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OCEAN SPRINTS

'Biggest one' yet



Eleven-month-old Ella Rose, with her father Jonathan Landry, gives the Easter Bunny some competition at Saturday's annual citywide Easter Egg Hunt in downtown Ocean Springs. Warren Kulo, *The Mississippi Press*

Kids gather at Little Children's Park to enjoy festivities of annual Easter Egg Hunt

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By midmorning Saturday, there were already well in excess of 100 children, accompanied by parents, grandparents and others, gathered at Little Children's Park in downtown Ocean Springs for the city's annual Easter Egg Hunt.

Children took part in numerous games and activities and posed for photos with the Easter Bunny as they waited for the first wave of children to be called for the first round of egg hunting.

Promptly at 10 a.m., the main festivities began, with kids up to two years of age and their parents swarming into the open grass area of the park to pick up the colorful, plastic eggs with various goodies inside.

By the time the four age groups finished gathering the eggs, more than 3,000 were distributed.

"It's a great turnout, great," said Bre Liddell, Camp and Special Event Coordinator for the Ocean Springs Parks & Recreation Department. "I'd say this is the biggest one

we've ever had. We filled more than 3,000 eggs and we'll go through all of them, easily."

The decades-long event (no one remembers exactly when it started) continues to be one of the more popular and well-received family events in Ocean Springs, drawing children and their parents from throughout Ocean Springs and elsewhere.

"This is so fun. Seeing the kids here, especially the little ones, having a great time. They're so cute," said Donna Lackey of St. Martin. "I like the fact it's here in the park, fenced off, where it's easy to keep track of the kids and it's safe. They're all having a great time."

The event has in past years been sponsored by local businesses, but this year the parks & recreation department absorbed the roughly \$2,500 cost, said Liddell, who has worked the past eight Easter Egg Hunts.

In addition to the egg hunts and other activities, there were multiple drawings for each age group for large Easter baskets put together by Liddell and her staff.

PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES

State names first black higher ed chief

Jeff Amy and Sarah Mearhoff
Associated Press

JACKSON — The state College Board announced Friday that Alfred Rankins Jr. will become higher education commissioner July 1 when Glenn Boyce retires. Rankins is the president of Alcorn State University.



Alfred Rankins Jr. was appointed Friday as the state's first African-American higher education commissioner.
Courtesy of Mississippi Public Universities

Rankins will be the first African-American to oversee Mississippi's eight public universities.

Rankins previously was deputy commissioner. After leading Mississippi Valley State University, Rankins was named in 2014 as president of Alcorn, where he earned his undergraduate degree.

"Dr. Rankins has experience at both the system level and as a university president," College Board president C.D. Smith of Meridian said in a statement.

SEE RANKINS, M3

PRISON CONDITIONS

Inmate says he was raped twice behind bars

Associated Press

JACKSON — An inmate in Mississippi's prison system testifying in a federal lawsuit over prison conditions told the judge Thursday that he was sexually assaulted twice behind bars in less than a year.

The man, identified as "J.H.," fought back tears as he described his ordeal as part of a lawsuit filed by the American Civil Liberties Union and the Southern Poverty Law Center over conditions at the privately run East Mississippi Correctional Facility near Meridian.

The Clarion-Ledger reports the inmate said he was first assaulted at Central Mississippi Correctional Facility in September 2015. After that, he tried to commit suicide and was eventually transferred to EMCF.

SEE PRISON, M3

TELEVISION

NBC documentary looks at images that propelled civil rights movement

"My guess is a large number of people knew his name, but didn't really know what happened. ... Seeing these pictures underscores what really happened, why the murder of Emmett Till was such a shocking and important event in the civil rights movement."

NBC News Chairman Andrew Lack



AP file

Network didn't air images until 30 years later

David Bauder *Associated Press*

NEW YORK — Gruesome images of lynched Emmett Till were seared into the minds of many black Americans in 1955 and helped lead to the modern civil rights movement. But few white people knew of their existence at the time.

That reality is at the top of NBC's two-hour documentary about how images propelled the civil rights effort. The film premiered Saturday as the 50th anniversary of the Rev. Martin Luther King's assassination approaches. It is being repeated on MSNBC Sunday night at 9 p.m.

Till was the 14-year-old black Chicago boy visiting relatives in Mississippi, killed after a

white grocery store clerk claimed he treated her rudely. Decades later, she recanted. That was far too late to save Till from being bludgeoned, shot in the head and thrown into a river. Two men were acquitted of the crime, even though they later admitted to it.

Given a casket nailed shut, Till's mother ordered it open and Jet magazine took pictures of his horribly maimed head, beaten beyond recognition.

"For a mainstream news audience, my guess is a large number of people knew his name, but didn't really know what happened, which is the best and highest calling for a documentary like this," said NBC News Chairman Andrew Lack.

SEE TILL, M3