


THE WICKER REPORT

SENATOR WICKER'S WEEKLY REPORT  from CONGRESS

Wicker Marks National Police Week

Gratitude for Public Safety Officials

Each May, National Police Week is an occasion to express our appreciation and support for the officers who promote safety and order in our communities. Most law enforcement is conducted by city police, sheriff's departments, highway patrol, or other state agencies close to home. In Congress, I partner with these officials to provide funding and other assistance.

eration of law enforcement professionals. The Forensic Science Institute and Digital Forensics Lab at Mississippi State University and the Training for Justice System Professionals program at the University of Mississippi each received support. I regularly advocate for these grants and am continuing to do so in this year's appropriations process.

FirstNet Connects Response Teams

Another way the federal government can back law enforcement is by providing communication service for emergency responders—especially in rural areas. For too long, first responders faced communication breakdowns during crises. Most response groups had unique communications systems, which kept them walled off from other teams. Oftentimes, medics could not quickly radio police officers or firefighters when they needed help. These challenges were particularly acute after the September 11th terrorist attacks and during Hurricane Katrina.

In the wake of those tragedies, government officials, private sector leaders, and public safety professionals worked together to create a solution. Those efforts led



B.B. King Museum

Steve and I have always been people who like to take advantage of the world around us. When traveling, we stop at different places that we might not have the opportunity to experience

again. Once we stopped at a place in Florida called "The Snakeatorium." It was full of nothing but snakes – go figure. We still have those pictures of snake after snake after snake. If we saw a sign

to FirstNet, which today is a nationwide broadband network open to all kinds of first responders.

Like all ambitious nationwide endeavors, FirstNet has encountered challenges. My colleagues and I are currently working through the hard debates about its merits and future success. Without congressional action, FirstNet's authority is set to expire in February 2027. As we discuss reauthorizing the program, we hope to achieve three things. Congress needs to improve the management and oversight of the network, FirstNet must continually embrace innovative technologies, and, ultimately, it must make communication easier for the heroic men and women who serve during crises.

Mississippi Salutes Fallen Officers

During this year's National Police Week, many Mississippians will be thinking of public safety officers we have lost in the line of duty. In January, Lee County

school resource officer Rick Haggard was killed during an accident while directing traffic at a school. In April, Jackson County Deputy Sheriff Michael Jimerson paid the ultimate sacrifice as he responded to a call regarding a domestic dispute.

Tributes immediately poured in from neighbors and from fellow law enforcement professionals. It is clear these men were characterized by selfless love for family, friends, and community. I join my voice with those statements, thanking Officer Haggard and Deputy Sheriff Jimerson for their sacrifice and expressing my condolences to their loved ones.

There will be a number of Fallen Officer Memorial events during this National Police Week, and I know many Mississippians will attend one. These ceremonies move us all toward renewed gratitude for the law enforcement officials who have given their lives to keep our communities safe.

Governor Kirk Fordice on March 16, 1999.

The goal of the Mississippi Scenic Streams Stewardship Program is to encourage voluntary, private conservation efforts by stream-side landowners. In a non-regulatory framework, landowners will be assisted in voluntary management agreements seeking to maintain scenic values while ensuring the landowner's rights to continue customary uses along the stream.

According to the bill, "To qualify as eligible, the stream must possess unique or outstanding scenic, recreational, geological, botanical, fish, wildlife, historic or cultural values. In addition, the stream must be a public waterway and not have been channelized in the previous five years."

In the Act, the drafters wrote that there is a necessity for a "rational balance between the use of these streams and the conserva-

tion of natural beauty along these streams." Conservation is attainable through the efforts of the landowners of property which adjoins these streams and rivers.

The benefits of keeping stream banks intact are many: property values remain strong; soil and nutrients stay in place; and the stream is saved from silt, caving banks and erosion. Also, swimming holes stay deep and canopies of trees and vegetation shade streams and keep water temperatures cooler. Cooler water temperatures in summer help stream fish populations remain stable.

James L. Cummins is executive director of Wildlife Mississippi, a non-profit, conservation organization founded to conserve, restore, and enhance fish, wildlife, and plant resources throughout Mississippi. Their web site is www.wildlifemiss.org.

for the "world's largest ball of string," we would probably stop, have a look and take a picture.

One year we went to Memphis to the Peabody for the week-end. Pete Fountain was playing on the rooftop and I wanted to go to that night's performance. Not that I am a huge fan of his, but my mom and dad had several of his records and I remember listening to them at home when I was a child. Steve, the hard rocker, was not thrilled but gave in with my argument of the fact that we might not ever have this opportunity again. His argument was that the NCAA Basketball Championship game was on television that night and that was really what he wanted to watch. I won. The ballgame began at 7:00. Pete Fountain was to begin at 8:00. At 8:45, still no Pete Fountain. A little after 9:00, he showed up with profound apologies for his being so tardy. Seems he was in his room at the Peabody watching the basketball game that went into overtime and he couldn't tear himself away. OOPS! I still remember that "Steve Flemming Glare."

