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MISSISSIPPIAN

THE STUDENT NEWSPAPER OF THE UNIVERSITY OF MISSISSIPPI | SERVING OLE MISS AND OXFORD SINCE 1911

LOCAL ART: TWO MISSISSIPPI PAINTERS AT SOUTHSIDE

Paintings by Jerrod Partridge and Jonathan Kent Adams cover the gallery's walls. Partridge's work finds beauty in everyday life, while Adams' reckons with his identity.

SEE PAGE 5



TIGHT ENDS EAGER FOR BIGGER ROLE

The tight end position was overshadowed in the Evan Engram era and even more so with the inception of the "NWO." Dawson Knox is ready to change the narrative.

SEE PAGE 8



Cost of campus parking passes continues to rise

GRACE MARION

THEDMNEWS@GMAIL.COM

When student parking pass sales opened in mid-July, many students noticed a jump in prices from the previous year.

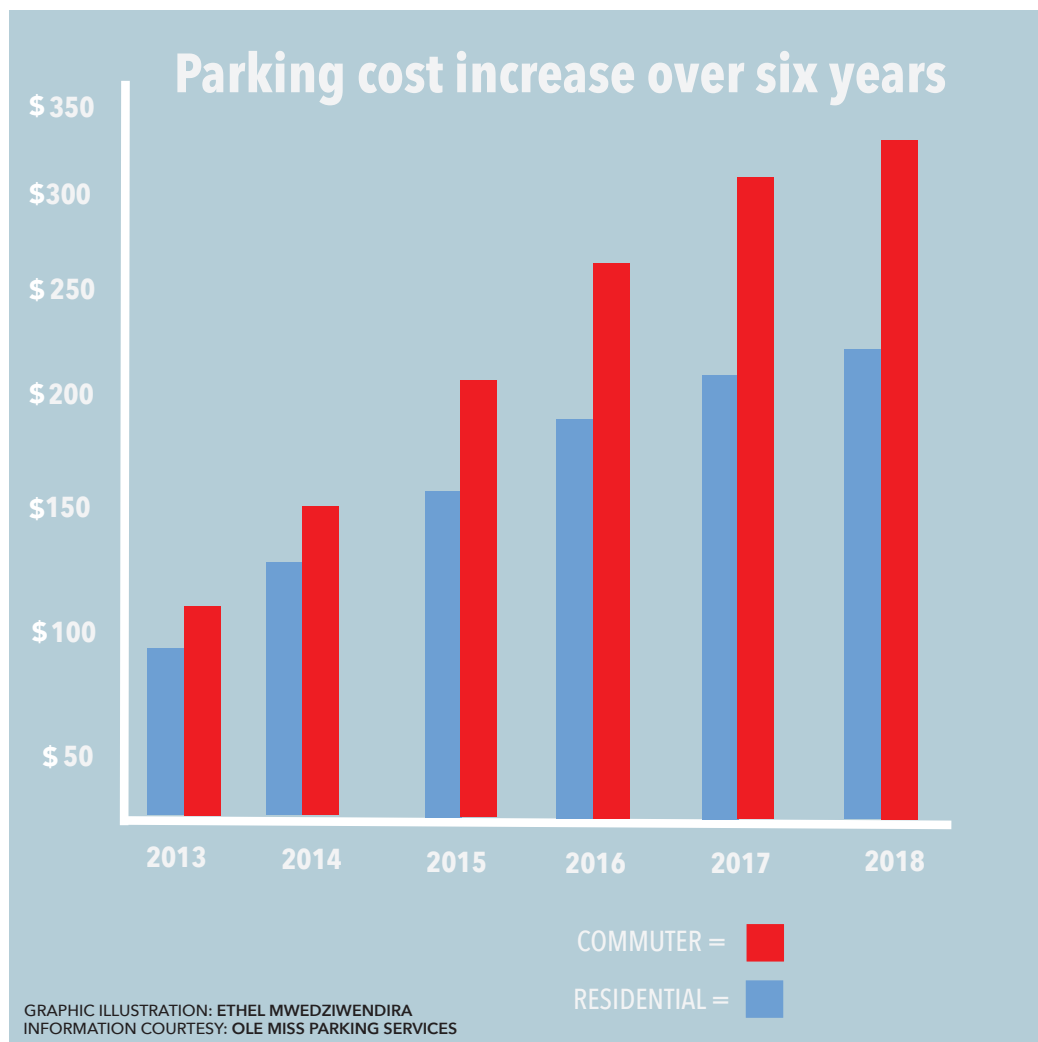
Commuter and residential parking passes rose from \$200 to \$210 and \$300 to \$325, respectively, for the 2018-19 school year. That's a cost increase of 5 percent for commuter passes and just over 8 percent for residential passes from the previous year.

"I personally think that's way too much," freshman graphic design major Lauren Taylor said. "Having a car on campus isn't a necessity, but it is very helpful to have for off-campus extracurricular activities, grocery runs and travel to and from home."

Money made from passes this year will be used for transportation improvements, according to Ole Miss Director of Parking and Transportation Mike Harris.

Harris said the price increase in parking passes will go towards "purchasing new buses for various routes on- and off-campus and adding additional routes to service the new Recreational Facility and South Oxford Center."

SEE PERMIT PRICES PAGE 3



Athletics offers monetized tailgating experience

BLAKE ALSUP

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The Ole Miss Athletics Foundation is launching a new tailgating experience for game days this fall.

