



COMMUNITY
CITY CELEBRATING
125TH ANNIVERSARY
Ridgeland — See page, A2

SPORTS
MADISON CENTRAL
HONORING COREY RAY
Baseball plaque — See page, A9



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MADISON COUNTY JOURNAL

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POLICE OFFICER NEARLY RUN OVER

Jackson trio arrested after car chases

By **DUNCAN DENT**
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Three Jackson men have been arrested after leading local authorities on two multi-jurisdictional chases this weekend, one of which resulted in a police officer almost being run over by one of the fleeing vehicles, authorities say.

Lt. Micah Taylor with the Madison Police Department said the last suspect, Tyler Devon Myles, was arrested in Jackson, around 5 p.m. on Tuesday, March 12, at a residence in Jackson.

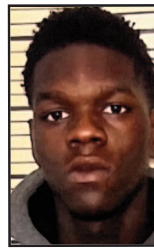
Myles, 20, of Jackson was arrested and charged with felony fleeing, receiving stolen property, aggravated assault of a law enforcement



J.W. Clayton



Tyler Myles



Anthony Thomas

officer and felony conspiracy for his involvement in the chase.

Myles was taken into custody with help from the Jackson Police

Department, Capitol Police Department, and the Mississippi Bureau of Narcotics.

Myles is one of three suspects in a multi-jurisdictional chase that occurred Saturday night starting in Madison.

Previously, J.W. Clayton III, 21, of Jackson was arrested on March 9, during the chase and charged with felony fleeing, receiving

stolen property, and misdemeanor possession of marijuana, and felony conspiracy for his involvement in the chase.

Taylor said Anthony Demetric Thomas, 20, of Jackson turned himself in on March 12. He was then charged with felony accesso-

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GLUCKSTADT

Families give land for park

By **MICHAEL SIMMONS**
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GLUCKSTADT — Families with deep roots in the community announced this week they are donating land to the city for the creation of a new park.

Commercial realtor Christi Greenlee, while doing research to find businesses to locate in the city, continued to hear over and over that the city needed a park.

"The number one request was a park," said Greenlee. "This was one of the first times in the 30-plus years in commercial real estate that I felt a passion to be a part."

From there, Greenlee began to have conversations with Lee Hutchinson and John Harrel, both who have families deeply-rooted in Gluckstadt. They also have their family lineage traced back to one of the original families — the Schmidt family.

"As the businesses in our community continue to thrive, we have noticed a parallel growth in our population," Hutchinson said. "With this growth, it has become evident that the residents of Gluckstadt

See **PARK**, page A2

ELECTION

Turnout low for Tuesday primaries

Voter turnout in Tuesday's Presidential primaries in Madison County was anemic, with less than 20 percent of registered voters who cast a ballot at the polls.

According to unofficial results, 17.8 percent of the over 75,000 voters in the county participated in the primaries. Of that, there were 9,421 Republican votes and 4,043 Democrat votes.

President Donald J. Trump won Madison County with 85.3 percent of the votes (7,972). He is the only contender in the race but previous challengers who have since departed from the race still appeared on the ballot.

See **ELECTION**, page A2



Pictured with the Athena Festival Grand Prize Trophy are Germantown Legacy Choir members, front row from left, Ella Applegate, Skylar Smith, Carter Stacy, Evie Watkins, Neely Ray (Middle) Miriam Hoerman,

Mikayla Jones, Taylor Cunningham, Kyle Austin, Molly Carr, Alexis Palmer (Back) Gabby Caraway, Lucy Jones, Rylan Hill, Gavin Chapin, Austin Addison, Parker Herndon, Kalyb James, and Nathan Carney.

NASHVILLE FESTIVAL

Germantown Choir wins grand prize

By **DUNCAN DENT**
duncan@onlinemadison.com

GLUCKSTADT — Germantown High School's Legacy Choir swept the inaugural Athena Festival in Nashville earlier this month bringing home several accolades including the overall grand prize.

"Winning the Athena award was an indescribable feeling," says Legacy singer Neely Ray, a junior. "To know everything you have worked so hard for was achieved. There's not a better feeling!"

In addition to the grand Athena Prize, the singers of Legacy also won best studio recording session, and Legacy Choir Director Jordan Langworthy was awarded Outstanding Conductor.

"I am so proud of Legacy, their talent, dedication, and spirit have brought us to this incredible moment. Together, we've created something truly special, and I am honored to have led such a remarkable group to victory," Langworthy said. "I am also grateful for The Athena Festival granting us the opportunity to share our music on such a magnificent stage. In the company of amazing directors and incredibly talented students, it was an honor to be recognized with the Athena Award."

She went on to say that her position at GHS is a dream job, "Most of all I am thankful for my students, awesome choir parents, amazing Germantown High School colleagues, the Madison County School District, and the Madison/Gluckstadt community for their continual and cherished support. There is nothing else in the world I would rather be doing and nowhere else I would rather be doing it."

Madison County Schools Superintendent Charlotte Seals said she is proud to see district students succeed in a national competition.

"We are so proud of the hard work everyone involved with Legacy contributes to creating such an excellent choral program," Seals said. "The arts are such an important part of school life, along with academics and athletics, and it is wonderful to see our students developing a passion for activities they truly love and succeeding at such a high level in the process."

The invitational competition was held the weekend of March 3. It showcases high school a cappella choral ensembles through live performances, studio recordings, and songwriting. The festival concluded with performances at the Parthenon where Legacy competed

against choral ensembles from across the United States. Langworthy said three schools were represented including GHS and two performing arts charter schools one of which was from North Carolina and the other from Missouri.

The Athena Festival win provides a stage for the roughly 20 Legacy singers to showcase their talents well beyond the competition, Langworthy said.

Langworthy is glad this event will highlight "these awesome students."

"They are some of the most talented, intelligent, and well-rounded individuals," Langworthy said.

Legacy's winning studio session, recorded at Ocean Way Studios, will be featured on Spotify, Apple Music, and Soundcloud in the fall.

Legacy singer Gabby Caraway, a senior, said she enjoyed competing against skilled competition from across the country.

