

HERALD
BRIEF

Bulldogs fall to Pelicans
in doubleheader

The Holmes Community College Bulldogs fell twice Friday, March 2 to the Nunez Community College Pelicans, 4-3 and 6-3. With the losses, the Bulldogs fell to 6-2. Holmes will host Williams Baptist on Thursday at 1/4 p.m.

In game one, Jeff Crenshaw suffered the loss. He went five innings and gave up three runs on four hits with three strikeouts and walk walks. Anthony Fidanza went 1/3 of an inning.

In game two, Kameron Ferguson suffered the loss. He went 2 1/3 innings and gave up one run on three hits with one strikeout and one walk. Alex Burt went one inning and gave up two runs on one hit while R.J. Pierce gave up one run on two hits with two walks and Morgan Jarabica went 2 1/3 innings and gave up one run on two hits with four strikeouts and one walk.

REVIVALS

SUNNY MOUNT MBC

Sunny Mount M.B. Church in Lexington will hold revival services from Monday, March 12 through Friday, March 16 at 7:30 nightly, with a different speaker each night.

ST. PAUL COGIC

St. Paul Church of God in Christ in Lexington will hold revival services from Monday, March 12 through Friday, March 16 at 7:30 p.m. nightly.

PLEASANT GROVE

Pleasant Grove M.B. Church in Goodman will host its Annual Spring Revival from Wednesday, March 14 through Friday, March 16 at 7:30 nightly. There will be a different speaker each night.

ST. JAMES C.M.B.C.

St. James Community M.B. Church in Lexington will be hosting a three-night spring revival from Monday, March 12 through Wednesday, March 14 at 7:00 nightly. There will be a different speaker each night

Family of slain Lexington man
wants urgency in solving case

By Matthew Breazeale

The family of Robert James wants what anyone wants with the death of a loved one, closure.

Robert James, 56, a Lexington resident, was killed on December 9 at his place of employment, The Wash House on Yazoo Street.

Montrez Jones, 26, was arrested and charged with the murder but Robert's family, siblings Francis James, Tony James and Earl James; daughter Angela Pilgram Brown; and niece Nikki James, say the case is being recklessly mishandled.

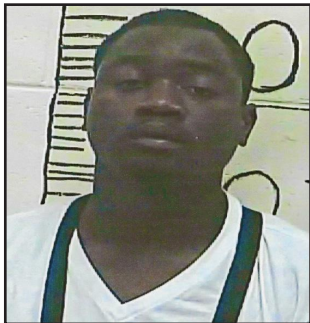
The family spoke with the *Herald* about the circumstances surrounding the case.

"I had received a call saying that there had been a shooting at the wash house, December 9 (2017)," said Francis. "That's on Yazoo Street, over there by Century Hairston Funeral Home."

Francis' ex-husband, Alvin Brown, initially called her saying there had been a shooting at The Wash House.

Family members said the shooting happened between 7:00 and 7:30 p.m. from their understanding.

"After I hung up with (Brown), the sheriff (Willie March) called me, 'What are you doing? Go to Beall Street and see what's going on.' He didn't tell me anything because he really didn't know."



MONTREZ JONES

Robert was employed part time at the washeteria/car wash business, according to family.

"Normally he worked there in the daytime, but what he was doing there that night I can't say for sure," Francis continued. "He worked every day though. You might go by two or three o'clock in the evening and see him picking up paper."

Robert was found by law enforcement and family shot in the back torso six times, according to Francis.

Robert's brother Earl was the first one of their family to arrive at the scene of Robert's shooting and detailed what he saw. "They just had (Robert) covered up," said Earl, who added that Lexington Police Officer Patrick Davis was already on scene. "He wouldn't let me come inside the tape. He said that (Robert) had passed. There was no ambulance or nothing that showed up. I stayed there until 10 o'clock, didn't no ambulance show up."

Angela said that Officer Davis had already started administering CPR. When asked if Davis had given an explanation for cause of death, "he just said (Robert) had been shot," said Angela.

During the investigation Jones was arrested and charged with murder.

Francis said there were two other suspects with Jones at the time of the shooting and were subsequently questioned but were never charged. "They were riding with (Jones)," said Francis.