This seemingly all-inclusive tailgating will provide game day attendees with a 10-by-20 tent, tables, chairs, TVs and more at the north end zone plaza near Vaught-Hemingway Stadium – for a price.

These tailgates will cost \$17,500 per tent for the entire 2018 season, which amounts to \$2,500 per game.

The athletic foundation's assistant director of development, Da'Ron Brown, said the tailgating experience wasn't set up to earn money but to provide a family-friendly

atmosphere focused on fans and donors.

He said the goal is to carry on a positive momentum from the spring semester, during which the athletics department hired new coaches and had successful seasons with baseball and track and field.

"So the fall is essential," Brown said. "Our goal here is to provide the ultimate fan experience and something new. That's what we're all about – just having that new energy."

The price tag also includes a parking pass for an adjacent parking lot and close proximity to a designated kids' play area and restrooms.

Other benefits include concierge and security staffs. Brown said although security is present throughout the Grove



PHOTO: CHRISTIAN JOHNSON

SEE TAILGATE PAGE 3

Ole Miss has begun setting up tents for its new tailgates, which are available to fans who want a "no-headaches" tailgate.

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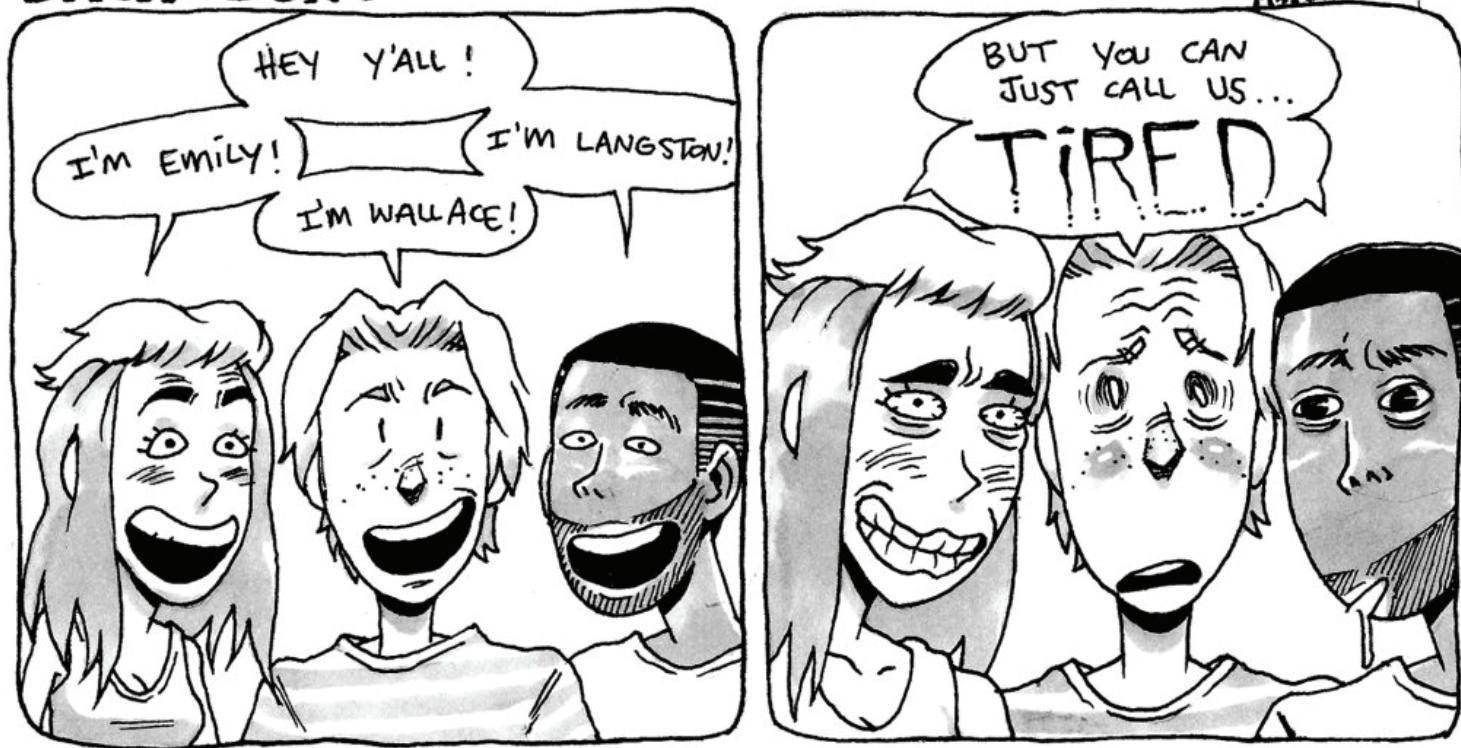
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BACHELORS



On the mascot issue: UM jumped the Shark



WILL HALL
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Two weeks ago, Ole Miss Athletics unveiled the official design for the university's long-awaited new mascot, Landshark Tony.

Upon Tony's reveal, media outlets across Oxford feverishly rushed to the defense of the peculiar humanoid shark, insisting that Tony was a wild success among both students and alumni and citing last year's student vote — orchestrated by the Associated Student Body — that showed 81 percent support of the Landshark.

