

Moving Canton Forward-TOGETHER

By Mayor Tim Taylor

As we welcome the month of October and the beginning of the fall season, I want to take a moment to thank the citizens of Canton for your continued support, involvement and commitment to our community. The progress of our city is not accomplished by City Hall alone. It takes the collective efforts of our residents, businesses, churches, civic organizations, schools, community leaders, City employees and the Board of Aldermen. When we work together, we create opportunities, address challenges and continue moving Canton forward.

Our commitment remains clear: Real Positive Change; Progress You Can See, Results You Can Trust.

Breast Cancer Awareness Month

October is recognized as Breast Cancer Awareness Month, a time to raise awareness, encourage early detection, support those affected by breast cancer, and remember the lives that have been impacted by this disease.

This month, we salute the courageous women and men who are currently fighting the battle against breast cancer. Your strength, courage, and perseverance inspire us all. We also extend our heartfelt support to the families, friends, caregivers and loved ones who stand beside those navigating this journey.

We also pause to honor and remember those who have lost their fight. Their lives, love, strength and legacies will never be forgotten. We stand with their families and loved ones as we remember them and the impact they made on the lives of others.

Let October be a reminder that awareness matters, early detection matters and support matters. I encourage everyone to make their health a priority, stay informed and encourage the people you love to do the same.

From the City of Canton, we stand together in hope, strength, remembrance and support.

A Season of Community Pride

Fall brings many opportunities for families and neighbors to come together. Whether attending a school activity, supporting our local businesses, participating in a community event, volunteering or simply spending time with family and friends, I encourage everyone to take pride in being a part of Canton.

I also encourage residents to continue doing their part to keep our neighborhoods clean. A clean and well-maintained community sends a powerful message about who we are and what we value.

Please remember that keeping Canton clean is a shared responsibility. I encourage neighborhood groups, churches, civic organizations, businesses, and individual residents to organize or participate in cleanup efforts throughout our city.

Supporting Our Youth

Our young people remain one of Canton's greatest investments.

As we move through the school year, I encourage parents, guardians, educators, coaches, churches and community organizations to remain actively involved in the lives of our children.

Our youth need positive examples, safe environments, encouragement, and opportunities to develop their talents. Supporting our students and young people today helps build the leaders, professionals, entrepreneurs, and community members of tomorrow.

Public Safety: Everyone Has a Role

Public safety continues to be an important priority for the City of Canton.

I want to thank the men and women of our police, fire, public works and other departments who work every day to serve and protect our community. I also remind residents that public safety is a partnership. If you see something that may threaten the safety of our community, report it to the appropriate authorities. Please remain aware of



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your surroundings and continue looking out for your neighbors.

Together, we can help make Canton a safer place to live, work, raise a family, and visit.

Moving Canton Forward

As your Mayor, I remain focused on creating a city where progress is not simply discussed but demonstrated through meaningful work and responsible leadership. We will continue focusing on the services that matter to residents, the appearance of our neighborhoods, economic opportunities, infrastructure, public safety, recreation and the overall quality of life in Canton.

There is still work to be done, and we recognize that progress takes time, cooperation, accountability and consistency. But I believe strongly in Canton and in the people who call our city

home.

A Message to Our Citizens

I ask each of you to remain engaged. Attend meetings. Ask questions. Support local businesses. Volunteer. Encourage our young people. Take pride in your neighborhood. Look out for your neighbors. And when opportunities arise to make Canton better, I encourage you to be a part of the solution.

The future of Canton belongs to all of us. As your Mayor, I am grateful for the opportunity to serve, and I remain committed to working with the Board of Aldermen, City employees, community organizations, businesses, schools and residents as we continue building a stronger Canton.

Let's continue moving Canton forward, TOGETHER.

With appreciation,

Mayor Tim Taylor - City of Canton



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Canton Public School District emphasizes early childhood education

By Courtney Warren

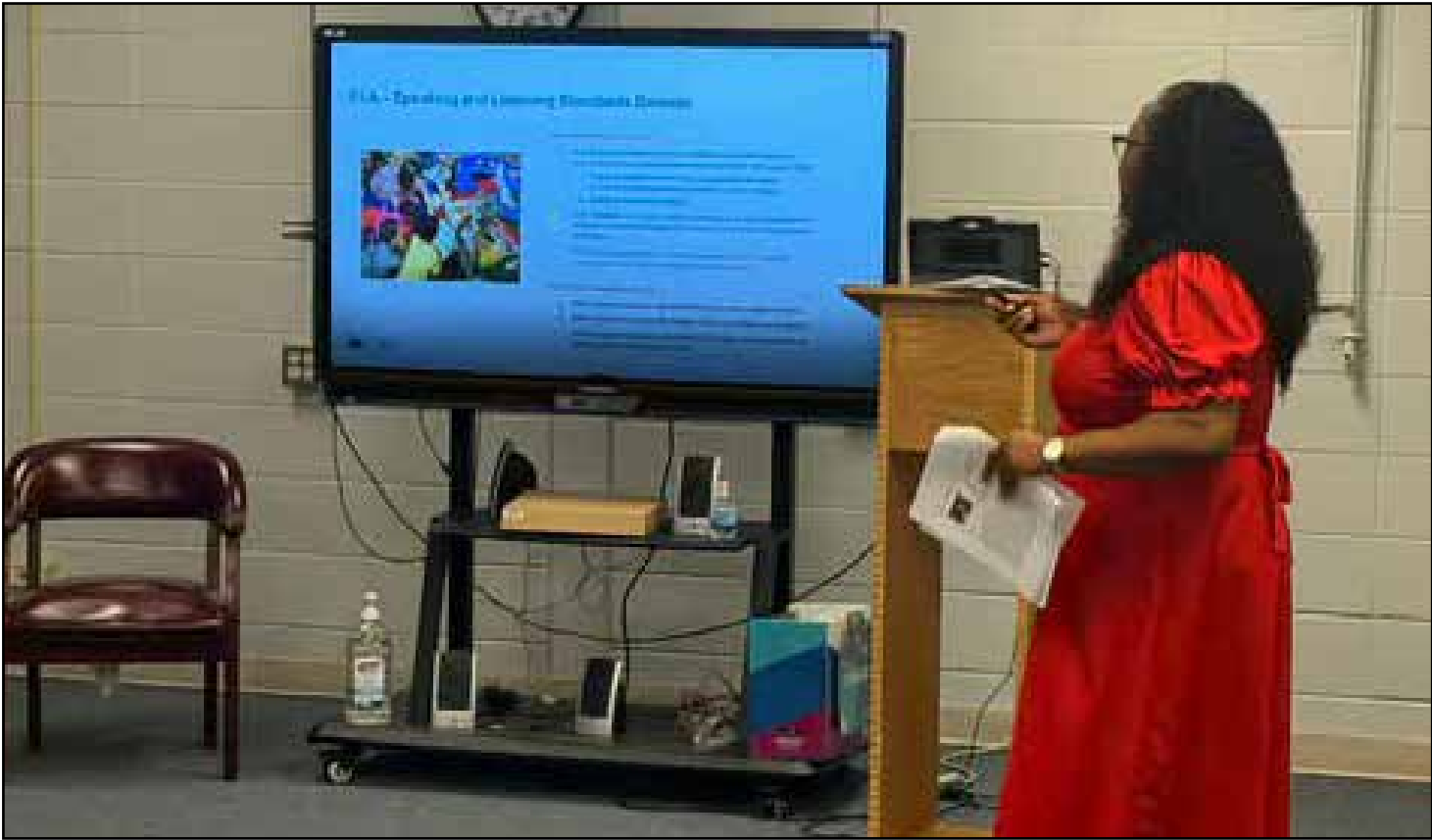
Early childhood education is a priority for the Mississippi Department of Education, and the Canton Public School District (CPSD) is working to strengthen early learning opportunities for its students.

