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VanHorn elected mayor; swearing-in ceremony held June 29

By Susie A. Wolfe

Karl VanHorn defeated Ryshonda Beechem for mayor by 247 to 188 votes in the June 8 election. A total of 434 votes were cast out of an estimated 767 registered voters in the general election with 402 cast in person, 22 absentee, and 11 affidavits.

As for the five aldermen contests, Aldermen Michael Adams, Ward 1, and Frank Boyd, Ward 2, were defeated. Adams had 36 votes to Diane Hill's 54 and Scott Walters 10. Boyd had 24 votes to Sandra Harvey's 68.

Margie Warren, Ward 3 incumbent, was re-elected in the April 6 Republican Primary against Walt Robbins and Boomer Graham.

Ward 4's James Ray Harrell and Alderman-At-Large Eddie Jones were re-elected. Harrell had 79 votes to Patsy Watson's 32. Eddie Jones defeated

two opponents. He had 235 votes to Summer Scruggs 129 and Catherine Poarch's 57 votes.

The new mayor and new alderwomen, Diane Hill and Sandra Harvey, joined the Board of Aldermen at the July 5 Board Meeting after being sworn-in June 29.

See page
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article.



Photo by Pelahatchie News

Karl VanHorn is sworn in as Pelahatchie's new mayor by Rankin County Circuit Judge Brad Mills. Felicia VanHorn, left, held the Bible for her husband as he took his vows as mayor. Alderwoman Margie Warren is seated.

Parade names Yogi 'Best Park in State'



Yogi on the Lake has a clean and active atmosphere perfect for a family vacation. The Park is located 30 miles east of Jackson off Highway 43 North in Pelahatchie.



Special to Pelahatchie News

Special to Pelahatchie News

Parade Magazine reported that camping has never been more popular than it is right now, thanks to its ease and safety during the Coronavirus pandemic. In Parade's June issue, the publication

highlighted the best campgrounds in the country by state naming Jellystone Park in Pelahatchie as the best park in the State of Mississippi, according to Trent Hershenson, vice president of marketing for Leisure Systems.

According to the 2021 North Amer-

ican Camping Report, more than 86 million U.S. households consider themselves campers. And with 48 million of those households admitting to have taken a camping trip in 2020, those numbers are expected to go up in 2021, according to the publication.

Jellystone Park, also known as Yogi on the Lake, is a park where kids can play in the water park, Water Zone, pool, nearby beach, and of course, the jumping pillow. For more information, call 601.854.6621 or visit www.jellystonems.com.

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Robinson brings home more Special Olympics' medals



Special to Pelahatchie News

Special Olympian Luke Robinson, a cafeteria employee at Pelahatchie schools, was honored in May at Gulde United Methodist Church by Pastor Beth Feisel. He participated in State Bowling in Southaven, Mississippi where he won a bronze medal in singles; a silver medal in doubles; and a gold medal in unified doubles. Robinson has won Special Olympic medals in other sports through the years, including softball, bocce and flag football. He is now qualified at the state level and can participate in the National Special Olympics in 2022 in Florida.

Sworn in as of June, the Pelahatchie governing group



Photo by Pelahatchie News

Pictured (l to r) is the new governing group of Pelahatchie. In the front row are Alderpersons Sandra Harvey, Margie Warren and Diane Hill; and in the second row are Aldermen Eddie Jones and James Harrell, and Mayor Karl VanHorn. They were sworn in on June 29 and will hold their first Board Meeting together on July 6.



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(L to R) front row, are, Jenny Harrell/
Manager, Amy Bailey, and Jennifer Quick;
and (L to R) back row, are: Cindy Jo
Weimer, and Brian Hall/Owner.

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Predators of the wild turkey are diverse



Special to Pelahatchie News

By Doug Carter, Rankin County Extension Agent

The wild turkey faces a diverse array of predator species, and these predator species vary in their mode of search and capture. True predators actively search and kill living prey. These include bobcats, hawks, owls, eagles, and all snakes. However, many predators of turkeys are more generalists and consume non-animal matter, such as plants and seeds and insects, as well as meat secured from stalking and killing prey. These include coyotes, wild pigs, gray and red foxes, rodents, and crows. The most significant nest predators include opossums, raccoons, and skunks. Finally, predators such as feral dogs and cats may be more harmful to turkeys as a

natural predator. Regardless of the predator, most are opportunistic; they can detect prey by sight, sound, smell during their normal travels and searches for food, and their capture of wild turkeys is usually incidental to pursuit of any suitable prey. Populations densities of many of the more adaptable predators of wild turkeys may be as high or higher today than previously. Additionally, increased urbanization has resulted in more feral cats and dogs. Predation is an important component of a turkey's life cycle. Larger predators such as the bobcat, coyote,



