


Obituaries


HENRY BRAXTON MCNEESE, JR.

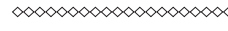
Presbyterian Church. His children knew him as "Daddy," his grandchildren as, "Gran" and "Dee". All who knew him, knew him as a friend. Henry was a story keeper and a storyteller. He possessed the ability to welcome you into any conversation as if you had been there all along, and as if you knew all of the names of family ancestors and towns he was referencing as well as he did. Quick with a joke or a witty (and inappropriate) comment, he did so with an honest and genuine spirit that never meant ill. Beneath his warmth was a fierce fearlessness born out of his tough early years and a life of hard work. His heart was made tender by the grace and humility given by Jesus. Henry earnestly prayed, "Forgive me for my sins." He knew of his brokenness and put his hope in the Blood of Jesus. He always remembered his loved ones in his prayers, and his loved ones will remember him in our hearts.

Henry passed away peacefully at home in the early hours of February 6, 2020, surrounded by loved ones. Henry was born September 4, 1931 to parents Henry B. McNeese and Georgia Belle West McNeese. As the second of four children, Henry spent his childhood years in El Paso, TX. Those early years were a difficult time for his family, both financially and with frequent conflict. So difficult that his mother moved the family back to her hometown of Camden when Henry was age 16. The first evening his family moved back, as they gathered for a celebration dinner his grandmother had prepared, young Henry gazed at the spread before him and asked, "Where are the beans?" At this point his mother burst into tears.

Those early trials and years of working the family farm instilled a resilience and work ethic that Henry maintained throughout his life. I recall always thinking that his back muscles were made of steel every time I hugged him. Henry met Jean Ella Worthey in high school in Goodman and they married in 1953. Having joined the Navy in 1951, Henry became a pilot and rose to the rank of Commander. He piloted P2V5J Neptunes on anti-submarine missions, as well as the famed Hurricane Hunter missions. After resigning his post as an active pilot, Henry and Jean Ella returned to Pickens to continue raising their young family. All told, Henry and Jean Ella raised five children, Hank, Bill, Gaye, Walt, and Chris, 10 grandchildren, and 11 great grandchildren. He was a stable presence in the lives of his children, grandchildren, and great grandchildren. Henry made his living as a funeral director/undertaker, an insurance salesman, and a U.S. Postal mail carrier. Henry's presence, leadership, and service in the town of Pickens has left an enduring mark. He held many cherished titles including: Scout Master, Town Counsel attendee, Election Commissioner, Volunteer Cooperative Observer for the National Weather Service, Sunday school teacher, and Ruling Elder at Pickens

Julie; grandchildren, Taylor and Hayden (Hank), Anna, Emily and Will (Bill), Stephanie and Sarah (Gaye), Melody, Lauren and Colton (Walt); great grandchildren: Riley (Taylor), Caroline and Luke (Anna), Xander, Ezra, and Juniper (Will), Ellie (Emily), Lily Grace and Olivia (Melody), Madelyn and Isabella (Lauren); brothers, John and George; sister-in-law Becky Leverette (Jesse); and loving nieces, nephews, cousins, and friends...and his faithful dog, Katie.

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to French Camp Academy, One Fine Place, French Camp, MS 39745.



KARL ORAN LAMAR HUNTER

Karl Oran Lamar Hunter passed away on Saturday, February 8, 2020, while residing at Durant Nursing Healthcare.

Karl was a resident of Durant, MS for the past six years and was reared in the city of Grambling, LA.

Auditor completes efficiency study of Department of Transportation

Report outlines where MDOT is performing well, areas for cost savings

Press Release

The Mississippi Department of Transportation (MDOT) is operating at a level comparable to other state transportation departments across the nation, but they could save millions of dollars by streamlining operations. This finding, along with the ways MDOT could save taxpayer money, is published in a study of MDOT released by State Auditor Shad White on February 4.

"My hope is that the new MDOT leadership will be able to use this report to make MDOT as efficient as it can be for the taxpayers," said White. "The quality of our roads and bridges is important to

Mississippi families, so we need to maximize the impact of every dollar we spend."

The State Auditor's office was given the responsibility to oversee a performance audit of MDOT as part of the infrastructure legislation passed during the 2018 special session of the Mississippi Legislature. After a formal competitive bidding process, the Auditor's office selected a team of national experts from the firm HKA in Philadelphia, PA, to lead the audit.

"The Auditor's office brought in national experts who had done studies on departments of transportation around the country for

this project," said White. "Working with those experts, we found MDOT is meeting many industry standards and best practices. But in any agency with a billion dollar budget, there will be ways to save money."