Shoney Harris, CPSD’s director of literacy and early childhood education, partnered with the Mississippi Department of Education to provide an in-depth look at what high-quality early childhood education should look like in early childhood classrooms.

Harris is committed to helping CPSD scholars develop foundational literacy skills and reach the goal of reading by age five.

The focus on early learning comes as Mississippi continues to see progress in kindergarten readiness and early literacy. In 2024, 67.2% of students in Mississippi’s Early Learning Collaboratives met the state’s end-of-year kindergarten readiness benchmark, compared with 59% in 2015. Additionally, 63.8% of Mississippi kindergarteners met the state’s end-of-year literacy target in spring 2024, up from 57.7% in spring 2022.

Mississippi also continues to emphasize quality in its publicly funded preschool programs. During the 2024-25 school year, 8,076 children were en-



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rolled in Mississippi’s state-funded preschool programs, and the state met all ten of the National Institute for Early Education Research’s quali-

ty standards benchmarks. CPSD is committed to ensuring teachers have the content knowledge, resources and instructional

strategies needed to support student success and build a strong foundation for students’ academic journeys.



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On the Shelf: celebrating Hispanic writers and readers

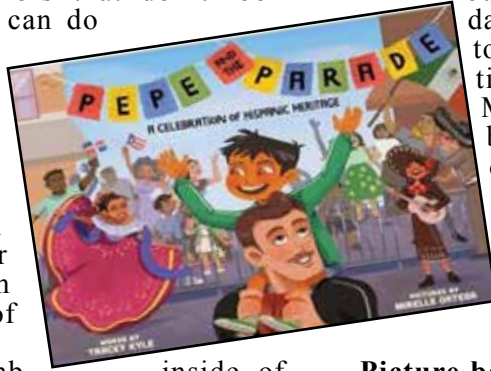
By Courtney Warren

We can't read in an echo chamber. There is nothing wrong with reading things we adore, but there are so many worlds to explore through the beauty of books. By reading authors that don't look like us, we can do

as Atticus Finch recommends, "You never really understand a person until you consider things from his point of view...Until you climb inside of his skin and walk around in it." With it being Hispanic Heritage Month, I'd love to talk about books written by Hispanic authors. According to the National Museum of the American Latino, Hispanic Heritage Month is a month-long celebration of Hispanic and Latino history and culture. While we celebrate Hispanic and Latino communities beyond this month, from September 15 to October 15, we give extra recognition to the many

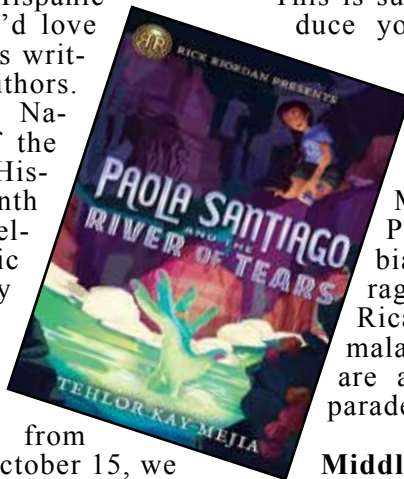
contributions made to the history and culture of the United States, including important advocacy work, vibrant art, popular and traditional foods, and much more.

Latinas and Latinos have always held significant roles throughout our country's history, dating all the way back to the American Revolution. Hispanic Heritage Month is important, because it provides an opportunity to celebrate the integral part the Hispanic/Latino community has had in growing and strengthening our democracy.



Picture book: *Pepe and the Parade* by Tracey Kyle

This is such a fun way to introduce young readers to the Spanish-speaking community! The story follows Pepe as he attends the Hispanic Day Parade. Mexican, Dominican, Panamanian, Colombian, Honduran, Nicaraguan, Chilean, Puerto Rican, Salvadoran, Guatemalan and Cuban cultures are all represented in the parade.

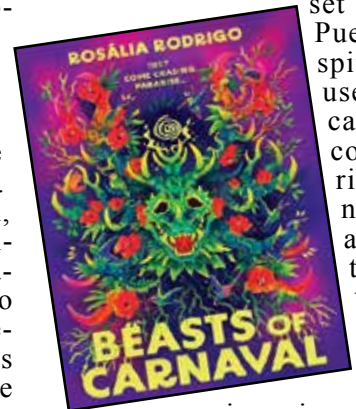


Middle Grade: *Paola Santiago and the River of Tears*

This one is so much fun and is in my middle school library! It's perfect for the spooky season because it tells the story of La Llorona, the weeping woman. Space-obsessed twelve-year-old Paola Santiago and her two best friends, Emma and Dante, know the rule: Stay away from the river. When Paola wants to go test a new telescope and hears something in the reeds, her stargazing evening turns into something she didn't expect at all.

Beats of Carnival by Rosalia Rodrigo

This one is on my list! First, the cover is stunning, and, second, the premise sounds so so good. According to the publisher, this sweeping historical fantasy set in a lush, Puerto Rico-inspired world, uses magical realism to combine Caribbean carnival culture and the mythology of the Taino - the Indigenous people of the region - in a gripping exploration of community, reclamation, and healing in defiance of a violent past.



Visgarra receives MSU Presidential Endowed Scholarship



Mississippi State University President Mark E. Keenum (center) is pictured with 2026-27 Presidential Scholars (l to r), front row: Kate James, Elizabeth Simpson, Maylee Gilmer, (President Keenum), Jacob Roark, Morgan Cheatham and Robert "Mac" Anderson; middle row: Justina Visgarra, Avi Anthony, Lincoln Morrison, Jackson Bacon, Sidney "Lee" McNeil, Elizabeth "Ellie" Kimble and Alexandra "Sev" Rieke; and back row: Samuel "Mason" Cordell, Nathan Williams, Brady Pure, Crosby Petro, Trevor Scott, Haratio Keys and Silas Walker.

