

WEST REPORT

by
West Civic Club

The West Civic Club held its monthly meeting a week early due to the Thanksgiving Holidays. Our hostesses this month were Leca Dew and Suzanne Bowie. Thank you ladies, you did a very good job.

Our speaker was Ms. Cindy Williams of the Vaiden vicinity. Ms. Cindy and her husband moved into this area from the coast after going through Hurricane Katrina in 2005, where their house was just cosmetically damaged, thirty people, children, dogs and cats, moved in with them since there was no where else for these people to live. Then, the Christmas of 2012, a tornado swept through the middle of their house but, not completely destroying

it. Her husband came home one evening after that and told her they were leaving the coast. Their son took over the oil business that his father was in and they moved to the Vaiden area. There they built a home and just recently bought the old school in Vaiden, and are turning it into a vintage market, located on Highway 51. Vaiden. Stop in to visit with her. Thank you MS Cindy for your very interesting presentation.

Our business for this month pertained to the gathering of names and supplies for our annual Christmas baskets. Each year they are distributed to shut-ins in our area. Our wish is the help make their holidays a little

*Pay Raise

(Continued from page 1.)

In this year of growth, my recommendation sets aside \$116 million, of which nearly half would go to the Rainy Day Fund, bringing our savings account to over \$400 million. This fiscal responsibility should be maintained until we reach the statutory limit of the Rainy Day Fund, which is 10 percent of the state's general fund revenue. This savings would not have been possible without the Financial and Operational Responses That Invigorate Future Years (FORTIFY) Act passed during the 2017 special legislative session. Without the FORTIFY Act, \$55.4 million would have carried over into FY 2019, as beginning cash, and spent, instead of being deposited into Mississippi's reserve accounts at the end of FY 2018. It is remarkable the state finished FY 2018 with a nearly \$124 million surplus, and placed \$118.3 million of that amount into reserve accounts.

This year we must spend \$75 million of our additional revenue on the Public Employee Retirement System (PERS). Although the PERS board raised the rate despite some opposition, the state's funding of that increase remains vital for the health of the pension system, the economic security of our state employees, and the credit rating of the State of Mississippi. I also ask that \$3.5 million be spent towards the Mississippi Highway Safety

Patrol's separate retirement system. Teachers are the men and women who are educating tomorrow's leaders, and they deserve to be better compensated. In this budget, I recommend a \$50 million pay raise for our state's public school teachers phased in over two years. This will be

the second pay raise in five years. Legislative leadership continues to advocate for our teachers, and I look forward to working with the Legislature on this new plan.

The state's correctional officers lag \$4,000 in pay behind the regional average, making it difficult to recruit and retain personnel in our correctional facilities. For that reason I recommend just over \$7 million for the Department of Corrections to bring its employees' salaries in line with our neighboring states. This increase will ultimately make our state's prisons safer for employees, offenders, and the communities where they are located.

I am also proposing that \$1 million go to the Department of Corrections for workforce training programs for those who are incarcerated. Among the best ways to ensure that offenders do not return to prison is to make sure they have the ability to get a job when they leave. Additionally, I recommend that \$6 million go to the first phase of repairing Unit 29 at the Mississippi State Penitentiary, the facility for close custody offenders.

We have the important responsibility to take care of the children in our state's custody. I am asking the Legislature to fund the Mississippi Department of Child Protection Services \$26 million above last year's allocation to provide the necessary resources for these vulnerable children to bring the state in compliance with the court-ordered staffing and technical needs. Of this expenditure, \$400,000 is for retaining social work students who have a desire to go into public service. A stipend will be created for eligible undergraduate and graduate students interested in a career at the MDCPS.

Outdoor Truths

By Gary Miller

What a wonderful time of year to celebrate Thanksgiving. Hunters ought to be the most thankful people on the earth. Every day we can share the outdoors with God's creation should make us a little surer about the existence of someone greater than us. I am thankful to be able to breathe the cool clean air on a fall morning. I am thankful to be able to walk across the fields and through the woods and climb into a tree stand. I am thankful for the warmth of the morning sun. I am thankful for the majestic mountains that

brighter.

Inez Dickerson gave an update on trying to get the East Holmes school marker moved as it a heritage marker for the area.

We want to wish each and everyone of you a Blessed Thanksgiving.

In another effort to retain our best and brightest students, I am proposing an \$8.5 million increase for the Institutions of Higher Learning's Student Financial Aid program. When students stay in state for school, they are more likely to take on a career in the state. To fund the future of Mississippi we must commit these additional resources.

We also strive to retain our state's physicians in Mississippi. The Rural Physician Scholarship Program is one that allows our doctors who want to live and work in rural areas an incentive to do so. I ask that the Legislature allocate \$600,000 to fund and grow the scholarship to cover the rising costs of medical school as well as recruit more students to enroll in the program.

To keep the motoring public safe on our highways, it is important that we fund a trooper school. With nearly one-third of Mississippi Highway Safety Patrolmen eligible to retire today, this \$7 million expenditure is critical. Furthermore, I ask the Legislature devote almost \$1.5 million to the State Crime Lab's Medical Examiner. Currently there are two doctors who conduct over 1,500 autopsies per year, including over 300 homicides that must be investigated. Adding medical examiners will increase the pace of investigations and help bring closure to families who want to know what happened to their loved ones.

