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WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 4, 2015 75 CENTS



## State of District address Thursday

Dr. Cederick Ellis will give an overview of McComb schools in his state of the district address at 6 p.m. Thursday at the McComb High School auditorium.

Ellis will share district goals and its strategic plan, give an update on school progress and provide information about the pilot school to open in August at the Summit Elementary campus.

## House panel OK's bump in sales tax money to cities

JACKSON (AP) — Mississippi's nearly 300 cities and towns could collectively get about \$30 million more in sales tax money under proposals lawmakers are considering, but it's not clear whether those efforts will survive competition for money in the run-up to state elections in November.

Representatives passed House Bill 1149 Tuesday, which would send about \$10.8 million in money collected from taxes voluntarily paid on Internet sales to cities. It now goes to the Senate.

Two House committees passed House Bill 1110 — which would boost cities' share of the 7-cent sales tax collected by the state by about \$20 million a year — sending it to the full House.

## DEATHS

**Bobbie F. Carter, 80**  
**Nell B. Chisholm, 85**  
**Ina Mae Honea, 86**  
**Alvie Mixon Sr., 68**  
**Jessie W. Reid, 76**  
**Ruby E. Smith, 79**

A3

## OUTSIDE

### Thursday

Cloudy  
High: 50  
Low: 29  
Rain: None  
Wind: N, 10

A2

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# McCray case puzzling

Victim's family, friends to honor him with candlelight vigil Thursday

BY JUSTIN VICORY  
ENTERPRISE-JOURNAL

Friends of Leroy McCray still convene inside the convenience store on Highway 24 where they used to shoot the breeze with him, dis-

cussing politics, news and sports.

Lately, though, most of the talk concerns their good friend, and what really happened to him.

McCray was found dead on a stretch of desolate road

near the Louisiana state line a week ago Tuesday, about 40 yards away from his burned van.

Co-workers and friends will hold a candlelight vigil at 6 p.m. Thursday in the parking lot of the Days Inn in McComb, where McCray worked as a waiter.

Pike County Coroner Percy Pittman confirmed that McCray had been shot multi-

ple times but couldn't confirm where he was shot or the weapon used. Meanwhile, officials continue to wait for an autopsy report to return from the Mississippi Crime Lab to give them more clues.

Pittman said it's likely McCray died on the night of Saturday, Jan. 24, when family members last saw him. Authorities said a witness reported seeing McCray's van

that night on the side of McNabb Creek Road. A deputy on patrol found his body three days later.

Local lawmen have released few details on the homicide investigation. They have not said if evidence indicates that McCray was killed where his body was found, or if they had any solid leads.

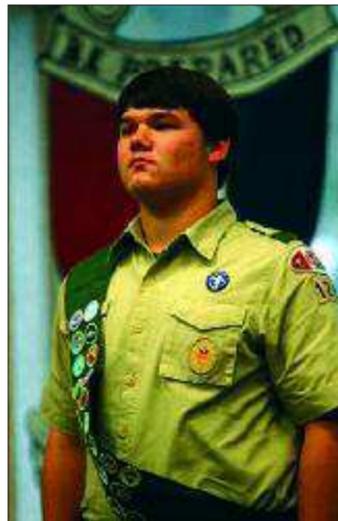
SEE McCRAY, PAGE A2

## Earning their badges



ELISE PARKER | ENTERPRISE-JOURNAL

At top, Zach Stewart and Tray Rawls give the Boy Scout salute as they and Collins Sanders receive the rank of Eagle Scout Sunday in the Pike National Bank Community Room. The three scouts are members of Boy Scout Troop 124 of McComb. U.S. District Judge Keith Starrett was the guest speaker. At far right, Stewart stands at attention. At right, Sanders hugs his grandmother, Nancy Soyars. Rawls, 16, is the son of Kim and Dalton Rawls and is a sophomore at North Pike High School. He attends South McComb Baptist Church. Stewart, 17, is the son of Jennifer and Eddie Wallace of Summit and William Stewart Jr. of Brooklyn. He is a junior at North Pike. He attends Summit First Baptist Church. Sanders is the son of Sam and Catherine Sanders. He is a freshman at Parklane Academy and attends Summit First Baptist.