"The Athena Festival was a wonderful experience that we will not be forgetting anytime soon. It allowed us to grow as musicians and perform in amazing environments, and having the honor of winning means a lot to us knowing how skilled the other choirs are as well," Caraway said.

Harold Palmer, whose daughter Alexis sings with Legacy and is a freshman at GHS said the competition was an opportunity for students to see what a career in music could look like.

"The Athena Festival win means due recognition for all the talent, skill, dedication, time, and effort put in to make Legacy sound as amazing as they do," says Palmer. "Secondly, I believe the win opens the students' eyes to an entire world of possibilities related to...music career options."

James Dickson, Advanced Placement English teacher at GHS said Langworthy's colleagues at the high school are proud of her accolades and those of the choir she leads, but not at all surprised.

"This award confirms what everyone at Germantown High already knows: that the arts are important, that our students are committed to creating beauty in all forms, and that Jordan Langworthy uses her expertise and love to foster an environment in which excellence is the only possible result," Dickson said.

Legacy is the auditioned contemporary a cappella ensemble that performs music from all genres and musical periods and is one of four performing ensembles that students can be a part of at GHS.

OPINION
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OPINION
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Ridgeland celebrating city's 125th anniversary

By DUNCAN DENT
duncan@onlinemadison.com

RIDGELAND — A virtual history room, more historical markers and an anniversary event in December are all in the plans this year to celebrate the city's 125th anniversary.

"This year marks a significant milestone as the city of Ridgeland celebrates its 125th Anniversary," said city spokeswoman Kim Cooper said. "The Planning Committee held its kick-off meeting earlier this week to set the stage for activities that will commemorate Ridgeland's past and celebrate the bright future ahead."

Cooper is also the chair of the 125th Anniversary Planning Committee. Other members are: Nancy Watson, Pat Truesdale, Jim Woodrick, Robby Carr, Polly Hammett, Donna Dye,



Items showcasing part of the city's history are on display at City Hall.

Mike Porter, Jane McGee, D.I. Smith, Bill Lee, Matt Dodd, Lisa

Walters, Bryan Johnson, Linda Bynum, Karen McKie, Kenya Rachel, Carol Fitzgerald, Explore Ridgeland staff, Ben McDonald, and William Gilbert. The celebration campaign

will focus on the history of Ridgeland and seek to highlight the history of the first families of the city.

"The first families are significant to our history, and they have left us with a heritage we can be proud of," Mayor Gene F. McGee said. "We honor those who have made Ridgeland a special place to live and work, and we believe that a vital part of being a community is remembering our heritage and being thankful for those who took the time to plan for the future of our great City."

More details will be announced in the future but currently on the calendar is an anniversary event on Dec. 29.

Ridgeland was incorporated as a village on December 29, 1899, after the first families settled in the area.

At some point in the future, Ridgeland will introduce a Virtual History Room on the city's website that will mirror the physical History Room located at City Hall, Cooper said.

"This virtual space will allow greater access to the narratives that have helped to shape Ridgeland," Cooper said.

The new feature will showcase historical archives of Ridgeland's first families, a share your story component, and much more.

The city also plans to unveil 20 new historical markers

throughout the city over the course of this year following the successful unveiling of the first history trail marker located at City Hall and display cabinets honoring the first families of Ridgeland in October 2023.

The Historical Committee of Ridgeland, with assistance from the Ridgeland Tourism Commission and city staff, has collaborated on developing the Ridgeland History Trail. Cooper said the History Trail will consist of interpretive wayside exhibits highlighting the culture and history of Ridgeland.

"It will utilize the existing multi-use recreational trail system, as well as additional off-trail sites," Cooper said. "More details about the Ridgeland History Trail will be announced in the coming months."

According to Cooper, the Planning Committee is also working on a variety of other fun activities that will provide opportunities for the community to come together for this special and celebratory year.

"These celebrations are not just about marking a milestone; they are a tribute to those who came before us and a celebration of a future path we pave together as a community," Cooper said.

For more details on the upcoming events and activities follow the City of Ridgeland social channels, sign up for Ridgeland Alerts, and visit www.ridgelandms.org.

THE LORD'S DAY

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11 a.m.

Sunday School

9:45 a.m.

Evening Worship

6 p.m.

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Park

Continued from page A1

are in need of a park. It is both a necessity and a desire for our community members to have a space where they can relax, unwind, and enjoy the beauty of nature.

"To fulfill this need, we are delighted to announce that the Hutchinson and Harreld families would like to donate a piece of property for the establishment of a park," Hutchinson

continued. "We believe that this park will not only enhance the quality of life for our residents but also attract visitors who will contribute to the vitality of our town."

"I think it's for a great cause and opportunity for the City of Gluckstadt," said Harreld said. "As a landowner and developer, I am pleased to help and do what I can for the city. The leadership in the city has done well."

"I want to thank the Harreld and Hutchinson families for their generous donation to the City of Gluckstadt" Gluckstadt

Mayor Walter Morrison said. "These families have been here for generations and this donation illustrates their continued dedication to the City. I hope that our citizens will enjoy this park for many years to come."

Hutchinson said he was eagerly anticipating plans for development for the park.

"We envision a place where families can create cherished memories, children can play and explore, and individuals can find solace in the tranquility of their surroundings," he said.

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Election

Continued from page A1

Former South Carolina Gov. Nikki Haley, the last of the contenders to drop out, received 1,001 votes.

U.S. Sen. Roger Wicker, who easily fended off two challengers for the Republican nomination the Senate, carried Madison County with 66.78 percent of the vote. Ghannon Burton received nearly 2,000 votes and Dan Eubanks received over 1,000 votes.

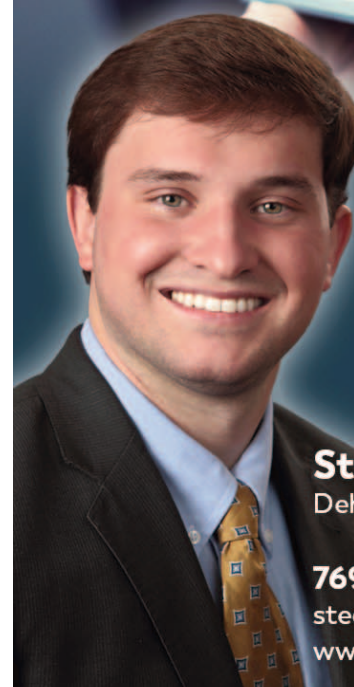
There were no contested races on the Democrat ballot.

