



Student's Tall Tales

I am fortunate to have many friends. Quite a few of them of them are what I call my “teacher friends”. We have taught together in the years past and still remain friends to this day. I think when you are “in the teaching trenches” together it creates a common bond. We all have some great stories to share from our classrooms. No matter what age you teach, there are always stories. Two of most memorable events were from my very first year of teaching.

Many times, elementary students will tell some outlandish stories. My first teaching job was teaching 4th grade at Cruger-Tchula Academy. At the beginning of every day, I would ask my students if they had anything to share after we had our daily devotional. One day, a student told me that his father had saved his goldfish’s life the night before. I was a little skeptical, but let him continue his tale. “Goldie”

had jumped from her bowl and was lying on the table and was not breathing. After hearing his son scream, the daddy immediately came to the fish’s rescue. He put the goldfish in shallow water, pushed lightly on the fish’s stomach and blew air into his mouth with a tiny straw. I remember thinking that was the craziest story I had ever heard in my life and I did not believe a word of it. After having a quick word about exaggerating the truth and always telling the whole truth, I basically brushed off the story of “Goldie”. That night at the Friday night football game, a man approached me and wanted me to know that he had actually saved that fish’s life and that his son didn’t think I really believed his story. He let me know really quickly that the story was true. OOPS!

Then there is the story of the “attack squirrel”. A student came limping in one morning and told us that the

night before he was barefoot in the garage and a big squirrel came running toward him and bit him on his toe. It was still hurting and he was limping because of the pain. Once again, I gave my speech about exaggerating the truth and always telling the whole truth. I told the student to try not to limp (thinking he was wanting attention) and I was sure his toe would be fine. Of course, I didn’t believe the story of the “attack squirrel” any more than I had believed the goldfish story. Imagine my surprise when his father showed up at about 11:00 to pick up his son for a doctor’s appointment. Seems his son was bitten on the toe by a great big squirrel and the doctor wanted to make sure there was no sign of infection or other problems with the bite of a wild animal. OOPS!

They can only teach you so much in college. You learn a lot from experiences in life – teaching is one profession that you learn something every single day. Fact is stranger than fiction. These recipes have nothing to do with goldfish or squirrels, but a way to make your life easier by utilizing your crock pot slow cooker.

I hope you will give them a try. Thanks for reading.

SLOW COOKER RANCH CHICKEN

¾ cup chicken broth
1 envelope Ranch dressing mix
2 lbs. boneless skinless chicken breasts
1 can Cream of Chicken soup
1 (8 oz.) cream cheese, cut into cubes

In a slow cooker, combine the broth and dressing mix; add chicken. Cover and cook

on Low for 6 hours. Remove chicken and shred; return to slow cooker and stir in soup and cream cheese. Cover and cook for about 30 more minutes or until cream cheese is melted. Serve over rice or noodles.

MISSISSIPPI POT ROAST

1 (3 pound) chuck roast
½ (12 oz.) jar pepperoncini peppers
½ (12 oz.) jar of pepperoncini juice
2 sticks butter
1 packet au jus gravy mix
1 packet Ranch dressing mix
Salt and Pepper to taste

Place roast in slow cooker. Pour peppers, juice and mixes on top; top with sticks of butter. Cover and cook on Low for about 8 hours. Remove and slice or shred with forks and serve with gravy over mashed potatoes, rice, or noodles.

MISSISSIPPI CHICKEN

2 pounds skinless, boneless chicken breasts
1 packet dry Ranch dressing mix
1 (16 oz.) jar sliced Pepperoncini peppers, reserve juice
4 Tbsp. butter, sliced

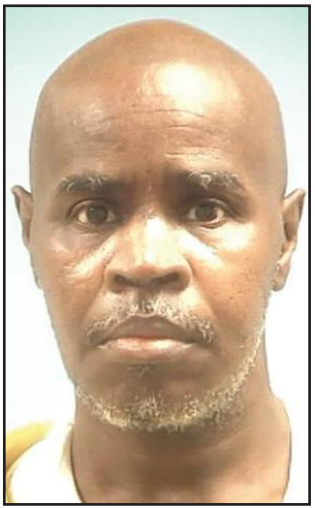
Place chicken in slow cooker; sprinkle Ranch dressing mix on top. Place peppers, juice and butter on top of chicken. Cover and cook on Low for 6 – 7 hours. Let stand and shred chicken with forks or slice if you prefer. Can serve alone or over rice.

Oven directions: Layer all ingredients and place in a Dutch oven; bake at 350 degrees for about 1 ½ hours.

