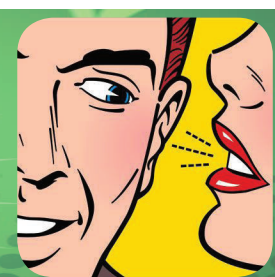


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VOLUME 62 - NUMBER 30

HCCSD Superintendent of Schools resigns

Press Release

Holmes County native son and Superintendent of Education, Dr. James L. Henderson has accepted another assignment as superintendent of schools out of state. "While we purposefully came home in an attempt to impact the lives of the

students and families in my hometown, God has given me another assignment," Henderson said. "I am grateful for the opportunity to have served this community and I'm confident that we are leaving this district in much better shape than we found it."

Henderson joined the Holmes County Consolidated School District in July 2018. His background and administrator experience in school leadership enabled the district to achieve consolidation with the Durant Public Schools, saving the new district \$1.5M in the reorga-



DR. JAMES HENDERSON

nization. Henderson led the newly consolidated school district in establishing mul-

multiple new departments and frameworks including a 3-year strategic plan with Key Performance Indicators to measure progress.

During his tenure, the district's schools eliminated corporal punishment and decreased the number of suspensions and out-of-school expulsions. The district was awarded over \$5M in grants for Advanced Placement Physics distance learning, after-school programs, technology and STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering

and Math) programs. More than another million dollars in grants are in the application process for literacy and Community Oriented Policing Services.

"It's time for me to say goodbye and acknowledge that for everything there is a season. I was brought to Holmes County by divine intervention and I'm leaving by the same means, effective July 31, 2020," said Henderson. "I wish my home community all the best as it

(Continued on page 9.)

Nineteen-year coaching veteran to lead Lady Trojans softball

By Matthew Breazeale

Central Holmes Christian School's new softball coach is Rusty Miller. He's a hard worker. He's self-proclaimed "old school."

Miller was cutting the grass on the Lady Trojans softball field in the mid-day sun just before his interview with the *Herald* on Monday, July 20. He had time for a quick interview before his girls started to show for practice.

The Woodville/Wilkinson County native is the son of a dentist and homemaker/teacher. Preacher, missionary and lumberjack are also legacies of hard work in Miller's family that has sculpted him as a person.

In the fall of 1968, Miller began to play the baseball diamond at "Ole Miss." Freshmen teams were separate from varsity at that time.

"I was a long way from home," said Miller. "My sisters were going to USM (University of Southern Mississippi), so I transferred there."

During Miller's second year at USM, the southern school became the second one in the country to begin a coaching program for a bachelor's degree. Miller's reasoning for coaching as a profession is his experience of coaching since he was six-



RUSTY MILLER

teen years old starting with a local little league team.

"Actually my dad was the coach, but I did all of it," Miller laughed.

His first after-college job offer was in Watson, Louisiana in 1973. Procrastination led to the offer becoming a missed opportunity and Miller began his career in ranching back in Woodville. Fifteen years passed before Miller moved to Utica, then

Blackhawk, before settling in Vaiden in 1992 to work for Dr. S.R. Evans.

In January of 2005, Miller and his wife Debbie lost their daughter Libby in a car accident. Libby was set to start her senior year at USM. Funeral costs were paid for by Libby's school. Miller said when he called the funeral home to find out the amount of expenses, "None of your business" was the response.

Libby was a softball player, which garnered Miller's passion for the sport.

Miller eventually helped to build the softball field at Winona Christian. Neighbors of Miller helped in that effort.

Miller's efforts caught the attention of school's administration, leading him to a coaching job for four years. Libby had graduated high school at the start of Miller's tenure at Winona Christian.

Miller also coached baseball and softball at Carroll Academy for 15 years, where he and his wife currently reside.

Miller has coached a total of 19 years.

Word of mouth and prayer led to Miller making a call to Central Holmes' Headmaster Tim Burton in May.

Miller and Burton agreed on a commitment to the school softball program, including field maintenance and upkeep.

"(Burton) asked, what do you need? I said conditioner, mound clay, chalk, nets and pads," said Miller.

Other issues are being addressed to bring the facilities up to Miller's standards, including a new nugget ice machine. The girls are "pitching-in" on that one by helping with fund-raising efforts.

Miller's philosophy on motivating his girls is heavily influenced by Libby's passing.

(Continued on page 4.)

State tax free holiday set July 31 thru Aug. 1

Staff Reports

Shoppers and deal hunters will be on the prowl for bargains ahead of this year's sales tax holiday on Friday, July 31 through Saturday, August 1.

The Mississippi Department of Revenue has announced this year's guidelines on tax free goods across the state and what items are eligible. School supplies were added to the list eligible items last year.

All clothing, footwear and school supplies under \$100 can be purchased minus the 7% state sales tax.

Sen. Chuck Younger co-authored the bill that passed in 2019 that adds school supplies.

School supplies are defined as "items that are commonly used by a student in a course of study," according to MDR. Some items listed are backpacks, binders, crayons, glue, lunch boxes, notebooks, loose-leaf ruled notebook paper, pencils, rulers, sheet music and textbooks.

Under Mississippi Code Section 27-65-111(bb) a sales tax holiday is held in the state, a temporary period when sales taxes are not collected or paid on purchases of specific products and/or services.

Passed by state legislators

in 2009, the seven percent state sales tax is not due on that sale of articles of clothing or footwear if the sales price of a single item is less than \$100, regardless of how many items total are sold at that time, according to the state guidelines.

"For example, a customer purchases two shirts at \$50 each, a pair of slacks at \$75 and a pair of shoes at \$110. No sales tax is due on the sale of the two shirts and the pair of slacks at a cost of \$175.00, even though the combined cost exceeds the one hundred dollar (\$100) threshold. However, Sales Tax is due on the entire \$110.00 for the shoes since they exceed the one hundred dollar (\$100) threshold," according to the guidelines.

Retailers may offer store discounts and store coupons to reduce the price of an eligible item to or less than \$100 in order to qualify for the holiday.

With the popularity of online shopping on sites such as Amazon and Ebay, "sales of eligible items that were placed or ordered by mail, telephone or the internet are not subject to sales tax if the purchaser orders and pays for the items during the Sales Tax Holiday and the

(Continued on page 9.)

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Wednesday
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