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Gluckstadt police arrest man for shoplifting

By DUNCAN DENT
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A man wanted in multiple jurisdictions related to shoplifting has been arrested for suspected shoplifting in Gluckstadt, authorities say. The man, Antonescu Iancu-Barbu, 32, was arrested

and charged with shoplifting. Gluckstadt Police Chief Barry Hale said on March 10, with the help of the Madison Police Department, Iancu-Barbu was arrested on the charge of felony shoplifting after he was identified as a suspect who allegedly took two Apple Watches from a

display at the AT&T store in Gluckstadt on Feb. 27. The two watches were allegedly valued at over \$1,000. "We started an investigation which led to Antonescu Iancu-Barbu being identified as the suspect," Hale said. "Mr. Barbu is also suspected

to be involved in similar crimes in Clinton and Ridgeland." Iancu-Barbu had his initial court appearance on March 12, 2024, in Gluckstadt Municipal Court and was given a \$25,000.00 bond. Ridgeland Police Lt. Eddie Addison said Iancu-Barbu is

wanted in Ridgeland for his involvement in a shoplifting incident at the Apple Store at the Renaissance in which an Apple Watch was shoplifted. Addison said RPD believes he was assisted by a minor.

Addison said Iancu-Barbu faces charges of shoplifting and aiding and abetting a minor in shoplifting in Ridgeland. He has a court date of March 26 in Ridgeland Municipal Court.

Chase

Continued from page A1

ry after the fact, felony fleeing and felony conspiracy for his involvement in the chase. "The Madison Police Department would like to express their gratitude to the Madison County Sheriff's Office, Rankin County Sheriff's Department, Gluckstadt Police Department, Capitol Police, Jackson Police Department, and The Mississippi Bureau of Narcotics for their assistance in the investigation and the apprehension of all individuals involved," Taylor said. "Each individual involved will have their initial appearance in the City of Madison Municipal Court and will be presented to the Madison County Grand Jury before District Attorney John "Bubba" Bramlett."

On Saturday, March 9, at approximately 6 p.m., an officer with the Madison Police Department attempted to stop a silver 2006 Chevrolet Silverado, Taylor said. "Dispatch advised the officers that the vehicle was reported stolen out of Jackson," Taylor said. Once the officers attempted to initiate a traffic stop, the vehicle fled northbound at a high rate of speed, according to Taylor. He said it was also noted by officers during the pursuit that the occupants were reaching into the back seat and grabbed what appeared to be two assault-style rifles.

The suspect vehicle then took the Sowell Road exit where Gluckstadt Police and deputies with the Madison County Sheriff's Department assisted with the pursuit. After taking Sowell Road, the vehicle then turned north onto Old Jackson Road where it entered the ditch

area and made a U-turn, almost striking an officer, who was getting out of his vehicle. The vehicle then got back onto the roadway and made its way north onto Highway 51. "The suspect vehicle ultimately wrecked out after losing control of the vehicle on Highway 51 just south of Nissan Parkway," Taylor said. Reportedly both occupants

of the vehicle then fled on foot, each having a rifle in their possession. After a brief foot chase, Clayton was taken into custody and one of the rifles was also located after the apprehension. At approximately 7 p.m., dispatchers advised that they had just received a call from a passerby that they observed a black male get into a silver Honda Accord on Highway 51 just south of the first stop

location, Taylor said. Officers with the Gluckstadt Police Department then located the Accord and attempted to stop the vehicle which ultimately led to a second pursuit. Taylor said that the pursuit led officers southbound on Interstate 55 and entered the Madison city limits where a Madison PD officer then led the pursuit into the Jackson city limits where he lost sight of the vehicle.

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EDITORIALS

Biden's Laken Riley flub

According to investigators, Mr. Ibarra took advantage of Mr. Biden's lax policies to cross the border illegally in 2022. He was one of millions who have recited the insincere words “I'm afraid of being returned to my home country” to be released under the Biden administration's easygoing asylum policy. Far from building the country, however, Mr. Ibarra and his brother Diego have been tearing it down.

Diego Ibarra's rap sheet became public after police picked him up charges of possessing a fake green card, which he flashed during the homicide investigation. In September, Diego had been arrested on suspicion of driving while high on methamphetamine and marijuana with an open container of alcohol at 80 mph in a 40 mph zone — without a driver's license. He never bothered showing up for court.

Prosecutors say Diego and Jose were later nabbed while on a family shoplifting spree at Walmart. Twice. Diego is covered in tattoos common to members of the violent Venezuelan gang known as Tren de Aragua, and Diego frequently posted photos of himself on social media wielding pistols, possession of which would be a felony.

This is who shows up when anyone can saunter into the country without even a

cursory vetting. House Democrats in vulnerable districts are already scared the public is starting to recognize the peril: 37 Democrats crossed party lines Thursday to help pass the Laken Riley Act, which forces the Department of Homeland Security to detain illegals accused of committing “any burglary, theft, larceny, or shoplifting offense.”

It's odd that it's even up for discussion that noncitizens who break our laws shouldn't be allowed to remain, much less roam free. Of course, none of this would have happened if the border itself were secure.

Senate Democrats, on the other hand, revealed their cynical motivation in leaving America's border wide open. Sen. Bill Hagerty, Tennessee Republican, forced a vote Friday on an amendment that would have blocked the counting of illegal immigrants on the census. Every Democrat voted no.

That means all those who entered the country illegally will continue to count when it comes to handing out congressional districts and electoral votes. With somewhere around 10 million trespassers, that's a lot of added political muscle.

How many more must die because Democrats seek to enhance their political power?

— *The Washington Times*

Endless red ink in budget

It's a congressional tradition to declare every president's budget dead on arrival. This tends to happen regardless of party affiliation, but the particular document the White House released Monday is more lifeless than most.

