

Lexington native named recipient of Mississippi Rural Physicians Scholarship

Hallie Murtagh, who graduated from Holmes Community College on May 11, was awarded the Mississippi Rural Physicians Scholarship valued at \$30,000 per year for her medical training at the University of Mississippi Medical Center (UMMC) in Jackson. The daughter of Johnny and Cathy Murtagh, she is a native of Lexington.

“Hallie Murtagh is so deserving of the Rural Physician’s Scholarship,” said chemistry instructor Heather Jones. “Born and raised in Holmes County, she is a perfect fit for the medical school scholarship and for serving her community as a physician there. We are very proud of her accomplishments and know she will do well. It was a joy to teach her for the past two years, with her huge smile, great work ethic and always a positive attitude.”

While at Holmes, Murtagh was an Ambassador for the Goodman Campus, part of the Baptist Student Union Lead Team, a member of the Student Government Association and a member of Phi Theta Kappa honor society. She was also named the 2017 Homecoming Queen, Sophomore Class Favorite and as one of the Top Five in Beauty Review both years.

Upon graduation from Holmes, Murtagh will marry her college sweetheart, Bailey Rutledge, before moving to Starkville to attend Mississippi State University. While she pursues her bachelor’s



HALLIE MURTAGH

degree in biological science at MSU, the Mississippi Rural Physicians Scholarship program will provide opportunities and materials for her to prepare her for medical school.

“During the next two years of undergraduate study, the program will provide MCAT study materials, job shadowing opportunities and other materials/opportunities to prepare me for UMMC,” Murtagh said.

Created in 2007, the Mississippi Rural Physicians Scholarship Program (MRPSP) is designed to provide more primary care physicians in rural areas of Mississippi. During medical school, each MRPSP scholar receives \$30,000 per year based on available funding. Consistent legislative support of the MRPSP translates to 60 medical students receiving a total of \$1,800,000 to support their education this fall.

“The Mississippi Legislature celebrates with these Mississippians from across the state in their commitment to improving health-

care for rural Mississippians by becoming rural primary care physicians,” said Buck Clarke, Chairman of MS State Senate Appropriations. In addition to the legislative support, 4 privately funded scholarships are also awarded this year. Other benefits include personalized mentoring from practicing rural physicians and academic support.

Upon completion of medical training, MRPSP scholars must enter a residency program in one of five primary care specialties: family medicine, general internal medicine, medicine-pediatrics, obstetrics/gynecology or pediatrics. The MRPSP Scholar must provide four years of service in a clinic-based practice in an approved Mississippi community of 20,000 or fewer population located more than 20 miles from a medically served area.

MRPSP provides a means for rural Mississippi students to earn a seat in medical school and to earn a \$120,000 medical school scholarship in return for four years of service and learn the art of healing from practicing rural physicians.

Youth sports camp set in Mileston

A kick-off event will be held in Mileston for youth sports ministry, summer camp and feeding program with registration from May 26 through June 4. Youth ages 7 to 18 can register by calling Coach Anthony Givins at 662-450-4188 or Wardell Turner at 662-392-6606.

Camp begins on Monday, June 11 at the Mileston School. Opening Day will feature NFL pro players from Houston and New Orleans Saints.

Hoffman Farm hosts Forestry Field Day

**By Betsy Padgett
Holmes Co. Ext./4-H Agent**

A beautiful day and an interesting site welcomed Holmes and Attala County Tree Farmers to a Forestry Field Day at Hoffman Farm north of Durant off Highway 51 and on the Big Black River owned by Joseph Guess of Pickens.

Dr. Randy Rousseau and Dr. Brady Self, both Mississippi State University Extension Forestry staff, were on hand to make presentations on managing hardwood forests. This was an interesting aversion from the usual Pine management strategies that have been taught at numerous field days in past years. In addition, two unique aspects of this tree farm were visited and especially enjoyed by the youth in attendance.