Special to Pelahatchie News

and fox kill adult hens and even gobblers. In contrast, smaller predators, including skunks, raccoons, opossums, and snakes, are primary nest and poultry predators. The impacts of predation upon turkey populations vary by season, location, and land use patterns. Predation may significantly impact turkey populations when populations are low, nesting cover is poor, food and/or water scarcity forces turkeys into unfavorable range, the number of other prey species is low, birds are exposed to severe weather for prolonged periods of time, and predator populations are abnormally high. The wild turkey has existed and survived with predators and predation for centuries. Management should center as much around managing man's impact upon turkey populations as managing predators of the wild turkey.

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Fusion's Harvey receives black belt



Special to Pelahatchie News

Michael Harvey earned his First-Degree Black Belt in June. Master David Adams officiated the testing. Martial Arts instructors pictured (l to r) front, are: Dana Watkins; and back row: Bryant Watkin; Michael Harvey; and Billy Rials, head instructor, Fifth-Degree Black Belt. The judge for testing was Kristen Rials, Third-Degree Black Belt.

Obituaries

NAME	AGE	CITY	DOD	ARRANGEMENTS
Eunice Hazel Coley	82	Morton	5/26/2021	Wolf Funeral Services
Caleb Carter	15	Morton	6/21/2021	Wolf Funeral Services
Virginia Gordon	94	Morton	6/7/2021	Wolf Funeral Services
Robert J. Weaver	89	Lake	6/7/2021	Wolf Funeral Services
William Lewis Jolly	83	Walnut Grove	6/9/2021	Wolf Funeral Services
Jimmy Latham	86	Lena	6/11/2021	Wolf Funeral Services
Valelis Crosby	87	Lake	6/14/2021	Wolf Funeral Services
Linda Adcox	86	Pelahatchie	6/20/2021	Wolf Funeral Services
Edwin Davis	90	Pelahatchie	6/24/2021	Wolf Funeral Services
David Lewis	61	Morton	6/24/2021	Wolf Funeral Services

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Q & A with new Pelahatchie Mayor Karl VanHorn

By Susie A. Wolfe

Q: Pelahatchie News - Summarize your professional and political careers giving details to work for Pelahatchie.

A: Karl Vanhorn - I've been a public servant since 1990 when I entered the fire service as a volunteer firefighter. In January 2000, I went to work for the City of Flowood Fire Department where I worked my way through the ranks and currently hold the rank of Battalion Chief. In this position, I manage 4 stations and 21 firefighters on my shift.

I came to work in Pelahatchie in 2006 as a contract maintenance person because of the vision of Mayor Ross and the board; they wanted to lower the fire insurance rating for the town, which would save the citizens and the business on their insurance premiums. We started day 1 of the board approving that contract, and we went to work. We set up a maintenance plan for all the equipment, trucks and fire hydrants. I met with the fire department, and we brought in free training for the volunteers where they became certified volunteer firefighters through the Ms. State Fire Academy. In 2008, we met with the fire department administration and looked at several rescue trucks and decided on the type of truck that would fit the

needs of the town for several years. We wrote a grant through FEMA, and we were awarded the grant and purchased the rescue truck in 2010. We also met with the water department, and they assisted with upgrading some water mains to boost the water pressure. With all these upgrades, we were able to lower the fire rating. We lowered our rating several times thereafter to our current rating of a Class 6. In 2017 we applied for another FEMA grant to replace our tanker and was awarded that grant. We took delivery of that truck in 2018.

In 2017 I went through the part-time police academy after being approached by then Police Chief Kevin Poole. I graduated top of the class in academics.

The mayor position is a part-time position. I feel that with my knowledge of how government works and the working relationships that I have established that we will move Pelahatchie forward.

Q: Why did you run for mayor?

A: I ran for mayor because this is my home. I was tired of seeing Pelahatchie in a negative spotlight every



Photo by
Pelahatchie News

week for four yours. Our town and our citizens deserve a mayor that will work with the board and the citizens to move our town forward. I want to put Pelahatchie in a positive spotlight. I want to be out promoting the town.

