

Kemper County Messenger

Established 1934 – DeKalb, Mississippi

Thursday, April 15, 2021

87th Year – 1934-2021

No. 15** 50¢

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Editor's note: The Kemper County Messenger publishes the Community Calendar weekly in this space. It covers events, announcements and happenings in Kemper County. We welcome your news and comments. If you would like to have something placed in the Kemper Messenger, contact the office at 601-743-5760 during business hours; or mail it to Kemper Messenger, P.O. 546, DeKalb, MS, 39328. The Messenger's writer, Steve Swogetinsky, may be reached at 601-776-6102.

MSU EXTENSION NEW CLASS OF MASTER GARDENERS

Registration opens March 1 for the newest class of Master Gardeners, who will receive their training online this year. This year, all Master Gardener instruction is online and self-paced. The class begins May 1 and closes June 30. The cost is \$125 for those who want to become certified Master Gardener volunteers and provide 40 hours of service. For \$200, a home-gardening course is available for those not interested in the volunteer service. Non-volunteer participants can pay \$25 per class for select classes if they prefer. These individual classes are available year-round. Registration is open from March 1 until April 15. Register for the training and learn more about the Master Gardener program at <http://msuext.ms/mg>.

MEETING OF KEMPER COUNTY WOMEN'S CIVIC LEAGUE

The Kemper County Women's Civic League plans to hold their first meeting of the year on Tuesday, May 11 at 12:00 in the DeKalb Library.

SALEM BAPTIST CHURCH HOMECOMING

Homecoming for Salem Baptist Church, Kemper County will be May 2. Services begin at 10:45 with pot-luck lunch to follow. Pastor: Rev Alan Hawkins

NEW BUSINESS- NOW OPEN

Roberts Florists, 14679 Hwy 16 W DeKalb, MS 39328, now open. Phone number 601-743-2445. Come let us take care of all your floral needs. In God We Trust!

GARBAGE BILL PAYMENTS

Attention: ALL KEMPER COUNTY LANDOWNERS effective January 1, 2021 all garbage bill payments must be taken at the Commercial Bank located in DeKalb, MS (in-person) please have account number.

The Kemper County Courthouse will no longer be accepting garbage payments.

Payments can be mailed to:
K. C. Garbage & Solid Waste
P O Box 39
DeKalb, MS 39328
Or call 1-800-253-0831 for questions regarding your account

JRMWV PROGRAM

Junior Master Wellness Volunteer Training Recruitment going on now. We are looking for youth 14-18 years old to join us for an exciting volunteer program.

The JrMWV Program is a community health education and volunteer leader training program. Youth will learn about improving health literacy and healthy lifestyle choices and will then go out into their community and become an advocate for a healthier Mississippi! Participants will be expected to give back by completing 24 hours of community service.

Come learn, share, and inspire others to lead a healthy lifestyle. For more information or to sign up call the Kemper County Extension office at 601-743-2837 or send an email to malikah.jones@msstate.edu.

COALITION FOR A HEALTHY KEMPER COUNTY

The Coalition for a Healthy Kemper County was organized to provide educational outreach. The goal is to bring educational awareness of health issues and unhealthy lifestyles that accompany diseases such as diabetes, hypertension, high cholesterol, etc. We solicit the help of area leaders, organizations and individuals working together to make a positive impact on the lives of our community members. If you are interested in helping us carry out our mission, contact Malikah Jones at the Kemper County Extension office at 601-743-2837 for more information.

COURTHOUSE MASK REQUIREMENT

Due to COVID-19 and Governor Reeves adding Kemper County on December 1, 2020 to the mask mandate list that requires residents to wear masks in certain circumstances, entrance to the Kemper County Courthouse will be through the East door (side facing Hwy 39) until further notice. Please note that your temperature will be checked before entering the building and wearing a face mask is required.

THE CHURCH OF CHRIST

The Church of Christ meets for worship every Sunday at 11 a.m. at 14678 Hwy 16.

