Claus Ball Pics Are In!

HOW TO THROW A FABULOUS PARTY

FOOD FEATURE: RECIPES TO MAKE YOUR SEASON BRIGHT

MATTERS OF THE SPIRIT: An open discussion with our chaplain staff
At Methodist Rehabilitation Center, we've trained generations of physical, occupational, speech and recreation therapists through our Clinical Education Program.

In the last 10 years, we've helped 372 therapists get the hands-on training they need to launch successful careers. And some like us so much, they decide to work for MRC.

Maybe it’s the fried chicken ...

We’re more than your next-door neighbor with the great fried chicken.
Discover an easy, convenient way to bank at UMMC.

Trustmark’s interactive teller machine, myTeller®, is designed to help make banking better fit your life.

myTeller allows you to connect face-to-face with a Trustmark associate who can perform most of the transactions that can be completed at a traditional teller window, such as:

- Deposits and withdrawals
- Cashing checks to the penny
- Balance inquiries
- Transfers and loan payments

myTeller is located in UMMC’s E Elevator Lobby leading to the Clinical Sciences Skywalk.

Also offers extended banking hours:
- myTeller ITM Banking: 7 am - 7 pm | Mon - Fri
- myTeller also functions as an ATM 24/7

Some deposits are credited the day deposited by 9 pm weekdays.
Greetings, Fellow Students, Faculty, and Staff,

As we continue into the holiday season, the fall semester is drawing to a close, and we are looking forward to the spring semester.

The Associated Student Body (ASB) has held its third ASB Council meeting and its annual holiday party. In addition, the ASB held its third Roundtable discussion session with invited students from each of the seven schools on campus. Updated dates, times, and locations for all other discussion sessions can be found in this issue.

Moreover, selected ASB officers from each of the seven schools on campus met last month with Dr. Ralph Didlake, the Associate Vice Chancellor of Health Affairs, where we discussed important topics pertaining to interprofessional education and diversity and inclusion. We will meet with Dr. LouAnn Woodward in January.

This past month, the ASB also organized a Recycling Initiative competition among the seven different schools and a clothing drive benefitting members of the Grace House community. ASB hosted a Veterans panel in commemoration of Veterans’ Day and a screening of a documentary pertaining to the HIV crisis in Jackson in lieu of World AIDS Day. ASB also had its annual Claus Ball to celebrate the holiday festivities. It also continued its sponsorship of the Interprofessional Education Opportunities for the 2018-2019 school year with its third of a series of seven seminars on November 27. More details on these seminars can be found in this issue, including the next seminar in January.

Finally, if you ever need any assistance, please feel free to contact me to offer any questions, concerns, and/or suggestions, and I will be happy to help you.

Yours in Service,

Edgar Meyer | ASB President

Your responses to the 2016 Student Satisfaction Survey directly led to significant changes at the Medical Center.

You said you were not satisfied with the food and beverage options.  
We did it! The student union’s food court was remodeled, and the Copper Spoon coffee kiosk was added in the new medical education building.

You said our shuttle service needed an overhaul.  
We did it! We upgraded the shuttle service with brand new buses and routes tailored just for students.

You said students need reliable wireless connections.  
We did it! The Division of Information Systems launched a new, secure student wireless network.

You said students need to know where to park.  
We did it! We provided reminders about parking policies and provided options about parking on nights, weekends, and holidays, allocated parking lot access during these times.

You said students need to know where to file a complaint.  
We did it! Student Affairs now provides regular reminders of the formal complaint process.

How else can we improve the student experience at UMMC?

Please take the 2018 Student Satisfaction Survey – coming soon to your student email account – and let us know!
Claus Ball

It’s the most wonderful fun of the year! Check out pics from this year’s Claus Ball, hosted by ASB at The Railroad District page 34
A question: What does it mean to be a chaplain?

Chaplain Jeffery Murphy: A chaplain gets to be there when people are most in need. We get to work with people who would never step foot in a place of worship. We work with the spiritual, not necessarily religious background. I’ve even worked with atheists and agnostics. We’re looking for what brings patients meaning in their situation. To me, it provides a much broader reach than I felt I was making in the church setting.

Q: What obstacles, if any, do you face interacting with people of faith traditions different from your own?

McComb: When I first started, I met someone who said a woman can’t be a minister. I don’t encounter those kinds of responses anymore. Most traditions are very open. I often tell them that I want to make sure their spiritual traditions are respected and their spiritual needs are met while they’re here as a patient. That usually opens the door. Sometimes people want a minister of their own faith tradition, and we do the best we can to find one. They may want prayers from their own tradition or someone that speaks their own language. We often feel welcome, but we try to accommodate those things.