Q: Describe your new duties combined with others in the town?

A: I'm going to be a working mayor. My duties will be to run the day-to-day operations of the town. I will be working very closely with the board of aldermen and the department heads. I will still be responding to fire and medical aid calls with the fire department.

Q: What are your plans going forward?

A: My plan is simple. First, we need to find a CPA to come in and look at our books. Then we need to work on hiring a city clerk so that city hall will operate more efficient. We need to look at Milltown Park and see what we can do to complete this project. We need to look at getting playground equipment for our children with disabilities so they can have the opportunity to be kids and play. I would like to see us move the splash pad to Milltown Park, as well. We need to look at repaving several roads throughout the town. We need to seek

out grants to accomplish some of these projects. I want to work to bring the Muscadine Jubilee back for our town.

Q: Talk about your vision for Pelahatchie in the next four years?

A: My vision is to be out promoting Pelahatchie in order to bring new businesses to our town. I want to work with the Rankin County Chamber to promote our town. We have tremendous potential with the land by the interstate that's in a great location for commercial growth. I want Pelahatchie to be the place where people want to come and raise their families. But with that will come improvements to our police and fire departments, as well as upgrading the water department. We have to look at the comprehensive plan that was developed in 2013 and see what improvements that we can do now to sustain the potential growth.

Q: Describe your family and the new addition?

A: I'm married to Felicia VanHorn and we will celebrate our thirtieth anniversary this August. We have one daughter, Whitney Peters, which just married her husband, Sean. They reside in Pelahatchie, as well. We just welcomed our first granddaughter, Dakota Grace, on May 30.



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PHS students place first and second in art contest



Photos special to Pelahatchie News

Pelahatchie High School (PHS) students Maddie Grace Walters and Symone Stringer recently participated in the MS-AATSP (American Association of Teachers of Spanish and Portuguese) 2021 Poster Art Contest, where Walters, left, placed first in the hand-drawn category, and Stringer, right, placed second in the hand-drawn category. Walters went on to win second place overall in the National AATSP hand-drawn category competing against students from across the United States for her original artwork based on the association's national conference theme of "Celebrando la diversidad."

MC names President's and Dean's scholars



Special to Pelahatchie News

The Mississippi College clock tower atop Nelson Hall in Clinton.

Special to Pelahatchie News

Amori Todd and Laura Wingo of Pelahatchie were named to Mississippi College's Spring 2021 president's list. To be eligible for the President's List, a student must maintain a 4.0 grade point average, based on a 4.0 system. The student must take a full course load of at least 12 semester hours of undergraduate credit with all academic courses impacting their grade point average.

Chancellor Easterling and Jason Wuestefeld were named to MC's Dean's List. To be eligible for the Dean's List, a student must maintain a 3.5 grade point average, based on a 4.0 system. The student must take a full course load of at least 12 semester hours of undergraduate credit with all academic courses im-

pacting their grade point average.

Mississippi College, affiliated with the Mississippi Baptist Convention, is a private, co-educational, Christian university of liberal arts and sciences serving more than 5,100 students, from 40 states and more than three dozen countries. Founded in 1826, Mississippi College is the oldest institution of higher learning in Mississippi, the largest private university in the state and America's second oldest Baptist college. Mississippi College is home to 84 areas of undergraduate study, 16 graduate programs, a doctor of jurisprudence, a doctor of education leadership degree and a doctor of professional counseling degree. Mississippi College seeks to be a university recognized for academic excellence and commitment to the cause of Christ.

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Unveiling PHS' potential in 2021-2022



By Guest Columnist
Dr. Teague Burchfield,
Principal, Pelahatchie
High School

Special to
Pelahatchie News

What an awesome summer we have had! It was not too long ago that we completed the most difficult school year we have ever experienced.

Necessary safety protocols created a veil of separation between each other as well as our school and community. Mask mandates and social distancing processes all come to mind as we reflect on last year's courageous endeavor. We are proud of the efforts of last year, and the successes bring hope for what's to come. This year brings a sense of anticipation as we "unveil" new processes and standards for the brighter days ahead.

We anticipate the "unveiling" of many new processes as we distance ourselves from last year's safety protocols. Cafeteria and break fellowship were two of many processes that come to mind that were absent from last year's processes that we all look forward to getting back to.

