

Rooms in our hearts

As Roy and I sat by our fireplace in our room this morning drinking 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.



Peggy's Take

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 "front room". There was 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

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.

1 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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PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE RURAL AREA PROGRAM

The Central Mississippi Inc. of Winona, Mississippi, is considering applying to the Mississippi Department of Transportation, Public Transportation Division, for assistance through its Rural Area Program to provide public transportation services within Holmes County. Funding is available to state agencies, local public bodies and agencies thereof, non-profit organizations, operators of public transportation services in locations other than urbanized Area, and, under special circumstances, private operators of public transportation on a competitive basis to undertake eligible transportation activities.

The goals of the Rural Area Program are: to enhance the access of people in non-urbanized Area to health care, shopping, education, employment, public services and recreation; to assist in the maintenance, development, improvement, and use of public transportation systems in rural and small urban Area; to encourage and facilitate the most efficient use of all Federal funds used to provide passenger transportation in non-urbanized Area through the coordination of programs and services; and to provide for the participation of private transportation providers in non-urbanized transportation to the maximum extent feasible.

The purposes for which these funds can be used are capital purchases that include such items as support vehicles, communication equipment, wheelchair lifts, etc.; administrative costs that include such items as salaries, office supplies, insurance, etc.; and operating expenses that include such items as driver's wages, fuel, oil, etc. More specific details regarding eligible activities, program requirements and the program criteria will be provided at a public hearing. Due to the pandemic of COVID-19, the public hearing will be a virtual public hearing. The Public Hearing Meeting will be held via ZOOM on February 2, 2021 at 2:00 p.m. The Public is encouraged to join the virtual meeting with any comments, any questions, etc. they may have concerning the Rural Area Program. The Meeting ID number is 974-8624-8916 and the passcode is aE68Y2.