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Canton HSEP students visit Nissan as part of career preparation



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Students in the Canton Public School District (CPSD) High School Equivalency Program (HSEP) recently visited Nissan Canton for an educational and career-focused experience. The visit was designed to help stu-

dents explore career opportunities in their community and consider their options after earning their high school equivalency credentials. CPSD's HSEP emphasizes three pathways for students after graduation: entering the workforce, enrolling

in a community college or university, or enlisting in a branch of the U.S. military. The district encourages students to view graduation as the beginning of their next chapter and to begin planning for their futures through the pro-

gram's "Three E's to Success": Enter, Enroll and Enlist. The Nissan visit gave students an opportunity to learn more about local career opportunities and gain firsthand insight into potential pathways in the workforce.

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School district reminds drivers to stop for school buses



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Fordis named Canton Career Center Teacher of the Month



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Drivers are reminded that passing a school bus with its stop sign extended is a serious violation of the law and puts students' lives at risk. Drivers traveling through school zones are encouraged to remain alert, follow posted speed limits and avoid distractions such as cell-phones. Drivers should also watch

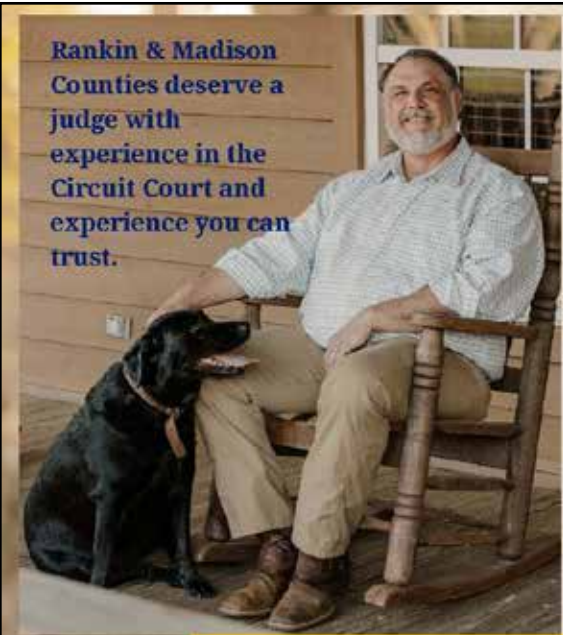
carefully for students waiting at bus stops or walking to and from school, particularly during arrival and dismissal times. The Canton Public School District encourages residents to share the safety reminder with family, friends and neighbors to help create safer school zones and protect students and staff.

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Canton Career Center has named Lindsey Fordis its Teacher of the Month. Fordis was recognized for her commitment to her students and the career center. She is described as a professional and effective instructor who communicates clearly, listens thoughtfully and approach-

es situations with patience and respect. Fordis is also recognized for her willingness to assist others and for the positive relationships she has developed with her students. According to the Canton Career Center, Fordis leads by example and inspires her students through her dedication to teaching and learning.

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Madison County Young Professionals announces 2026-27 board



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The Madison County Business League & Foundation has announced the inaugural 2026-27 Madison County Young Professionals Board of Directors.

Since its organization in 2016, interest in the Madison County Young Professionals program has grown, according to the organization. The Madison County Business League & Foun-

dation has transitioned the program's steering committee into a board of directors, creating a smaller leadership team to guide its next chapter.

Madison County Young Professionals provides emerging young leaders and entrepreneurs with opportunities to build relationships, serve the community and engage with business, political and civic leaders. The program also focuses on professional devel-

opment for Madison County's future leaders.

Serving on the board are Peyton Brown, vice chair, Huntington Bank; Bethany Stanfill Ricks, secretary-treasurer, BSS Global; Jamie Lake, immediate past chair, BankPlus; and Ron Dixon, chair, Atmos Energy.

Other board members are Carter Clarke, Tellus Operating Group; Gabby MacNabb, Entergy; Emily

Harrison, Madison County Economic Development Authority; Betsy Dowell, Century Construction; Abbey Wennerlund, Birdsong Construction; Amanda Green, Nissan North America; Wilson Nichols, Argent Wealth; Brady Power, Trustmark Bank; Sammy Brown, Brown Legal Group; Hugh Warren, Jones Walker; Wes Neely, Guaranty Bank; and Whit Mills, Mills Contracting.

CA junior high cheerleaders earn second place at MAIS competition



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Canton Academy's (CA) junior high cheerleaders recently earned second place in the Junior High Non-Tumbling Small Division at the 2026 MAIS Spirit Competition.

The Panthers were recognized for their performance at the competi-

tion, with the team's finish highlighting the hard work and dedication of the cheerleaders throughout the season.

Canton Academy congratulated the junior high cheerleaders on their accomplishment and for representing the school at the competition.

Jonathan Dixon named new CMU commissioner

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Jonathan Dixon, a longtime Canton resident and 2005 Canton High School graduate, is serving as a new commissioner for Canton Municipal Utilities (CMU).

Dixon currently serves as deputy director of information technology at the Mississippi Development Authority, where he provides leadership for the agency's technology operations and initiatives. His career has focused on information technology and public service, with an emphasis on supporting effective government, innovation and community development.

Dixon said his connection to Canton extends beyond being a resident. Canton is his hometown, and he remains invested in the city's growth and the well-being of its residents.

He also serves as a minister at Andrew Chapel Missionary Baptist

Church, where faith and service are important parts of his work in the community.

As a CMU commissioner, Dixon said he is committed to listening, learning, asking questions and working collaboratively to help ensure Canton Municipal Utilities provides reliable service while responsibly managing the resources entrusted to the utility.

Dixon said his professional background in technology and public service, combined with his connection to Canton, gives him a perspective that can contribute to the work of the commission.

His goal, he said, is to serve the people of Canton and work toward a stronger future for the community while leading with integrity, accountability and a commitment to making a positive impact in Canton and throughout Mississippi.



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Canton woman celebrates 100th birthday



All photos Special to The Canton News

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Parkway Health and Rehab celebrated a milestone with Nell Wagner, who turned 100 years old on September 10. Wagner celebrated her birthday surrounded by family, friends and the Parkway Health and Rehab team. At

her request, the celebration featured a Western hoedown theme, with family members and staff dressing accordingly. Wagner has spent her life devoted to her family and hard work. As a stay-at-home mother, she also helped on the family farm and worked in the

cotton fields, contributing to her family's livelihood. Canton Mayor Tim Taylor and Police Chief Eugene Luckett attended the celebration and presented Wagner with an official 100th Birthday Certificate in recognition of her milestone.

The Mississippi Health Care Foundation also honored Wagner with a bouquet of roses, her favorite flowers. The celebration brought together family, friends and caregivers to recognize Wagner's century of life and the legacy she has built.

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CPSD thanks Alpha Kappa Alpha chapter for voter registration efforts



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The Canton Public School District (CPSD) thanked the Upsilon Upsilon Omega Chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority Inc. in Canton for assisting eligible high school

seniors with voter registration. The district expressed appreciation for the chapter's time and service and its commitment to promoting civic engagement in the community.