Despite the misleading polling and selective interviews that have become a staple of how the

university does business in recent years, there was something truly peculiar about this decision. Other than a few children who participated in a photo shoot with the new mascot, the Landshark seems to have no supporters besides its design committee.

With the Landshark receiving ridicule from sports commentators, state political leaders and a clear majority of both students and alumni alike, the university has truly outdone itself in yet another episode in its series of brutal self-imposed humiliation, which is entirely the responsibility of university leadership.

Despite how much the flawed message of unity will be pushed in the coming weeks, Landshark Tony does nothing more for our school than to further erode its national perception from that of a football powerhouse full of southern tradition to a politically correct laughing stock in the style of the University of Missouri in 2015.

If the athletics department and the radical administration truly cared about building any

further sense of community at the university, they should have consulted all students, not just the over-enthusiastic liberal minority that fanatically orbits the administration's power structure.

This issue is not about voicing support for one mascot or another, it's about understanding that the selection of the Landshark continues to lead Ole Miss down a destructive path. I would challenge every single fan, student and alumnus to search out someone who supports this selection and simply ask what he or she hopes the Landshark will achieve because, thus far, that has been far from a clear answer.

This is not to say that the selection of the Landshark will not have a lasting effect on the university, especially with the tens of thousands of dollars the school is bound to waste on promotion, merchandise and the costs associated with inevitable drafting committee for what will become our next mascot.

The only thing I affirmatively know about the future is this: It will

be a cold day in hell before I call myself an Ole Miss Landshark.

Will Hall is a senior journalism major from Atlanta.

CORRECTIONS:

An article in Monday's issue of The Daily Mississippian incorrectly reported that the Oxford Lafayette Humane Society now only accepts animals from Lafayette County. The OLHS is still accepting animals from outside of Lafayette County.

Campaigning for homecoming court elections does not begin on Friday. The ASB will release petitions for campaigns on Friday.

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The Daily Mississippian welcomes letters to the editor. Letters should be e-mailed to dmletters@olemiss.edu.

Letters should be typed, double-spaced and no longer than 300 words. Letters may be edited for clarity, space or libel. Third-party letters and those bearing pseudonyms, pen names or "name withheld" will not be published. Publication is limited to one letter per individual per calendar month.

Letters should include phone and email contact information so that editors can verify authenticity. Letters from students should include grade classification and major; letters from faculty and staff should include title and the college, school or department where the person is employed.



**MISSISSIPPI
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MEMBER NEWSPAPER

PERMIT PRICES continued from page 1

He added that the parking and transportation department is “also working on installing WiFi on the buses.”
This year’s increase

continues an upward trend in price over the past several years. In 2013, a commuter pass cost \$95 versus \$210 now, a 121 percent increase over five years. That same year, a residential pass was \$115 versus \$325 now, a 183 percent increase over five years.

Reserved passes for 2018-19

are now \$800, Pavilion Garage Reserved passes are \$450 and Park-N-Ride costs \$105, according to the university’s transportation department website.

“Campus is small enough that I can walk everywhere without using the bus system,” freshman accounting major Lele

Goldsmith said. “I do not want to have to pay for the bus repairs and WiFi if I will not even be using the bus system.”

Junior international studies major Caroline Thompson shared similar thoughts about the funds raised from the price increase going to busing.

“I think it’s a good idea,

although our money is for ... passes for our cars,” Thompson said. “We don’t even use the buses. Maybe they could get the money (from) somewhere else.”

All University of Mississippi students have the option to ride the OUT bus routes for free with a university ID card.

TAILGATE continued from page 1

and stadium during game day, there will “be a good amount of security in that specific area.”

Ole Miss Athletics is also extending its catering services, provided by Centerplate Catering, as an additional, optional purchase for those who purchase the turnkey tailgating package.

Clay Cavett, associate director of alumni affairs, said the reserved tailgating section will function as the final stop on the Walk of Champions and will include a viewing riser.

“It’s a riser that’s right up against the Starnes Center, and it’s my understanding they’re going to put tailgating up on that riser,” Cavett said.

Though this style of reserved tailgating is a first for Ole Miss Athletics, Cavett said he doesn’t see this change as a step towards charging fees for tailgating in the Grove.

