

# Arrest Made Minutes After Shooting



Deputy Tyler Wortham, III, secures the scene on Blackmur Drive shortly after Thursday's fatal shooting as other officers search for a suspect.

WATER VALLEY — A 20-year-old Water Valley man was shot and killed Thursday afternoon in a homicide that police say was resolved within minutes, though the investigation re-

mains ongoing.

Water Valley Police Department Chief Jason Mangrum reported officers and deputies responded at approximately 4:21 p.m. on Feb. 12 to a shooting on



## LENTEN LUNCHES AT METHODIST CHURCH

The Coffeeville Methodist Church will begin its series of Lenten Lunches on Tuesday, February 24, 2026, at 12:00 noon, in the church fellowship hall, located on Main Street in Coffeeville.

At each Lenten Lunch, there will be a light lunch served followed by a short devotional message. The series will continue on March 3, 11, 18, and 24th. The public is invited to participate as we prepare our hearts for Easter.

Blackmur Drive near the intersection of Blackmur and Hayles Street. When officers arrived, they found the victim lying on the sidewalk with multiple gunshot wounds. (Cont'd. on Page 18)

## Chick With . . . (Cont'd. from front page)

One of the first to step forward was Kevin Robertson, along with a few other helpers tackling heavily damaged properties in the early days. She spent time teaching Kevin proper chainsaw safety and cutting techniques, and he quickly became a steady presence on job sites.

"He can work," she said. "He stuck with it."

Kevin's brother, Braxton, joined the effort as well, helping move debris and clear yards. Their father, Vince Robertson, brought equipment, including a trailer, and often ran his own saw alongside the crews.

Before long, organized volunteer teams began arriving through connections made by Rev. Jim Petermann, pastor of Coffeeville Methodist Church.

Petermann put out a call through the Global Method-

ist Church disaster response network. Crews responded from the South Carolina Conference, the Alabama Emerald Coast Conference and the Mississippi-West Tennessee Conference.

"They're trained. They're credentialed," Petermann said. "They know what they're doing."

For Gorospe, the arrival of those teams was a huge boost.

"What had taken me two days to complete by myself, we were knocking out 11 jobs a day," she said.

Together, the volunteers completed approximately 128 homes, working through a lengthy list before the disaster crews returned home this week as the list slimmed.

The work has ranged from clearing driveways and cutting leaning trees to removing limbs that buried

propane tanks and blocked access to homes. On some properties, trees lay tangled across each other under heavy pressure, requiring careful cuts to avoid injury.

"I'm not an arborist," Gorospe said. "When you've got tree on tree and widow-makers overhead, you have to be careful. I learned a lot from these crews."

The visiting teams brought not only skill but spirit.

After one long day, Petermann said the volunteers gathered around tables and shared stories of where they had seen faith at work.

"They went around and talked about where they saw Jesus that day," he said. "Everybody had a different story."

Gorospe said that spiritual component matters as much as the saw work.

"Sometimes people don't



CHS Jr Diversified Agriculture Capstone student Ayhaunna Smith participated in the Mississippi World Food Prize Youth Institute held at Mississippi State University.

The Mississippi Youth Institute is a transformative experience where high school students engage with local leaders and agriculture experts on critical global challenges, participate in hands-on activities and explore meaningful ways to make a difference in Mississippi and around the world.

need their yard cleared first," she said. "They need to know they're seen. They need to know someone cares."

To organize requests, Gorospe and the teams have used a national platform called Crisis Cleanup. The app allows the addresses to be entered and volunteer groups to claim and complete jobs.

"All across the United States, you can see open operations," she said. "You claim the job, you go do it, and you close it out."

She travels in a self-contained camper so she can remain on site without burdening local resources. Much of the work is funded through small donations. Operating a mobile disaster response ministry requires more than chainsaws and good intentions. Fuel, replacement chains and bars,

safety chaps, helmets, ladders and routine equipment maintenance are ongoing expenses. She travels thousands of miles between deployments, and donations to Chick With A Chainsaw help sustain those practical needs, allowing her to respond quickly when the next community calls.

Gorospe has worked disaster zones in Texas and North Carolina during the last year. She said each storm leaves different scars. "Everybody shows up for the immediate emergency," she said. "But rebuilding takes years."

In Yalobusha County, she has been especially mindful of elderly residents and families without the means to clear heavy debris on their own.

"It always seems like the ones who get hit the hardest are the ones who can least

afford it," she said.

Gorospe expects to remain in the area several more days before moving on to assist other communities impacted by the same storm system.

She knows she will likely see many of the same volunteers again somewhere down the road, especially the ones who are have the deepest commitment.

"The ones who keep pushing long after the press coverage has subsided are the ones I am talking about."

When asked what keeps her going, she paused only briefly.

"There's a song that asks, 'Did I do all I could do in the time you gave me?'" she said. "When I get to heaven, I want God to say I did."

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