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HOLMES COUNTY

HERALD

THURSDAY, AUGUST 19, 2021

ONE SECTION

LEXINGTON, MISSISSIPPI 39095

VOLUME 63 - NUMBER 33

Emergency Bridge Closing

The precast bridge on Martin Luther King Drive, better known as School House Bottom Bridge, has been officially closed until further notice.

The bridge is an important travel route for the community. It is one of only two entrances to Central Holmes Christian School, The Superintendent's and main office for the Holmes County Consolidated School District, The Vo-Tech, and the HCCSD's school bus fleet garage.

MDOT came to inspect the 3 span precast beam-bridge with timber piles on August 4, 2021. Upon inspection, they found that Bent 2 pile (#2) in critical condition and pile #3 had failed completely. They immediately ordered the closing of the bridge.

The bridge was originally built in 1976. It had never been inspected before the August 4 inspection as it was not on the MDOT's inven-



SCHOOL HOUSE BOTTOM BRIDGE

tory list of existing bridges.

The mayor and the board have applied for emergency repair funding. If the bridge has to be replaced, the cost

of replacement is about 2,000,000 dollars. If it can be repaired, it will cost over 100,000 dollars.

(Continued on page 9.)

Mississippi opening field hospital amid surge of COVID cases



Federal employees made up of doctors, nurses, respiratory therapists and paramedics sent to staff the field hospital at UMMC set up equipment in the basement of Parking Garage B, Thursday, Aug. 12, 2021 in Jackson. UMMC needed the help because of a lack of resources during a recent surge in coronavirus cases.

Gov. Tate Reeves extends COVID-19 state of emergency as hospitals on the verge of collapse

Mississippi Today
by Bobby Harrison and
Geoff Pender

Gov. Tate Reeves announced Thursday that he will reverse course and not carry out plans to terminate the state of emergency he declared on March 14, 2020, to combat the COVID-19 pandemic.

Reeves had previously said in June that he would let the emergency order expire on Aug. 15. Back in June, the number of coronavirus cases significantly decreased. Today, the spread of COVID-19 in Mississippi is out of control, and medical professionals are warning the state's hospital system could fail in a matter of days.

JACKSON, Miss. (AP) — UMMC will open a 50-bed field hospital and the federal government will send medical professionals to help treat patients as COVID-19 cases continue surging in a state with one of the lowest vaccination rates in the U.S., officials said Wednesday.

Many Mississippi hospitals face a crunch for space and staffing.

The state health officer, Dr. Thomas Dobbs, expressed frustration Wednesday about people ignoring recommendations to get vaccinated and wear masks to slow the spread of the virus. Masks are required in some schools and optional in others, but some parents say mask mandates infringe on children's freedom.

"I kind of personally feel like I'm an air traffic controller, and every day I'm watching two airliners collide," Dobbs said during a news (Continued on page 8.)



Governor Tate Reeves signs state of emergency.

In a Thursday morning interview with Gulf Coast television station WLOX, the first-term Republican governor said the state of emergency will stay in place. "It is a very different situation than two months ago," Reeves said of when he had (Continued on page 7.)

UMMC to open second field hospital, with ICU beds, in parking garage as COVID-19 explodes

Mississippi Today
by Will Stribling

The University of Mississippi Medical Center will open a second field hospital in one of its parking garages near the Children's of Mississippi Hospital - Blair E. Batson Tower, another attempt at propping up a hospital system on the verge of collapse due to a surge of COVID-19 patients.

Samaritan's Purse, an evangelical Christian humanitarian aid organization, will build and staff the field hospital, which is expected to contain 30-50 patient beds. An estimated 5-10 of those beds will be ICU beds. None of the 50 or so beds

in the field hospital UMMC opened on Friday are ICU level.

Franklin Graham, president of Samaritan's Purse and son of the late Christian evangelist Billy Graham, tweeted a picture Sunday morning of three loaded trucks and trailers en route to Mississippi.

This is the latest development in a period where MEMA is seeking out any help it can get from the federal government and the private sector to get Mississippi hospitals staffing that is desperately needed.

Over the past week, Mississippi broke its single-day (Continued on page 7.)

50¢ Single Copy



Thursday
Scattered T-Storms
55/75
Precip. Chance
40%



Friday
Scattered T-Storms
89/74
Precip. Chance
40%



Saturday
Partly Cloudy
92/74
Precip. Chance
24%



Sunday
Mostly Sunny
95/75
Precip. Chance
20%



Monday
Mostly Sunny
96/72
Precip. Chance
12%



Tuesday
Mostly Sunny
97/74
Precip. Chance
17%



Wednesday
Mostly Sunny
97/74
Precip. Chance
17%

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