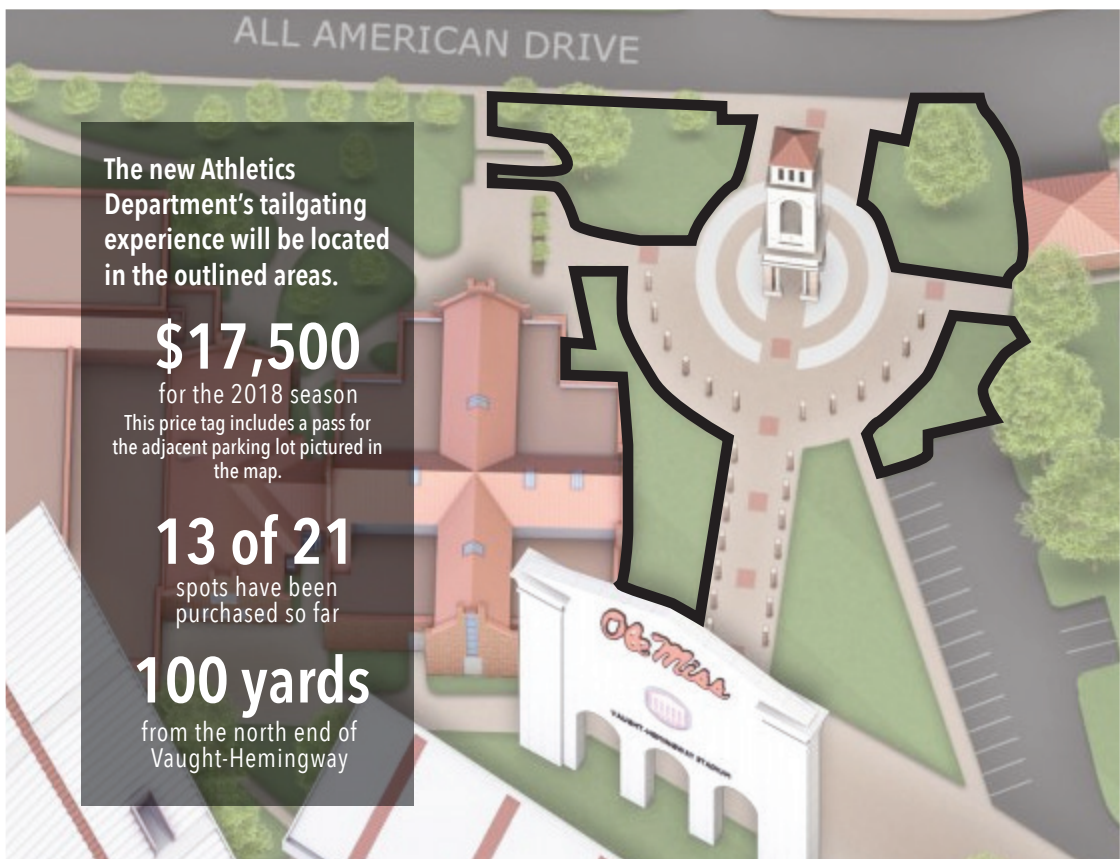
“The Grove experience is what it is,” Cavett said. “I don’t see it ever going in that direction.”

Colton Benford is owner of Tailgate Group, a vendor that provides tailgating services in the Grove. He estimates that they set up approximately 120 tents per game. He doesn’t see the athletic foundation’s new offering as a threat to business and said the addition of turnkey tailgating “in no way changes any traditions that are existing in the Grove right now.”

Instead, he sees it as an additional option for individuals looking for new tailgating opportunities.

“It’s making the best tailgating experience in the country even better,” Benford said. “It’s adding to it. I don’t think that it’s taking anything away from what exists.”

Of the 21 tents available, 13 have been sold so far, according to Brown. He believes turnkey tailgating might start a trend at other universities.



The new Athletics Department's tailgating experience will be located in the outlined areas.

\$17,500

for the 2018 season
This price tag includes a pass for the adjacent parking lot pictured in the map.

13 of 21

spots have been purchased so far

100 yards

from the north end of Vaught-Hemingway

GRAPHIC ILLUSTRATION: HAYDEN BENGE

“When you look at the Ole Miss Athletics Foundation, we are looked upon as top-notch,

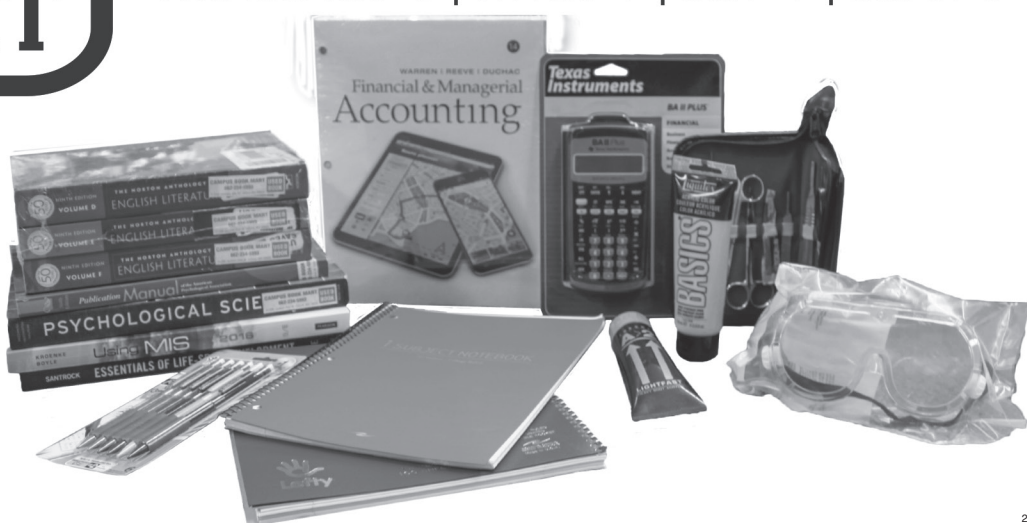
so it’s just about staying above the curve,” Brown said. “We always want to be the initiator,

because now you will probably see other programs doing the same.”

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Scott pays homage to Houston with ‘roller coaster’ album

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Named for the Six Flags AstroWorld amusement park in Houston, Travis Scott’s third studio album, “Astroworld,” was released on Aug. 3.

Scott started making music after his favorite childhood theme park closed down in 2005. His 59-minute “Astroworld,” which flows like a roller coaster, is an appropriate homage.