“Biden's budget doesn't just miss the mark,” said House Speaker Mike Johnson, “it is a roadmap to accelerate America's decline. ... House Republicans reject Biden's misguided budget proposal and have taken action to steer our nation back to a path of fiscal sanity.”

The legislative branch didn't wait for President Biden's tardy submission. Half of the 2025 spending measures have already been enacted, with Congress left to wrangle over the six remaining appropriations bills. That means Mr. Biden's fiscal 2025 blueprint won't have much impact. And that's a good thing, because it would only contribute to our country's financial disarray.

Last year, the government spent \$1.7 trillion more than it took in. The red ink rises to \$1.9 trillion this year, even though taxpayers will send an extra \$640 billion to Uncle Sam. Mr. Biden's budget plan squanders all of that extra income with unbounded extravagance, proposing annual expenditures that continuously rise to \$10 trillion by 2033.

The administration's own figures point to an alarmingly simple solution to the budgetary imbalance. Without changing anything else, income and expense would come into balance within three years by holding spending at last year's already excessive levels.

But discipline is not in Mr. Biden's vocabulary. For 2025, he is asking for a \$7.3 trillion spending extravaganza that distributes billions in rewards to agencies serving his special needs. The Department of Justice, for instance, gets a \$1.1 billion

bonus no doubt in thanks for its work locking up Mr. Biden's political opponents — including the unprecedented prosecution of his main rival in the November election.

The president also wants \$9.3 billion for “refugee resettlement,” which refers to the distribution of illegal immigrants in areas of the country that bring the most political advantage. The biggest boost in spending by far goes to the Defense Department, which is focused more on Ukraine's security than America's.

Formal spending on Ukraine is done in supplemental appropriations, but the administration is already allocating funds to improve that nation's infrastructure. “The Budget includes a new capital increase to the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development to maintain support to Ukraine,” the White House document explains.

Radical expenditure always comes with a cost: tax increases. There's a 25% minimum tax on “billionaires” (defined as those worth \$100 million), a jump in the corporate tax rate and the closing of tax loopholes for corporations. The “soak the rich” approach may have superficial appeal, but corporations won't pay those new taxes. Any added cost will be passed along to consumers in the form of higher price s — as if prices weren't high enough already.

Government's unhinged spending has also sent interest rates skyward. At 7.3%, the average home mortgage rate is more than double the 2.65% rate when Mr. Biden took office, adding nearly \$1,000 to the average monthly house payment.

Restoring the American dream requires only an uncharacteristic bit of restraint on Washington's part. It's up to the House to come up with a realistic alternative.

— *The Washington Times*

CAL THOMAS

Biden, Congress need an intervention

When some people appear beyond help because of addiction or other circumstances they can't control, family members have been known to stage an intervention. Congress and President Biden need an intervention as their addiction to spending exceeds anything seen in history.

In his State of the Union address last week, the president invoked one of his party's favorite lines about corporations and the rich not paying their “fair share” in taxes. Notice they never say what they consider fair and when Democrats manage to hike the tax rate it's never enough.

The president claimed he has reduced the “deficit” (as opposed to the debt, which continues to grow). He takes credit for the reduction in spending following the Covid-19 pandemic, but that produced a decrease in the increase of spending, not an actual reduction. In the way the government mis-figures things, if you spent \$500 on a credit card one month and \$400 the following month, you would have decreased your spending, but still added \$900 to what you owe. See how this works?

The top 1 percent of taxpayers — those who earn \$561,351 or more — paid 42.3 percent of the total tax revenue collected in 2020, according to the latest figures from the IRS. In fact, the top 1 percent of taxpayers paid more income taxes than the bottom 90 percent combined. And yet the president wants to squeeze more blood from these successful “turnips.” Notice Democrats never suggest cutting a single dollar in spending, or eliminat-

Congress and President Biden need an intervention as their addiction to spending exceeds anything seen in history.

ing programs that don't work, or have exceeded their “sell-by” date. Instead, they demand more from the successful to subsidize and buy votes from people who pay no taxes, many of whom receive government checks.

Basic economics appears among the casualties of what is not taught in today's public schools and universities. Let me help the uninformed and misinformed. Too much debt is a dead weight on the economy and on individuals.

From America's beginning, there have been warnings of the threat to the nation of large debt.

As this is the 100th anniversary of Calvin Coolidge's presidency, let's begin with a few of his thoughts on debt: “Public debt is a burden on all the people.” Under Coolidge the debt fell. About taxes, he said: “The collection of taxes which are not absolutely required, which do not beyond reasonable doubt contribute to public welfare, is only a species of legalized larceny. Under this Republic the rewards of industry belong to those who earn them.”

What has changed in one century? Again, it is the transi-

tion from self-reliance to an over reliance on government.

George Washington warned the new nation to avoid “the accumulation of debt, not only by shunning occasions of expense, but by vigorous exertions in time of peace to discharge the debts.” Washington also believed it wrong to place “upon posterity the burden which ourselves ought to bear.” As with many of the other Founders, Washington would likely be appalled that moderns are ignoring his sage advice.

Why don't more of us pay attention to the wise words of men like these and to what history teaches about nations that fall too deep into debt? Again, the answer is that so many people have been misled to rely on government first and themselves last that they have become addicted to government and the borrowed money that keeps those checks coming. As with other addictions from which the addicted cannot free themselves, an intervention is much needed. One can happen in November if enough non-addicts vote for candidates who are committed to putting our financial house back in order. First, they have to change their thinking about what was supposed to be a limited government so that “we the people” might be unlimited in our pursuit of happiness.

Email Cal Thomas at tcaeditors@tribpub.com. Look for Cal Thomas' latest book “A Watchman in the Night: What I've Seen Over 50 Years Reporting on America” (HumanixBooks).

RICH LOWRY

Joe Biden will never be normal again

Joe Biden won the normality test in 2020.

There wasn't anything remarkable about him. He just seemed like a steady hand who had been around for a while, who didn't look or sound like a radical, and who knew how Washington worked.

He wasn't the leader of a movement, wasn't charismatic and wasn't particularly witty or well-spoken. He was, in fact, completely uninteresting and utterly conventional. He was just the most normal guy in the room.