With the completion of the bond issue behind us, we look forward to "unveiling"

our beautiful new campus to our guests as we lessen the restrictions from last year's safety protocols.

We even look forward to all of the smiles as we "unveil" the very masks that limited us in so many ways regarding interaction. We have so much to look forward to; we look forward to "unveiling" Pelahatchie High School's ultimate potential this school year!

As we move closer to the beginning of the 2021-22 school year, several "Back to School" events have been prepared for you. Opportunities such as "Seventh Grade Orientation" on August 3, our first regular season home volleyball vs. Forest on August 12, "Open House" (including Meet the Chiefs) on August 13, and

our first home football game vs. Florence on August 27 are ALL great opportunities to attend and help kick off what we anticipate being yet another great school year.

We are truly excited to start the 2021-22 school year. As you well know, great things are happening here at Pelahatchie High School, and we are eager to continue to build on the successes of yesteryear. As always, we appreciate your support and look forward to seeing you all soon! Go Chiefs!



CMRLS has summer library programs for all ages

Special to Pelahatchie News

Central Mississippi Regional Library System (CMRLS) is providing virtual summer library programs this summer. The list of remaining programs in July may be seen on the website, www.cmrls.lib.ms.us.

At the Pelahatchie Public Library, there are two games available if you visit the library. Whose Tail is It? is a game where patrons can match a picture of an animal tail with the animal. A drawing will be held for a

\$25 gift card from all correct responses. In addition, a candy guessing game is on display. The guess closest to the correct number of candy pieces will win the candy. If there is tie among entries, a drawing will be held to determine winner.

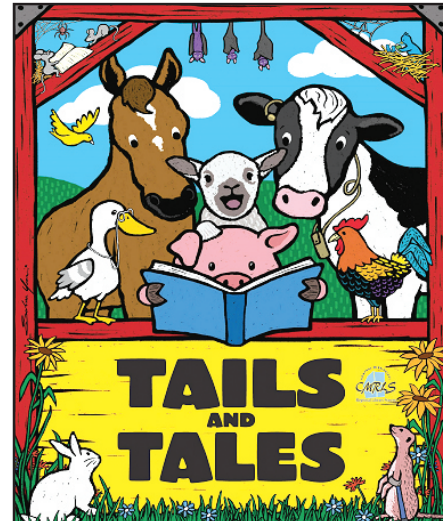
Reading challenges are available through the Beanstack app that can be downloaded to your phone, tablet, or computer. A drawing will be held at

the end of the program for those that complete the reading challenge. If you have any questions about summer library programs or Beanstack, please call or stop by the library, and will assist you.

The adult book club is meeting at the library again. On July 14 at 11 a.m., the group will meet to discuss Mississippi author Michael

Farris Smith's novel, *Nick*.

CMRLS encourages you to come back to the library and utilize this important community resource. From books to DVDs to public computers to fax/copying services, they are there to serve you.



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Ward inducted into MAC Coaches Hall of Fame



Special to Pelahatchie News

Coach Bill Ward, surrounded some of the coaches that he worked with during his tenure at Pelahatchie. Pictured (l to r) are: Ben Dee, Chris Courtney, Ryan Keeton, Ward, Avery Nobles, Kacey Myers, and Shane Sanders.

Special to Pelahatchie News

Bill Ward is part of the Mississippi Association of Coaches (MAC) Hall of Fame Class of 2020. *Pelahatchie News* ran a story at the time, but due to COVID, the induction ceremony was held a year later at the 48th Annual Mississippi Association of Coaches Hall of Fame & Awards Banquet held on Friday, June 19, 2021.

Coach Ward led the Chiefs to a state title in 2001 and has 201 career wins. He also won two Coach of the Year awards. The 38-year veteran championship foot-

ball coach held positions at Mantachie, Kosciusko, and Pelahatchie. He coached at Mantachie from 1979 to 1981, where he also coached the girls basketball team. He led teams at Kosciusko from 1981 to 1984 and paced Pelahatchie from 1984 to 2017.

Ward led his football teams to a record of 201-131 including eight district crowns, a 1998 South State title, and the 2001 State Championship at Pelahatchie. He coached teams that had two undefeated regular seasons and made 20 playoff appearances. He also coached in the Bernard Blackwell and Mississippi/

Alabama All-Star Classics.

He served as MAC President in 2014-2015. Ward was named Metro Coach of the Year in 2001 by the Jackson *Clarion Ledger* and received the MAC Roy Garcia Outstanding Coach Award in 2010.