The album jolts to a start with “Stargazing,” a drug ballad driven by trap drums. Lines such as “And it ain’t a mosh pit if ain’t no injuries / Got ‘em stage divin’ out the nose bleeds” capture the energy of his live shows.

The album’s momentum steadily climbs with “Carousel,” which features Frank Ocean, before going completely off the rails with crazy flows and production on “Sicko Mode,” a three-part Big Hawk, Drake and Swae Lee-assisted track.

On the album’s best track, “Stop Trying to Be God,” Scott is accompanied by a legendary cast of features, which include Kid Cudi humming, James Blake singing and Stevie Wonder playing harmonica. This song has it all, from its features to its flow to its subject matter.



PHOTO COURTESY: TRAVIS SCOTT'S TWITTER

“Cause they did not create commandments / When you hustle, always make it fancy / The signal’s far from what you can be / ‘Cause air traffic controls the landing,” Travis raps as he leads into the chorus, telling listeners to stop trying to control every aspect of their existence and using air traffic control as a comparison to the way God works in people’s lives.

This roller coaster of an album continues to go through

several loops, from high-energy rager “No Bystanders” to the hazy, psychedelic “Skeletons” (produced by Kevin Parker from Tame Impala) and “Wake Up,” in which Travis raps about a lucid dream over a looped guitar riff. The latter two songs feature frequent collaborator The Weeknd, who has been featured on all of Travis’ studio albums.

“Astroworld” hits a slump in the middle of the record with two weaker tracks, “5% Tint”

and “NC-17.”

The only other weak spot on the album is toward the end, on the track “Who? What!” featuring Quavo and Takeoff. It feels like a leftover from Scott’s less-than-stellar 2017 collab album with Quavo, “Huncho Jack, Jack Huncho.”

It’s not that this song is bad. But, at this point, it’s just boring because we’ve heard so much of their same flow, features and adlibs before.

But things quickly pick up again with “Astrothunder” as the album approaches its final peak. It’s the most simple song on the album lyrically, but it has a melody and chorus that will stick with you.

On “Yosemite,” Travis and Gunna trade verses over a guitar- and flute-laden beat that almost has a country vibe, beginning the momentous descent to the end.

“Can’t Stop” is another late-album standout. With a line like “Gang too wavy, move like Navy Seals,” a song can’t be bad, right? Don Toliver, an up-and-coming rapper out of Houston whose vocals are reminiscent of Akon’s, makes a sizeable contribution to the track, rapping and singing for more than half of the song’s duration.

The only previously heard single on the album is “Butterfly

Effect,” released in early 2017. It still goes as hard as it ever has. I saw Travis perform this song live at a Halloween warehouse party in the Bronx, and he played the song three times in a row while flying above the crowd on an animatronic eagle.

This song will never not be hype. Travis raps about experiences he’s had in his home city of Houston on the penultimate track, “Houstonfornication,” which references the city’s world-renowned space center.

On the album’s closer, “Coffee Bean,” Travis is at his most vulnerable, rapping about the ups and downs of his relationship with Kylie Jenner, his girlfriend and the mother to his daughter, over a laid back string ensemble-assisted instrumental.

As the final orchestral notes play and the sound of Travis’ melodic pitched-down groans fade, the ride slows to a stop, the safety bars are lifted and fans are free to press play and ride again.

I give “Astroworld” a 9 out of 10 rating. The album as a whole is great, and I feel like even the lackluster songs will grow on me with repeated listens. “Astroworld,” Scott’s magnum opus, is the follow-up that 2015’s “Rodeo” deserves and everything I wish 2016’s “Birds in the Trap Sing McKnight” had been.

Emerging Southern writer to converse with local author

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Acclaimed author David Joy will appear in conversation with local author Ace Atkins at 5 p.m. Thursday at Off Square Books to promote his latest novel, “The

Line That Held Us.”

Joy said he looks forward to his visit to Oxford because he already has relationships with both Off Square Books and Atkins. He first met Atkins when he appeared at Off Square Books in 2015, after the publication of

his first novel.

“I’ve known Ace since my first novel,” Joy said. “We went on a publicity tour for Putnam Books, and we’ve been friends ever since. I consider him one of my few writing friends. He’s one of the most talented and hardworking folks I know — just good people. He’ll be there heckling me.”

Joy’s novel, a noir rooted in the spirit of Appalachia, depicts the cover-up of an accidental death and of the brutality resulting from the cover-up’s failure. It is a story of family, friendship, vengeance and desperation.

Both this dark tale and Joy’s prior work have invited comparisons to such Southern literary greats as Flannery O’Connor, Tom Franklin and Cormac McCarthy.

According to Joy’s publicist, Elena Hershey, the novel has allowed Joy to “firmly and definitively assume his place within the Southern Gothic literary canon.”

The North Carolina author writes about the South and, specifically, Appalachia for two reasons. On one hand, Joy writes about what he knows — the Southern culture and place he feels tied to. On the other, he is driven by the desire to speak for the underrepresented constitu-



PHOTO COURTESY: ACE ATKINS



PHOTO COURTESY: DAVID JOY

ents of this environment, who often cannot speak for themselves.

Joy’s works are largely defined by an acute sense of place and have earned the author national recognition for his honest and empathetic depictions of the Appalachian region and its inhabitants.