Jones has since been bonded out of the Holmes-Humphreys Regional Correctional Facility after being held on a \$50,000 bond, according to Warden Barry Rule.

"It was initially a \$100,000 but Judge Marcus Fisher lowered it to \$50,000," said Francis. "(Jones)' lawyer request for a bond hearing, reduction. But we were not notified (about Jones being bonded out) by nobody, Lexington Police Department, justice court, the county prosecutor or nobody...Just out of courtesy you'd think that would have been the right thing to do."

Family members feel the case is not given the same priority as the recent shooting death of a Lexington alderwoman's, Clementene Cooper, son, Brandon Cooper, who was murdered on February 14 and received

wide media attention.

"It seems it's still not a priority," said Angela.

"And then (Lexington Police) Chief Kirklin avoiding us," said Francis, "he don't want to talk. Him and (Lexington Police Investigator) John Newton, you call them on the telephone, they don't answer none of us or talk to us or tell us nothing. It's just like, to them, Robert wasn't important. That's our brother, he's important to us just like Cooper's son was important to her."

"We know the statistics on Holmes County murders," said Angela, "they are slim to being solved or having someone behind bars. We just want them to make it a priority."

Family members who spoke with the *Herald* cite that possible nepotism is at play in the progress of Robert's case.

"(Law enforcement) knows that family (Cooper) just like they know us and they probably feel some type of way because (the suspects) are young kids," said Nikki James, Francis' daughter and Robert's niece. Nikki continued that the two other suspects were present when Jones shot Robert, but were not charged with accessory. "Just like they charged those other two boys (Andreious Johnson, Calvin Gibson, Jr. and Dworne Brown were all charged with capital murder in Cooper's death) with capital murder, I think they should have done the same," Nikki added.

"Harry Greer," one of the suspects according to Nikki, "and Montrez Jones are first cousins. John Newton has a baby by Harry's sister. So they are family related."

Francis said a Mississippi Bureau of Investigations agent was on scene after the shooting but she has had limited contact with him lately. "He said he has a large district and is really short of help but he said 'I hadn't forgot.'"

"We all know Holmes County," said Angela, "looking back at history, all these black on black crimes, and the people acquitted. It's just that, if they're not important enough the case goes unsolved...I'm just saying

fairness, just do your job. Do your job even if he was Donald Trump, do your job. Also it seems that there is just a lot of cover up now, at the scene they said CPR was done. They said an ambulance was called. If you live in Lexington you can hear the ambulance anywhere you live. I heard the shots initially, my husband and I were just coming from a funeral. We were sitting on the bed and we heard the shots."

Angela and her husband live on Jordan Street.

"We heard the shots," Angela continued, "made comments about it then went to sleep. We get a knock on the door, it was my friend girl, telling me that I needed to come with her because she had heard something happened to my father. At that time she took me to the hospital. The hospital had no recollection of anything about him being shot or him coming in. We went to the scene, just the police were there and my father was on the ground, covered up. They said CPR had been done. When you're trying to do CPR, you are supposed to wait until an ambulance gets there, to come in and take over. Then at that time, he would be pronounced dead. From our perspective, there was no ambulance."

"It seems like (law enforcement) have a lot of ties with that family," Angela said, "Jones' aunt is the lawyer (Lexington Prosecutor Pearlene Jones)."

Chief Kirklin said in a separate interview that Pearlene Jones was not serving as prosecuting attorney in this case.

"We had to get an attorney out of Washington County, Willie Simmons," said Kirklin. "Neither Newton nor I (Continued on page 7.)"



The Wash House on Yazoo Street in Lexington is where the family of Robert James said he worked and was ultimately killed after being shot on December 9. The James Family say there is no urgency or priority set on solving his death after wide media attention was given to the shooting death of a Lexington alderwoman's son.

(Photo by Matthew Breazeale)

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Thursday
Sunny
55/36
Precip. Chance
0%



Friday
Sunny
66/50
Precip. Chance
0%



Saturday
Thundershowers
68/55
Precip. Chance
90%



Sunday
Cloudy
65/42
Precip. Chance
20%



Monday
Sunny
59/36
Precip. Chance
0%



Tuesday
Mostly Sunny
60/38
Precip. Chance
10%



Wednesday
Sunny
64/42
Precip. Chance
10%

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