the traditional Chinese tile game now enjoying a massive comeback as a premier social activity.

Much like the popularity of bridge among mothers in the 1990s, mahjong has become the go-to game for building new friendships and community connections. Clubs and casual gatherings are popping up everywhere, drawing new players of all ages who appreciate the game's blend of strategy, luck and face-to-face interaction.

The game, which involves drawing and discarding tiles to form sets, offers a welcome break from digital screens. There is also a beauty in mahjong in regards to the etiquette of the game. While many find it intimidating, as learning the tiles, the suits, and the rules can be a bit overwhelming, the beauty of the game is the lack of competitive nature. In a world where we are all focused on winning and being the best, mahjong focuses on celebrating everyone's wins and working together, even as you attempt to create your own mahjong match.

Beyond its social appeal, mahjong has also proved to be an effective tool for philanthropy. Many groups and enthusiasts have successfully leveraged the game's popularity to host fundraiser events for various charities, turning a fun game night into a community giving night. The combination of its strategic challenge and the inherent social nature of playing with a group has solidified mahjong's place as the latest "it" hobby.

Mahjong came to America in the early 1920s and was first popularized by a white American entrepreneur in China, Joseph Park Babcock. It saw a boom in popularity in the 1920s, but later faced a decline until it experienced a renaissance after World War II, largely driven by Jewish American women who played it to build social networks.

Madison County specifically has seen a huge uptick in mahjong, as many moms are meeting for after school events, church events and more. Classes have also become more popular, and some, like Ménage à Mahj, offer hour-long classes to beginner learners. In these classes and lessons, you're able to experience a one-of-a-kind curriculum, as well as gain an understanding of the history of the game. Ménage à Mahj



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also hosts Mississippi Mahj Club, an opportunity to find events in the area and make new friends.

Whether you are just learning the

game or an advanced player, if you are interested, visit <https://menagea-mahj.com/mahj-club> to find a Madison County group near you.



ingredients

- Two bags of cranberries
- Apple cider
- Sprite
- Powdered sugar (organic is best)

instructions

1. Wash your cranberries in a large bowl.
2. In a large bowl, pour in equal parts apple cider and equal parts Sprite.
3. Refrigerate for 12 to 24 hours.
4. Strain the cranberries and move them to clean bowl.
5. Add a generous amount of powdered sugar, and shake until each berry is coated. If they are sticky, add more powdered sugar.
6. Preheat your oven to 200 degrees, and bake the cranberries for 5 minutes to help dry out the sugar coating.
7. Remove from oven, and leave the berries on the counter for a few hours to finish drying.
8. Serve them in an airtight container and eat them once they've chilled for a few hours.

Cracking Candied Cranberries

Special to The Canton News

By Courtney Warren

Have you seen the new trend of making candied cranberries? They are sweet, crunchy and perfect for the holidays. I have loved watching videos of people making these and was so excited to try my hand at them for the holidays!