Murphy: I think that most people, if you’re going to respect their religion or spirituality, they respond to it. There is rarely a barrier with any faith traditions, even those people that do not have a tradition. People tend to want to talk about their faith.

Q: What are some of the positive aspects of being a chaplain?

Chaplain Linda McComb: It’s that sense of connection. Being ill sometimes disconnects patients from their normal life, family, home, and sometimes faith. They begin to wonder where is God in all of this.

Some of our witness is helping people to make connections again with their family, their inner strength, or with their definition of God or a higher power. It can be inspirational for us. I also enjoy meeting people who are different from me and learning from them. They tell me what is important to them and how they practice their faith. I find some joy in just discovering all the ways that we express our spirits. Here at UMC, we are very rich with that because we have such a diverse population. There’s a genuine curiosity and respect for diversity as a chaplain.

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Q: How do you all cope with difficulties in your own lives when it this work becomes really hard?

Whitaker: We have something called EAP here, employee assistance program. Students can use it too. I have to utilize every aspect that I can to make sure that I’m well emotionally, mentally, and spiritually. So, I get a lot of energy from church, I get a lot of hope and encouragement not from the people, but from me attending church, hearing the word, participating in the worship. It gives me strength and it builds me up. And now I have some counseling so I’m depending on that, just to keep myself resilient. But I talk openly with my colleagues, I do journal, and I pray.
"When I leave this place, I believe God is still at work and it’s not my job to fix everything, it’s my job to be as faithful as I can to those that I serve, including, what I would call God. So I say I am not the savior of the world. I try to keep that perspective, that it’s not all dependent on me. There’s a team of medical people and there is a spirit of God, alive and well. So that helps me not to take on more than I should. To see myself as the creature, not the creator.

**Q:** Are there any particularly meaningful interactions that have stuck with you?

**Murphy:** Many years ago, this was not even in Mississippi, at least 20 years ago. I remember I volunteered for relay for life. And this was like two or three o’clock in the morning. And the family of one of my patients who had died was walking ahead of me. I asked if I could join them and the patient’s wife said “you did the big walk with us you can certainly do the small one”. And I remember that so distinctly over twenty years. And the whole image of, we walk with people.

**Q:** Is there anything that you would like for the average person to know about what you do?

**Murphy:** People understanding it is a profession with its own standards, certification, and code of ethics. You can’t just become a chaplain anymore than you can just become a doctor or nurse or PT or whatever. It does take training and time and constant professional review.

**Whitaker:** Chaplains are different from pastors. Pastors, in my own words, work inside the church walls with rules, regulations, and rituals. Chaplains are different to me because we may work inside the church with a particular denomination, but we work in broader society. We work in prisons, hospitals, hospices, airports with police and fire departments, military and we are trained and called to work with a diverse population of people regardless of their denomination, faith tradition or lack thereof. So, chaplains work outside of the temple or mosque providing spiritual care to all people.
The School of Nursing recently celebrated its 70th anniversary this past month. On November 9th the school invited alumni, former faculty/staff, and present students to celebrate all that the school has accomplished throughout the decades. It was such a joy to have everyone back in the building together and to hear so many stories from the discussion panel detailing life in the School of Nursing throughout the decades.

A lucky group of students from the School of Nursing got to experience the disaster response side of their field up close and personal. Thanks to Dr. Carl Mangum, who is a staff member at the School of Nursing as well as a volunteer for disaster relief, these nursing students were able to participate in an ongoing disaster relief drill at the Fire Academy in Pearl.

As part of a two day course, both men and women completed a classroom portion of the relief drill on day one. On the second day, they were able to put their classroom knowledge to the test using a disaster relief drill. Nursing students teamed up with middle school students from Northwest Rankin and together acted as victims of a bombing.

The men and women participating in the course had to collect all of the students and set up a triage unit using the colors green, yellow, red, or black. Once the triage was set up, they set about “taking care” of the students who were the most wounded and helping in whatever way they could. Overall, this disaster drill was a great learning experience not only for the people taking the course but also the students.

On December 1st the UMMC School of Nursing hosted their annual Question it! Discover it! at the Mississippi Children’s Museum. The Question it! Discover it! events are held on the first Saturday of each month in conjunction with UMMC; these events are designed to ignite a passion for learning and discovery within the medical field. Hannah Ivey, the SoN Philanthropy Chair, headed this month’s Question it! Discover it! which educated children on heart health through a variety of fun and engaging activities. The children were able to learn about healthy lifestyle choices, explore the human body through 3-D anatomy models, and listen to their heartbeat through a stethoscope!
Tell us a little bit about yourself. How did you end up here at UMMC?

