

Medal of Honor Medallion added to Olive Monument



Pictured above, Bonita Porter Spurlock (at left) and Don Barrett, members of the Milton Olive Memorial Committee, admire on Thursday, March 28, the recently mounted Medal of Honor Medallion, complimenting the U.S. Veteran Affairs authorized medallion placed on the West Grove Cemetery headstone of Pfc. Milton Lee Olive, III. The new medallion has only recently been authorized for mounting on private cemetery grave sites. Olive’s family, on November 1, 2018, was the first family in the United States to receive the newly minted medallion. On special request, U.S. Veterans Affairs Under Secretary for Memorial Affairs Randy Reeves, a Mississippi native, authorized a second medallion to be presented to the city of Lexington and Holmes County to be mounted on the Olive monument located on the Holmes County Courthouse grounds. The G.V. “Sonny” Montgomery Foundation also contributed in having the medallion presented to Olive’s family.

(Photo by Julie Ellison)

AG Jim Hood seeks \$1 billion from Entergy

The United States District Court heard Attorney General Jim Hood’s case against Entergy on Monday, April 1. The case will be tried before District Judge Carlton Reeves. The State intends to prove the following at trial:

Entergy owes Mississippians approximately \$1 billion. When a state grants an electric utility a monopoly, the company agrees to provide its customers power at the lowest reasonable cost available and to open its books. Entergy didn’t keep its promise and violated the Consumer Protection Act by refusing to buy the cheap electricity generated by newer, more efficient independent gas powered generators owned by its competitors, which drove them out of business. At the same

time, Entergy sold its Mississippi ratepayers (almost a half million), including the state of Mississippi, the most expensive power generated from its old, antiquated electrical generating plants and purchased from its affiliates. Entergy’s actions made Mississippi a dumping ground of high-cost electricity. Entergy settled two cases in Louisiana involving similar claims for over \$150 million.

As the result of a meeting between Attorney General Hood and the Department of Justice, the DOJ launched an investigation into Entergy’s conduct at issue in this case. Because of that investigation and this suit, Entergy was forced to cease its anti-trust activity by turning over control of its transmission system and operation of its

generating units to an independent, non-profit entity. This is the reason our electrical rates have decreased, not because of Entergy’s benevolence as it claims.

General Hood stated, “For years, Entergy was more interested in paying billions in dividends and buy-backs to its shareholders instead of its duty to provide its Mississippi customers with electricity at the lowest reasonable cost. I have been fighting this case for a decade. It’s time for Entergy to stop being a poor corporate citizen and pay what they owe Mississippians. They’ve wine and dined legislative leadership to try to stop this case from going to trial, but its day of reckoning has come. I’m confident the facts will prevail in court.”



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DURANT NEWS

by Rowena Hill

Everyone is invited, both men and women, to Ladies Night Out Saturday at 5 p.m. at Kaffay’s. Special guest speaker will be Joy Vaughn McComb of Vaiden. She is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Sindney Vaughn.

The Fifth Sunday Singing at First Baptist Church this past Sunday was very enjoyable. Several folks sang and all enjoyed it. We look forward to the next time. Also, the Easter Cantata will only be presented once at Main Street Baptist Church in Goodman by the choirs from there and FBC Durant.

Mrs. Sammy (Shirley) Higginbotham visited for several days and night last

week with the Hill family. Jay returned home with her after four weeks visiting with this writer and the family. He will return in a few weeks.

Prayers and best wishes are for Mrs. Betty Tullos as she adjusts to being a resident of the Vaiden nursing center. She hasn’t been well for some time. She is missed at First Baptist Sunday school and church services.

Sympathy is extended to the families who have recently lost loved ones during the week. I don’t recall all but Milton Hoover was one of them. I know each will surely be missed by their families and friends. May

God bless and give comfort to each.

We were sorry to learn that Mrs. Diane Busby has been sick for some time. She’s better but not completely healed. She did sing at the 5th Sunday Singing.

Mrs. Warren (Jaime) Conner and family visited Saturday night and Sunday en route from San Diego, California to Nashville, Tennessee. They are training and preparing for a new business. Warren recently retired out from the Navy after 20 years.

Mrs. Stephanie Hathcock of Flowood visited last Friday with friends and family. It was a treat to see her again after so many months nursing her husband, Mr. William Henry Hathcock.

It was also good to see Mr. and Mrs. Martin Frazure.

Hundreds to compete in state’s largest-ever craft championship

Hundreds of Mississippi career and technical students along with aspiring apprentices are heading to Jackson for one of the state’s largest-ever craft competitions.

Slated for April 9-10 at the Mississippi Trade Mart & Equine Center, the annual MCEF SkillsUSA State Championship will feature more than 300 top-notch competitors in conjunction with the Passport to Careers (P2C) Expo and the CTE Counselors Workshop.

The event is part of the Mississippi Construction Education Foundation’s Building Futures initiative aimed at ensuring the state’s need for more craft professionals is met by qualified Mississippians who have graduated from one of the state’s accredited career and technical education programs.

“This is one of the most important weeks of the year,” said MCEF president Mike Barkett. “The reach of this statewide competition will take us to new heights in equipping students to fill the 80,000 craft positions needed in Mississippi by 2020.”

The MCEF SkillsUSA

Championship showcases Mississippi’s most outstanding career and technical education students from high schools and community colleges around the state along with rising apprentices from the construction industry.

Contestants will work against the clock and each other, proving their expertise in occupations such as carpentry, cabinet making, electrical-residential, electrical-commercial, HVAC, masonry, plumbing, sheet metal, welding fabrication, welding-structural, and teamwork.

Events are run with the help of industry partners and contractors, trade associations and labor organizations, and test competencies are set by industry.

“This statewide competition provides a glimpse at the soul and spirit of some of tomorrow’s best craft professionals today,” said Barkett. “Its format places participants in conditions similar to those they will face in their careers, and provides the knowledge and confidence they’ll need to be successful.”

The top three finishers in the secondary and post-

secondary competitions will advance to Louisville, Ky., June 24-28 for the National Leadership and Skills Conference (NLSC), a showcase of more than 16,000 career and technical education students. Meanwhile, winners of the apprenticeship competition will represent Mississippi in next year’s National Craft Championship in Long Beach, California.

“SkillsUSA is one of the largest career and technical student organizations in the United States and a proven talent pipeline for career-ready employees,” said Barkett. “We are proud to partner with them on opportunities that promote individual achievement while addressing the skilled trades job gap with the expertise and talent these careers require.”

The mission of the non-profit MCEF is to promote careers, recruit capable individuals and train a quality workforce for the construction and manufacturing industries in the state of Mississippi. MCEF also offers workforce training and credentialing in construction, industrial maintenance and manufacturing trades.



Top-performing career and technical students from around the state are heading to the Mississippi Trade Mart April 10-11 for one of the South’s largest-ever craft competitions. (Photo submitted)