He benefited from a favorable contrast with the magnetic, endlessly interesting, constantly outrageous, norm-busting President Trump, whose theatrical and chaotic governance made him vulnerable to a basement campaign run by a candidate happy, in ice-cream terms, to be vanilla to Trump's rocky road.

If Democrats hope to rerun the 2020 campaign, they will once again have plenty of material to work with against Trump, who provides more of it on a regular basis. It's the other side of the equation that's the problem — the supposed safe alternative is AWOL and never coming back.

That erstwhile Joe Biden, the generic, broadly acceptable president, didn't survive contact with the reality of his presidency.

Of course, he destroyed his reputation as the steady hand with his disastrous mishandling of Afghanistan. It's not just that he kneecapped our allies and abandoned Americans — all accompanied by Fall of Saigon—like images of chaos and desperation on the ground — but that he insisted

A president is supposed to reassure the public with his bearing and words; Biden now largely does the opposite.

everything was fine.

After this, it was impossible to look at Biden the same, and indeed his approval rating has never recovered.

Maybe you could say that he was dealt a bad hand in Afghanistan, or, after 20 years, the intervention had to end one way or the other.

The border, however, is even more damning. Biden took a situation that was under control, blew it up, refused to readjust when the consequences became obvious, insisted that the crisis wasn't a crisis as it began to be felt all over the country, and engaged in implausible blame-shifting — all because he was beholden to a new, radical ideology hostile to borders as such.

This wasn't moderate or competent. And it certainly wasn't normal.

Even if Biden's record were unassailable, the way he walks and speaks now would make it impossible for him to be a nothing-to-see-here conventional politician again.

We have never in the modern media age witnessed a president this infirm. It is not what anyone expects from the president of the United States, a role associated with vigor, energy and very often youth.

Watching Biden mumble through speeches, get confused about his stage directions, mix up names and old memories, and walk so stiffly and awkwardly that he seems

at risk of stumbling or falling at any time is deeply unsettling.

A president is supposed to reassure the public with his bearing and words; Biden now largely does the opposite.

For most people, he doesn't even meet the most basic standard of seeming capable of performing his duties for the entirety of his term in office if he's reelected. Indeed, that Biden will serve as president until January 2029 may be among the most preposterous things a major political party has ever asked the American public to believe.

Democrats will take comfort from the president's fiery State of the Union performance, but Biden shouting his way through an extensively rehearsed speech on a teleprompter didn't make him seem any younger and won't allay the well-founded concerns about his age.

In the latest New York Times poll, 71% of people agree strongly or somewhat that Biden is “just too old to be president.” This is unprecedented territory, and is politically perilous when you hope to be the default candidate arrayed against an unacceptable alternative.

Donald Trump, who in so many ways is an outlier in American politics, is now matched up against another outlier. The normality advantage that Biden enjoyed in 2020 is gone, and defeating his Republican adversary has, accordingly, gotten that much more difficult.

Rich Lowery is editor of National Review, a leading conservative magazine founded by William F. Buckley.

BIBLE SELECTION

Know therefore that the Lord your God is God, the faithful God who keeps covenant and steadfast love with those who love him and keep his commandments, to a thousand generation

— Deuteronomy 7:9 (ESV)



OBITUARIES

Donald Richard Partridge

Mr. Donald Richard Partridge "Richard", 85, passed away peacefully of natural causes on March 8, 2024, at his home in Jackson, Mississippi. Richard was born in Omaha, Texas on February 14, 1939, and lived in Pittsburg, Texas for most of his early childhood. Richard has been a resident of Jackson, Mississippi for most of his adult life.

Mr. Partridge was a man of great vision and insight. He was always artistic and had a strong entrepreneurial spirit. He enjoyed designing, building, and turning his ideas into reality. To his artistic nature and architectural credit, Richard held several process and utility patents. Mr. Partridge leaves behind a distinguished business reputation and legacy that spans more than 50 years. He has always been an integral pillar of the Mississippi business community. He used his vision and grit to become the founder of multiple oil and gas, propane, real estate, and transportation related companies throughout the south.

Richard was a very gentle and compassionate man. He was well known for his kindness and generosity. He directly touched and impacted the lives of countless people that were around him. Those that knew him the best, knew that he valued honesty, integrity, dedication, and hard work. His greatest passion and highest value were his love for his family and his love for Christ. Richard will be greatly missed.

Richard is survived by his loving wife Sherry Green Partridge; his children Charles Hubbard Partridge (Tammy), Paige Partridge Sullivan (Lavelle), and Pamela Partridge Morrison (Greg); his grandchildren Charles Hubbard Partridge II (Chase), Clayton Cook Weathersby, and Kelsey Beverly Weathersby, Anna Claire Cole, and Dillan Ferguson; his great-grandchild Carter Cook Martin; and his brothers Larry Dean Partridge (Dot) and Charles Carroll Partridge (Linda). He was best known by his grandchildren as

"Pop Richard".

A visitation for Richard was held Tuesday, March 12, 2024, from 11:00 AM to 2:00 PM at Parkway Funeral Home, 1161 Highland Colony Pkwy, Ridgeland, Mississippi 39157. A funeral service was Tuesday, March 12, 2024, at 2:00 PM, 1161 Highland Colony Pkwy, Ridgeland, Mississippi 39157. Reverend Norris Ables will be officiating. A final resting place will occur at Parkway Memorial Cemetery, 1161 Highland Colony Pkwy, Ridgeland, Mississippi 39157.

Memorial tributes can be made as charitable donations to McClean Fletcher Grief Center and Mississippi Animal Rescue League.

Patsy L. Boswell

Patsy L. Boswell, 86, of Madison, died March 7, 2024, in Brookhaven. Services were held March 13, 2024 at Galloway Memorial United Methodist Church.

Patsy was born on January 21, 1938, the daughter of the late, Clarence and Clara Williamson. Patsy was a long-time member of Galloway United Methodist Church, serving the church in many capacities of over 64 years of membership; including teaching Sunday school and serving in the Meals on Wheels Ministry.

Along with her parents, Clarence and Clara Williamson, she is preceded in death by her children, John Ellis Boswell, Jr. and David Mims Boswell.