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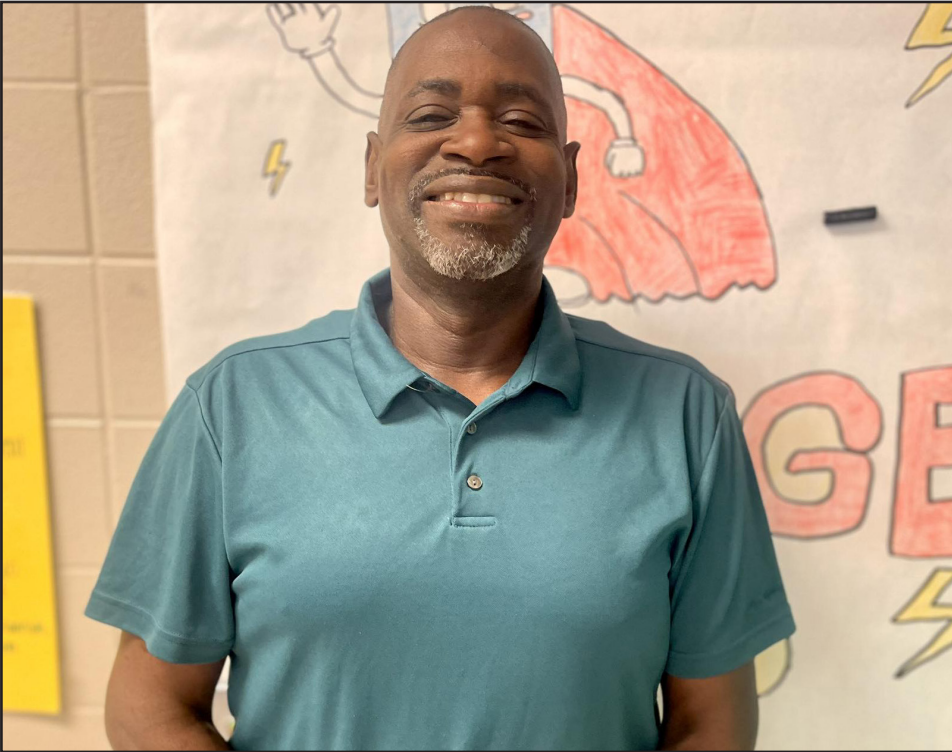
\$21+ million donated

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Canton Career Center celebrates Wayne Day as Teacher of the Year



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Staff at the Canton Career Center recently honored Mr. Wayne Day as their Teacher of the Year for 2025–26 with a celebratory luncheon. The staff wanted to express their

deep gratitude for Mr. Day’s unwavering dedication and consistent efforts to go above and beyond to help his students succeed. He was also recognized for his positive attitude and “wonderful smile.”

Kylie’s Market thanks community for successful Christmas event



Special to The Canton News

By Courtney Warren

Kylie Melons Market extended its gratitude to everyone who helped make its Christmas at Kylie’s event a success. The market specifically thanked Blakeney McGraw for participating in the day and helping patrons create “precious handprint ornaments.”

The market staff also appreciated all members of the community who attended and made the event a fun experience. “Whether you come for Christmas trees, watermelons, or anything in between, our prayer is that you always find that you are family to us,” a market representative stated.

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BAPS marks 25th Year in Jackson, celebrates community service



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The BAPS Swaminarayan Hindu Temple celebrated its 25th anniversary in Jackson on Saturday, November 22, marking a quarter-century of spiritual guidance and community outreach.

The celebration was inspired by the current BAPS spiritual leader, His Holiness Mahant Swami Ma-

haraj, and featured a range of distinguished guests, including Mississippi State Auditor Shad White, former Jackson Mayor Harvey Johnson and Canton Police Chief Otha Brown.

The Mandir’s presence in Jackson embodies the philosophy of His Holiness Pramukh Swami Maharaj: “In the joy of others lies our own.” Temple activities extend beyond worship to include community ef-

forts such as health fairs, blood donation drives, food drives and disaster relief work. The temple serves as a spiritual home for hundreds of families, offering fellowship, education, communal meals and youth activities designed to foster integrity and character.

Canton Police Chief Otha Brown attended the event on behalf of Canton Mayor Timothy C. Taylor. May-

or Taylor has previously recognized the importance of cultural diversity, religious freedom and interfaith understanding as fundamental values that enrich society.

Temple Coordinator Rakesh Patel and outreach coordinators Nayan Mehta and Jignesh Patel expressed gratitude to Mayor Taylor, Chief Brown and the City of Canton for their support.

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Junior Auxiliary of Madison County awards mini-grants to area schools



All photos Special to The Canton News

By Courtney Warren

The Junior Auxiliary of Madison County (JAMC) recently completed its annual Money for Minds Prize Patrol, awarding teacher mini-grants to several area schools. The grants aim to support teachers in implementing creative projects and

resources in their classrooms. Recipients for this year include Goodloe Elementary School, Canton Career Center, Camden Elementary School, Highland Elementary School PTO, and Madison Station Elementary. The organization extended its congratulations to all recipients and stated it “can’t wait to see your grant

work in action.” The Junior Auxiliary of Madison County (JAMC) is a non-profit volunteer service organization dedicated to serving the needs of children, youth, and families in Madison County, Mississippi. Part of the National Association of Junior Auxiliaries (NAJA), which is

focused on charitable, civic and educational projects, the JAMC’s mission is generally to provide service to the community, emphasizing projects related to the welfare of children. Programs like the Money for Minds Prize Patrol are one way the organization fulfills this mission by providing resources directly to local educators.

