

# Rooms in our hearts

As Roy and I sat by our fireplace in our keeping room this morning drinking our final cup of coffee after breakfast, I told him I was so homesick for my grandmother’s house. A house long ago torn down and dismantled but still so fresh in my mind’s eye. I have no idea why I am so sentimental and emotional but for some reason I am somewhat weepy as I remember the times so long ago.

The old house sat up on a hill from the red clay road and then at the end of a long-rutted driveway. It was made of gray clapboards, bleached by the sun’s rays with a long inviting porch running the full width of the old house. The porch held two rocking chairs, a bench and a straight-backed chair that my granddaddy sat in reared backwards against the wall. It seemed he was always whittling from a small piece of black gum wood. The old house had no kind of modern heating, just a big opened fireplace in the room this morning drinking wood piled high next to the hearth that was fed into the brick opening that my granddaddy built. He was a brick mason by trade and had built many chimneys and fireplaces in the little community. As I ventured into the dining room, which was a step down into the rest of the house, you quickly missed the warmth from the rolling fire. The only heat for the rest of the house radiated from the old Sears Roebuck cast iron wood burning stove in her kitchen. There was a little box of thin short wood logs that she would let me feed into the little door on the side that spread heat to the six big flat burners on top of the old stove. It was a miracle of heat and heated the kitchen, dining room, the little room behind her kitchen, her quilt room, and her larder of fruits and vegetables and roots



Peggy’s Take

from the summer harvest. I remind myself of my grandmother, Ms. Ednie, in my stature and something around my eyes and nose certainly looks like a Key. I learned so many things from this little woman during my ‘growing up’ years spent there in that old clapboard house. My grandmother was an excellent cook and one thing she made I still try to make but it never quite tastes like hers. Ham Bone Soup – My granddaddy had a smoke house and he always had a few hams ‘curing’ inside. After cooking one my grandmother would always make this soup. I left over ham bone with little bits of ham, 1 diced onion, 1 cup of diced carrots, 2 red chopped potatoes, 3 cups pinto beans, salt and pepper to taste, 4 cups chicken broth, 2 cups diced ham. Mix all ingredients and cook on simmer all day or put in a crock pot for 8 hours on low

*\*Peggy Sims is a life-long resident of Attala County and columnist.*

# Dept. of Education says passing requirements for some state tests should be waived

Mississippi Today

State testing will continue this year, but State Superintendent of Education Carey Wright said Wednesday she recommends waiving the passing requirements for the statewide third grade reading test and high school end-of-course tests.

The department is also recommending schools and districts retain their letter grade from the 2018-19 school year for the 2020-21 school year.

In Mississippi, schools and districts receive a grade of A-F under the accountability system. The grade reflects their performance in areas such as student achievement, student growth, graduation rate and participation rate, which measures the percentage of students who participate in statewide testing.

Based on a 2013 law called the Literacy-Based Promotion Act, third graders in Mississippi public schools



State Superintendent of Education Carey Wright

must pass a reading test to continue to fourth grade. And high schoolers take tests in Algebra I, English II, Biology and U.S. History designed to determine whether students have the knowledge and skills needed to graduate.

“I believe this needs to be a year of grace. Our schools, our teachers, and our children are under a lot of pressure about this, but knowing we have not had a standard way of instructing children — to hold children accountable, I do not feel is fair,”

Wright said during a Senate education committee hearing in Jackson.

State testing will still continue this year, however, in order to assess the impact of COVID-19 on student learning and meet federal requirements.

The Legislature or Gov. Tate Reeves, via an executive order, would have to act to adopt these recommendations as they are all currently required by law.

If this happens, it would be the second school year in which districts retain 2018-19 ratings. State testing was cancelled last spring because of the pandemic, which meant there were no test results to base 2019-20 accountability ratings on. As a result, the Mississippi State Board of Education allowed all school districts to retain whatever rating they had from the previous school year.

# CROSSWORD PUZZLE

ACROSS

- 1) "And another thing ..."

5) Book with maps

10) Leopard feature

14) Salon work

15) Grandiose or flashy

16) Strip a fruit

17) Radius, to diameter

20) Put in

21) Tempts

22) Pinch of seasoning

25) Hackman of "Hoosiers"

26) Do one's part?

29) Where the worm turns

31) Villain

35) Long scarf

36) Overpromoted

38) Cotton-pickin' contraptions

39) What landlords hate

43) Double-decker part

44) Musical drama

45) Time span

46) Roller coaster reaction

49) Bygone despot

50) Scheider of "Jaws"

51) Svelte

53) Barbecue accessory

55) Chains of connected ideas or passages

58) Recessed area

62) Complete account

65) Having sufficient skill

66) Cleverly avoid

67) Type of candy or cider

68) Onetime Turkish governors

69) Asian goatlike animal

70) Ages upon ages

DOWN

- 1) Feel sore

2) Bit of bank business

3) River deposit

4) Killed, mobster-style

5) Baseball bat material

6) \_\_\_ Lord's Prayer

7) Valuable vein

8) On \_\_\_ and a prayer

9) Gambler's claim to beating the odds

10) Period beginning with Sputnik

11) Window square

12) Middle-Earth menaces

13) Golf prop

18) Like some novels

19) Pitchfork prong

23) Tofu bean (Var.)

24) Zoo heavyweight, briefly

26) Assists in a crime

27) Laughable

28) Grow narrower

30) Was a boulder?

32) San Fran pro

33) Foreword, briefly

34) English-class assignment

37) Bride's purchase

40) Railroad bridges

41) Keep from escaping

42) Boat harbor

47) Downwind, nautically

48) Saucy misses

52) Syrup source

54) One-tenth payment

55) Die

56) Country friendly to yours

57) Speak unclearly

59) "See you, signore"

60) It's hit in traffic jams?

61) Loose things to tie up?

62) "Incredible!" to Beatle fans

63) Rapid bustling movement

64) In mint condition

GET YOUR FILL

By Tim Burr

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