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Canton public school librarians attend Mississippi library conference



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Canton Public School District librarians recently took part in the Mississippi Library and Media Professionals conference, gaining new ideas and resources to bring back to their school libraries.

The free conference is held in three Mississippi cities — Canton, Oxford and Hattiesburg — giving library professionals from across the state opportunities to learn from one another and build professional connections. The conference program included

professional development sessions for K-12 school and public librarians. Topics included new programming ideas, curriculum connections and literacy resources that librarians can incorporate into their schools. Canton Public School District librarians also had the opportunity to

meet with library vendors and learn about products and services designed to support school library programs. The conference provided the librarians with additional resources and ideas as they continue developing programs and services for students throughout the district.

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Reuben B. Myers School thanks Parker Hannifin for backpack donation



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Reuben B. Myers School of Arts and Sciences extends its thanks to Parker Hannifin Corp. for its generous donation of backpacks to support students. School officials expressed their appreciation for the company's contribution and support of the school community.

Canton High School honors Class of 2027 volleyball seniors



Special to The Canton News

Canton High School honored its Class of 2027 volleyball seniors during a special Senior Night celebration. The event recognized the seniors' hard work, commitment and dedication to their school and community throughout their volleyball careers. The school expressed its appreciation for the seniors and their contributions to the volleyball program. As they prepare for their next chapters, the Canton High School community wishes them continued success and encourages them to pursue excellence in all their future endeavors.

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The MCBL&F announces Madison County Young Professionals Board of Directors



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The Madison County Business League & Foundation (MCBL&F) is pleased to announce the inaugural 2026–27 Madison County Young Professionals Board of Directors. Since its founding in 2016, the group has grown. To support that growth, MCBL&F has transitioned the group from a committee to a Board of Directors, creating a smaller leadership team to guide its next chapter.

Madison County Young Professionals provides young professionals and entrepreneurs with opportunities to build relationships, serve the community and engage with business, political and civic leaders. The program invests in the professional development of Madison County’s future leaders.

Seated (l to r): Peyton Brown, Vice Chair, Huntington Bank; Bethany Stanfill Ricks, Secretary Treasurer, BSS Global; Jamie Lake, Immediate Past Chair, BankPlus; Ron Dixon, Chair, Atmos Energy. Middle (l to r): Carter Clarke, Tellus Operating Group; Gabby MacNabb, Entergy; Emily Harrison, MCEDA; Betsy Dowell, Century Construction; Abbey Wennerlund, Birdsong Construction; Amanda Green, Nissan North America; Wilson Nichols, Argent Wealth.

Standing (l to r): Brady Power, Trustmark Bank; Sammy Brown, Brown Legal Group; Hugh Warren, Jones Walker; Wes Neely, Guaranty Bank; Whit Mills, Mills Contracting.

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Simple summer energy tips from Canton Municipal Utilities

Small changes can help lower summer energy use.

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Clean or replace filters monthly so your A/C can run efficiently.

2

Set the thermostat wisely

Choose the highest comfortable temperature to reduce usage.

3

Use fans

Circulate cool air with ceiling or box fans, but turn them off in empty rooms.

4

Block the sun

Close blinds, shades and curtains during the hottest part of the day.

5

Seal air leaks

Use weather stripping or caulk around doors, windows and ductwork.

6

Use a programmable thermostat

Help control costs by adjusting temperatures around your schedule.

Stay comfortable this summer while helping keep your energy use under control.

Canton Municipal Utilities

MDE conducts new writing standards professional development



All photos Special to The Canton News

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The Mississippi Department of Education (MDE) held a professional development session to share updates and outline next steps for writing instruction for administrators and teachers in the Canton Public School District. The session included a comprehensive overview of the changes

being implemented in writing assessments to help educators prepare for new standards. MDE shared essential resources to support teachers in this transition, including sample writing responses that exemplify expected student outcomes, detailed rubrics for evaluating student work, and grade-level

writing checklists that outline criteria for successful writing at each grade. These resources are designed to standardize writing instruction and assessment across the district. Canton Public School District leadership emphasized the importance of keeping all staff informed about adjustments to the writing assessment

process. They noted that students can earn up to twelve points on the end-of-year state assessment, underscoring the importance of effective writing instruction. By equipping teachers with these tools and insights, CPSD aims to enhance student performance and ensure a smooth transition to the new writing assessment framework.

