

# Obituaries

## MARTHA GOLDEN LOFTIN ABLES

Martha Golden Loftin Ables who was more affectionately known as Goldie was born in Attala County, Mississippi, to Jefferson Thomas “J.T.” and Fannie Flint Loftin on January 2, 1937; she was the youngest of thirteen children. She married Joe C. “Snow” Ables on September 26, 1953, and they were married for sixty-two years. They made their home in Coxburg.

Goldie is preceded in death by her husband Snow, one son Michael Joe Ables, her parents, seven brothers, and five sisters.

Goldie is survived by her daughters, Martha Jo (Robert) Dickard and Amy Renee’ (Dwayne) Ward all of Coxburg; the lights of her life her grandson Michael Ward and his daughter Heidi Lynn Ward of Coxburg, grandson Bob (Sandra) Dickard and their children Hillary, Kirsten, and Wade Dickard of Vicksburg, granddaughter Stephanie (Paul) Bilsky and their children Ronnie Dickard and his daughter Stella Kate Dickard, D. J. Bilsky, Lindsay Huffman and Sophie Bilsky of Coxburg.

## MARY DAVIS BRIDGERS ARCHER

Graveside services for Mary Davis Bridgers Archer, fondly known as “Baby Jack”, were held at 1:00 p.m. Wednesday at Odd Fellows Cemetery in Greenwood.

Baby Jack, age 90, died on Sunday, January 17, 2021 at her daughter’s home in Sallis.

She was born on January 16, 1931. Baby Jack was a member of Cruger Baptist Church and a well-loved “Mema” to many.

She was preceded in death by her parents, Jack and Amanda Davis; husbands, Claude Lee Bridgers, Sr. and Barnes Archer; son-in-law, Walter Kilpatrick; and grandson, Wes Humphreys.

She is survived by her four children, Doris Bridgers Kilpatrick of Cruger, Patricia Bridgers Hester (George) of Sallis, Lee Bridgers (Bren-

## TOMMIE WILLIAMS, SR.

Tommie Williams, Sr., 75, of Jackson, passed on January 15, 2021.

He will be laid to rest on January 23, 2021 at 2:00 p.m. at New Banyon Cem-

Visitation was held on Sunday, January 17, 2021, at Southern Funeral Home in Lexington from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. and on Monday, January 18, 2021, from 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. at Oak Grove Baptist Church in the Tolarville Community. The service was held at 11:00 a.m. at Oak Grove Baptist Church and there was a graveside service immediately following at Harland Creek Baptist Church in Coxburg.

Active pallbearers were Michael Ward, Wade Dickard, Bob Dickard, Ronnie Dickard, Grady Ables, Terry Ables, Barry Ables, Davis Ables, Brien Ables, Brooks Ables, Trey Ferrell, Lamar Ferrell, Danny Ainsworth, Robert Shurley, and Brien Anding.

Honorary pallbearers were James Hearon, Kenny Loftin, Kim Loftin, Ralph Miller, Jay Loftin, Bill Winstead, Paul Warren Winstead, Zane Lee, James Earl Flint, and Bo Flint.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests that donations be made to the Harland Creek Baptist Church cemetery fund or your organization of your choice.

da) of Greenwood, and Jack Bridgers (Donna) of Yazoo City; 15 grandchildren, Amy Kilpatrick, Suzanne Kilpatrick Thompson (Eric), Holly Kilpatrick Faulkner (John), Kimberly Hester Rutledge (Steven), Jason Hester (Brandy), Lyndsey Hester Thompson (Chad), Adam Hester (Gail), Trey Bridgers (Sarah Kathryn), Mary Beth Bridgers Moore (Tate), Ashley Selby (Adam), Nolan Humphreys (Lindsay), Amy Hayles Dear (Steven), Matt Hayles (Brittany), Adam Porter (Paige), Dave Porter (Mary Lauren); and 32 great grandchildren.

Rev. Al Different and Rev. David Raddin officiated at the services.

Wilson and Knight Funeral Home was in charge of arrangements. Online guest book may be signed at [www.wilsonandknight.com](http://www.wilsonandknight.com)

etery in Sallis, MS. Visitation will be held at 300 West Madison Street in Durant between 1:00 p.m. and 4:00 p.m. on January 22, 2021. Arrangements are entrusted to Affordable Funeral Home of Durant.

# Chicken with its head cut off

With so much puffery and half-truths in the news today and so many of our new sitcoms leaving a lot to be desired or maybe they include so many ideas that we don’t agree with, we mainly watch reality television shows. Shows like Alaska the Last Outback, Moonshiners, (My favorite. Makes me want to build a still), and all the shows on HGTV. On one of the shows we recently watched they were trying to get rid of some of the

need to feed some of their chickens because of lack of feed, so they were butchering them and preparing them for their freezer.

Years ago, my mother and daddy lived over on the east side of town and in that day and time we could have chickens living, pecking, and

running around in our back yard. We had a red rooster that she had bought believing he was a female and that rooster hated me. Every time I stepped out the back door, he chased me down. We also had a chicken pen built down in the bottom part of our garden plot and she would raise off about twenty-five fryers at a time and then we would “take care of them”.