## City hit with bid issues

Technicalities to delay Pearl River Avenue work, raise depot cost

BY TULLY TAYLOR  
ENTERPRISE-JOURNAL

Motorists will continue to encounter a rough ride on Pearl River Avenue after McComb officials learned Tuesday that they have to reject repair bids due to a technicality.

Work had been expected to begin as soon as crews completed water line work under the street.

City officials learned at their work session that they must reject the sole milling and overlay bid due to Mississippi Department of Transportation regulations forbidding single bids.

Dickerson & Bowen's bid came in at \$501,462. It included work on the eastern approach of the overhead bridge. It also was approximately \$115,000 more than the \$386,400 MDOT reimbursement, public works director Philip Russell said. That is about 20 percent more than the engineer's estimate.

"The problem is this — when you only get one bid with federal highway funds, their policy is if that one bid is more than 10 percent more than the engineer's estimate, they will reject it and make you readvertise," Russell said.

If there is more than one bid, MDOT feels comfortable awarding a bid because they have more figures to compare to the estimate, he said.

"We'll go back to the well and try to get more bidders to bid," he said.

Selectman at-large Tommy McKenzie asked where money for the project will come from if future bids come in over the MDOT's reimbursement.

"Anything that goes over, that is ours," Russell replied.

Russell said this morning that he is unsure of a timeline for the paving project, given the need to readvertise, but "we'll do it as quickly as we can."

The board will vote next Tuesday to reject the bid and authorize readvertisement.

The city hit another MDOT stumbling block with a \$500,000 grant for an enhancement project for the railroad museum.

SEE CITY, PAGE A2

## Smokin' on the Tracks expects bigger event

BY MATT WILLIAMSON  
ENTERPRISE-JOURNAL

Smokin' on the Tracks will be so big this year, it'll be on both sides of the tracks, organizers of Sum-

mit's celebration of barbecue and music said Tuesday.

"It's fixing to be bigger and better than it's ever been. We've got a lot going on," organizer Ann Jackson

told the town council.

The event, which has looser open container rules, will be held April 10 and 11.

It will begin with live music from 5 to 9 p.m. Friday, when teams of barbecue

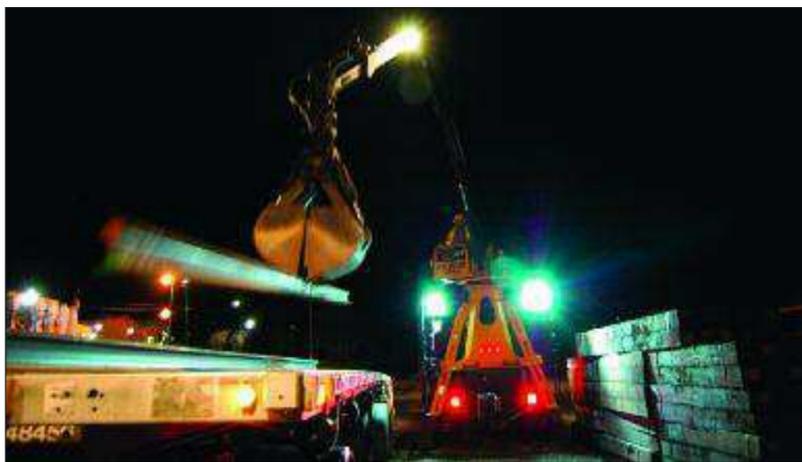
cooks set up their rigs and commence to slow smoking.

The event continues from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Saturday.

SEE SMOKIN', PAGE A2

## Summit crossing to close for repairs

A worker uses a crane to unload new sections of rail and crossies along the railroad tracks in Summit Tuesday night. Workers closed the Robb Street railroad crossing this morning for repairs that could take as long as Saturday.



MATT WILLIAMSON | ENTERPRISE-JOURNAL