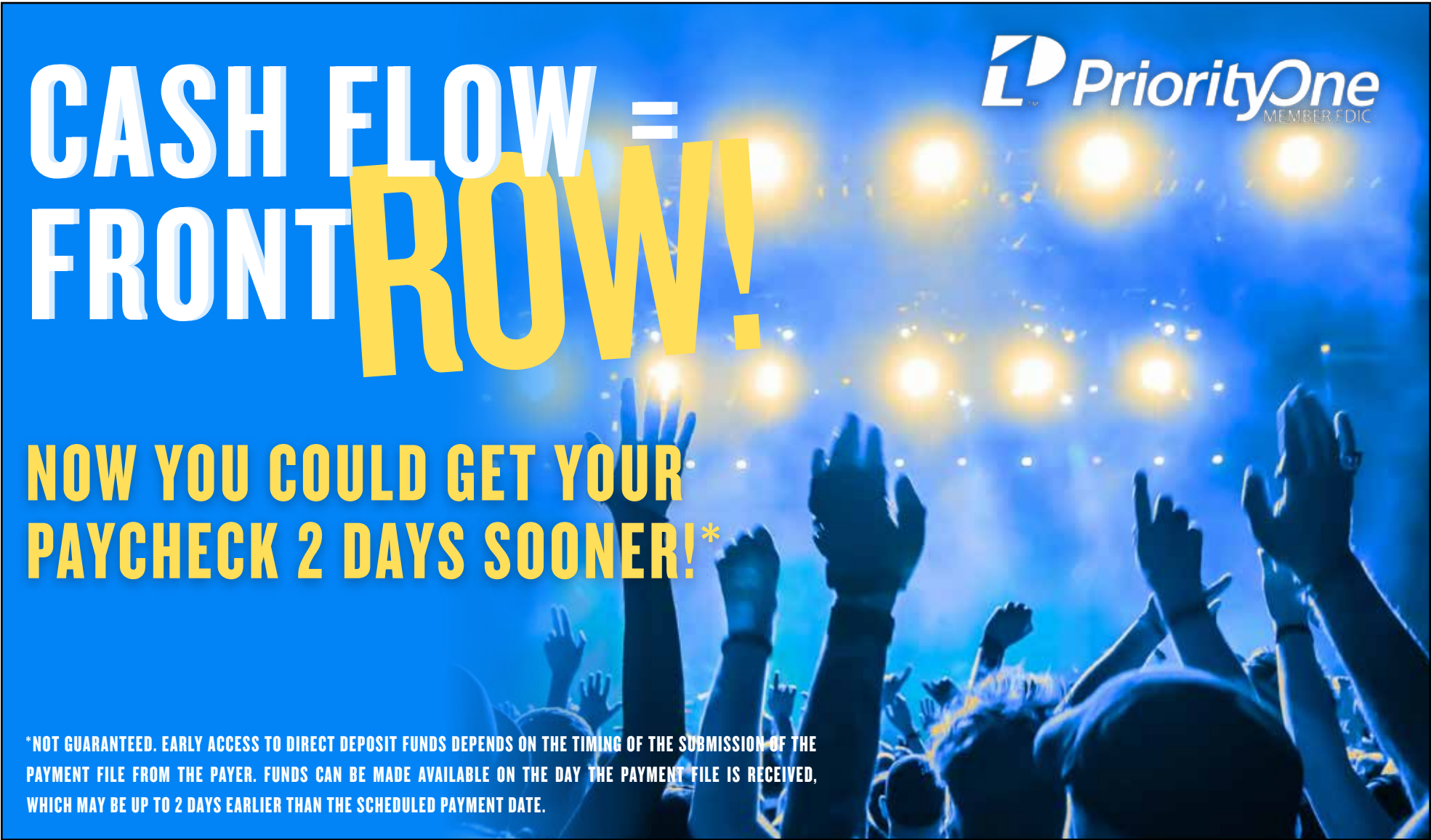
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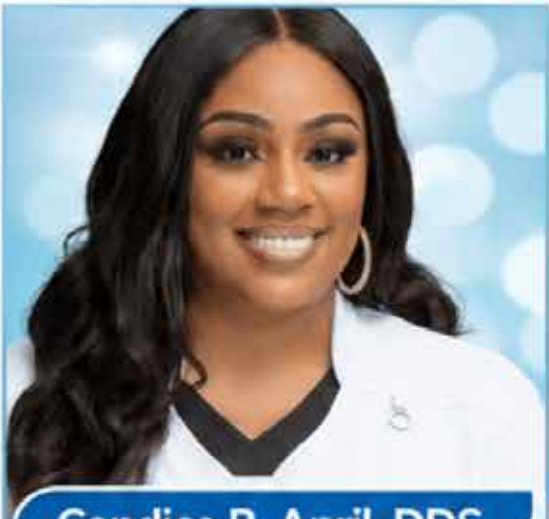
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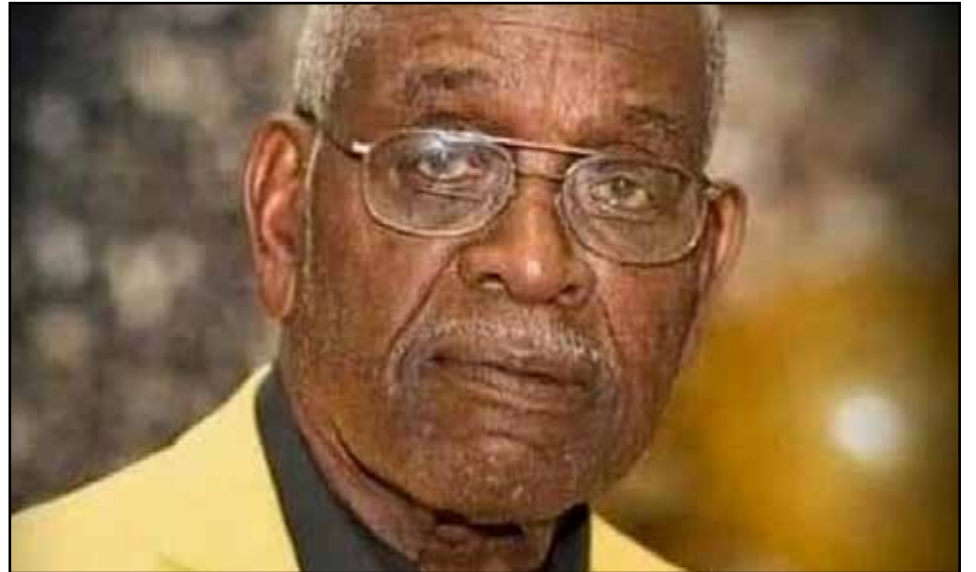


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Canton veteran John Wesley Henry celebrates 107th birthday



All photos Special to The Canton News

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John Wesley “John the Baptist” Henry celebrated his 107th birthday Sept. 30, marking more than a century of life and history in Madison County.

Born in Madison County on Sept. 30, 1919, Henry has witnessed more than 100 years of change while building a legacy of military service, community involvement, faith and music.

In 1942, Henry enlisted in the U.S. military and was deployed to Eu-

rope in support of the Allied war effort during World War II. He was honorably discharged in 1945 and returned to the Canton area. Two years later, in 1947, he married Catherine Griffin.

Henry went on to build a life rooted in the Canton community. He worked for Presto Manufacturing, Canton Public Schools and the City of Canton as an essential service employee.

Faith and music also have played important roles in his life. Known

affectionately as “John the Baptist,” Henry served as a deacon at Mount Olive Missionary Baptist Church and was a member of the Canton Southernairs for more than 60 years.

His family has grown across the generations. When the Mississippi Senate honored Henry in 2025, Senate Resolution 138 noted that he had 12 children, 38 grandchildren, 71 great-grandchildren and 31 great-great-grandchildren.

The Mississippi Senate formally recognized Henry’s life and service

in April 2025, honoring the Canton World War II veteran for his contributions to his country and community.

At 107, Henry remains a remarkable living connection to more than a century of Madison County history.

The Canton-Madison County Historical Society wishes Henry a happy 107th birthday and expresses its appreciation for his military service and many decades of contributions to the Canton community.

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Letter from the editor: Book festivals and the beauty of creativity

By Courtney Warren

The Mississippi Book Festival recently took place, and it was just as magical as always. The lawn of the Capitol was filled with book vendors, authors, nonprofit organizations, and more as the push for literacy continues. I look forward to it every year, and this year was just as wonderful.

I started my day off listening to Kate McKinnon, who addressed a full sanctuary as she talked about the magic of her book *The Millicent Quibb School of Etiquette for Young Ladies of Mad Science*. I had no idea she'd written a book, so when my best friend Lindsay said we had to go, I naturally purchased every book in the series.

This did not disappoint in the slightest. What I loved the most about her panel was that she couldn't stay seated and on stage. Every few minutes, she was up and walking around, specifically looking for young readers in the audience. It was such an authentic interaction.

There were two younger girls in the pew in front of us, and when McKinnon announced that not only was the third and final book in the trilogy releasing in a few days, because of the festival, we were able to purchase it right then. The two girls began bouncing in their seats and tugging on their mom's sweater in excitement. It was so awesome! It really showed the impact of a good story.

As McKinnon walked around the sanctuary asking about hobbies and favorite reptiles, not a single child mentioned gaming, their phones, or the like. It was refreshing, truly.

After getting our books signed, the next panel we attended was Love, Identity, and the Harlem Renaissance. I originally attended because I was most excited to hear Victoria Christopher Murray, who wrote *Harlem Rhapsody*, but was also excited to listen to her in conversation with journalist and activist George M. Johnson.