Now, by take care of them I mean we would get up early with the intention of preparing them for our freezer that sat underneath our carport. She would always call my cousin to help us as I was a little squeamish with the entire process. And I was also doing the little rooster dance to stay out of his way. We had a big concrete block sitting right out-



Peggy’s Take

## ROY LEE AUSTIN

Roy Lee Austin, 63, of Lexington, Mississippi was called to his heavenly home on January 18, 2021 surrounded by his family and friends. Roy was born January 26, 1957 in Morgan City, Louisiana to Alton Roy Austin and Beverly Lee Austin and was the oldest of three children. Roy graduated from Morgan City High School as Valedictorian in 1975 and graduated from LSU in 1979. Roy was a devoted LSU fan. Roy started his accounting career in New Orleans, Louisiana at Arthur Anderson Accounting Firm. Roy retired from Entergy as a State and Local Tax Manager, CPA January 31, 2020. He was known as “The Man, The Myth and The Legend” by his friends and co-workers at Entergy.

Roy loved doing genealogy research for his family and help others find their family genealogy. Roy was an avid reader, loved entertaining, traveling and cooking for a large crowd. Roy even became trained as a Girl Scout cook so he could go to his daughter, Ashley’s Girl Scout campouts. Roy was co-leader with his wife Cherie for Ashley’s troop in Houston, Texas and lead the troop to complete their Gold Award. Roy moved to many different locations during his career and always made friends with his new church family. Roy and Cherie moved to Lexington, Mississippi in July 2020 to retire among friends of Sand Hill Road. Roy served the Lord Jesus Christ in life and in the different churches he attend-

ed working with children and an ordained deacon.

Roy was preceded in death by his mother Beverly Lee Austin.

Roy is survived by his wife of 39 years, Cherie Monnerjahn Austin of Lexington, Mississippi and daughter Ashley (Carey) Keller of San Antonio, Texas. His dad Alton Roy Austin of Morgan City, Louisiana, two brothers Curtis (Lori) Austin of Woodlands, Texas and Jerry Austin of Morgan City, Louisiana. His grandchildren Zoe and Jeremiah Keller of San Antonio, Texas. His aunt Ann Lee of Silverthorne, Colorado and a host of nieces, nephews and cousins whom he dearly loved. Family was extremely important to Roy.

Visitation will be held from 9:30 to 11:00 a.m. on Thursday, January 21, 2021 at Pleasant Ridge Baptist Church of Lexington, Mississippi. Funeral service will follow at 11:00 a.m. at the church with Rev. Gene Richards officiating.

A graveside service at Evergreen Baptist Church Cemetery near Bernice, Louisiana on Saturday, January 23, 2021 at 10:00 am with Rev. Larry White officiating.

The family would like to thank the staff of St. Dominic Hospital for their loving care during Roy’s final weeks due to Covid pneumonia.

In lieu of flowers a donation to an animal rescue of your choice or Coco House Rescue, PO Box 721314, Byram, MS 39272. Roy loved all the many dogs he adopted.

side the pen and my mama would reach in and grab a white feathered bird hold its head in one hand and its feet in her other and my cousin would take the little hatchet and “WHACK” and then throw the poor chicken down and it would run around like a chicken with its head cut off!!

After all the massacring, I would help to dip them in hot water and pluck the feathers off and I really disliked this. Then my mama and cousin would cut up the poor birds and put them in the freezer.

# Report shows how students, educators and schools persisted pandemic challenges

## Press Release

The newly released Mississippi Department of Education (MDE) 2019-20 Superintendent’s Annual Report tells the story how students, educators and schools persisted in their pursuit of higher academic achievement while dealing with the challenge of the COVID-19 pandemic.

View the report online at [mdek12.org/superintendent2020](http://mdek12.org/superintendent2020).

Report highlights:

- Facts and figures about student enrollment and the educator workforce
- 2019-20 achievements
- Immediate response to school building closures
- Long-term response to pandemic, including Mississippi Connects digital learning initiative

No new achievement data were produced for the 2019-20 school year because state and national assessments were not administered. However, Mississippi’s record of significant, sustained improvement through the end of the previous year has been historic:

- 4th graders had achieved the No. 1 spot in the nation for gains on NAEP in reading and math, with 4th graders scoring higher than the nation’s public-school average in math and tying the nation in reading.
- 8th graders had outpaced the nation for growth in math and held steady in reading; nationally, scores for most NAEP subjects dropped or remained flat.

- Black, white and Hispanic students from low-income homes in Mississippi had achieved higher scores than their counterparts nationally in all four NAEP subjects.
- 85.6% of students met the most challenging standard ever required under the Literacy-Based Promotion Act.

Students in every grade had made significant, annual gains on statewide English Language Arts and mathematics assessments. When the tests were first adminis-

I can tell you right now, I really enjoy going into the grocery store and selecting my chicken from the nice clean packaged birds in the cold cases.

This is a quick chicken chili recipe that I do in a hurry. It’s really good

## CHICKEN CHILI

Brown 1 pound of cut up chicken beast in oil in a deep cast iron skillet with ½ cup chopped bell pepper. Stir in 1 package McCormick white chicken chili seasoning mix,

(Continued on page 4.)

tered in 2016, one-third of students scored on or above grade level in English Language Arts and Math. In 2019, closer to half reached those levels.

- The graduation rate hit an all-time high of 85%, on par with the national average.

“I am incredibly proud of our students, teachers and leaders and the resilience they showed during incredibly challenging circumstances,” said Dr. Carey Wright, state superintendent of education. “I am optimistic about the future of education in Mississippi because we have already proven what can happen when there is a singular focus on supporting students and improving academic achievement. When we put students first, Mississippi succeeds.”

The Mississippi State Board of Education’s and MDE’s priorities for 2021 and beyond include maintaining a focus on literacy and high academic standards to prepare all students for college and careers, strengthening the state’s early childhood education infrastructure, continuing to help make teachers and school leaders more effective, making data-driven decisions to raise student achievement and close achievement gaps, and improving low-performing schools.



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