Avery Nobles, former Pelahatchie High School coach, said, "I'm super proud of this guy for being inducted into the MAC Coaches Hall of Fame!"

"We always gave him a hard time for bumbling words in his speeches. Well, tonight (June 19), he gave an amazing Hall of Fame worthy speech that was classic Bill Ward."

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Harper named to UA President's List

Special to Pelahatchie News

Jackson Harper of Pelahatchie was named to The University of Alabama President's List for Spring Semester 2021.

A total of 11,813 students enrolled during the spring 2021 term at The University of Alabama made the Dean's List with academic records of 3.5 or above (on a 4.0 scale), or the President's List with academic records of 4.0 (all A's).

The UA Dean's and President's lists recognize full-time undergraduate students. The lists do not apply to graduate students or to undergraduate students who take less than a full course load.



Special to Pelahatchie News

The Denny Chimes tower was named in honor of George H. Denny, who served as university president from 1912 to 1936 and then again in 1941.

White receives award for most improved ACT score



Special to Pelahatchie News

Kaitlyn White, a Pelahatchie High School (PHS) junior, received a \$250 check from PriorityOne Bank and a Certificate of Excellence from the Rankin County School District for 2021 ACT Growth on May 12. Pictured (l to r) are: Dr. Teague Burchfield, Katie White, Kaitlyn White, and Rob Oates, vice president, PriorityOne.

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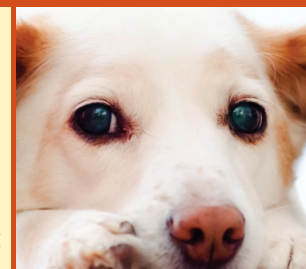
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By Guest Columnist
Robin Sanders,
Principal, Pelahatchie
Elementary

As we reflect on the previous school year and plan the next, we have nothing but admiration and appreciation for our entire school community for their understanding, patience, and grace in making the best of a challenging and very different set of circumstances. We moved forward, even when our steps seemed heavy and required more diligence from time to time. We will continue to experience some heavy steps this year as we continue to make up for learning loss, but I have no doubt that Pelahatchie Elementary has the grit and determination to rise up!

Students, you have wonderful opportunities ahead to make a difference in your life and the lives of your classmates. Achieving your goals will take commitment and a willingness to do the work. To help you along the way, we have a talented and dedicated staff ready to assist you. Our staff, your hard work, along with informed families and a community that is involved and

values education, will help to put you well on your way to a successful future.

Families, together we can make this the best school year yet, by making sure your children are in the classroom, focused on learning and celebrating success along the way. Research shows that attendance is an important factor in student achievement. We encourage students to be on time and stay all day.

Our instructional day is from 8:05 a.m. - 2:50 p.m., and I can promise you that our teachers begin promptly with instruction as soon as morning announcements are over and continue until the final announcements at the end of the day. Students who attend school regularly have been shown to achieve at higher levels than students who do not have regular attendance.

When our students succeed, we all succeed because of the contributions young minds can make to society and the communities in which they live. I hope to see you participating with your students in the schools. I wish everyone a year filled with achievements, and many fun, memorable experiences.

We would like to invite parents to the school to meet your teacher(s), Tuesday, August 3, from 4-6 p.m.

PHS Spanish students earn national recognition



Special to Pelahatchie News

Pelahatchie High School (PHS) students Mariah McGill and Bailey McKee pictured (l to r), as well as Camden Patton, not pictured, recently received Honorable Mention, national recognition for their 2021 National Spanish Exam scores.

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Tournament raises money for Shannon's Home of Hope to help children in crisis



Special to Pelahatchie News

The All Things New Rev 21:5 is about to play the team from The Pointe Church in the SHH Basketball Tournament, and they took time to pray together before competing hard against each other.

Special to Pelahatchie News

The Second Annual Shannon's Home of Hope (SHH) Basketball Tournament was a success, according to Michelle Rhodes, President of the Board. Approximately \$8,000 was raised to provide a safe place for the kids while authorities can work on a long-term plan for the child and family.

Though they do not have a home yet, they are currently looking for land, or a home and land, in rural Rankin County. The emergency shelter will be a 45-day shelter for youth who are in abuse or neglect situations, runaways, or a child in need of supervision.