After graduating from the UMMC School of Dentistry in 1979 (in the first graduating class), I returned to my hometown, Forest, MS and practiced general dentistry there for almost 33 years. I served several terms on the admissions committee for the SOD during those years. In 2003, I joined UMMC as a part-time clinical faculty, teaching in the student clinics. In 2011, I retired from private practice and became a full time faculty member. I was named the Assistant Dean for Admissions in 2014 and Assistant Dean of Students in 2017.

My wife, Diane, is a retired high school chemistry and physics teacher and also has her Masters degree in Dyslexia Therapy from Mississippi College and is a Certified Academic Learning Therapist. We have 3 sons and 6 grandsons. The oldest son earned his PhD in organic chemistry and lives with his wife and 3 sons in Missoula, Montana. The middle son is an Emergency Medicine physician in Oxford, MS and earned his medical degree from UMMC and completed his residency here. He and his wife have 2 sons. The youngest son and his wife have 1 son and live in Southaven, MS. He received his medical degree from UMMC and is in his 3rd year of residency in Interventional Radiology at the University of Tennessee Health Science Center in Memphis.

What do you enjoy most about teaching?

A little known fact (that might help explain my love for teaching) is that UMMC School of Dentistry was scheduled to begin its first class in 1974, but was not allowed to due to the lack of the proper number of faculty. I had applied for dental school here that year, but had to delay entering until 1975. I was hired as a science teacher at a local high school for that one year, where I taught physical science, biology, chemistry and advanced biology. I really enjoyed teaching that year, but dentistry was still my first choice.

What do you like to do outside of work?

My wife and I enjoy traveling, both in the US and abroad. The trip that stands out the most to me is the month we spent in China recently, traveling with a small group of friends, led by a couple that were retired university professors who served as visiting professors in China beginning in the 1970’s. We were introduced to areas that are probably not on the average tour to China.

What is your favorite...

- **RESTAURANT IN JACKSON?** Our favorite restaurant in the Jackson area is still Walkers. We both like the seafood and the steaks there.

- **SPORTS TEAM?** I have been an OLE MISS fan for years, an often-time frustrated New Orleans Saints fan, and am just beginning to pull for LSU due to my daughter-in-law being a huge fan.

Any advice to students?

The advice I can offer is to please realize the opportunity you have been given to be trained here at UMMC to provide health care to the citizens of Mississippi. Take advantage of this opportunity to learn from your faculty. Integrate academics and clinical care. Learn to think critically. Know that you are developing relationships that will last your lifetime. Finally, enjoy the journey because 40 years will pass before you know it.
The Office of Diversity and Inclusion announces the second annual presentation of an awards program honoring those who have made meaningful contributions that broaden diversity and promote a climate of inclusion in the UMMC community and beyond.

**AWARD CATEGORIES**

**STUDENT/TRAINEE - EXCELLENCE AWARD**

**EMPLOYEE - INCLUSION AWARD**

**FACULTY - BEACON AWARD**

**ALUMNI - LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD**

**COMMUNITY ADVOCATE - INSPIRATION AWARD**

Contact the Office of Diversity and Inclusion for awards criteria and nomination forms.

www.umc.edu/thepillars  (601) 815-7857

A celebration event honoring the recipients will be held Thursday, January 17, 2019 (4:00 – 5:00 pm)
Norman C. Nelson Student Union Ballroom
5 ways to support the Jackson Free Clinic

1. **Volunteer this Saturday!**
   Be on the lookout for our weekly e-mail with a link to the sign up sheet. Contact Hannah Miller, Ford Franklin, or Monica Nguyen for more information! (hmmiller@umc.edu, jfordfranklin@umc.edu, dnguyen2@umc.edu)

2. **Purchase a JFC t-shirt or scrubs**
   Visit the JFC store at jacksonfreeclinic.org. We just got some new scrubs in, get ’em while they’re hot! Contact Patrick Wood or John Bobo for more info (rwood@umc.edu, jfbobo@umc.edu)

3. **Register with Amazon Smile**
   Visit smile.amazon.com and search for Jackson Free Clinic for the Homeless. 1% of each purchase you make on Amazon will be donated to JFC.