Johnson wrote *All Boys Aren't Blue*, and, for this particular panel, he talked about his new book *Flamboyants: The Queer Harlem Renaissance I Wish I'd Known*. Let me tell you, so much of what I learned about the Harlem Renaissance was not taught to me within the walls of Delta State University.

The two authors talked about the research that went into their books, as well as the importance of the art they create and how it impacts the world around them. I oftentimes forget that writing is an art form, even as I sit here and write now. In the age of AI, we truly are losing our abilities to create, which is heartbreaking.

Johnson and Murray both talked about spending hours sifting through the letters of W.E.B. Du Bois and others to learn more about the time period. They both laughed at the gos-



sip shared among Langston Hughes and the receivers of his letters. Did you know he sent a fruit basket to the wedding of Countee Cullen and Yolande Du Bois because it was an open secret in the community that Cullen was a gay man? Hughes later joked about the gift in a letter to Zora Neale Hurston! It makes me wonder what will happen decades from now, as we have moved from letter writing and even from writing our own statuses or captions, and are more focused on AI doing the writing for us.

If anything, this was just another reminder that we need to fight this literacy crisis and ensure we are all not only reading, but writing, as well. Even if you are just writing

your own caption for a photo, avoid clicking the buttons. We are already seeing evidence of a loss of creativity and cognitive ability due to AI usage, and specifically generative AI.

All of that to say, I encourage you to create something.

Go to the Madison County Library System Canton branch, and check out one of the books I mentioned.

Visit with the people of the historical society or with Canton Tourism, and listen to them tell you the history of our town. Let that give you inspiration as you take your next walk through the square.

There is magic in our community and in our stories. We just need to grab it with both hands and not let go.

Canton aldermen approve school budget request, housing rules and production deal

Special to The Canton News

The Canton Mayor and Board of Aldermen addressed municipal health insurance, public school funding, rental housing regulations, infrastructure projects and a film production agreement during regular meetings on September 1 and September 15 at Canton City Hall. Led by Mayor Tim C. Taylor, the Board handled agendas covering routine financial approvals, equipment acquisitions, departmental personnel matters and interlocal cooperation agreements.

During the September 1 meeting, officials accepted a resolution approving the millage rate and budget request of \$30,829,285.59 for the Canton Public School District's 2026-27 fiscal year.

The City selected United Health Care with PreMed Option 1 as its health insurance provider and ratified the employment agreement for the City attorney. Aldermen also passed an amended ordinance setting registration requirements, administrative regulations, enforcement penalties and standards for rental housing units within Canton.

In public safety and administrative actions on September 1, the Board accepted fire equipment purchased by

the Fire District, including an all-terrain vehicle, trailer and fire skid. The City authorized a contract with Application Data Systems Inc. to provide Police Department services featuring a \$5,500 setup fee and \$4,045 monthly service fee. Additional actions included purchasing \$17,990 in mobile shelving from Nationwide Shelving for Court Service, reimbursing a

Extension and Mississippi Homemakers Volunteers Inc.. Travel was authorized for Dr. Chuonna Anderson to attend the Fall Municipal Clerk Conference in Natchez from October 28 through October 30, as well as conference travel to Flowood from December 9 through December 11 for Anderson, Tiffany Anthony, Kajwana Davis and Ladrena Wise.

study land use and infrastructure in the South Canton Parkway Growth Area, with final approval scheduled for October 6. The City approved Task Order No. 34 with Waggoner Engineering for strategic services and funding assistance at an hourly rate not to exceed \$125,000. Officials also approved a final pay request to R&C Services for drainage repairs on Adeline Street and Johnson Street, along with a resolution declaring a retention pond in the Jody Drive vicinity a threat to public health and well-being.

Interlocal and community actions on September 15 included approving a cooperation agreement with Madison County to pave a portion of North Old Canton Road from Yandell Road to Highway 51 using County term bid contractors. The Board authorized the use of the Community Center for a movie production from September 28 through December 4 at a rate of \$1,000 per day. A public hearing was held, and the Board entered executive session to discuss three litigation items, three business relocation or expansion matters, six Police Department personnel issues and two Landfill Department personnel matters.

\$100 pavilion rental deposit to Jaleesa Seals, approving a letter to Commissioner Simmons regarding blocks on Adline Street, and designating City officials under the MOSTF program.

The Board approved several consent items on September 1, including an in-kind donation of the Multipurpose Complex for an October 15 meeting of the Mississippi State University



Executive session discussions covered land transactions, three litigation matters, and individual personnel matters across the Fire, Public Works, Landfill and Police departments.

At the September 15 meeting, the Mayor and Board considered preliminary plans for Waggoner Engineering's Draft Task Order No. 33 to

Madison County Youth Leadership names 2026-27 steering committee



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The Madison County Business League & Foundation has announced its 2026-27 Madison County Youth Leadership Steering Committee. The committee will help plan program days and guide participants

throughout the year. Madison County Youth Leadership introduces students to careers and industries across the county while developing leadership skills and encouraging participants to apply what they learn in their communities.

Members of the 2026-27 steering committee are, seated from left, Dr. Bronwyn Martin, Holmes Community College, and Rochelle Thompson, American Lung Association; standing from left, Ellis Wise, Madison County Business League & Foundation; Kel-

ly Coleman, Staffers; Melanie Greer, EXIT Realty Collective; Kacie Sanford, Renasant Bank; CJ Fisher, Origin Bank; and Jan Collins, Madison County Business League & Foundation. Chamar McDonald, Neel-Schaffer, is not pictured.

The Business Office holds annual procedural training



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The Business Office held its annual procedural training, providing information and important updates to support the district's financial stability and smooth operations.

Led by new Business and Finance Director Tracy Lewis, the training emphasized collaboration and adherence to established guidelines and procedures to help prevent future issues.

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Every few months, dedicated volunteers roll up their sleeves and give their time to help keep Canton clean, welcoming and beautiful. Recently, volunteers with Keep Canton Beautiful and Keep Mississippi Beautiful were out in our community picking up litter, tidying public spaces and showing some love for the place we

all call home. Their work may happen quietly, but it certainly doesn't go unnoticed. Thank you to the volunteers who continue to invest their time and energy in Canton. Their example is a great reminder that keeping our community beautiful is something we can all take part in—one clean street, public space and act of service at a time.

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A Blast from the Past: Henry Gwinner's Store on the Canton Square



Courtesy of the Canton-Madison County Historical Society

Recently, the Canton-Madison County Historical Society was contacted by Mrs. Sarah Caudell of Clearwater, Florida, who reached out with an original photograph and historical materials connected to one of Canton's early merchants, Henry Gwinner.

Here is the special story behind how these materials came into Mrs. Caudell's care.

After Henry Gwinner's granddaughter, known as "Muggee" Lutz, and her husband, Clovis Lutz, moved to Clearwater, Florida, they became good friends with Mrs. Caudell.