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If power lines are down, call your local utility and emergency services.

Make sure your car is ready for winter travel

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Replace worn tires and check tire air pressure.

Keep gas tank full to avoid ice in tank and fuel lines

Make a winter emergency kit to keep in your car.

Bring your pets indoors as temperatures drop!

Dress warmly and limit exposure to the cold to prevent frostbite.

Avoid getting wet to prevent hypothermia.

Prepare yourself for exposure to winter weather.

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Manuel Luna-Guevara celebrated as student of the month



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Madison County Business League & Foundation members Rochelle Thompson with the American Lung Association and Melissa Loves with Holmes Community College presented the Canton Career Center November Student of the Month award to Hector Manuel Luna-Guevara.

Manuel Luna-Guevara is enrolled in the construction program at the career center. The purpose of the Student of the Month program is to connect businesses and industries with students while promoting the skills needed to strengthen Madison County's workforce.

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How Do I Handle Unexpected Expenses (Without Panicking)?

Special to The Canton News

C.U. Smarter: A financial education focus of Veritas Federal Credit Union, located at 276A Nissan Parkway in Canton

Let's face it—flat tires, surprise bills, and “uh-oh” moments are part of life. But they don't have to wreck your finances. Here's how to stay ahead of the curve, even when life throws you a money curveball.

Step One: Build That Emergency Fund

An emergency fund is your financial safety net—made just for moments like these. Start small: \$10 a paycheck adds up. Aim to grow it to cover 3–6 months of expenses over time.

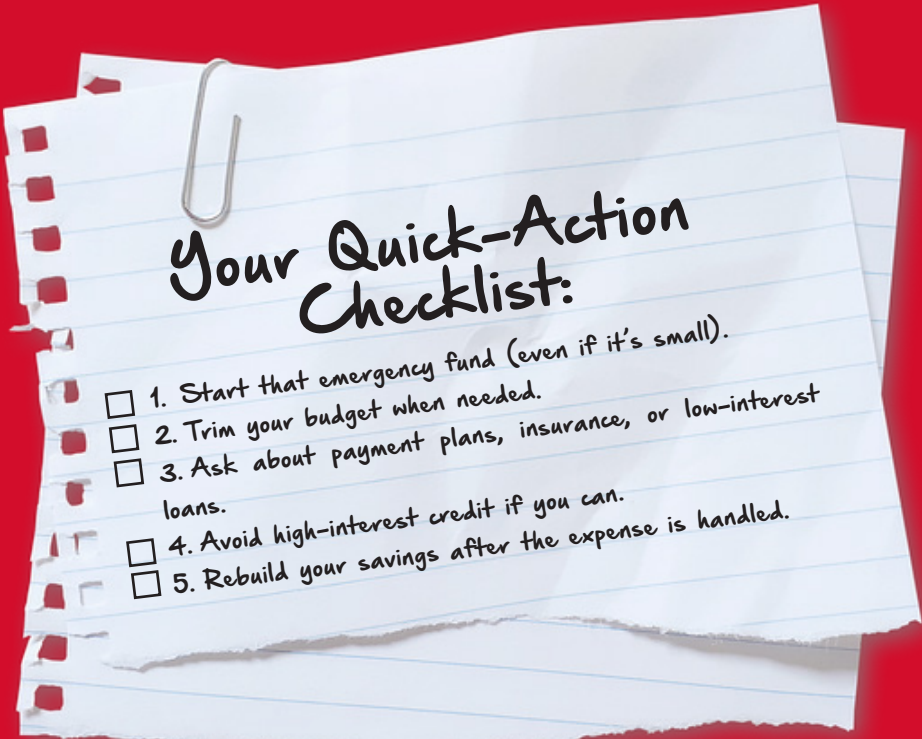
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Step Two: Rethink the Budget

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Step Three: Know Your Options

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Canton Career Center junior inducted into National Technical Honor Society



Lailan M. Hamlin, a junior at Canton Public School, is pictured with Michael Ellis, principal of Canton Career Center.