I have always loved music of any kind. I particularly love "the blues." We went to the B.B. King Museum in Indianola several months ago.

The museum was delightful and everyone who worked there was the epitome of "southern hospitality." I am quite the history buff when it comes to the 1960's. The films were wonderful and the memorabilia was absolutely breathtaking. The periods of time they had depicted were so real to life that it sent you back to years and years ago – times that I can even remember.

Don't let things right under your nose pass you by. Take advantage of everything life has to offer. Even if it is not something you think you will really enjoy, you just never know. Just ask Coach, he had a great time and so did I!

Warm weather is here and I am in the mood for salads. Hope you enjoy this week's recipes. Thanks for reading.

FRESH BROCCOLI SALAD

- 4 cups fresh broccoli florets
- 3 cups fresh cauliflower flowerets
- 1 (8 oz.) pkg. sliced fresh mushrooms
- 2 cups halved grape tomatoes
- 1 cup chopped green olives
- 1 green onion, minced
- 1/3 cup lemon juice
- 1/4 cup grated Parmesan cheese
- 2 tsp. Dijon mustard
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1/2 tsp. salt
- 1/2 tsp. black pepper
- 1/2 cup vegetable oil

In a large bowl, combine broccoli, cauliflower, mushrooms, tomatoes, olives and green onion; set aside. In the container of a blender, combine lemon juice, cheese, mustard, garlic, salt, and pepper; blending until smooth. With the blender running, slowly pour in oil until well combined. Pour over salad. Toss salad with dressing 1 hour before serving. Cover and chill. The ingredients for dressing may easily be doubled if more dressing is desired.

STRAWBERRY SPINACH SALAD

- 1/3 cup raspberry vinaigrette
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 1 tsp. salt
- 1/4 tsp. prepared mustard
- 1/2 cup vegetable oil
- 4 1/2 tsp. poppy seeds
- 1 (10 oz.) pkg. fresh baby spinach
- 1 pint fresh strawberries, sliced
- 1/2 cup coarsely chopped pecans, toasted

In a blender, combine the raspberry vinaigrette, sugar, salt and mustard. While processing, gradually add oil in a steady stream. Stir in poppy seeds. Transfer to a small pitcher or bowl; chill for at least 1 hour. Just before serving, toss the spinach, strawberries and pecans in a large salad bowl. Serve with the chilled dressing.

SUMMER GARDEN SALAD with BALSAMIC VINAIGRETTE

- 8 cups mixed salad greens
- 1 cup halved grape tomatoes
- 1 cup thinly sliced seedless cucumber
- 1 yellow pepper, sliced into 1/4 inch strips
- 3/4 cup thinly sliced radishes
- 1/2 cup thinly sliced red onion

- Dressing:
- 1/2 cup aged balsamic vinegar
- 2 Tbsp. dark brown sugar
- 2 Tbsp. stone-ground mustard
- 1/2 tsp. garlic salt
- 1/2 tsp. ground black pepper
- 1/2 cup light olive oil

In a large bowl, combine salad greens, tomatoes, cucumber, bell pepper, radishes, and onion. Drizzle with dressing just before serving.

Dressing: In a small bowl, combine vinegar, brown sugar, mustard, garlic salt, and pepper. Whisk until sugar is dissolved. Slowly whisk in oil. Cover and refrigerate until ready to serve. Store in an airtight container; will keep for 2 weeks.

**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.*

Conservation Corner

by James Cummins
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Mississippi's Scenic Streams Stewardship Program

People have long felt a strong connection to streams and rivers. Painted scenes of rock-filled streams and lazy rivers often evoke feelings of serenity. Streams and rivers accommodate a variety of human activities, but they also support a variety of aquatic life and plants, as well as provide hydration for many species of wildlife, and humans. The value of streams and rivers is immeasurable, and it is essential to maintain them. Following the passage of the National Wild and Scenic Rivers Act by Congress in 1968, Mississippi's first attempt at a streams bill was in 1969. However, the project was abandoned in 1978 after six failed attempts at a regulatory streams act. These failures seemed to prove that a mandatory or regulatory program would not work

in Mississippi. Twenty years later, a renewed effort was underway. Richard L. "Dick" Livingston, Chairman of the House Game and Fish Committee, and William Y. Quisenberry, of the Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks (MDWFP) breathed new life and perspective into a plan for a streams program in Mississippi.

William Quisenberry, known as "Quiz" to his friends and colleagues, had been working nearly 30 years on a piece of legislation to protect Mississippi's scenic rivers and streams. In 1999, Quiz saw his work come to fruition when the Mississippi Legislature passed a non-regulatory scenic rivers and streams program to work with landowners to promote buffers along stream banks. This program, the Mississippi Scenic Streams Stewardship Act, was signed into law by