The performance audit identified the following areas, among others, as ways to save money:

- Eliminating under-utilized vehicles could save \$13 million.
- Not replacing under-utilized commuting vehicles could save \$895,000.
- Eliminating unnecessary staff in fleet maintenance could save \$600,000 annually.
- Eliminating under-uti-

lized rest areas and managing project schedules better.

The consulting firm also suggested MDOT might be able to save by recruiting more vendors to participate in project bids, because a lack of competition in the bidding process has been proven to increase MDOT project costs.

The audit revealed several functions the department of transportation already does well. Consultant engineers are regularly monitored, and MDOT ensures they deliver the products they are hired to produce. Additionally, the GPS tracking system the department uses in each of its vehicles likely saves the state hundreds of thousands of dollars in fuel costs and other vehicle costs.

The entire report can be found online at the Auditor's website.



DURANT F.B.C.

First Baptist Church of Durant and its WMU will host its Annual Valentine's Banquet on Friday, February 14, at 6:30 p.m. This event is free but donations will be welcome for WMU mission work. Sign up to attend by calling 662-653-3105, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 1 p.m.

2-6,13

HEALTH COUNCIL

The Lexington Mayor's Health Council will meet on Wednesday, February 19, at 10 a.m. at the Lexington Multi-Purpose Building.

2-6,13

MVSU ALUMNI

The Mississippi Valley State University Alumni Association Inc., Holmes County Chapter will have a special called meeting on Sunday, February 9, 3 p.m. at Harvester Restaurant in Lexington.

The MVSU 18th Annual Green and White Scholarship Gala will be held on Saturday, February 15, at 6 p.m. For more information call 662-528-1508 or 601-502-5642.

The Holmes County Chapter of the MVSU Alumni will meet on Sunday, February 16, 3 p.m. at Harvester Restaurant in Lexington. For more information call 662-528-1508.

2-6,13

BETHLEHEM M.B.C.

Bethlehem M.B. Church in Tchula will host its Black History Program on Sunday, February 16 at 11:30 a.m. For information call 662-670-4566.

2-6,13

ROCK OF AGES

The Rock of Ages C.O.G.I.C. in Tchula will host a Pre-Valentine Program on Saturday, February 8 at 7 p.m. A reception will follow the program. This event is free and open to the public.

2-6,13

MOUNT SINAI M.B.C.

Mount Sinai M.B. Church in Pickens will present its Gospel Explosion on Sunday, February 23 at 3 p.m.

2-13,20

WEST GROVE M.B.C.

West Grove M.B. Church in Lexington will host "A Musical" on Sunday, February 16 at 3 p.m. Singers are asked to render an A and B selection.

A Black History Program will be presented on Sunday, February 23 at 11 a.m. This event is free and open to the public.

2-13,20

LIBERTY HILL AMEZ

Liberty Hill AMEZ Church in Durant will host its Friends and Family Day

Program on Sunday, February 23, at 11 a.m.

2-13,20

PANCAKE FUNDRAISER

St. Mary's Episcopal Church in Lexington will host its annual Mardi Gras Pancake Supper Fundraiser on Tuesday, February 25 starting at 4:30 p.m. to 7 p.m. Pancakes plates are \$5.00, dine in or take out. Grab your beads at the door!

2-13,20

OUR HOUSE INC.

Monthly online chat is available for sexual assault victims/survivors in the Mississippi Delta area, the third Monday of each month. Safe Online Space (SOS) for Healing Conversations, Monday, February 17, 5 p.m. to 6 p.m. Visit www.our-housevoices.com

2-13

SECOND PILGRIM

Second Pilgrim rest Church will celebrate its pastor and wife's 9th year anniversary on Sunday, February 16 at 2 p.m.

2-13

FILM SHOWING

Lonnie Sanders will present "The Most Explosive Black History Documentary Video Showing" at the MLK Center in Pickens on Thursday, February 13 at 6 p.m. This event is free and open

to the public.

2-13

ST. JOSEPH C.O.G.I.C.

St. Joseph C.O.G.I.C. in West will host the Flemings Family and Friends Day Program on Sunday, February 23 at 11 a.m. with Sunday school at 9:30 a.m.

2-13,20

MEMBER



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Matthew Breazeale...Editor
Julie Ellison...Gen. Manager

SUBSCRIPTION RATES

In Holmes County - \$35.00
In Mississippi - \$40.00
Outside Mississippi - \$50.00
Senior Citizen discount - \$1.00 off above rates