4. **Add your Kroger Plus Card**
   Google “Kroger Community Rewards,” and click the first result. Select “Create an Account,” and add your info. Click on the link within the confirmation e-mail you receive, visit your “Account Summary” page, and add your Kroger plus card number in the “Plus Card” section. Scroll down to the “Community Rewards” section at the bottom. Our organization number is 32010 and our name is Jackson Free Clinic for the Homeless

5. **Add your mom and dad’s Kroger Plus Card!**
   They'll understand. You’re so #philanthropic

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**WANT TO DONATE TO JFC? FIND US ON PAYPAL!**
jacksonfreeclinic@gmail.com

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**School Cup**

School Cup

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Point Values</th>
<th>1st</th>
<th>2nd</th>
<th>3rd</th>
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<td>1st</td>
<td>75 pts</td>
<td>50 pts</td>
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**How to Earn Points:**
- Participate in ASB–determined activities
- Awarded based on each school’s percent participation

**Champion School:**
- Engraved Trophy for School’s Display
- ASB-sponsored End-of-Year Party

**Contact jfbobo@umc.edu for more information**
Student Stories

Everyone has a story to tell and The Murmur wants to hear from you! If you have a personal essay in you, contact jfbobo@umc.edu and let’s talk about it.

Steven Papas: Medicine, 3rd year

There seems to me, quite a bit of laughing involved with the M3 year, or at least in my somewhat abbreviated experience with it. I’ve laughed quite a bit. I’ve laughed with colleagues, for patients, and at myself, for that matter. While I am fully aware of my laughter as a defense mechanism for the intimidation of the hospital, I am no doubt fully embracing it, too. Without it, I fear I might just go crazy, or rather let my crazy go.

As we come to a crashing halt at the midway point of this academic year, there’s one particular laugh I can’t stop smiling about. My patient was laying on her changing table, staring up at me with just about the most cheerful, cutest grin I had ever seen, with just about the biggest, bluest eyes I had ever met. Noticing her signs and symptoms, which included a euphoric affect with psychomotor agitation of the hands and feet, excessive amounts of lallation and an undeniably elated mood, I leapt into action. I performed, what I understood to be, despite my rather disconcerting level of inexperience in this field, the proper bedside maneuver – a bilabial trill with hypergargalesthesia, obviously. And just like that, she belted out the cutest laugh!

Charleston Ann Papas laughed for the first time this month, and all it took was a silly baby sound and a lot of tickling. Her laugh, like the smiling before it and the swaddling before that has no doubt, been the highlight of my third year. With the tidal wave of chaos enveloping us third years, milestones like this have grounded me, reminding me that purpose and joy aren’t found in a good test scores or an even better evaluation.

Ps. I totally looked up the big words to sound smart and impress the residency directors for the next couple of years.
Don’t let the congenial smiles fool you, these three House Mentors can get competitive when asked whose house is the best!

Zeb Henson of Marston House
Jimmy Stewart of Leathers House
Mike McMullan of Evers House
So many medical advancements have been made over the past one hundred years it is hard to imagine the medical field without state of the art surgical tools and novel drugs at our fingertips. Medicine was much more challenging and restricted before the advent of modern tools and techniques. What would you do if you had a medical emergency without all of the tools of today available to you? Providing the best medical care in an emergency situation without the luxury of modern medical tools is the paradigm of wilderness medicine. It is an expansive specialty in medicine that focuses on stabilizing patients in the field where definitive medical care is more than an hour away, often days and weeks. The Wilderness Medicine Interest Group led a kayaking trip this...
November on the Pearl River to teach some of the life stabilization techniques utilized in wilderness medicine.

The trip was a beautiful eight-mile paddle in sunny sixty-degree weather. The water was a chilly thirty-nine degrees, but coupled with the warm weather made for a perfect day out on the water. Luckily, the area had received plenty of rainfall in the weeks leading up to the trip, so the river was the highest it has been in many years. The high water supplied us with a brisk current that pushed us to our first sandbar stop ahead of schedule. Many sandbars are scattered throughout the route, which we used as places to rest and teach wilderness medicine techniques. The first stop focused on the broad approach of assessing the scene in a rural encounter. RJ Case, a fourth year medical student and former Emergency Medical Technician, along with Will Salaun, a second year medical student, taught the basic thought process and triage management when finding a person in distress. This stop also covered useful tools to bring on any outdoor adventure and basic identification and management of bites and stings.

