

# Oakland News

By Linda Ross Aldy



Congratulations to Teresa Ross who retired last week from Modine after 39 1/2 years at the same company! She was excited about not having to set an alarm. We wish her many adventures and much relaxation in her retirement. There are a LOT of great books in her future, I'm sure!

Congratulations also go to Velisha Adams Walls for receiving her Associate of Science as a Medical Administrative Assistant. Lisa and Michael are the very best folks!

Our sympathy to the family of Bobbie Griffin of Oakland. She worked for the telephone company, for Big Yank, as a kindergarten and elementary assistant teacher, and in medical billing. Survivors include her sons, Ron (Destiny) Griffin, Jr. and Robbie (Marie) Griffin; her daughter, Shana (Chris) Bauer; 14 grandchildren; 11 great-grandchildren (and one on the way!). She was preceded in death by her parents, Robert and Mary Poe; her husband, Ronald "Ronnie" Griffin, Sr.; a son, Chad Griffin; a grandson, Cody Haire; and a sister, Patsy Poe Elliott. She was a member of Oakland Baptist Church.

Holy Week services in the area were well attended with

rotation among the following churches: Springhill Church of God, Springhill Baptist, Oakland Baptist, Oakland Methodist, and Tillatoba Baptist. Mother said the services were wonderful and that there was a lot of good visiting included as well.

I read a column recently about the death of Larry Hentz last month who was convicted in the 1982 death of James Williamson of Oakland. It was a big case at the time, but there was a very personal element for me involving one of the best dogs to ever be in my life.

I was a hot-shot newspaper reporter living in a small town outside of Clarksdale where I covered Northwest Miss. for The Commercial Appeal.

I got a call that a train had derailed between Tutwiler and Webb. I grabbed my trusty Pentax 35-millimeter camera, a reporter's slim notebook, and jumped into my 1973 Chevrolet Laguna I had purchased new from Dynamite Kirk.

As I drove, an 18-wheeler went barreling by and from the corner of my eye, I glimpsed a movement. In that split second when the brain processes the vision, I thought I had seen a little monkey trying to clamber



**Richard E. Farris**

Richard E. Farris was born on August 8, 1962, in Coffeeville, Mississippi, to Roosevelt Bell and Nancy Neely and departed on March 16, 2026.

Richard displayed a natural rhythm and passion for music early, proudly serving as a member of the Coffeeville High School band for four years, where he mastered the snare drum. He graduated in 1981 and continued his education at Northwest Mississippi Community College, where he also remained active in the band. Richard later attended the University of Mississippi (Ole Miss), majoring in Broadcast Journalism. His rich, distinctive voice opened doors for him as he worked at the campus radio station and later as a radio DJ for Miss 98 country Station. His talent earned him opportunities in voice work, including a commercial for Naomi Sims' beauty products. In 1986, he relocated to Dover, New Jersey, to further his radio career.

out of the way. It was a tiny puppy. The train was already wrecked and not going anywhere anytime soon, so I pulled over, caught the pup, maybe 6 weeks old, with not ONE hair on its scrawny body and dropped it off at my vet's office.

When I returned, they told me a sad story of mange (the

really infectious kind), worms and more. I was making a grand total of \$125 a week. After explaining the treatment including 8 weeks of boarding, they told me if I would pay for half of the medicine, they would comp the rest. I agreed and ended up with a dog named Mon-

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In pursuit of new opportunities and a greater calling Richeard enlisted in the United States Air Force. Though he initially sought a role in journalism, he honorably served as a Law Enforcement Specialist. Stationed at Hulburt Field in Florida from 1987 to 1991, he proudly served his country during Operation Desert Storm and was honorably discharged.

On July 18, 1988, Richard was united in marriage to the love of his life, Debra D. Farris. He built a dedicated career with Texas Instruments, where his intelligence and skill with computers and technology truly shined. He was known as a "wiz" with gadgets, always eager to learn and help others. In his leisure time, Richard found joy in fishing and cooking, especially experimenting with new recipes.

Richard preceded in death by his grandfather, Johnny Farris; his mother Nancy Neely; and his grandmother, Rebecca Farris. He leaves to cherish his memory his devoted wife, Debra Farris; his father, Roosevelt Bell (Lottie); his son, Richard A. Farris (Katrina Brown); his beloved grandsons, Ashton Farris and Ayden Farris; his sister, Tammy bell; his brother, Kennedy Taylor (Brenda); his aunts, eltha gram and Onia sims; along with a host of nieces, nephews, cousins, and dear friends.

He attended and graduated from his beloved Mississippi State University, where he was quick to tell anyone who would listen that all the trophies and accolades he received there were in dancing. He never missed a chance to tell anyone and everyone how much his alma mater meant to him, and he was never at a loss for a story (or two) from this time in his life. It was during this time that he began his lifelong love of music. Many of his stories involved following The Red

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**Phillip Bruce Stidham**

Phillip Bruce Stidham passed away on February 21, 2026. He left this world as he lived his life -on his own terms in his home, surrounded by all those who loved him most.