Knowing of Mrs. Caudell's love of history, the Lutzes gave her an original photograph of the interior of Henry Gwinner's store in Canton, along with information about the family and business.

Mrs. Caudell carefully preserved these pieces of Canton history. Many years later, she remembered

where their story began and reached out to share them with the CMCHS.

The photograph she preserved is remarkable.

The interior view allows us to step inside Gwinner's store. The long, narrow establishment is crowded with merchandise. Glass cases and counters line the room, shelves rise toward the ceiling, and goods occupy nearly every available space. Produce, barrels, packaged goods and household merchandise can be seen throughout, while a number of people stand among the counters and displays.

The photograph itself has its own history. Written on the back of its mount are the words "H. Gwinner's Store" and "Picture taken 1869 in Canton, Miss." Another surviving marking identifies Weatherford & Swan, Photographers, Canton, Miss.

If the handwritten date accurately records when the photograph was taken, it provides an extraordinarily early view of Gwinner's Canton business, during the period of Re-



all photos Special to The Canton News

construction only a few years after the Civil War.

After receiving Mrs. Caudell's photograph, we were also able to pair it with an exterior image familiar to the CMCHS: a view of Gwinner's storefront published curated for the Society's 2004 pictorial history of Canton.

To the best of our research, Gwinner's store was located on the north side of the Canton Square.

The exterior photograph brings the business to life from another perspective with Mr. Henry Gwinner standing out front with another unidentified man. Produce fills open bins and crates along the sidewalk, merchandise and advertisements surround the entrance, and two men stand amid the displays. And Gwinner's apparently offered Cantonians more than groceries and household goods.

An April 14, 1877 notice in Canton's American Citizen announced that the "Little Giant" Soda Fountain was in operation for the season "AT GWINNERS."

For five cents, customers could purchase a large glass of soda, advertised with the wonderfully Reconstruction-era phrase "the spirit of '76." The notice praised the machine as a "model of beauty" and said it offered advantages "just suited for the times and seasons."

These surviving pieces - the photograph preserved by the Gwinner family and Mrs. Caudell, the exterior image preserved by the CMCHS, the photographer's imprint, the handwritten identification, and the 1877 newspaper notice - begin to reconstruct the story of a business that was once part of daily life on the Canton Square.

Henry Gwinner himself was eventually laid to rest here in Canton, where his grave marker survives today.

But the merchant is only half of the story.

Before Henry Gwinner became a Canton businessman, his life had taken a very different course during the Civil War. His surviving mil-

cont. on page 21

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DAR members help fourth graders celebrate Constitution Day



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Fourth-grade students welcomed three members of the Daughters of the American Revolution to help celebrate Constitution Day on September 17. Suzanne Avent, Betsy Sligh and Davin Ford visited with students as part of the celebration. Ford also shared “Ring the Bell” with the students, and each student received a gift bag to commemorate the occasion. Constitution Day and Citizenship

Day is observed each year on September 17 to commemorate the signing of the U.S. Constitution in Philadelphia on September 17, 1787. The National Archives encourages educators and students to use the day as an opportunity to learn more about the Constitution and government. The Daughters of the American Revolution, commonly known as DAR, is a nonprofit organization founded in 1890 whose mission includes historical preservation, education and patriotism. The organi-

zation has a particular focus on educating young people and provides programs and resources for students and teachers. DAR also played a direct role in establishing Constitution Week. In 1955, the organization petitioned Congress to designate September 17-23 as Constitution Week. Congress adopted the resolution, and President Dwight D. Eisenhower signed it into law in 1956. For fourth-grade students, visits like this provide an opportunity to

connect classroom lessons about the Constitution and American history with members of their local community. DAR’s educational programs include Constitution Week activities and resources designed to encourage students to learn about American history, government and citizenship. The school expressed its appreciation to Avent, Sligh and Ford for spending time with the students and helping them celebrate Constitution Day.

READ OUR LATEST

Columnist

Janiece Austin

Janiece Austin is the author of the newest blog on www.CantonNews.Net.

In 2025, she was selected to serve on the 2024-2025 Mississippi Department of Education (MDE) Mississippi Teacher Advisory Council.

She loves spending time with family and friends.

Her passion is reading and bringing people all walks of life together

Scan here to see her latest blog!

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This Old House: The Priestley Home ca. 1852



Courtesy of Old House Preservation with Randy Paul

Built in 1852 by Dr. James Priestley, the Priestley Home exemplifies antebellum Mississippi residential architecture and stands as one of Madison County's finest examples of period craftsmanship. Originally constructed with four rooms, a grand staircase, and an iconic front porch, the residence was expanded over time with addition-

al wings and rooms, creating the substantial home it is today.

The current restoration, recognized by the Mississippi Historic Trust for Outstanding Restoration, preserves the home's historic integrity while incorporating thoughtful modern conveniences. Every detail was meticulously considered: historically appropriate hardware, reclaimed original dining room doors, restoration of the grand staircase, original architectural ele-



all photos Special to The Canton News

ments, hardwood floors, period plaster work, and historic windows. Structural improvements include new foundation piers, steel-beam reinforcement, and a long-life metal roof.

The residence features four gracious bedrooms with fireplaces, four fully appointed bathrooms with clawfoot tubs and period detailing, and formal entertaining spaces: dining room, music room, parlor, library, and office. A period-inspired kitchen combines origi-

nal character with professional-grade modern function. Outdoor spaces include a screened sunroom, sleeping porch, mature hardwoods, established gardens, greenhouse, and pool.

Situated one block south of Canton's historic downtown, the Priestley Home merges architectural heritage with livable elegance.

A documented masterpiece of Mississippi antebellum architecture and local preservation legacy.

cont. from page 19

A

itary records tell of his work as a saddle maker, his service with Mississippi cavalry, his appointment as a bugler, and an unusual wartime assignment seeking the services of an "honest practical mechanic."

And the connection between the Gwinner family and the Canton Square did not end with Henry.

Something donated to Canton by Clovis Lutz remains on the Square to this very day.

Before coming to Canton, Henry Gwinner served during the Civil War.

Family research preserved with the collection identifies him as a private in Company I, 28th Regiment, Mississippi Volunteer Cavalry. The records indicate that he enlisted in 1862 and was appointed Chief Bugler on July 1 of that year.

He later appears as an acting brigade bugler and among staff and acting staff associated with Jackson's Cavalry Division.

One particularly interesting record dates to February 1, 1864.

Correspondence from the Office of the Chief Inspector of Field Transportation requested that Gwinner be assigned to special service. The reason was his civilian trade: Henry Gwinner was a saddle maker.

The correspondence described him as

thoroughly acquainted with the work required and emphasized the need for an "honest practical mechanic."

Subsequent records place Gwinner on detached service at Demopolis, Alabama, where he served as a foreman.