The trip afforded not only a good shoulder workout but also a great opportunity to get away from the books and enjoy the relaxing Mississippi landscape and wildlife while picking up a few useful medical techniques along the way. On the other stops along the river, a traction splint was demonstrated and field hemostasis was discussed. The traction split was applied to a willing volunteer to demonstrate its usefulness in decompressing long bone fractures. Limb stabilization, splinting, and patient transportation were all discussed focusing on the resourcefulness required to find supplies in wilderness situations. At the end of the day, the 2018 Wilderness Medicine Fall Kayaking trip was a fun time with friends in the beautiful Mississippi landscape that afforded us the opportunity to share some of the wilderness medicine knowledge that we have picked up throughout the years.
Students dropped by The Murmur google poll to share their favorite holiday memories

- Christmas morning, opening presents with all the family and all the chaos.
- Giving my grandfather his Christmas presents
- Getting a Buzz Lightyear
- Getting a bicycle from Santa and going out to the street and my sisters teaching me how to ride it
- Christmas at Disney

"GOING TO MY PAPAW'S HOUSE. I REALLY MISS MY PAPAW."

- Drinking hot chocolate late at night while sitting by our lit Christmas tree with my mom making christmas ornaments and selling them in our front yard and then using the proceeds to go get toys for salvation army.
- Decorating my college dorm room for Christmas
- Picking out the annual tree at the farm
- A white Christmas in Tennessee when I was 8
- Waking up to a trampoline in the yard that I prayed for.
- White Christmas in High School
- Picking out a Christmas Tree with grandparents
- Christmas decorations in Elementary School
- My daughter’s first Christmas
- My child’s first Christmas morning
- Going to see A Christmas Carol every year
- Going to Waffle House with the fam at 4am Christmas morning to eat breakfast (listening to Journey on the ride there) and giving the workers $100 tips!

ALL THE SKITS WE HAVE MADE UP AS CHILDREN LONG AGO

- We have Christmas drinking glasses with the 12 days of Christmas printed on each. After Christmas breakfast, we all sing the 12 days of Christmas. It’s always fun to see who has to sing “Five Goooold Rings” or sing “and a Partridge in a Pear Tree” twelve times. All of my grandparents (except one) have passed away. It’s fun to think back on their moments in the spotlight singing on Christmas morning and precious to watch my young nephews adopting the Christmas singing tradition.
- Making Christmas candy with the family
- Going on a Christmas vacation instead of exchanging gifts. I got to spend time with my family and make memories that we will never forget instead of getting a materialistic object that I would have lost by the time the next Christmas came around
- Going to my Papaw’s house. I really miss my Papaw.
- Getting a car for Christmas
- Getting a fourwheeler
- All the skits we have made up as children long ago
- Family karaoke and dance parties

“All the skits we have made up as children long ago”
Around the U

• 1st Christmas with my husband

• My most recent favorite holiday memory was last year. I made my dad a set of coasters with various family member’s pictures on them, he started crying instantly. I could tell he liked them, and it made me happy to see something I made get that kind of reaction.

• Going to Midnight mass on Christmas Eve at the cathedral in Jackson for the first time

• Making cookies with my mom

• Going out in the woods to cut a tree with my family. Always fun to see what we could find!

• Family conversation around the fireplace

• Family Christmas party

• My mom being shocked at my complete ambivalence over the Cabbage Patch doll she probably elbowed a bunch of other mothers out of the way to get for me and put under the tree... sorry mom!

• Secret Santa 2015 - got a one of a kind “Ole Miss Quidditch” t-shirt & handmade Nimbus 2000

• This is a hard one (there’s so many!). One that comes to mind is waking up to a white Christmas in Mississippi. That was pretty cool

• We would always drive over to my grandparents house on Christmas Eve morning in our pjs. Once we got there we would play a Christmas album on the record player while we cooked breakfast and then open presents.

• My mom losing her [cool] because my grandmother’s dog knocked over the poinsettia and she was convinced it was one of the kids.

YOU VOTED

THE ESSENTIAL CHRISTMAS MOVIE LIST

1. Elf
2. Home Alone 1 & 2
3. The Grinch (live action)
4. Christmas Vacation
5. Polar Express
6. It’s a Wonderful Life
7. The Grinch (animated)
8. “all Hallmark Channel movies”
9. The Holiday
10. A Christmas Story
11. The Santa Claus
12. Harry Potter
13. “every old claymation movie”
14. Love Actually
15. Miracle on 34th Street
16. White Christmas
17. Rudolph
18. Mickey’s A Christmas Carol
19. Four Christmases
20. Charlie Brown
21. Chronicle’s of Narnia
22. Frosty
23. Holiday Inn
24. The Family Stone
25. Rocky 4

you voted
Around the U

Claus Ball

**When:** Friday, December 7, 2018

**Where:** The Railroad District

**Music by:** 2 Hipnotic

Photos courtesy of UMMC Public Affairs
Around the U
Happy Hour Run Down

Every happy hour you need to know about

page 40
THE HAPPY HOUR RUNDOWN

It’s 5 o’clock in the 601

Offset your student loans with these deals around town. That counts as financial planning, right?