MULTI-COUNTY CSA TEMPORARY OFFICE PROCEDURES KEMPER COUNTY

Due to COVID-19 we are providing teleservice only. Face-to-face, in-house appointments are temporary suspended. Please call our office to schedule a telephone appointment.

If you are a senior citizen or receive disability income AND have been assisted this year, you DO NOT need an appointment. Please submit your bill (for which assistance is needed).

See **CALENDAR**, page 2

PSC releases broadband funds

From special reports

East Mississippi Electric Power Association is excited to announce that its fiber broadband subsidiary, East Mississippi Connect, was awarded Eligible Telecommunications Carrier (ETC) status by the Mississippi Public Service Commission.

Public Service Commissioners Brandon Presley, Brent Bailey and Dane Maxwell officially signed the order last week, releasing \$38.6 million from Rural Digital Oppor-

tunity Fund (RDOF) to East MS Connect. East MS Connect will use these funds to guarantee that broadband internet access is made available to rural homes and businesses that are currently unserved or underserved, including Kemper County.

The company is currently installing the fiber optic cable in Kemper County to bring high speed Internet to its rural customers.

For more than 80 years, EMEPA has provided reliable electric service to the region. But beginning last

fall, the company expanded its services to offer broadband internet under the subsidiary East MS Connect.

"The last year has been very difficult for all our members and brought new and unprecedented challenges. Teleworking, telehealth services and remote learning are now essential. With the Commission granting East MS Connect ETC status, we can seek additional funding to offer high-speed broadband access to unserved communities that are in dire need of these

services. It is all part of our commitment to empowering lives," said EMEPA CEO Randy Carroll.

East MS Connect is the only provider in the region offering a state-of-the-art, utility-grade fiber network for its

members. Thanks to a \$6 million CARES Act grant, the initial build-out of this \$113 million project spanning EMEPA's entire service area is well underway.

For more information about East MS Connect, visit EastMSConnect.com.



School photo

Elias, Adisyn, and Julian working in the technology center at Kemper Lower Elementary. The district is planning kindergarten registration April 20 – 22 from 9 a.m. – 1 p.m. at Kemper County Lower Elementary in Scooba and Kemper County Upper Elementary in DeKalb. From school reports

Kemper County School District schedules kindergarten registration

Pre-kindergarten and Kindergarten pre-registration is open for the future Class of 2034 and 2035 in Kemper County. The pre-registration process is to be in person on April 20 – 22 from 9 a.m. – 1 p.m. at Kemper County Lower Elementary in Scooba and Kemper County Upper Elementary in DeKalb.

"We are encouraging parents and guardians to pre-register students to help the district with appropriate planning, scheduling, and screening for Pre-Kindergarteners and Kindergarteners

for the 2021-2022 school year," said Dr. Jeri Cawthorn, Kemper County Lower Elementary School principal. "We conduct pre-registrations in Kemper County to also help alleviate the burdens and stresses that sometimes come with general registration."

In order to pre-register a child for pre-kindergarten or kindergarten, parents or guardians will need to bring a photo ID and two forms of proof of residency, which can include a mortgage statement or rental agreement, or utility bills. The child's original birth certificate, social security card, and immunization records are also required.

"The district is planning for these events to take place in-person while still practicing social distancing and other safety protocols," said Tyresia Brown, Kemper County Upper Elementary School principal. "We are excited about the upcoming school year and are looking forward to meeting many new smiling faces."

For information on the pre-registration process, visit the district's website, www.kempercountyschools.org, or call Kemper County Lower Elementary at (662) 476-8423 or Kemper County Upper Elementary at (601) 743-2432.

COVID-19 declines as vaccinations increase

Compiled by STEVE SWOGETINSKY
The Kemper County Messenger

As the number of people receiving vaccinations for COVID-19 increases in Mississippi, the number of new cases and hospitalizations are on the decline according to the health department.

Gov. Tate Reeves reported in a news conference last week that between 25,000 to 30,000 people in Mississippi were being vaccinated every day. Mississippi has a population of around 3 million

people. Of that, over 18 percent or more than 550,000 people are now fully vaccinated, Reeves said.