She is survived by her loving husband of 67 years, John Ellis Boswell, Sr. of Madison; grandson, John David Boswell and his wife Summer; brother, Ronnie Williamson.

Lorne Smith, Jr.

On March 7, 2024, we lost our beloved husband, dad, grandfather (a/k/a Pop), friend and one person you could always count on.

Lorne Smith, Jr was born on July 8, 1950. He graduated from Central High School and the University of Southern Mississippi. He joined the United States Marine Corp and

was honored to be a "Proud Marine" until his dying day.

He spent his early years in State government and in several different departments within the Mississippi Department of Wildlife, the last being Hunter Education Administrator. He was involved with the International Hunter Education Association, serving on the Board of the organization, two of which he served as President and then Past-President. While being President, he had the honor of representing the organization at the international meeting in Finland.

He also was on the committee that wrote the Hunter Safety Manual used over the United States. He taught hunter education courses to many, many students while working at the Department and many years since his retirement. He also wrote and taught accident investigation and reconstruction to many law enforcement officers.

He and John Louk with the Treestand Manufacturer's Association taught courses to volunteer hunter education instructors on how to teach the national course and a course for law enforcement and investigators.

He started Smith Investigation & Support Services, LLC, in 2000 and investigated and reconstructed hunting accidents. He was recognized across state and federal courts throughout the nation. Through his work he made many close friends that he greatly respected.

His joy was spending time with his wife Linda, his son, David (wife Tammy) and grandchildren, Victoria, Robert, Tanner, Jordan, Walker and Garrett, and his three great-grandbabies, Mallory, Allie and Grayson.

A memorial service was held on March 13, 2024.

Memorials be made in his name to the Treestand Manufacturer's Association, P.O. Box 15214, Hattiesburg, MS 39404 to continue the work of safety education in order to save as many lives as possible, his passion in life.

BIBLICAL PERSPECTIVES/J. Ligon Duncan III

You are Gods

We continue working through the Psalms together in Psalm 82, a Psalm about God and government. And if you looked at the title and were wondering if I had slipped a cog — no, I really did mean to title the sermon, "You Are Gods." You'll note those words come right out of the Psalm. It's important for us to know before we read this Psalm to whom this phrase "You are gods" refers. In this passage, the "gods" here refer to civil rulers. Throughout the Old Testament God is constantly enjoining government officials to rule justly; and in this passage He refers to them as gods (little "g") because they have been appointed by Him to function as servants of God.

God meant to teach His people several important truths about civil authorities, and I want to point you to three of them in this passage. In verses 1–4, I want you to see God's call for just government. In verse 5, I want you to see God's complaint against unjust government. And then, in verses 6–8, I want you to see this warning of judgment that God gives to the mortal "gods."

I. God's Call for Just Government

Here we see God's pronouncement to His people about good government. In this passage we're introduced to what seems to be a courtroom scene; at the very least, it is a great official assembly of the people of God. In this case, God Himself convenes the court session. His people are assembled around Him. And who is also there? The rulers. "He judges in the midst of the rulers." And immediately, in verse 2, God brings an accusation against these rulers: "How long will you judge unjustly and show partiality to the wicked?" God stands in the whole assembly of His people, and He points to these rulers, and says, "You are judging unjustly and you are showing favoritism to the wicked." Now, having brought that initial charge against them, He tells them what He expects of those who are administering good government. You see this in verses 3 and 4.

Their rule is to look out for the interests of those who are most likely to be overlooked. And He lists them: the weak, the orphans, the afflicted, and destitute. So their rule is to look out for those who are most likely to be overlooked and to make sure that they are given justice and protection from wicked aggression. So notice

here God speaks of at least two elements of a good government. Firstly, a government should look out for those who are likely to be overlooked. They should make sure that there is equal justice for all. Secondly, they should defend those who are vulnerable from mistreatment and aggression by the wicked. This is the reason why Christians have always believed that good government ought to foster equal justice under the law. That's not an idea invented by our founding fathers. They learned that truth from their Christian heritage, from the Bible: that equal justice under the law is something that God expects of all good governments.

One of the things about this Psalm is that it continually emphasizes that God rules not just over Israel, but over all the nations. They belong to Him. God is concerned for just rule not only amongst His people, but in all societies, and God will hold accountable those who rule.

II. God's Complaint Against Unjust Government

There's a second thing I want you to see. And that is God's complaint against unjust government. Here in verse 5 you see God's assessment of Israel's rulers. God says, "They do not know, nor do they understand; they walk about in darkness; All the foundations of the earth are shaken."

Well, it wasn't a very good grade on their report card, was it? God says to them that as judges and rulers that they are without understanding. He says that they walk about in darkness. They are engulfed in a dark fog of moral confusion. They lack wisdom and discernment, something essential to just rule and judgment. And they're morally confused, because they have not adequately appreciated that their rule comes from God.

And so what is the consequence? "All the foundations of the earth are shaken." In other words, the whole moral order is upset, is in turmoil because of this poor leadership. Not simply poor leadership, but unjust and immoral leadership. The foundations of the general welfare are undermined by this unjust government. It shouldn't surprise us, but in a fallen world there is a corrupting tendency at work in all exercise of human authority and power. Here God is giving His assessment on these rulers and leaders. They have not acknowledged God as the source of justice and govern-

ment, and so they lack wisdom and discernment, and the people consequently suffer.

III. God's Warning of Judgment

And then finally, in verses 6–8, we see God's declaration concerning these rulers. He warns of His judgment on these mortal governors whom He calls gods. Listen again to God's words in verses 6 and 7: "I said, 'You are gods, and all of you are sons of the Most High. Nevertheless, you will die like men, and fall like any one of the princes.'"

In other words, God is saying, "I appointed you in Israel as My representatives for the welfare of the people, and in that sense, you are gods, you are sons of the Most High. You are people who have been vested with My authority to rule. Nevertheless, don't you forget that you're going to die like any other man, and when you die there will be a judgment waiting." God has appointed rulers in Israel. They're vested with His responsibility to administer justice according to His standards. They're accountable to God.