Special to The Canton News

Lailan M. Hamlin, a junior at Canton Public School and student at the Canton Career Center, has officially been inducted into the National Technical Honor Society (NTHS) Class of 2025. Hamlin, who represents the NTHS attributes of skill, scholarship, leadership, honesty, responsibility, service and citizenship, is the daughter

of Makita Hamlin-Jackson and Eldon Hamlin, both graduates of Canton High School. Beyond her academic achievements, Hamlin is a freelance artist and young entrepreneur who is currently applying for her Certified Licensed Braider credential. She is passionate about using her creativity and skills to build her future, with plans to become a dental hygienist or a Registered Nurse after high school.

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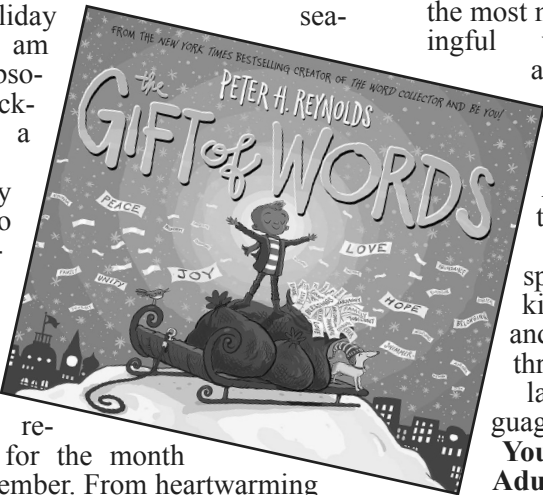
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On the Shelf: Books for the Holiday Season

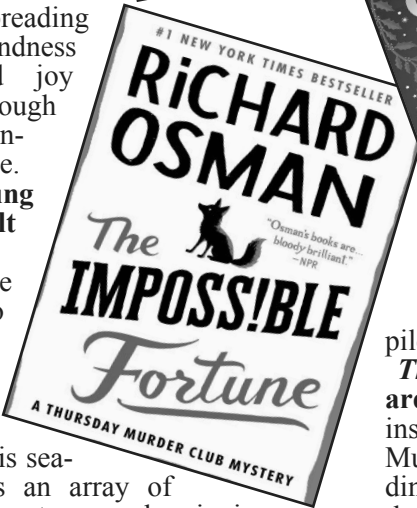
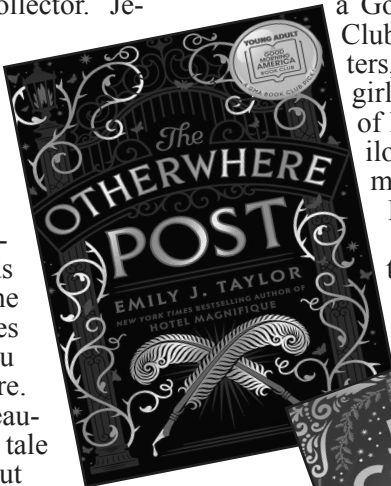
By Courtney Warren

The weather outside is frightful, but a good book is so delightful! Whether you're nestled by the fire with a cup of cocoa or looking for the perfect gift for the book lover in your life, the publishing world has delivered a sleigh-full of new releases this holiday season. I am an absolute sucker for a good holiday read so I always love finding the final releases for the month of December. From heartwarming holiday romances to high-stakes YA fantasy, here are our top picks across five categories to help you fill your shelf—and your stockings—this winter.