Square Books general manager Lyn Roberts, who cited the benefits of authors appearing in conversation with each other, said she is looking forward to the event.

“Ace Atkins is a good friend of the store, and it’s great,” Roberts said. “He’s not only a great writer, but it’s really nice to have authors in conversation because they can bring out a lot more.”

Roberts said these events are crucial to maintaining the relationship between Square Books and Oxford’s literary community. Atkins, a resident of Oxford and a New York Times best-selling author, is a prominent member of this community.

This event in particular is a special opportunity for students and community members to hear from one of today’s foremost voices in Southern literature.

This conversation between authors is free and open to the public. Attendees will have the chance to ask questions as well as have their books signed after the discussion.

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Local gallery features prominent Mississippi painters

JACQUELINE SCHLICK
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Southside Gallery on the Square is showcasing the works of two Mississippi artists until Sept. 8. The artists, Jerrod Partridge and Jonathan Kent Adams, have created pieces that address different aspects of the human experience.

Partridge's show is titled "A Eudaimonic Search," and the paintings depict domestic scenes and vibrant flowers. The term "eudaimonia" comes from Aristotle's philosophy of ethics, in which it is defined as human flourishing and prosperity.

"I am interested in the poetic beauty of the light and color in these paintings, but at the same time, they portray excess," Partridge said in his artist statement. "Human flourishing is often connected with having more than we need."

In previous works depicting piles of dishes and other household clutter, Partridge found ways to change his perspective regarding the stresses of working from home to one in which he can find beauty.

"When your studio is in your house and you have young kids — I needed to find an appreciation for this kind of chaos of everyday life for myself as much as (I was) trying to make a statement with it," Partridge said. "How can I appreciate these dishes in the sink? Is there some sense of form and organization and beauty in this thing that really is a burden that I have to go deal with?"

Partridge's depictions of flowers are inspired by his wife's career as a florist and by his experiences of having these plants as a constant part of his environment. In "Morning Light on Spanish Moss," Partridge focuses on a sweeping image of a tree's branches cutting along the side of a house in Ocean Springs.

"Human flourishing can be something simply beautiful, like flowers, or something not obviously beautiful, like a pile

of clothes," Partridge said. "As a practicing artist, I never had a strong drive to paint pretty flowers, but they are a very prominent part of our life ... I started doing a series of paintings of some of my wife's arrangements because they felt ... sincere and authentic."

Partridge doesn't see his work as the complete culmination of eudaimonia but as a beginning to his exploration of the concept.

"Domestic scenes of excess, natural beauty and graphic symbolism by no means fully express the breadth of the concept of eudaimonia, and that's why this is a search," Partridge said. "(My) search (is) not for an end but for flourishing and prosperity in the process."

Partridge received his master's degree from the New York Academy of Art and was a recipient of the 2011-12 Visual Arts Fellowship from the Mississippi Arts Commission. He was named distinguished alumnus of the year for the Mississippi College Department of Art in 2017. He currently calls Ocean Springs home.

Adams' show is called "Myth of the Beast" and has a theme of moving past insecurity.

For the majority of his life, Adams felt he was a "beast" among men, and his show challenges the ideas of protecting one's "identity, social constructs and self confidence," according to the Southside Gallery's website.

"Growing up in Mississippi and realizing I was gay, I would hear people talk about that in church," Adams said. "I internalized what I saw and heard around me growing up, and it's what led to me believing I was a 'beast.'"

Many of the paintings feature Adams' own silhouette.

"In the series, my silhouette is repeated throughout, and within that silhouette, I've tried to communicate that my mind can go somewhere else besides the physical," Adams said. "For instance, in a few paintings, my silhouette becomes the sky. I'm saying that it doesn't matter what's going



PHOTOS COURTESY: SOUTHSIDE GALLERY

on around you — your identity depends on what's within you."

In his oil painting "The Myth in Flames" Adams depicts a tent on fire alone in a field, mimicking a break towards freedom.

"Adams is one of the more popular artists in Oxford," Southside Gallery director Wil Cook said. "I've been interested in exhibiting his work for some time and

was pleased when he agreed to exhibit with us in a group show earlier this year. This will be his first featured exhibit at the gallery, and we're very excited."

Adams received his bachelor's degree in painting from Ole Miss

in 2014 and studied at the Art Student's League of New York in 2012. He lives in Oxford.

There will be a reception with the artists from 5-8 p.m. on Sept. 6, at Southside Gallery.



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Ole Miss soccer poised for success, Kizer leading the way

JOSH GOLLIHAR
 THEDMSPORTS@GMAIL.COM

Head coach Matt Mott's Rebels have opened their season with two clean-sheet performances. Ole Miss displayed its potent offensive attack by tallying 10 total goals against Louisiana-Lafayette and Western Kentucky. New arrivals made their mark on the scoresheet, but the familiar faces have risen to the top.

Senior forward CeCe Kizer has received national recognition for her abilities. She was included on the preseason watch list for the MAC Hermann Trophy, which is presented to the most outstanding player in all of college soccer. Kizer's early season work reinforces her inclusion on this list.

The Rebels' top scoring threat already has four goals to her name, including a hat trick in Sunday's win against Western Kentucky.

Factoring in her one assist, Kizer has a direct hand in half of the team's goals. Her performance earned her SEC Offensive Player of the Week honors.