Since last Monday, the number of new reported cases in Mississippi was 1,361. There have been 307,519 cases reported in the state since March 2020. There were 45 deaths reported in the last week due to COVID-19, leaving the state total at 7,096 reported deaths.

As of Monday, the Mississippi Health Department reported that Kemper County has had 957 reported cases of COVID-19 since March 2020, an increase of three

cases since last Monday. The number of deaths due to COVID-19 in the county was 26, an increase of one since last week.

COVID-19 vaccinations for Mississippians are available at no cost from drive-through sites around the state, and from some local healthcare providers.

The governor and health officials say the vaccination shots offer excellent protection against illness, hospitalization and death from COVID-19. All persons aged 16 or older who live or work in Mississippi are eligible for vacci-

nation.

Free vaccinations are available at MSDH drive-through sites statewide.

Local health clinics, physicians, pharmacies and providers also offer COVID-19 vaccination. Check the Mississippi Department of Health website to learn more about finding a vaccination site and making an appointment.

While the number of new cases are declining, health officials say it is no time to let down your guard.

See **COVID-19**, page 4

EMCC announces Pine Grove Arts Festival schedule

From school reports

East Mississippi Community College's annual Pine Grove Arts Festival on the Scooba campus kicks off Tuesday with events scheduled through April 21.

"We are really looking forward to the festival and the opportunity it provides to celebrate the visual, musical and performing arts," EMCC art instructor and Scooba campus Pine Grove Arts Festival Chairwoman Lisa Spinks said.

Some events on the Scooba campus, including a beauty pageant, a Mighty Lion Band performance and an art exhibit, will be open to the public, while others, including events at the Golden

Triangle campus, are primarily for students, faculty and staff.

Attendees are asked to wear a face mask while on campus and practice social distancing guidelines recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Mississippi State Department of Health.

Here is a breakdown of events on the Scooba campus:

Wednesday

The EMCC Mighty Lion Band will perform beginning at 12:30 p.m. in Keyes T. Currie Coliseum. The public is

See **EVENTS**, page 4



School photo

East Mississippi Community College students, staff and guests will enjoy a variety of games and events during the Pine Grove Arts Festival.

Ways to eat healthy during Taco Tuesday suppers

Compiled by DENISE SWOGETINSKY
Kemper Messenger

In our house, Taco Tuesday is always looked forward to.

My grandchildren love it. We can help make it carb friendly by doing things like making your own chips using low carb wraps that we cut into

chip size and fry it air fry into crispy chips.

For the tacos, again use the low carb wraps and USE soft tacos. We can pile the cheeses, vegetables, and sour cream on our choices of meats.

Mix it up by using fish, pulled chicken, steak, ground meat or shrimp. Any meat you choose for your taco base will

work.

We can make our own cheese sauce, Pico de Gallo, and taco sauces. We can make the fried rice using cauliflower rice as a replacement.

Just remember, a healthy life style takes planning and moderation.

CHUNKY TACO SAUCE

FOR CANNING

8 qts. tomatoes, diced & peeled

1 qt. chopped onions
1 qt. chopped sweet peppers
1 qt. chopped celery
1 qt. cider vinegar
1 c. sugar substitute
2 c. water
2 tbsp. brown sugar substitute

1/3 c. canning salt (not iodized)

1 tbsp. whole pickling spice

(tie in cloth)
2 tbsp. chili powder

2-3 tsp. cayenne pepper (more for hot)

1 tbsp. garlic powder
2 tbsp. lemon juice

Black pepper to taste

Combine all ingredients in large, heavy kettle. Bring to boil; simmer 3 to 3 1/2 hours. Pour hot sauce into clean, sterilized pint jars, process in pressure canner at 10 pounds pressure for 30 minutes. Yield: 14 pints


See COOK, page 4

Kemper County Devotional Page

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— John 3:16 (NIV)

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GETTING THE MESSAGE/Rev. Chris Shelton

Luke 24:50-53

In this passage the Lord Jesus blesses his disciples before ascending into heaven. He had appeared to his disciples after being raised from the dead. When He first appeared to them, He said to them, “Peace to you!” (verse 36)

In your life you might have wonderful pronouncements from someone. You might hear compliments that are encouraging, or the affectionate “I love you,” from someone whom you love. I recently heard a lady, who was 20 years old when WWII ended, tell me it was a feeling she will never forget when she heard the war was over.