Now in response to this, the people of God finally speak in this Psalm. In verse 8, the people of God sing with their own words. And what do they sing? "Arise, O God, and judge the earth! For it is You who possess all the nations." Now, finally the people assembled call out; and what do they say? "Come, Lord, and judge the earth, because all the nations belong to You." God is reminding us through this Psalm that He will hold accountable all those who rule and govern and judge.

To close, this Psalm give us the substance and content for how we can pray for those who are in rule and authority. We can take the positive instructions of God and pray for our governors and civil authorities. "Lord, grant that they would rule in accordance with these positive commands." You can take His negative judgments against the unjust rulers of Israel, and you can reverse them and pray that the Lord would grant our rulers not to rule in that way, but to rule in accordance with the principles of God's enduring moral norms. May God do this in our hearts.

The Rev. Dr. J. Ligon Duncan III is Chancellor and CEO of Reformed Theological Seminary. He can be reached at 601-923-1600 or by email at jhyde@rts.edu.



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 — Ephesians 4:2 (ESV)

“Do not boast about tomorrow, for you do not know what a day may bring.”
 — Proverbs 27:1 (ESV)

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 — John 3:16 (NIV)

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Getting the Message/Rev. Chris Shelton

When man seeks his own glory

The great sin of the old world at Babel continues to this day: “Let us make a name for ourselves.” God’s glory is denied, and man seeks his own glory and good apart from God. We are all pulled that way, and it leads to misery and death.

Christ came to restore us to the life of God, that we might glorify God and enjoy him forever. In Revelation 1:14-16, the apostle John saw a vision of the glory of Christ. In verse 17, we see John’s response to the vision: “When I saw him, I fell at his feet as though dead.”

Why was John floored this way? Because he knows he is in the presence of God. This is the common response to a sinner who suddenly finds himself in the presence of God. Daniel responded the same way in Daniel 10. Isaiah in the presence of God said in alarm, “I am undone.” Ezekiel, after a vision of the Lord, sat down overwhelmed for 7 days.

The Bible mentions these responses for a reason. They could have been omitted from the stories. But God would have us consider what it will be like when we stand before him. Salvation appears in a wonderful light when we do.

Even though John fell as though dead, he was very much alive. He is a believer in Christ, and the Lord places his hand on him and assures him of his favor, saying, “Fear not.” We might stop there and consider how many things there are that can provoke fear in this world. But if God assures us that we need not fear in his presence, then what are these things compared to that?

The Lord itemizes reasons his people need not fear in the presence of God. He says, “I am the first and the last.” Christ, as the eternal Son of God had no beginning. But here he points us to his sovereignty over all creation and the salvation of his people. It is good to be under his care.

In Isaiah 41, the Lord uses this expression to say that although the nations foolishly run after other gods and are never satisfied, he will have a people he redeems for himself out of the nations. He says of the redeemed, “I took you from the ends of the earth and called you from the farthest

corners.” So, the Lord is telling John, “Don’t fear, you are one of mine.”

Next, the Lord says, “I am the living one.” He alone is God, and he alone can give spiritual life. He is telling John that John has life in him. We cannot just want Christ as the one who can deliver us from death. He must be the object of our love, now and forever. He is our life.

The third reason the Lord says do not fear is, “I died, and behold I am alive forevermore.” Literally it reads, “I became dead.” In John 1 we read that “The word became flesh.” The Lord took upon himself human nature in order to die for our sins. He had to be clothed with our sins so that we could be clothed with his righteousness.

The apostle Paul’s motivation behind his labors and sufferings for Christ was that “He loved me and gave himself for me.” How can we stand in the presence of God? We don’t look within or to our own accomplishments, but rather to Christ and what he accomplished for us in his death. John’s assurance wasn’t that he was an apostle. It was that Christ died for him.

The last consolation the Lord gives is, “I have the keys of death and hades.” Hades referred to the place of souls departed from the body in the Old Testament. God had made our souls eternal. That Christ has the keys means he has conquered death and that he will assign men their eternal place. He is the judge of all men.

John will later see a vision of souls dressed in white before the throne and before the Lamb (Revelation 7). There is no value you could attach to having that white robe in the presence of God. You won’t be there without it. People attached to this world have little care about what happens after this life. These words, “I have the keys of death and hades,” matter not.

This is not the case with one who knows Christ. The redeemed soul knows what sin he was redeemed from. He lives in gratitude for the assurance from his Savior, “Fear not.”

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 — 1 Corinthians 16:14 (ESV)

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SPORTS

Madison Central honoring Corey Ray

By DUNCAN DENT
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Corey Ray, the late former School Resource Officer and PA announcer for the Madison Central Baseball team, will be honored next week with a permanent plaque on the press box at the Madison Central Baseball Stadium, Gene Wright, director of Communications for Madison County Schools, said.

Officer Ray's family will be present to throw out the first pitch. The presentation will take place around 6:30 p.m.

His mother, Karen Golden said Ray enjoyed all MC sports but that jag Baseball was "his heart."

"I am just so, so thrilled they are recognizing him like this and that people are still thinking about him this far after he is gone," Golden said.

said. "It warms my heart."

Golden said she knew baseball season was coming because Ray would set up a card table in the den with his computer to fine-tune edited music drops, walk-out songs and sound effects for use during the games he announced. She said that the table was usually set up throughout the whole season.

"I couldn't be happier," she said. "I am just tickled pink."

The ceremony will open the Jaguars' game against West Jones. As of Wednesday morning, the Jags sat at 10-4 on the season and were playing in a tournament at East Central Community College in Decatur.

On March 12, the Jaguars blanked Cleveland Central, 6-0, in Grenada.

Corey Evan Ray, 41, of Ridgeland, died July 14, 2021, at his home surrounded

by family and friends. His mother, Karen Green Golden, said he went peacefully after a lengthy struggle with an extended illness.

Ray put in long hours at the school and would often go by to check on things on holidays and his days off, his mother said.

Ray was born on May 8, 1980. He graduated high school from Madison Central and joined the Madison

County Sheriff's Office in the same year, 1998. He served with the Sheriff's Office for 12 years.

In 2010, Ray joined the Madison Police Department and worked in Dispatch before becoming the School Resource Officer for Madison Central High School.