Per his wishes, a small celebration of life will be held later, and his ashes will be scattered at two of his favorite places: his hunting camp, Bucksnot, in Mississippi, and his good friend Corwyn Aldredge's farm, where he spent so many wonderful times with his closest friends.

Bruce was born May 30, 1935, to Emmett Earl and Mary Hope Stidham. He spent his early years in many small Mississippi towns with his family, as his father led several Presbyterian congregations, before they finally settled in Coffeeville, Mississippi. He loved his parents and was so incredibly proud of them. He and his mother shared the same sense of humor, and he passed it down to all his children. Among his most cherished belongings were his

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## Thank You

The family of Mike Shaw Sr. would like to express our heartfelt gratitude for the love, support, and kindness shown during this difficult time. We are deeply thankful for the prayers, comforting words, flowers, food, and all the thoughtful gestures extended to our family.

Your presence, whether in person or in spirit, has brought us strength and comfort as we remember and celebrate his life. We are truly grateful to have such caring friends, family, and community surrounding us.

With sincere appreciation,  
The Family of Mike Shaw, Sr.  
May 9, 1942 to March 18, 2026

father's Bibles and a book of his handwritten sermons. His faith was strong from a young age.

During high school, one of his many claims to fame, along with attaining the rank of Eagle Scout, was being the only beekeeper in all of Yalobusha County. He chose this as his 4-H project and was called upon from all over the county to handle "bee issues". Right after high school, he was drafted into the United States Army and was stationed in Germany alongside fellow Mississippi native Elvis Presley, whom he continued to love and listen to all his life. He spent several afternoons sitting on Elvis' porch in Germany while they were both serving our country. He had a lifelong love of all things Elvis and loved to tell stories about their time together, and the white convertible BMW Elvis drove while they were there.

He attended and graduated from his beloved Mississippi State University, where he was quick to tell anyone who would listen that all the trophies and accolades he received there were in dancing. He never missed a chance to tell anyone and everyone how much his alma mater meant to him, and he was never at a loss for a story (or two) from this time in his life. It was during this time that he began his lifelong love of music. Many of his stories involved following The Red

message for salvation of souls everywhere. What an Easter message, HE suffered, died and arose ALIVE for us!

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## Tillatoba News By Patcie Deck

I saw the Easter bunny hippity hopping back down the bunny trail Sunday night. He waved and said, "I'll see you all again March 28, 2027!"

Love and sympathy to the Rusty Dogan family of Searcy, Arkansas. Rusty passed away April 2, 2026. Rusty was the son of Jerry and Ollie Simmons Dogan. I remember Rusty when he was a young boy full of life and so much fun to be around.

Diane Dukes sent us 4 large boxes of food and 2 different desserts on Saturday and we made three meals out of it. Thank you so much for thinking of us, Diane!

Diane Dukes and her family met at the "Four Roses" and had their Easter egg hunt and meal on Saturday. They all had a good time.

I talked to Trudy Simmons, Monday morning and we decided our falls that we had recently was age related. Surely not!

Beautiful sunshine, lovely ride to Pope Willow Springs AOG. Followed by a special spirit filled message of Easter's meaning by Bro. Tommy Darby, said Martha Box. Followed by the Holy Spirit's interruption



Great gathering at Martha's house with a lot of tasty food prepared by such good cooks. Granddaughters Mar-nie and Addie assisted me yesterday. When my shoulders and hands went into malfunction mode. Those girls are great cooks already. Jake's Birthday today with Easter was a great celebration!

Then Jake showed the film! They had taken Martha's old home movies of my babies in our way back then youth, and fixed them to view on TV. Yes, I squalled as they remembered!

Sadie and Milton Harper had a Blessed Easter. First time in a long time that all 3 of my children were at church together. We also had our great grandson Tyler with us, but he got sick and had to leave church. We all had a great Easter.

Tyler Welch and Kristie Hartley went turkey hunting and brought home two big turkeys. Phil and Ginger Harrison and boys had a great day celebrating Easter. Jake led the music and sang the special at Pine Grove

Preheat the oven to 350° and grease baking sheets. Beat together, butter, sugar, and vanilla in a large bowl with an electric mixer until creamy and well combined. Mix in flour, a little at a time, until incorporated. Gently fold in potato chips and drop dough by spoonfuls onto the prepared baking sheet. Bake in the preheated oven until the edges are golden brown, about 15 minutes. Transfer cookies to a wire rack to cool completely



# Who Is It?

Last week's "Who Is It?" was Jono Reed, Dwain Clark and Donrell Bland. No one correctly identified them. Jimmy Norwood knew Guy Dale Shaw from two weeks ago. Please call the Courier at 662-675-2446 before noon on Monday or call and leave a message or text 662-458-8939.



“For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish, but have eternal life.”



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