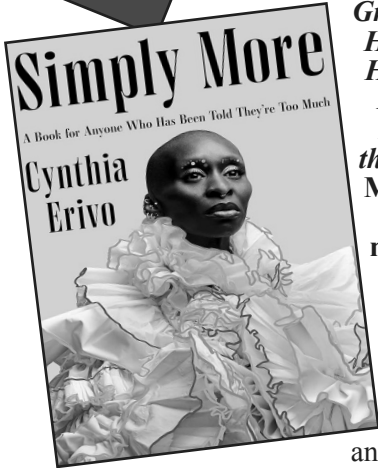
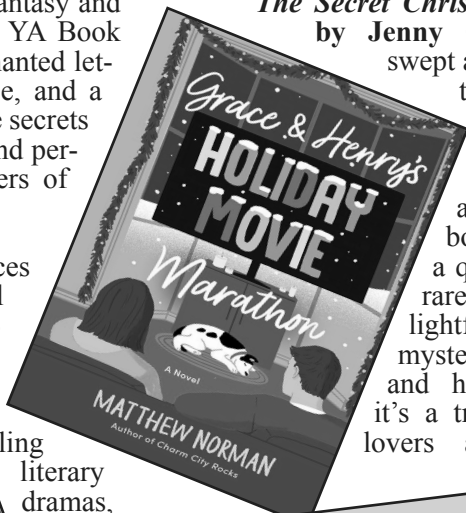
Children's
The holiday season is a magical time for young readers, filled with wonder and new traditions. These picture and early chapter books are perfect for co-zying up at story time.
The Gift of Words by Peter H.



Reynolds: A delightful follow-up to *The Word Collector*. Jerome embarks on a new quest to find inspirational holiday words, only to realize that the most meaningful words are the ones you share. A beautiful tale about spreading kindness and joy through language.
Young Adult (YA)
For the teens who love to escape into other worlds, this season offers an array of fantasy, mystery, and gripping contemporary novels.
The Otherwhere Post by Emily J.



Taylor: A dark academia fantasy and a Good Morning America YA Book Club Pick. It features enchanted letters, a magical post office, and a girl who must uncover the secrets of her past. A romantic and perilous adventure for lovers of mystery and magic.
Fiction
From holiday romances that warm the soul to compelling literary dramas, these new fiction releases are perfect for your holiday reading pile.
The Secret Christmas Library by Jenny Colgan: The unmissable new installment in the beloved Thursday Murder Club series.9 When a wedding guest asks Elizabeth for help, the thrill of the chase is reignited, proving that even a quiet year can turn quickly into a high-stakes mystery.



The Secret Christmas Library by Jenny Colgan: Get swept away to a castle in the Scottish Highlands! This story follows an antiquarian book hunter on a quest to find a rare book. A delightful blend of mystery, romance, and holiday spirit, it's a treat for book lovers and treasure hunters.
Grace & Henry's Holiday Movie Marathon by Matthew Norman: A moving story about two people, Grace and Henry, who have both lost their spouses and are reluctantly paired up by their matchmaking mothers.12 They embark on a friendship forged
cont. on page 16

Canton High School vs. Canton Academy hoops underway



Special to The Canton News

The sound of the squeaking sneakers and bouncing balls signals the return of high school basketball in Canton, Mississippi, with both Canton High School and Canton Academy hitting the court for the

new season. Canton High School's Varsity Boys' team, the Tigers, have jumped out to a strong start, securing multiple wins in their early non-region matchups, including victories against Yazoo County, Holmes County Central, and Clin-

ton. Their determined play has been noted across the state. Meanwhile, the Canton Academy Varsity Boys' team, the Panthers, have faced a tough opening to their schedule with a few losses, including games against Central Hinds Academy and Park Place Christian

Academy. Despite the initial challenges, the teams look forward to leveraging the early season games to prepare for the district and league play ahead. Both Canton-area teams are set to continue their schedules into December as they vie for success on the court.

All photos Special to The Canton News

MCEDA Visionary Leadership Award given to Prado



Special to The Canton News

Special to The Canton News

The Madison County Economic Development Authority (MCEDA) and the Madison County Business League & Foundation (MCBL&F)

established the Visionary Leadership Award in 2011 to honor individuals or communities whose leadership, investments in people, and commitment to community service have significantly enhanced the quality of

life in Madison County. This year, the award was presented to Gabriel Prado in recognition of his forward-thinking leadership and dedication to community advancement, which have made a lasting impact in advancing Madi-

son County’s shared goals and values. Shown at the presentation are (from left) Jan Collins, executive director MCBL&F; Sam Kelly, MCBL&F chair; Prado; Governor Tate Reeves; and Gerard Gibert, MCEDA chair.