**Nearby**

**Apothecary**
T-Sat, 5-7pm: $6 cocktails, wine, bar snacks

**Babalu**
M-F, 3-6pm: Flight and bites menu, $10 sangria and tequila flights, $6 beer flights, $3 tacos, $4 sangrias, $5 well and house wine, $6 house

**Barrelhouse**
M-F, 3-6pm: $1 off draft beer, $2 domestics, $3 off wine, $4 well drinks, $5 meatballs (3/serving) margarita ($5 on Margarita Mon)

**Hops and Habanas**
Thursday 6:00-8:00, Pint Night: free pint with purchase

**CAET**
M-Th, 4-6pm: $5.50 snacks, wine, cocktails, sangria, adult slushies

**Pig and Pint**
M-F, 3-6pm: $1 off all draft and bottle beer

**Sal and Mookie’s Pie Lounge**
M-F, 11a-6p: 25% off all bar drinks, Sat/Sun $5 mimosas, bloody marys, bellinis

**Saltine**
Daily, 4-6:30 ½ price draft beers, cocktails, wine. $1 oysters, $3 chicken biscuits

**Sneaky Beans**
M-Th, 5-7pm: $1 off beers; M-F 10a-12pm: free upsize coffees

**Surin**
Daily, 4:30-7pm: $2 off beer, house wine, martinis. 1/2 off select sushi rolls

**Aladdin**
BYOB, 10% off meal with UMC ID

**Nearish**

**Manship**
M-F, 3-6pm: ½ price pizzas, $2 off craft and import beers, 25% off large format bombers, $5 house wine and barrel picks

**Library Lounge**
M-F, 4-6pm: $5 wells, house wine, flat bread, queso, cheese board

**Lou’s Full-Serv**
M-F, 4-6pm: $5-8 cocktails, $5 snacks

**Deep South Pops**
Daily, 4-7pm: 2 for $5 popsicles, discount on beers

**Fenians**
M-F, 3-7pm: $1 off all drinks

**Wingstop on State Street**
Mon/Tues, all day: 60 cent boneless wings

**A Little Ways**

**Iron Horse**
M-F, 3-6pm: $1 off pints, $3 MS beers, $4 wells, $5 martinis, $6 house wine

**Parlor Market**
M-F, 4-6pm: $5 wines, $5.5 well drinks, $5 truffle fries

**Ole Tavern on George Street**
M-F, 3-7pm/ Sat, 9p-12a: 2 for 1 wells and house wine, $2 long necks

**Estelle Wine Bar and Bistro**
Daily, 3-6pm: $5 wine and select cocktails, $4-6 small plates, Sunday $17 bottomless brunch cocktails

**La Cazuela Mexican Grill**
Sun-Th, 3pm til close: 2 for 1 house margaritas

**El Charro**
Mon-Th, 4-8pm: 2 for 1 flavored margaritas

**Martin’s**
Mon: 2 for 1 drafts, Tues: 10p -12am $2.25 margaritas, Sat: 11a-2p: $3 bloody marys

**Hal and Mal’s**
Daily, 4-7p: $1 off all drinks

**The Bulldog**
M-F, 11a-7p: 50 cents off pints, $1 off pitchers, $1.50 off house wine, double drinks for the price of a single

**Capitol Grill**
M-F, 3-7pm: ½ price wells, $1 off beers, ½ off certain shots

**Last Call Sports Grill**
M-Sat, 2-7pm: 2 for 1 mixed drinks, $1 off draft beers

by Mikey Arceo

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M-F, 4-6pm: $5-8 cocktails, $5 snacks

Deep South Pops
Daily, 4-7pm: 2 for $5 popsicles, discount on beers

Fenians
M-F, 3-7pm: $1 off all drinks

Wingstop on State Street
Mon/Tues, all day: 60 cent boneless wings

**A Little Ways**

Iron Horse
M-F, 3-6pm: $1 off pints, $3 MS beers, $4 wells, $5 martinis, $6 house wine