Lee Ann Fleming is a Holmes County native, food columnist and has garnered fame for her recipes featured in the film, **The Help. Fleming can be reached at lafkitchen@hughes.net.*

Humphreys County man sentenced to two life terms

On Tuesday, March 7, 2023, a Humphreys County Circuit Court Jury, found Timothy Robinson of Belzoni guilty of COUNTS I-II Murder, COUNT III Shooting into Occupied Dwelling, COUNT IV Aggravated Assault and COUNT V Possession of Firearm by Convicted Felon that involved the January 2, 2020, fatal incident which took place at the home of his former girlfriend. Robinson was wearing an ankle monitor while on the Intensive Supervision Program under the custody of the Mississippi Department of Corrections for the 1991 kidnapping and stabbing of another female and the kidnap of that individual’s family member when he callously murdered Annie Jefferson and her son Melvin Jefferson. The lone survivor of this horrendous crime, her then ten-year-old grandson, was, also, shot by Robinson but managed to escape the home. Robinson’s ankle monitor was a crucial piece of evidence that allowed the Humphreys County Jury to find Robinson guilty of all charges following a very



TIMOTHY ROBINSON

short deliberation period. Yesterday, Robinson was sentenced COUNTS I-II by the Circuit Court judge, each count, to a term of Life without the Possibility of Parole in the custody of the Mississippi Department of Corrections. COUNT III to a term of ten years to serve in the custody of the Mississippi Department of Correction and COUNT IV to a term of twenty years. For COUNT V, Robinson was sentenced to a term of five years. All COUNTS of this sentence shall run consecutively.

THE PARTNERSHIP FOR A HEALTHY MISSISSIPPI

Flavor Attracts; Nicotine Addicts: Menthol Products in the Marketplace

In 2009, Congress passed the Family Smoking Prevention and Tobacco Control Act prohibiting the sale of flavored tobacco products across the country. This was a positive step in decreasing overall smoking rates but failed to include mentholated products which have long been prominent among African American smokers, youth, and young adults. Youth remain the age group most likely to use menthol cigarettes.¹

Now the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has proposed a ban on menthol flavored products. First added to cigarettes in the 1920s, menthol became widespread in the 1950s and 1960s, and although traditional cigarette smoking rates have decreased over the years, the prevalence of menthol products has basically remained stagnant.² (For more on the FDA’s actions on menthol, visit <https://www.fda.gov>)

In 2019, an estimated 18.5 million people in the U.S. aged 12 and older smoked menthol cigarettes, a disproportionate number of whom were youth, young adults, and African Americans.

Source | National Cancer Institute

From 2005-2015, the decline in cigarette consumption was greater for non-menthol cigarettes than menthol cigarettes.

Source | Truth Initiative

Menthol interacts with nicotine in the brain to enhance addictiveness, making it harder for people to quit.

Source | Public Health Law Center

39% of middle and high school students who used cigarettes in 2021 reported using menthol.

Source | National Youth Tobacco Survey

Menthol cigarette preference among cigarette smokers in the U.S. by age, 2018

Source | Truth Initiative

Ages 12-17	50
Ages 18-25	49
Ages 26-34	48
Ages 35-49	39
Ages 50-64	33
Ages 65+	29

Menthol makes up a large portion (37% in 2020) of the cigarette market in the U.S.

Source | Truth Initiative

How to Prevent Use of Menthol and Aid in Quitting

Source | Centers for Disease Prevention and Control

For States and Communities

- Curb the advertising and marketing of menthol and other tobacco products to young people
- Ensure that all people who use tobacco products have access to evidence-based quitting resources, including counseling and medication.
- Develop educational initiatives that describe targeted tobacco industry marketing tactics.

For Parents and Teachers

- Learn about menthol and its relationship to tobacco product use and nicotine dependence among young people.
- Be aware of how menthol products are disproportionately marketed to specific groups of people.
- Take advantage of quitting resources in your community such as the local Mississippi Tobacco Free Coalitions (MTFCs).
- Develop and equitably implement and enforce tobacco-free school policies that address all types of tobacco products and that incorporate non-punitive penalties.
- Implement school prevention programs that are free from tobacco industry influence.

For Health Professionals

- Learn specifically about menthol and its relationship to tobacco use and nicotine dependence.
- Ask about use of all types of tobacco products when screening patients for the use of tobacco products.
- Provide information to patients about evidence-based quitting resources.

For free help to quit tobacco use, call 1-800-QUIT-NOW (1-800-784-8669) or visit <https://www.quitnow.net/MS>.