I have proposed spending over \$1 million at the Department of Health for disease prevention. With the transmission of syphilis on the rise nationally and Hepatitis A breaking out locally, I am charging the Department of Health to immediately expand efforts to find, treat, and

reach through the valley fog. I am thankful for the opportunity to share a tree with a squirrel or watch a fox find its way back to its den. I am thankful for time alone, away from the man-made things of this world. I am thankful for the opportunity to learn patience and how to be still. I am thankful for living in the country, where you might just see a deer in your back yard.

I am thankful for Steve and Aaron in Missouri, Ed and Jonathon in North Carolina, and the Brigalow's in Virginia. I am thankful for Cheryl, the Corium's, and the Fultz's in my own area. And all the other good people who have helped me enjoy hunting. There are so many others. I am thankful for both friends and strangers who have helped me drag a deer out of the woods. Both have treated me like family. I am thankful

prevent the spread of disease in Mississippi.

A topic that we often do not discuss except in times of tragedy is mental health. To bring this topic into the mainstream and to help those struggling with mental illness, I am asking the Legislature to allocate an additional \$1 million to the Department of Mental Health for community-based services. These services will allow those with certain mental disorders to remain in the community through mobile treatment.

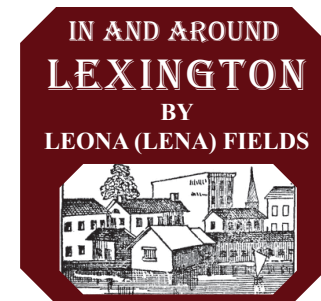
This past August, I called a special session of the Mississippi Legislature to address our state's infrastructure needs. In a strong display of bipartisanship, legislators were able address these needs in a comprehensive manner. During these historic five days, the Legislature passed legislation to infuse over \$1 billion into infrastructure over five years without raising taxes by using revenues from a newly-created state lottery, internet sales, sports betting, and revenue bonds.

Legislation was also enacted to justly divide the BP economic damages between the lower six counties and the remainder of the state.

It has been a historic year in Mississippi, and the future looks bright. What we have accomplished economically is a success, and economic development, job growth, and revenue have all taken a step in the right direction. This Executive Budget Recommendation highlights the needs in our state to keep our citizens and our communities both safe and prosperous. It will enhance our educational institutions, continue to reform our corrections and criminal justice systems, and increase the protection of our foster children. Now

for my parents. They taught me to love God and man. I am thankful for my wife Teresa (who lets me hunt) and my three children, Bethany, Brittany, and Stuart. And my four grandchildren, Kiersten, Kaden, Brogan and Juda. Most of all, I thank God. He is the creator of this beautiful place we call earth.

The two most powerful words in my life for the past 15 years, have been "Thank You." They have not only transformed me and what I do, but each time I have uttered them, they have placed me squarely in the will



Mrs. Leola Montgomery is in or has been back in the hospital. Mr. William Wright is in the rehab in Kosciusko. Mrs. Annie Sago is still at home getting well from the surgery she had a while back.

The weekend before last, there was a wreck near Fred's Dollar store in Lexington. By hearing various people talk, it was one of Florine Hodges' grandsons that was in the wreck.

One of my neighbors donated some material to the Volunteer Homemakers Sewing Club at the Senior Citizens' Feeding Site in Lexington. We thank her very much. This cloth will help us make quilts for needy people in and around Lexington. We are still in need of some quilting frames.

For me, when it rains it

is the time to work together and ensure these recommendations are properly implemented.

of God. The Apostle Paul said in a letter written to the church at Thessalonica, "Give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus." It's amazing to think that perhaps more than any other time, America could have millions of people simultaneously in the will of God on Thanksgiving. I wonder as we give thanks together on that day, where God will turn our hearts. I imagine where ever that is, it will be where His heart is all the time. And I imagine it will be on others. gary@outdoortruths.org

pours. My heating unit needs repairing. It's shooting out cold air. My dryer is not getting hot enough to dry my clothes. It's not fun hanging out clothes in November. But I won't complain. My dryer is over 25 years old.

I guess I am old or just crazy. When it comes to voting, if 13,059 people are registered to vote in Holmes County, it should be 13,059 people votes cast instead of 5,732. No wonder why we're one of the poorest counties in Mississippi. You won't vote to help get who or what we need to better ourselves.

Bridal Registry

Cassie Cothran
Jonathan McClellan
November 17

Peoples Drug Store

Court Square 834-2721 Lexington

EXPRESS GRAIN COMMODITY PRICES						
Crop	CBOT Month	Delivery Period	Futures Price	EGT Basis	Net Price	Change
Wheat	Jul 19	2019 Jun	5.31	-0.22	5.09	-0.01
Corn	Dec 18	2018 Nov	3.65	-0.02	3.63	-0.03
Corn	Dec 18	2018 Dec	3.65	-0.02	3.63	-0.03
Corn	Sep 19	2019 Aug	3.92	-0.07	3.85	-0.02
Soybeans Sidon	Jan 19	2018 Nov	8.92	-0.82	8.10	0.03
Soybeans G'wood	Jan 19	2018 Nov	8.92	-0.59	8.33	0.03
Soybeans G'wood	Jan 19	2018 Dec	8.92	-0.35	8.57	0.03
Soybeans G'wood	Jan 19	2019 Jan	8.92	-0.35	8.57	0.03
Soybeans G'wood	Nov 19	2019 Aug-Sep	9.37	-0.42	8.95	0.00
Soybeans Minter City	Jan 19	2018 Nov	8.92	-0.70	8.22	0.03
Rice	Nov 18		10.890			0.150
Rice	Jan 19		11.055			0.155
Cotton	Dec 18		76.12			-0.130
Cotton	Mar 19		78.29			0.010

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