But there is no pronouncement like the Son of God saying, “Peace to you.” At that point the disciples didn’t understand it. Jesus knows they are troubled and full of doubts (verse 38). So he shows them his hands and feet. He is not a just a spirit. His body has been raised. And it means peace for them.

Jesus is not ashamed of his wounds inflicted upon Him from the cross. He has conquered death, and accomplished the peace God promised in Moses and the prophets, which the angels also announced at his birth (Luke 2). He is alive forevermore, and all who believe in him will be also. He has paid in full the debt of sin.

The disciples loved Jesus, but they could not understand his dying, especially upon the cross, the sign of one accursed of God. So Jesus explains the Scriptures and opens their minds to understand why he had to suffer (verses 44-45). It had to have been a humbling, yet joyful thing to hear the Lord explaining he had to die for their sin, and he loved them this way so they could be with God forever.

Moreover, Jesus tells them they are witnesses of all that has happened, and of the Scriptures, so they are commissioned to “proclaim repentance and forgiveness of sins in his name to all the nations, beginning in Jerusalem (verses 47-48).” There is indemnity to be proclaimed from heaven to sinners; they will have no legal liability to God through Christ Jesus.

Jesus tells the disciples that he will send the promise of the Father, which means the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit will empower the dis-

ciples and convict men of the truth. Men are slaves to sin until Christ makes them free. Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. That which is born of flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Without the Spirit we can do nothing.

Therefore, we owe all to God for our salvation. He has given us Christ for our sin and corruption; the Spirit to make us wise for salvation. Christ is risen indeed, so when he blesses the disciples (verse 50), they are blessed indeed.

In Numbers 6, the priestly benediction was, “The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you. The Lord lift up his countenance and give you peace.” After this the Lord says that his name shall be upon the people and that he will bless them. In Revelation 22, we read that in the new heaven and new earth, Christians shall see the face of the Lord, and his name will be on their foreheads.”

How do we apply this? It is vital, as the apostle Peter writes in his 2nd epistle, is to “make your calling and election sure.” You have to act on God’s word; practice genuine repentance and produce fruit in keeping with faith. Peter tells us growth comes by looking to what is promised in heaven, and by remembering you have been cleansed from sin.

In the parable of the great banquet, Jesus warns that many will refuse the invitation to come and eat with the Master because of preoccupation with other things. So he sends servants to invite the afflicted, lame, crippled, and blind men. Those who come to Christ, and look ahead to seeing him, live as those cured of an affliction by Christ. Make sure of your place at the table.

The apostles worshipped Christ, and had great joy (verse 53). In those he blesses, the Lord Jesus expects adoration. Your life as a Christian may be filled with trouble (and the apostles would face many troubles), but the peace Christ proclaimed endures. So we need to endure in the faith, endeavoring to love Christ and honor his name as the first thing we practice in our life.

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‘And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who[a] have been called according to his purpose.’
Romans 8:28

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“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!”
— 1 Corinthians 5:17 (NIV)

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In the Garden with Felder Rushing

Got a plant you'd like others to know and grow? Need a way to spread it around?

A friend of mine set up a neighborhood herbary, like those little corner bookstores cropping up everywhere; he planted rosemary, oregano, and hot peppers near the street, and sometimes puts out bagged seeds and trays of seedlings, and invites folks to help themselves. Can't you see kids setting up herb, seed, and cutflower stands, with lemonade?

The most common approach is through plant swaps. Quite a few years back, celebrated folk writer Eudora Welty confided to me and a friend over supper that her mother stopped going to the

garden club when they stopped swapping plants at the meetings. And we understood; my great-grandmother complained in her 1950s diary that few others seemed to share her love of odd-ball plants like the now-popular but then-new Clara Curtis mum.