The first site visited was a planted bottomland hardwood site – that had been planted after the early 2000 tornado that ripped through eastern Holmes County devastating much of Joseph’s

river bottom ancient oaks.

The second site was in the same area, but over many more of his acres – this of naturally regenerated hardwoods. At the first site Dr. Rousseau pointed out that planting hardwoods does not replicate what natural regeneration can do so well. The group, then, moved on to the second site to witness what he had eluded to. It was most interesting and educational to see the comparison.

From those two sites, the group was then treated to unique sites on the place. First, a man-made rock bottom pool (of sorts) possibly constructed by native Americans – a site first discovered by the owner within the past 2 years after another tornadic event on his farm. Then, it was on to what Joseph refers to as his “mushroom” rocks. These large rocks, most 12 to 18 inches thick and 12 ft. long by 8 ft. wide (in irregular shapes), sit atop free-standing soil banks in another area on the farm. Both of these sites contributing to

the pleasure and interest of

spending a day in the forest. Not to be forgotten, was the prescribed burn that had been applied to a site the month prior to the field day and to see the “green” back up from that practice in such a short amount of time.

As is always the purpose of field days, to get to see and experience what is being done on the ground, it was a near perfect “weather” day to be out in the forest and an outstanding offering of diversity and interest to all who came.

Upcoming for August 17, there will be another Forestry/Wildlife educational event/field day starting first at the “new” Extension building in Lexington and continuing to Bowling Green Road for the field work on setting up wildlife cameras and legal feeding sites. There will be more on this event as time draws closer – but mark your calendar if this interests you.

Call Betsy at 834-2795 for more information on this.



Dr. Rousseau is pictured above examining minerals at the base of one of the “mushroom” rocks visited on the Forestry Field Day. Dr. Rousseau is a Forestry Specialist with MS State University.
(Photo by Betsy Padgett)

DURANT NEWS

by Rowena Hill

Prayers continue for William Henry Hathcock, who is a patient in a Jackson hospital and will be undergoing surgery again after he improves.

Family and friends of Noel Wigley were saddened to learn of his death. He had been a resident of an assisted living facility in the Memphis area for some time. Funeral services will be in Lexington. Prayers are for the family. Noel was a goodman and is survived by a loving family and many friends.

The family attended a get together Saturday afternoon at the home of Keith and Lynn (Farmer) Marchant in Winona, in honor of his mother’s birthday and in memory of Lynn’s mother, Mrs. Frankie Farmer. The food was delicious and they had an enjoyable visit. It was sad. We all miss Frankie a lot.

Friends, members and former members of Immanuel Church gathered Sunday at the church for a Homecoming. Former pastor and resident, Daniel Blaylock, brought a very good message to all present. All welcomed them back home. They (Daniel and wife) presented

an enjoyable time of special music.

Prayers are for Judy Bledsoe as she returns home and recovers from recent major surgery in Jackson. All look forward to their return home and recovery. We sure missed them.

Family and friends of Pat Burrell and family are thankful he is improving after an accident at his home that caused him to spend time in a Jackson hospital last week.

Love and prayers are for Mrs. Tom (Cassie) Humphreys. She hasn’t been well. We sure miss them in church and pray all will be well again soon.

It’s good to see the new building by the railroad tracks almost complete. It should be an asset to our town.

All are thankful David Truitt is home recovering from recent surgery in Jackson. We miss him in church. All look forward to his complete recovery.

My sisters, Bessie and Shirley, Aunt Sara Cain Pilgrim, Cousin Janette Cain and two friends from Grenada enjoyed time together at my home Thursday night and Friday.

Learning Manners with the Mayor



Smart Girls of Boys and Girls Club of the MS Delta-Lexington Unit were hosted by Lexington Mayor Robin McCrory (tenth from left) on Saturday, May 19 for a luncheon. The girls were educated on table manners and etiquettes by Janie Harris (seventh from right). The luncheon was hosted at the Corner Deli on the Lexington Court Square.
(Photo submitted)