The accolades do not stop there. TopDrawerSoccer named Kizer to its Team of the Week, and United Soccer Coaches tabbed Kizer as the first-ever Rebel to win National Player of the Week. If the first week has any bearing on the rest of the Rebels' 2018 campaign, Kizer is poised to have a big year.

Though Kizer has dominated the pitch in Oxford for years now, Mott has a host of new players who are ready to produce. Sophomore Florida State transfer Madisyn Pezzino found the back of the net twice in her first weekend as a Rebel. She trails only Kizer in goals and shots for the Rebels. Freshman midfielder Haleigh Stackpole's ability to control the offense led to her adding a goal and an assist. Newcomers Sydney Michalak and



FILE PHOTO: TAYLAR TEEL

CeCe Kizer prepares to kick a goal in a 2017 matchup versus Northwestern State.

Madison Smith each tallied a goal over the weekend, as well.

For Mott, there is a possibility for a successful season. The Rebels have experience at all three levels of the formation – Kizer up top, captain Gabby Little in midfield and veteran goalkeeper Marnie Merritt leading from the back.

Mott's incorporation of transfers and younger players into his system has left the team overlooked: the SEC Coaches Poll tabbed the Rebels to finish seventh in the conference. However, the finishing ability of this roster is absolutely lethal.

If Kizer continues to play like

a national player of the week, the goals will continue to come. The star power she brings to the Rebels has Ole Miss poised to make a far-deeper run in the SEC and NCAA tournaments than critics have predicted early on, and Kizer has the supporting cast to keep up the pace.

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9 Suckle

14 Excuse me

15 Family group

16 Golf clubs

17 Offering opposition

19 Gives up

20 One giving a ring

21 Dynamic beginning

23 This is what eyes do

24 Hurt

26 Tabula ____

28 Photographer Adams

30 Actress Kidman

34 ____ see it...

37 An organization

39 Wise one

41 New Zealand parrot

42 Tons

43 Going forward

48 Ave. crossers

49 The Dog Star

50 Slow mover

52 Thrust with a knife

54 Firstborn

57 City official: Abbr.

60 Wall covering slab for a kitchen or bathroom

62 Less fatty

64 Orange Bowl site

66 Personified

68 Hay bundles

69 Sports figure?

70 1982 Disney film

71 Notre Dame's Fighting ____

72 ____ Like It Hot

73 Vintner's prefix

DOWN

1 Jeanne ____ (French saint)

2 Lots

3 Inventor Nikola

4 Iago's wife

5 Girl on film

6 Suffix with pay

7 Grandma

8 Keyboard key

9 Capital of Cyprus

10 Suffix with fail

11 Staffs

12 Dagger

13 Latin being

18 Medicinal shrub

22 Punjabi princess

25 Student tables

27 Proceedings

29 Silt deposit

31 Painter's medium

32 Booty

33 Tolkien tree creatures

34 Snakes

35 Dress often worn by Hindu women

36 Aviation pioneer

37 Sikorsky

38 The ____ Mutiny

40 Auspices

44 Lustful

45 Lou's "La Bamba" costar

46 Bordered by a ridge

47 Down source

51 Simple shed

53 Rapture

55 Trap

56 Grand ____ National Park

57 Prefix with dextrous

58 Person who is liable to tell untruths

59 Surrealist Salvador

61 Within (prefix)

63 Gambling haven

65 Parisian possessive

67 Engine part

Crossword puzzle provided by BestCrosswords.com (www.bestcrosswords.com). Used with permission.

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Puzzles by KrazyDad

2			3	7		8	5	
	1				8			7
	9	7	5	2	4			
6		5		3				8
	3						6	
7				9		3		5
			6	8	3	7	9	
3			7				2	
	7	9		1	5			3

HOW TO PLAY

Complete the grid so that every row, column and 3x3 box contains the numbers 1 through 9 with no repeats.

DIFFICULTY LEVEL

EASY

3	8	9	5	1	2	6	7	4
1	2	5	6	4	7	9	8	3
4	6	7	3	8	6	2	5	1
5	1	3	6	9	4	8	2	7
2	6	4	7	5	8	1	3	6
8	7	9	2	3	1	5	4	6
9	3	1	4	2	5	7	6	8
6	4	2	8	9	6	3	1	5
9	5	8	1	3	7	4	2	6

Davis recruits best Rebel basketball class since 2012

JACK GENTRY
 THEDMSports@GMAIL.COM

Kermit Davis wasted no time after his March hiring in building his first recruiting class as the Rebels' head coach. He lost four key seniors this off-season: Deandre Burnett, Markel Crawford, Marcanvis Hymon and Justas Furmanavicius, but Davis feels confident heading into the new school year.

He summed up his off-season rather simply.

"It has been a quick summer but a productive summer," Davis said.

After spending 16 years building Middle Tennessee State into an NCAA tournament caliber program, Davis made an immediate impact on the Ole Miss recruiting trail when he brought two former MTSU commitments down to Oxford with him.

D.J. Buffen, a 3-star forward from Gainesville, Georgia, was the first to sign. Standing at 6 feet, 7 inches tall and weighing 220 pounds, Buffen has length and athleticism that will be a welcome addition to the Ole Miss roster. He is coming off his senior season at Gainesville High School, where he was named the 8-6A Player of the Year after averaging 16 points and seven rebounds per game.