So thirty-one years ago, when Janis Watkins, the librarian in tiny Flora, Mississippi, put the word out that she was hosting a free plant swap, I jumped on the opportunity to participate in the small-town gathering of people of all ranges of expertise and ability, from bemused horticulturalists to clueless newbies, of all ages, ethnic and social backgrounds.

Like a pot-luck buffet, the

simple venue brought out the social creature in even timid folks in a safe, no-one's-a-stranger setting. Neighbors and strangers alike brought in pots and plastic bags of freshly-dug small shrubs, herb seedlings, bulbs, divided perennials, rooted cuttings, and unusual potted heirlooms, creating a smorgas-bord of people and plants. Nobody looked at what anyone was wearing so much as what they carried in their hands.

See, plants are great levelers. They don't care where you're from, who your mama 'n them are, how you worship or vote. They just want to be given their places in the sun (or shade) and to be spread and enjoyed far and

wide.

There are two easy approaches to organize the chaos of a plant swap, and both can be done with face masks and social distancing. The organizers of PlantSwap UK, the oldest continuous plant swap in England, start their informal swap with the announcement to "get what you want, not too much, be courteous, and have fun." And everyone pretty much does just that, with lots of convivial sharing and talking, a relaxed, informal mix of unusual plants and unusual people.

The one at the Flora library is a bit more organized. As plants are brought in and lined up, each has a number taped to it. To kick

off the swap someone talks a bit about the plant diversity, maybe asks about particular plants (who brought it, what do you call it, how does it grow, will it freeze outside, etc.). Then a basket is passed around from which participants draw numbers to see which plant they get - like it or not; the real swapping goes on later in the parking lot where extra plants are stashed.

I see the evidence of swapped plants in the countless hundreds of people who now grow Eudora's night-blooming cereus, my great-grandmother's chrysanthemum, and my own rooted roses. Those and countless others will continue to survive and, as they are spread far

and wide outside the normal commercial channels, connect people hand-to-hand.

Over the next few weeks I will be driving my garden truck around the state, conducting a series of these unique socio-horticultural free-for-alls. If you'd like to participate in one, go to my blog and see where the nearest will be to you.

If you can't make one, spread the word, start one yourself.

Felder Rushing is a Mississippi author, columnist, and host of the "Gestalt Gardener" on MPB Think Radio. Email gardening questions to rushinfelder@yahoo.com.

Events

Continued from page 1

invited to attend.

The theme for the performance titled "Coronation" will center around the novel coronavirus. The first movement will feature the melodies of "What a Wonderful World," The Knack's "My Sharona" — dubbed "My Corona" — and The Police's "Don't Stand So Close To Me."

The second movement will open with Bobby McFerrin's "Don't Worry Be Happy" and will be followed by "Happy." The performance will end on a more serious note with Disturbed's version of the Simon and Garfunkel song "The Sound of Silence."

The event will mark the debut of the Mighty Lion Band's newly formed indoor marching band, comprised of

about 40 members from the Color Guard and percussions, brass and woodwinds sections.

"Indoor marching bands have been going on for about 10 years around the nation but we are one of the first community colleges in Mississippi to have one," Band Director Chris King said. "We have had a blast putting this together and the indoor marching band will probably become part of our spring lineup going forward."

The group's New Orleans style brass band, Southern Soul, will also perform.

The Art Department will also host a rock painting session on Wednesday on the outdoor cafeteria patio at the F.R. Young Student Union beginning at 3 p.m. Rocks and painting supplies will be provided.

April 19

An outdoors spring festival for students will take place from 3-6 p.m. between the F.R.

Young Student Union and the Hawkins Building. The event will feature carnival-style games and food.

April 20

The Scooba Choral Department will present two performances of the musical "Charleston," with the first beginning at 11 a.m. and the second at 7 p.m. Both will take place in Stennis Hall. The public is invited and there is no cost to attend.

The musical, which is a comedy, celebrates the "Roaring 20s" and is complete with gangsters, jewel thieves, flapper girls and music from that time period.

April 21

An art exhibit and reception will take place in Aust Hall from 3 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. featuring recent works of Spinks and Brejenn Allen, a graduate of EMCC and the Chicago Insti-

tute of Art.