"It (SHH Tournament) was a great showing of support by so many churches, ministries, individuals, and businesses from our area," said Rhodes. "Rankin County is a great place to raise a family, but unfortunately not all family situations are healthy for the child."

"We need to be able to get in churches or other organizations to spread the word of the need for this shelter. SHH is a 501c3 Organization, so all donations are tax deductible. We have

several donors that give monthly donations, which is awesome! We also have donors that donate to SHH in lieu of Christmas gifts for the person who has everything. We also have donors that make end of the year donations to SHH. The basketball tournament is a great partner with other ministries. We had All Things New Rev. 21:5, Teen Challenge Mercy House, Sheriff Bailey's Jail Ministry, churches, businesses, and great community members that came together to help children in crisis," said Rhodes.

"We have been so blessed to have generous donors to Shannon's Home of Hope," said Rhodes. "Shannon Love made a huge difference in children's lives, and people want to help with this mission."

"Our hope is to partner with churches and businesses to help the children in crisis situations, and this donation showed that we can all come together to help."

To donate to Shannon's Home of Hope, go online at www.shannonshomeofhope.org or mail a check to PO Box 223, Brandon, MS 39043.

Feisel reappointed to serve in Pelahatchie



Photo by Pelahatchie News

Beth Feisel was reappointed to serve as pastor for Gulde United Methodist Church and Pelahatchie United Methodist Church for the next year. Pictured (l to r) are: Rev. Beth and Kevin Feisel.

Special to Pelahatchie News

Pastor Beth Feisel has been reappointed by the United Methodist Church announced by Bishop James E. Swanson, Sr. and the Cabinet of the Mississippi Conference during the Appointment Sessions.

According to Bob Phillips, chairperson of the Pastor Parish Relations Committee, "We worked prayerfully together to appoint clergy to every church in our Annual Conference. I give thanks for the ministry of our pastor, Rev. Beth Feisel, who has been a servant leader among us. Our pastor

is reappointed to serve for another appointment year. We ask your prayers for her."

Feisel said she is pleased to serve as pastor for Gulde United Methodist Church and Pelahatchie United Methodist Church for July 1, 2021-June 30, 2022.

"My husband, Kevin, and I have enjoyed living in Pelahatchie the past four years and are happy to be returning for another year. I am looking forward to serving God and God's people in this community for another year and am believing God for even greater works than ever."



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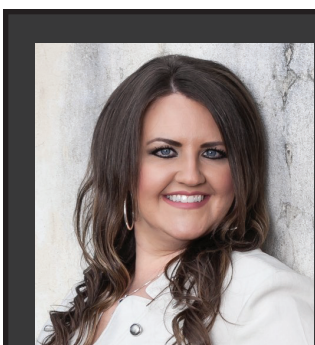
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Celebrate the freedoms you have in Christ



By Guest Columnist John Vaughn, Pastor, Cross Roads Baptist Church

Special to Pelahatchie News

The Declaration of Independence was adopted by the Continental Congress on July 4, 1776, and announced the separation of the thirteen American colonies from Great Britain. With this, a new nation was formed - the United States of America. The most quoted line from the Declaration of Independence is "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness." Our forefathers were declaring that they not only demanded freedom but also acknowledged that ultimately, freedom comes from the Lord.

On Independence Day, here are some of the freedoms we celebrate:

1. The Freedom to Live out Our Faith

In some countries, the mention of serving God or his Son means instant death. Our forefathers recognized the Creator through their extension of certain



Special to Pelahatchie News

God-given rights in the Declaration of Independence. Our faith is the most important of all, as it gives us the foundation and assurance that God is in control of a world in chaos. When life seems out of control, seek the source of all creation - God. He will provide peace in the midst of all your life's storms.

2. The Freedom to Worship

We are allowed the choice to worship in any way we desire. God created us for fellowship. Our individual gifts are stronger when they are joined with our

brothers and sisters in Christ. Sadly, statistics show worship attendance is in a decline as more people choose a life of independence, which ultimately leads to a life of solitude.

Choose today to ask God to direct you to a church for you to be involved in.

3. The Freedom of Prayer

Self-reliance is an American lifestyle demanded and respected. Just as this can be seen as a strength, self-reliance can also be a tremendous weakness when it leads us to put God on the side-

lines of our life, and call upon him only when we need his rescue. By choosing to submit our requests to God in prayer, we are making the choice to live out the faith to which he calls us.