His military story continued through the closing days of the war. Family research records Gwinner on a prisoner-of-war roll following the surrender of Confederate forces at Citronelle, Alabama, in May 1865, followed by his parole.

Another record places him on a prisoner roll at Grenada, Mississippi, later that month.

Four decades later, Gwinner told part of the story in his own hand.

On April 26, 1905, while residing in Canton, he completed a Certificate of Eligibility for a Confederate Cross of Honor for the United Daughters of the Confederacy. Gwinner recalled entering Confederate service as a private and identified his final position as Chief Bugler, Armstrong's Brigade.

And at the bottom of the document appears something particularly personal:

Henry Gwinner's own signature.

As is often the case with historical records created at different times, there are some discrepancies among the surviving documents concerning dates

and details of his service.

Rather than diminishing their value, these differences remind us why preserving the original records, and comparing them carefully is so important.

The papers shared with us also provide a glimpse into how Henry Gwinner's story survived long after his death.

Among them is a handwritten note dated March 28, 1980, accompanying research into Gwinner's military service. It reads in part:

"Here is Grandfather Henry Gwinner's record ... Lee wanted you to have."

Another notation asks that the material, once read, be "pass[ed] on to Aunt Muggie."

That "Muggie" was Henry Gwinner's granddaughter, Edythe Hollingsworth Lutz (1899-1993), remembered by the family as "Muggee." She was married to Clovis Charles Lutz (1897-1983). Both Edythe and Clovis were buried here in Canton.

Eventually, Muggee and Clovis moved to Clearwater, Florida, where they became friends with Sarah Caudell. Knowing Mrs. Caudell's love of history, they entrusted her with the original photograph of Gwinner's Canton store and the history associated with the family.

Through her generosity, materials that had traveled through the Gwinner family and eventually hundreds of miles away have now been shared with the community where so much of the story took place.

But there is one final twist.

Not everything the Lutz family left behind ever left Canton.

Clovis Lutz donated a watering trough to the City of Canton.

Remarkably, it is still on the Courthouse Square today.

Its purpose has changed with the times. The old trough is now filled with flowers and serves as a planter, maintained by the Canton Garden Club. Generations of Canton residents have passed it—many perhaps never knowing the family story behind this familiar object.

More than a century after Henry Gwinner conducted business in downtown Canton, this familiar object provides a tangible connection between his descendants and the community their family once called home.

The Canton-Madison County Historical Society extends its sincere appreciation to Mrs. Sarah Caudell of Clearwater, Florida, for preserving these materials and for recognizing that their story belonged back in Canton.

Canton High senior begins second term on state student advisory council

Special to The Canton News

Canton High School senior Alexandria Luckett will continue representing her school and community on the Mississippi Department of Education’s State Superintendent’s Student Advisory Council.

Luckett has been selected to serve a second term on the council for the 2026-27 school year. The council brings together Mississippi students in grades 11 and 12, along with first-year college students, to provide input on education and share their experiences with state education officials.

For Luckett, returning to the council provides another opportunity to speak about issues affecting students and offer feedback based on her own experiences at Canton High.

The 2026-27 council includes 144 students from across Mississippi. Members serve as liaisons between the Mississippi Department of Education and their peers and advise State Superintendent of Education Dr. Lance Evans on educational opportunities and state policies.

“The MDE enjoys offering the Student Advisory Council program each year because not only does it give students an opportunity to learn more about Mississippi’s



Special to The Canton News

public education system, but it also allows MDE staff to get direct feedback from students about their school experience,” Evans said.

The Mississippi Department of Education launched the Student Advisory Council in 2019. Each

year, students apply for membership by submitting a cover letter and resume and answering questions about their interest in the council, accomplishments, educational concerns and academic goals.

MDE received nearly 200 applications for the 2026-27 council.

Luckett’s second term will allow her to continue bringing the perspective of a Canton High student to conversations about education at the state level.



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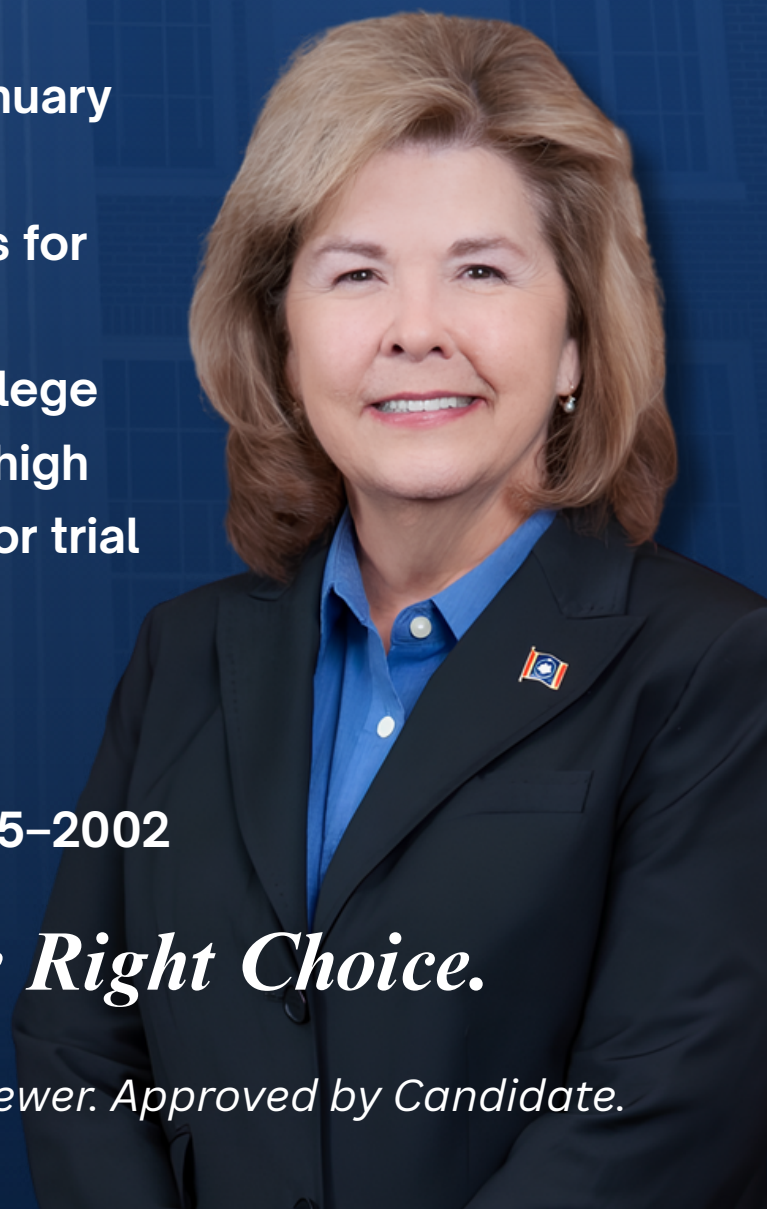
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- Staff member for the National Judicial College
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- Served in private practice of law from 1985–2002



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