

The Coffeeville Courier

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Community Invited to Learn About New Oakland Montessori Pre-School



Brooke Fly Spears

OAKLAND, MISS. — Parents interested in enrolling their children in a new Montessori Pre-School and individuals interested in teaching opportunities are invited to attend an informational meeting on Tuesday, July 7, at 6:00 p.m. at the Oakland Chamber Building, 304 Holly Street, Oakland. The meeting will introduce plans for the proposed Oakland Montessori Pre-School, which will serve three- and four-year-old children and help address a longstanding need for early childhood education opportunities in the Oakland area.

Leading the discussion will be Brooke Fly Spears, a highly respected Montessori educator and trainer with more than 15 years of

classroom experience.

"We are excited to bring one of the region's leading Montessori educators to Oakland to help families and prospective teachers learn more about this educational approach and what it could mean for our community," organizers said.

Spears taught for five years at Near North Montessori, an AMI-accredited school in Chicago, working with children ages 6 through 14. She also taught fifth-grade science in the Mississippi public school system before returning to North Mississippi to support the growth of Montessori education.

She founded the Elementary Program at Magnolia Montessori School in Oxford and served for eight years as Lead Guide in a Montessori elementary classroom. Since 2021, she has worked as an Elementary II Trainer with Arete Memphis Public Montessori Residency and as a Consulting Teacher with Libertas School of Memphis.

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Thunder Moving; Begins June 10

By Adam Prestridge, Publisher, *Grenada Star*

The annual Thunder on Water festival returns to Grenada Lake this June with five days of family-friendly entertainment and food at Thunder Field across from the airport. Hosted by the Grenada Lake Association, the main festival activities begin Wednesday, June 10, with Family Night at the carnival from 6 p.m. until 10 p.m., featuring \$25 wristbands for unlimited rides.

The carnival continues Thursday evening from 6 p.m. until 10 p.m. with \$30 wristbands.

On Friday, June 12, the festival expands to all-day programming with arts and crafts vendors and food vendors operating throughout the day. The evening brings tethered balloon rides starting at 6 p.m., carnival operations from 7 p.m. until 11 p.m., and a barbecue cookoff competition. The night culminates with a balloon glow beginning at dark, followed by fireworks atop the levee.

Saturday, June 13, features the festival's most packed schedule, beginning with a Kids Fishing Rodeo at 8 a.m. and a Car and Truck Show starting at

the same time. The Tractor Pull begins at 11 a.m., while a Downtown Barbecue Competition runs throughout the day. Arts and crafts vendors and food vendors operate all day, and the carnival runs from noon until midnight with multiple session options at \$30 per wristband. Tethered balloon rides return at 6 p.m., and another balloon glow lights up the evening sky at dark.

The festival concludes Sunday, June 14, with arts and crafts, food vendors and carnival operations running from noon until 8 p.m. Wristbands for Sunday's carnival sessions are \$30.

The safe boating festival is one of Mississippi's largest outdoor celebrations, drawing visitors from across the region to the scenic shores of Grenada Lake. The carnival features more than 20 rides and 10 games and attractions throughout the week. The Dixie Iron Tractor Pull features pre-1960 tractors at the Blue Hole, while the Crossroads Cruisers and O'Reilly Auto Parts sponsor the car and truck show at

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From My Porch to Yours

*"When the Lord Speaks
Through the Smallest Cry"*

By AmyEl-Rai Brown

Friend, every now and then the Lord will meet us in the most unexpected places, sometimes before we ever make it through the church doors. That is just what happened to me this past Sunday morning. I was sitting in my car, praying before service, when the stillness was broken by the faintest little cry. Somewhere nearby, a kitten was crying out. It was such a thin, pitiful sound that somebody in a rush might have brushed it off and kept on walking. But that little cry settled down in my spirit and would not let me be.

Now, I will just be honest with you, I have never been much of a cat person. Most days, I probably would have gone on inside and thought nothing more about it. But the longer I sat there, the more I felt that sweet nudge of the Holy Spirit, the kind that will not let you stay comfortable when something close by is hurting. So, I got out and followed the sound. There in the grass was the tiniest kitten, wounded, bleeding, and crying toward the church.

She looked so helpless and so alone that my heart just folded up inside me.

Right then, these words came up in my spirit clear as day: "to the least of these" (Matthew 25:40).

I scooped that little baby up and carried her back to my car, planning to get her home where she could be cared for. Somewhere in the middle of all that, I realized I had left my Bible on top of the car, and it had flown out into the road along with the rest of the things I had set there in my hurry. So, there I was, trying to gather up my scattered belongings with a wounded kitten in my arms and a heart full of concern. It was not graceful, and it surely was not convenient, but mercy hardly ever waits for a time that fits nicely and easily into our plans.

By the time I started toward home, I looked down and saw blood on my shirt and thought to myself, "Well, you surely cannot go to church looking like this." But sometimes what sounds practical is really a distraction trying to pull us off course. I called my daughter to meet me, placed that kitten in her care, and turned right back around toward the house of God. In that moment, the Lord

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