4. The Freedom of Happiness

If you notice in the Declaration, one of the rights it defines is "the pursuit of happiness." True happiness can only be found through a personal relationship of faith in Jesus Christ. But once that relationship is established, there is no problem or difficulty that can keep you from enjoying happiness. The reason is that the happiness comes from your relationship with Christ, and no one can take that away from you.

The 56 leaders who signed the Declaration of Independence had the foresight to understand things had to change...so the generations who followed them would experience Life, Liberty, and Happiness. They accomplished this for all of us who are alive today. We must be careful to protect these freedoms for future generations to enjoy.

Independence Day is on Sunday this year. Be sure to take your family to church to celebrate the freedoms you have in Christ!



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Plant manager pleads guilty to harboring illegal immigrant

Special to Pelahatchie News

A poultry processing plant manager who was earlier indicted on charges related to the 2019 U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) raids of Mississippi poultry plants, has pleaded guilty to harboring an illegal immigrant.

Salvador Delgado-Nieves, 58, of Pelahatchie, worked for southern Knights Industrial Services as the manager of the A&B Inc. poultry processing plant in Pelahatchie. He was charged with aiding and abetting the harboring of an illegal immigrant for financial gain, according to a press release from the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ).

The case was investigated by Homeland Security Investigations.

Delgado-Nieves was initially indicted in July 2020 with three counts of assisting illegal immigrants in falsely representing themselves to be United States citizens, three counts of assisting illegal immigrants in obtaining false Social Security cards, and one count of making a false statement to law enforcement officials when he denied having hired illegal immigrants at A&B. Delgado-Nieves was one of four people to

be indicted at the time.

Sentencing for Delgado-Nieves has been scheduled for September 15, 2021. He faces a maximum penalty of ten years in prison. A federal district judge will determine any sentence after considering the U.S. Sentencing Guidelines and other statutory factors.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Lynn Murray is prosecuting the case.

The guilty plea comes as an outcome of the ICE raids in which agents executed multiple federal criminal search warrants at seven agrifood plants in Mississippi on August 7, 2019. Those raids resulted in the detainment of 680 alleged illegal immigrant workers.

Other facilities targeted in the raids were operated by Peco Foods, Pearl River Foods, MP Foods, PH Foods and Koch Foods. Three of those facilities were operated by Peco Foods, with those located in Canton, Bay Springs and Sebastopol. However, Peco announced January 7 that the Canton plant would be one of three company facilities to close with some of that production being transferred to Sebastopol.

Roy Graber is a senior reporter at WATT Global Media. Contact Graber via email at rgraber@wattglobal.com.

Pelahatchie is next for Fast Fiber Internet from TEC

Special to Pelahatchie News

TEC, a leading provider of Fast Fiber Internet across the Southeast, has broken ground on a project that will provide high-speed internet to the Pelahatchie community. Construction has started on Highway 80 and is scheduled to be completed in early fourth quarter of 2021, with service installations to begin shortly after. The Pelahatchie expansion is part of a TEC regional project worth an estimated \$96 Million investment to construct high-speed broadband infrastructure over the next six years.

The total project will provide Fast Fiber Internet access to over 23,000 families and businesses in rural Mississippi, connecting more Mississippians with the world. TEC was one of 386 competing companies in the November 2020, Federal Communications Commission (FCC) auction, which awarded \$9 billion for the provision of broadband internet to unserved and underserved areas throughout the United States. TEC, with the assistance of the FCC, will be funding to build and deliver broadband access to Copiah, Covington, Jasper, Lawrence, Lincoln, Newton, Rankin,

Scott, Simpson, and Smith counties.

"Access to high-speed broadband internet is vital to people's ability to work, learn and carry out business," Central District Public Service Commissioner Brent Bailey said. "I continue to applaud TEC's assertive efforts to advance their broadband expansion projects to bring high speed internet to the residents and businesses of Pelahatchie, MS and in other areas of the Central District."

TEC's goal is to bridge the digital divide by providing a reliable, high-speed internet option that ultimately has positive impact in the communities which it serves.

"Our aggressive goals of expanding our service area paired with innovative grant opportunities from State and Federal government are truly changing the economic landscape in Mississippi for the better," said Joey Garner, TEC Executive Vice President. "TEC was started here in Mississippi and has been serving our customers for nearly 100 years. We are excited to see this expansion continue throughout the state, and we will always look for creative solutions like this to best serve our customers and best equip our rural communities with the services they need."



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