Carlos Curry, a 3-star power forward from Albany, Georgia,



FILE PHOTO: MARLEE CRAWFORD

Kermit Davis talks about his first few weeks as head coach of Ole Miss Men's Basketball at the Tuohy Center.

checks in as the second signee of the Kermit Davis regime. At 6-foot-11 and 240 pounds, Curry averaged 15 points, 10 rebounds and five blocks per game during his senior season of high school. His size and defensive presence will be a key piece of the Rebels' frontcourt, following the departures of Hymon and Furmanavicius.

Three-star recruit Franco Miller Jr. was the next recruit to sign to Ole Miss under Davis and chose the Rebels over

offers from Oregon, Minnesota and Oklahoma. The 6-foot-2, 180-pound point guard from the Bahamas averaged 25 points, six rebounds and five assists per game in his senior campaign at Crestwood Preparatory College in Ontario, Canada.

The next recruit Davis lured to Oxford is 3-star small forward Luis Rodriguez, who signed with the Rebels out of Woodstock Academy in Connecticut. During his

career at Woodstock, he averaged 14 points and seven rebounds per game in his senior season. Rodriguez, a 6-foot-6, 200-pound player, was a major victory for Davis, who beat out Illinois and UMass for the services of Connecticut's No. 1 high school player.

The Rebels also added a top-100 player to their 2018 class in the form of a 6-foot-7 shooting guard, Blake Hinson. Hinson, who finished his high school career at Sunrise

Christian Academy as the No. 1 player in Kansas, averaged 15 points and six rebounds per game. Hinson chose the Rebels over Clemson, Florida State and Memphis, among others.

Rounding out the 2018 recruiting class is junior college transfer Brian Halums. The 6-foot-5, 185-pound shooting guard hailing from Hollandale averaged 17 points per game on 55 percent shooting and 45 percent shooting from the 3-point line at Itawamba Community College. Halums' sharp-shooting talents will be much-needed, as the Rebels shot only 31.9 percent as a team from deep during the 2017 season. Halums is an incredibly athletic find for the Rebels and received high praise from Davis.

"There will be no better athlete in college basketball in terms of running and jumping," said Davis.

Davis and his staff have worked to out-duel competing Power Five schools for key pieces of Davis' inaugural Rebel recruiting class, which ranks No. 9 in the SEC and No. 51 in the nation. The Rebels will look to improve upon their last-place 2017 SEC campaign, in which they went 12-20. The 2018 class' No. 51 national ranking is the best since that of the 2012 recruiting class, which was headlined by Rebel hero Marshall Henderson.



2018 M CLUB Homecoming Court NOMINATIONS

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FedEx Student-Athlete Success Center

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Rebel Roll Call: Overlooked tight ends seek bigger role

COOPER RUWE

THEDMSPTS@GMAIL.COM

With the Rebels' first kickoff against Texas Tech less than two weeks away, Ole Miss looks set to have a solid offensive unit that includes strong players at the tight end position. Dawson Knox is tabbed as the starting tight end for the Rebels. However, fellow tight end Octavius Cooley is not to be overlooked.

As a former walk-on, Knox provides one of the most intriguing stories on the team. He was quarterback in high school and received little interest from SEC schools, partially because of a season-ending injury early in his senior campaign. After choosing to walk-on at Ole Miss, Knox was seemingly buried on the depth chart after three 4-star tight ends signed on to the Rebels' 2016 recruiting class.

After the departure of All-American Evan Engram in 2017, many assumed that one of these promising talents would take over; the favorite among them was Cooley. However, Knox's hard work and growing talent earned him the starting nod leading up to the 2017 season. He had a solid year, racking up 24 catches for 321 yards in 10 games, and in December he was awarded a full scholarship for his dedication and commitment to Ole Miss.

One year later, Knox is poised to be one of the top tight ends in the

SEC and, potentially, the country. He has already been placed on the Mackey Award watch list for the nation's most outstanding tight end and the Burlsworth Trophy watch list for the nation's most outstanding player to start his career as a walk-on. On top of that, the NFL listed Knox as one of college football's top 18 athletes to watch in 2018 thanks to his 6-foot-4, 250-pound frame and 40-yard dash time of 4.59 seconds.

All of this buildup comes in spite of the off-season surgery which was performed to repair a nagging foot injury that held Knox out for several periods in the 2017 season.

"I have so much confidence in my receivers," Jordan Ta'amu said. "Because of the way we work during the offseason, the spring and the summer. That's when we really built that chemistry."

Cooley filled in for Knox as he recovered during off-season practices. Though Cooley has yet to have the Engram-level impact that many projected for him, his career is far from over. This off-season, Cooley was presented with the Eli Manning Award as the most improved offensive player during the team's spring practices.

Cooley's combination of size and speed adds an extra dimension to an already tantalizing Rebel offense. Head coach Matt Luke has even pondered the idea of two tight end sets, a rarity in modern spread-of-



Dawson Knox pushes forward in pursuit of a first down during game versus the Louisiana-Lafayette Ragin' Cajuns during the 2017 season. Ole Miss won 50-22.

FILE PHOTO: TAYLAR TEEL

fenses, to get both Knox and Cooley on the field at the same time.

"Me and my receivers have great connections," Ta'amu said. "I'm

super confident they'll come down with the ball."

BURGERS AND BLUES COOKOUT

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Coach Luke