Mac Stacey commits to collegiate golf



Special to The Canton News

Special to The Canton News

Canton Academy’s Mac Stacey has officially signed to play collegiate golf at Northwest Mississippi Community College (NWCC).

Stacey, a standout player for the Canton Academy Panthers, committed to continue his academic and athletic career with the Rangers program.

During his high school career, Stacey achieved notable success on the course. In the spring of 2025, he finished the season with a strong performance, placing 6th overall as a medalist in a tournament. This highlight capped a successful season for the Panthers’ golf team.

Stacey is expected to join the NWCC golf program in the fall.

cont. from page 15

over shared grief and classic holiday movies, learning to see a life beyond their sadness.

Non-Fiction

For the curious mind, these releases offer a chance to learn and reflect on history, culture, and personal growth.

Simply More by Cynthia Erivo: This is for all of my Wicked fans! Part-memoir, part-inspirational guide from the multi-talented acclaimed actor. Erivo reflects on her personal growth, the powerful lessons learned on stage and in life, and the perseverance required to

build the life you seek.

Christian

These Christian books of devotionals offer depth, practical guidance, and faith-filled holiday fiction to enrich your spiritual life this season.

The Best News of All: A Christmas

Bible Verse to Remember by New Growth Press: A wonderful board book for young children that helps them memorize the angel’s joyful announcement to the shepherds from Luke 2:10-11, making the true meaning of Christmas accessible to

the small- **My Merry Mistake By Courtney Walsh:** She is one of my new favorites because of her clean and Christian based story telling. Walsh is the best at a good rom com. After accidentally sending an email to a handsome stranger inviting him to her small-town holiday party, a cynical woman must choose between admitting her mistake or seeing where the unexpected miscommunication leads. A charming, faith-filled Christmas romance about second chances.



Tigers Excel at MHSAA Central MS Super Regional



Special to The Canton News

Special to The Canton News

Canton High School’s cross country team put forth an outstanding effort at the MHSAA Central MS Super Regional meet. Leading the charge was Jaheim Dudley, who delivered an incredible performance, finishing the race in 21 minutes, 5.11 seconds. His time secured him the 15th place among all competitors from Region 2-6A.

Right on his heels was Abraham Johnson, who finished in 21:06.52 and earned the 16th place in Region 2-6A. Giancarlo Rosales also made a strong showing for the Tigers, placing 27th overall and ranking in the top 30 among the Region 2-6A runners. The Tigers’ impressive results highlight a successful run at the Super Regional event.

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Second graders lead reading program for kindergarten class



Kennedy and Ms. Walker celebrate her reading skills.

Special to The Canton News

Second grade students at Canton Elementary are trying new things and building mentorship connections by reading to a kindergarten class each week. This new program provides second graders with a chance to practice their reading and public speaking

skills while building relationships with younger students. Kennedy Baird and Porter Dungan were the first second graders to take up the challenge. Both students successfully read to the kindergarten class, demonstrating great enthusiasm. The program is set to continue, fostering growth for both the older and younger “Panthers.”

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Around the Historic Canton Square

RUDOLPH'S PLAYGROUND
FIRETRUCK & TRAIN RIDES
18 FOOT WALK THROUGH GIFT BOX
TOWERING 3 STORY CHRISTMAS TREE
SANTA'S COOKIE STOP
New Location: 184 E. Center Street
SNOWMAN 16 FOOT WALK THROUGH
CATERPILLAR 32 FOOT LONG WALK THROUGH

Christmas Interactive Village
Rudolph's Barn - Frosty's House - Rudolph's House

Mrs. Clause Storyteller Extraordinaire
A Canton Christmas Festival Treasure! Look for Mrs. Claus in her new location.