Former MRA standout wins Howell Trophy

By STAFF REPORTS
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A Madison-Ridgeland Academy graduate is the first college freshman to be awarded the Bailey Howell Trophy announced Monday by the Mississippi Sports Hall of Fame.

Mississippi State University freshman guard Josh Hubbard was awarded the Bailey Howell Trophy on Monday, March 11, during a luncheon at the Golden Moon Casino held by the MSHF. Fellow Bulldog Jessika Carter of Harris County received the Gillom Trophy.

"The Mississippi Sports Hall of Fame is proud to recognize Jessika, Josh, and all of the finalists on their tremendous accomplishments this season," said Bill Blackwell, Executive Director. "We appreciate the partnership of the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians and Pearl River Resort, as well as their commitment to honoring our state's outstanding college athletes in both basketball and baseball."

Under Coach Richard Duease at MRA Hubbard finished his high school career as the state's all-time leading scorer with 4,367 career points. This broek record that had stood for 37 years.

Hubbard's MRA squad was the 2021 MAIS Class 6-A state champions and the 2022 MAIS Class 6A runner-up.

According to Matt Dunaway, a spokesman for the university, the Howell Trophy is named after former Mississippi State player and Naismith Basketball Hall of Fame inductee Bailey Howell. He said Hubbard is the first freshman to win the yearly award that is given to the best male college basketball player in the Magnolia State which dates back to the 2004-05 season.

Howell was on hand at the ceremony and presented Hubbard with the award himself.

Hubbard is the ninth State player to capture the honor and extends the Bulldog's run to six of the last seven seasons to win the award, Dunaway said.

Quindary Weatherspoon, another Madison County standout out of Velma Jackson High School was a two-time recipient during the 2017-18 and 2018-19 seasons.

The 2024 Howell and Gillom Trophies are sponsored by the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians and Pearl River Resort. They are presented annually to the



MRA graduate and Mississippi State University freshman Josh Hubbard is the recipient of the Bailey Howell Trophy.

most outstanding men's and women's college basketball players in the state of Mississippi.

Josh Hubbard, the 5'10" freshman Guard, had a standout freshman season for the Bulldogs as the team's leading scorer. He averaged 16.8 points per game with a career-high 34 points against Kentucky. He was named SEC Freshman of the Week five times this season. The other finalists for the Howell Trophy were Matthew Murrell of Ole Miss and Austin Crowley of Southern Miss. Hubbard hails from Madison.

The Howell and Gillom Trophies are a part of the Outstanding Player Awards Series which also recognizes the top college athlete in football with the C Spire Conerly Trophy and the top college baseball player with the Ferriss Trophy presented by MBCI and Pearl River Resort.

Next for the Bulldogs and Hubbard is the SEC Tournament where they will play LSU tonight. Tip-off is currently scheduled for 12 p.m. CT from Bridgestone Arena, home of the NHL's Nashville Predators. The game will be televised by SEC Network and streamed online through the ESPN app.

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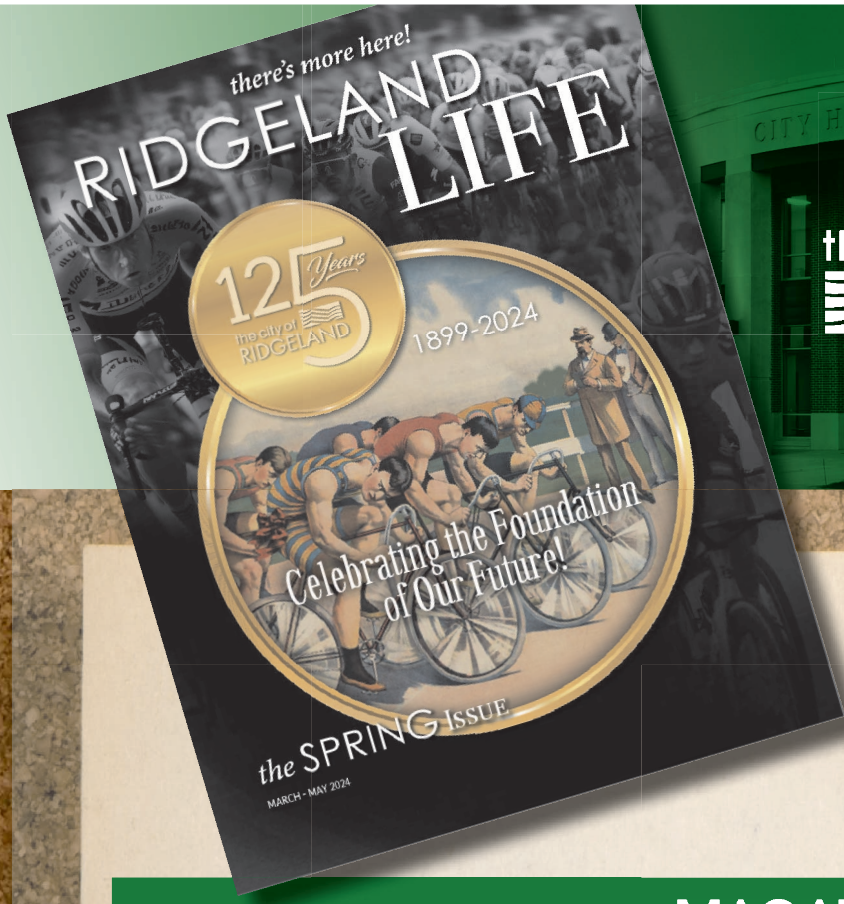
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Info: jotc.org
Time & Place: Mar. 26
Ridgeland Rec Center
Old Trace Park

Spring Baseball

Madison Ridgeland Youth Club
Info: mryouthbaseball.com
Time & Place: Mar. - May
Ridgeland Rec Center
Liberty Park & Freedom Ridge Park

Miracle League Baseball

League for individuals with disabilities.
Info: ridgelandms.org
Register: End on Mar. 29
Time & Place: Apr.-May
Ridgeland Rec Center & Hite Wolcott on the Parker Miracle Field

TOP Soccer

League for individuals with disabilities.
Info: topsoccerms.com
Register: Mar. 20
Time & Place: Mar. 28
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