Parlor Market
M-F, 4-6pm: $5 wines, $5.5 well drinks, $5 truffle fries

Ole Tavern on George Street
M-F, 3-7pm/ Sat, 9p-12a: 2 for 1 wells and house wine, $2 long necks

Estelle Wine Bar and Bistro
Daily, 3-6pm: $5 wine and select cocktails, $4-6 small plates, Sunday $17 bottomless brunch cocktails

La Cazuela Mexican Grill
Sun-Th, 3pm til close: 2 for 1 house margaritas

El Charro
Mon-Th, 4-8pm: 2 for 1 flavored margaritas

Martin’s
Mon: 2 for 1 drafts, Tues: 10p -12am $2.25 margaritas, Sat: 11a-2p: $3 bloody marys

Hal and Mal’s
Daily, 4-7p: $1 off all drinks

The Bulldog
M-F, 11a-7p: 50 cents off pints, $1 off pitchers, $1.50 off house wine, double drinks for the price of a single

Capitol Grill
M-F, 3-7pm: ½ price wells, $1 off beers, ½ off certain shots

Last Call Sports Grill
M-Sat, 2-7pm: 2 for 1 mixed drinks, $1 off draft beers

by Mikey Arceo
Holiday Recipes

We’ve got recipes and guides to help you put your best festivity forward this holiday season (and this bourbon punch is easy + delicious). page 54
Need to Know

BY HARRISON MATHENY

NEWS YOU CAN USE

As 2018 comes to a close, life is chaotic. Exam season is in full swing, the holiday party season gauntlet has been thrown, you still need to go shopping for presents... and Mom just called and asked you to cook Christmas dinner!

Take a 4 minute break from it all and catch up on what’s happened around the State, Nation, and Globe since our last issue:

One of the longest-running U.S. news stories of the last couple months was the most destructive wildfire season on record in California history. The fires charred 1,824,505 acres of The Golden State, causing nearly $3 billion in damages (including $1.3 billion in fire suppression costs). The notorious Camp Fire in Butte County began November 8th and took nearly three weeks to contain. Over the course of the fire, over 100 civilians were killed or reported missing with over 18,000 structures destroyed by the flames. [Sources: San Francisco Chronicle, Cal Fire]

Back in the home state, the news was dominated by the U.S. Senate special election to fill the unexpired term of retired Senator Thad Cochran. Senator Cindy Hyde-Smith, Secretary Mike Espy, State Senator Chris McDaniel, and Tobyee Barbett all ran in the general election.

With no candidate receiving over 50% of the votes cast on November 6th, the top two candidates – Espy and Hyde-Smith – went into a runoff which was held November 20th. Republican Senator Cindy Hyde-Smith was appointed to fill Cochran’s seat by Governor Phil Bryant in April 2018 and most recently served as Mississippi’s Commissioner of Agriculture. Secretary Mike Espy is a three-term U.S. Congressman from the Delta who, in 1993, left Congress to serve as President Bill Clinton’s Secretary of Agriculture, where he served for nearly two years. What was initially projected to be an easy Hyde-Smith win began drawing attention from the national press in the final weeks, as Senator Hyde-Smith was criticized for controversial comments she made. Secretary Espy was similarly criticized in final weeks for his role in providing counsel to the tyrannical former president of Côte d’Ivoire, Laurent Gbagbo. Ultimately, Senator Cindy Hyde-Smith won the special election with 53.8% of the vote.

On the other side of the globe, the world watched as details emerged about the death of a young American missionary, John Allen Chau, on North Sentinel Island in the Bay of Bengal. The island’s population is thought to be the world’s last remaining pre-Neolithic tribe and has a history of being unwelcoming toward visitors. Mr. Chau understood that he’d been called by God to evangelize to these unreached peoples, and he hired local fishermen to deliver him to the island. However, India’s government - desiring to protect natives and potential visitors alike - has outlawed any contact with the Sentinelese people and any trespassing on the island. Only days after he arrived on the island, the fishermen passed by North Sentinel and saw tribal members burying Mr. Chau in a shallow grave on the beach. His body has not been (and perhaps never will be) recovered. [Source: Smithsonian]