Children's Rides
Old Fashion Carousel, Antique Cars, and Sky Race

Santa's Snow Village
Peek Inside To View Santa's Picturesque Home Town!

Christmas Animation Museum and I Spy
Canton History Comes Alive with Christmas Magic!
Look for the Elves' Top 10 Favorite Toys



**Paint the Square: Mississippi
Artist Guild Plein Air Event**
December 6: 5-9PM

THE CANTON CHRISTMAS
FESTIVAL CELEBRATES
AMERICA



Look for patriotic displays
around The Square.
FESTIVAL ACTIVITY INFORMATION
LISTED BELOW

Santa's Reindeer Round Up
Find all of Santa's reindeer team

Sing-A-Long Fest with the Best
Join our magical cast of characters for carols,
pictures, and your favorite family holiday traditions!
Dec. 5-7, and Dec. 12-23

Photos with Santa
One-on-one time with Santa and have your
picture taken!
Dec. 5-7, and Dec. 12-23
Locations: 137 W. Peace St.

Carriage Rides
Cozy up with a stroll around the Historic Square
driven by horse-drawn carriage!
Dec. 5-7, and Dec. 12-23

Merchants Open House Weekend
Shop for gifts and antiques around the
Historic Square.
Friday & Saturday: 10AM-9PM Sunday 5-9PM

19th Annual Holiday Sip N Cider
December 12: 5-9PM
Participating merchants offer Christmas Hot Cider.
Annual fun competition for our visitors.

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How to help prevent home christmas tree fires

Special to The Canton News

For all the joy and beauty Christmas trees bring, it's important to remember that they are large combustible items that present potential fire hazards in the home. This blog provides an overview of home Christmas tree fires and tips from National Fire Prevention Association (NFPA) to help you stay safer this holiday season.

How common are Christmas tree fires?

Between 2018 and 2022, fire departments in the United States responded to an annual average of 155 home structure fires caused by Christmas trees. On average, these fires resulted in four civilian deaths, seven civilian injuries, and \$15 million in direct property damage each year. NFPA data indicates that fires involving fresh Christmas trees tend to be more common than artificial tree fires.

Overall, home Christmas tree fires don't

happen often—fires involving candles happen roughly 38 times more frequently in the U.S., for comparison—but when Christmas tree fires do occur, especially involving fresh Christmas trees, they're likely to be serious. That's in part because fresh Christmas trees dry out over time, making them more flammable the longer they're in the home. A dried-out Christmas tree will burn much more quickly than a well-watered one.

What causes Christmas tree fires?

According to the latest statistics from NFPA, lighting and electrical equipment cause most Christmas tree fires in the home. According to the research:

- Electrical distribution or lighting equipment was involved in more than two in five (41 percent) home Christmas tree fires.
- One in five (20 percent) home Christmas tree fires were started by lamps or bulbs.

- More than one in 10 (11 percent) home Christmas tree fires were started by candles.
- Two in five (40 percent) home Christmas tree fires started in the living room.

Tips for staying safer

NFPA offers a number of safety tips to help you stay safer while picking, putting up, decorating, and disposing of a Christmas tree, including:

- Test a fresh Christmas tree before purchasing it by running your hands along one of its branches. If you end up with more than a few needles, it's a sign that the tree may be too dry.
- After selecting a fresh tree, cut 2 inches (5 cm) from the base of the trunk before placing it in the stand. Add water daily to keep the tree well hydrated.
- Trees should be placed at least 3 feet (1 m) away from any heat source,


such as fireplaces, radiators, candles, heat vents, or lights.

- Make sure the tree is not blocking an exit.
- Ensure that decorative Christmas tree lights are in good working order and used in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions, keeping in mind that some lights are designed for indoor or outdoor use only, while others can be used for both.
- When purchasing new Christmas tree lights, make sure they bear the mark of an independent, qualified testing laboratory, which ensures that the product has been tested to meet established safety standards.

After Christmas

Get rid of the tree after Christmas or when it is dry. Dried-out trees are a fire danger and should not be left in the home or garage or placed outside against the home.

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