Spinks said the show, titled "Daze," will include a variety of works, with much of it focused on everyday life.

Cook

Continued from page 3

CHEESE SAUCE
2 tbsp. butter
2 tbsp. flour
dash pepper
1 cup milk
1/2 tsp. salt
1/4 tsp. white pepper (optional)
1 cup shredded cheese

Make a white sauce and cook over hot water in a double boiler until the mixture has thickened to desired consistency. Add seasonings and cheese, stirring until cheese has melted.

PICO DE GALLO
8 to 10 Roma tomatoes (seeded)
1/2 to 1 red onion (to taste)
1 jalapeno pepper (or more to taste)
2 medium cloves garlic
juice of one lime
1 tbsp. olive oil
4 tbsp. chopped fresh cilantro
1 tsp. coarse salt
1/2 tsp. fresh ground black pepper

Seed and dice tomatoes.

"Brejenn uses really bright colors in her artwork and I will select some of my art that kind of works with hers," Spinks said.

Chop onion, jalapeno and garlic to a fine consistency. To these ingredients, add the fresh cilantro, salt, pepper, olive oil and lime. Mix well.

Cover and refrigerate for at least 3 hours. Best if served the next day.

MEXICAN CAULIFLOWER RICE
1 cup of cauliflower rice
1 1/2 cup water
1 large onion, chopped
1 large green pepper, chopped
3 cloves garlic, minced
1/2 tsp. dried basil or 1 tsp. fresh basil
pinch cayenne or red pepper flakes
1 can tomato sauce
1/3 teaspoon lemon pepper
3 tablespoons olive oil
In medium size cooking pan, heat olive oil, garlic, onion, green pepper and add seasonings. Stir in rice and lightly toast. Then add tomato sauce and water. Cook for until warmed through.

TOSTADA CHIPS
low carb wraps
oil

Cut wraps into triangles and let them dry. Fry: Add enough

The exhibit will be on display weekdays from 8 a.m. to noon beginning April 12 and running through the end of May.

corn, safflower or vegetable oil to a skillet to have about 1/2 inch and place over medium high heat for about 4 to 6 minutes. Once the oil is hot but not smoking, add enough tortilla triangles (depending on how large your skillet is) to have them in a single layer. It doesn't matter if some triangles get cozy with others, but you don't want to add so many that there is more than a single layer.

Let them fry for about 45 seconds to 1 minute on one side, before flipping them over. Let them fry and crisp on the other side for another 30 seconds to 1 minute or until they have achieved a nice golden tanned color (but not overly browned) and are crispy. Remove them from oil and place them in a baking sheet covered with paper towels. Sprinkle with salt to taste.

Toast or Bake: Spray or brush a very light coat of vegetable or corn oil on the tortilla triangles. Toast them on a baking sheet in a 350 degree oven for about 25 to 30 minutes, turning them once or twice along the way, or until tanned and crisp. Remove from oven, sprinkle with salt and let them cool.



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COVID-19

Continued from page 1

It is encouraged that you wear a mask when in public.

The more you are apart from others, the more you are protected from COVID-19 transmission. The virus spreads easily between those eating together, talking together, or attending events.



Choctaw Child Find

Choctaw Tribal Schools
Support Services for Students & Families
601.650.7302
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The goal of Choctaw Tribal Schools is to provide full educational opportunity and a free appropriate public education (FAPE) to all students with disabilities ages birth through twenty-one (21).

Through screening and referrals the Child Find project helps locate, evaluate, and initiate education or other needed services for Native American children and youth.

Specifically, the **Early Education Intervention Program** has made a commitment to identify and serve disabled, developmentally delayed, and at-risk Choctaw children ages birth to five (5).

For more information about Early Education Intervention services, call **Mrs. Angie Gordon, at 601-663-7655** or send an email to angie.gordon@choctawtribalschools.com.

Persons knowing of a child who may need special education or gifted educational services should contact

Trina Cheatham, Child Find Coordinator,
122 Division of Schools Drive,
Choctaw, MS 39350,
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