Late in the evening on Friday, November 30, news rippled across the nation and globe, and a pensive hush descended upon a bustling Fondren Public: The 41st President of the United States, George Herbert Walker Bush, had died. Born in Milton, Massachusetts, in 1924, George Bush enlisted in the Navy on his 18th birthday and became the Navy’s youngest aviator. He became a war hero after being shot down over the Pacific. Over the next 70 years of his life, he captained Yale’s baseball team in the first two College World Series, became a Texas oilman, U.S. Congressman, Ambassador to the United Nations, Chairman of the Republican National Committee, U.S. Envoy to China, Director of the Central Intelligence Agency, and Vice President of the United States. Then in 1989, he attained the top prize in American politics as he was sworn in as the 41st President of the United States. That he died was not shocking to many, as his health had been failing in recent months since the passing of his wife of 73 years, Barbara Pierce Bush, in April 2018. However, his death has caused many (including this author) to pause and reflect with upon his well-lived life marked by public service and humility. With gratitude for the past & hope for the future, we celebrate the life of George Herbert Walker Bush.

Other national and global news stories included President Donald Trump’s former personal attorney Michael Cohen’s ongoing cooperation with FBI Special Counsel Robert Mueller in his probe into Russian activity in the 2016 Presidential election; continued coverage surrounding the suspicious death of Saudi dissident Jamal Khashoggi, which caused widespread geo-political tensions; ongoing explosive and violent protests in France in response to repeatedly increased fuel taxes; the signing of the U.S.-Canada-Mexico Agreement (USMCA or “New NAFTA”) on the sidelines of the G-20 Summit in Argentina (much of the pact must still be ratified by lawmakers in the three countries); and uncertainty over Brexit as Prime Minister Theresa May seeks Parliament’s approval of a deal she has reached with the European Union.

This author’s 2018 Holiday soundtrack is Songs for Christmas by Sufjan Stevens. The festive album features 42 songs ranging from traditional Christmas hymns to original Christmas songs written and arranged by Stevens. Songs for Christmas is a culmination of five separate EPs Stevens was known to give friends and family from 2001-2006; the full album was released officially in November 2006.

Harrison Matheny is a young professional Jacksonian and a friend to the University of Mississippi Medical Center.
How to:

Throw a Fabulous Holiday Party

BY ROSEMARY MOAK
THIRD YEAR | MEDICINE
**Need to Know**

**The 5 P’s of Holiday Party Planning:**

**Planning**
- Make an invitation list
- Design an invitation
  
  *A paper invitation is always a nice touch. However, if you’re in a pinch, there are great E-vite options. This may help you save a dollar that you want to spend towards something else.*
- Set a budget (try to stick to the budget!)  
- Create a menu (heavy hors d’oeuvres and drinks)
- Make a grocery list (try to use Sam’s Club or Costco)
- Select some libations and beverages

**Purchasing**
- With that budget in mind, purchase your ingredients for menu and alcohol/beverages
- Procure paper products (cups, cocktail napkins, silverware. Party City has options for nicer plastic ware - great for holiday parties.)
- Your Christmas decorations will speak for themselves; throw in some greenery and votives and you are set.
- Make sure you buy extra trash bags, paper towels and club soda (in case there is an unfortunate spill.) This will make pick up easier!

**Preparation**

**FOOD**
- Prepare your food and/or assign hosts/hostess items to make (try to do as much prep in the days before as possible. Party day will be more manageable, less stressful, and more organized).
- If you are assigning hosts/hostesses items to make or bring, keep it simple. Create a spreadsheet and categorize each section such as desserts, heavy hors d’oeuvres, drinks and allow your hosts/hostesses to sign up for each item.
- If you aren’t using your own serving pieces, ask hosts/hostesses to bring an item ready to serve.
- Menu should include items easy to pick up. Avoid charcuterie boards - they can be expensive and can hold up a food line. (**see easy holiday recipes below)**

**CLEAN YOUR HOUSE**
- **Clear off a bed in order for your guests to have somewhere to place their coats.**
- **Make sure your dish washer is empty - this will make “pick up” easier!**

**SET THE TABLE WHERE YOU PLAN ON SERVING FOOD**
- **Sticky notes are KEY.** Place sticky notes on each serving piece or location you want for to go on the table. For example, if you write “Captain Rodney’s Dip” on a sticky note, your host/hostess knows where to put it. This keeps your host/hostesses from asking you where things need to go.
- Decorate your table. Your décor can be as simple as votives, sprayed pinecones, magnolia leaves, and fresh greenery. These are all things you can find outdoors - sans the votives.
- When setting the table, place napkins, silverware, and plates on either end of the table to establish a flow for food pickup.

### ANYONE CAN THROW A FABULOUS HOLIDAY PARTY! THE MOST IMPORTANT STEP IS TO BE PREPARED SO YOU CAN ENJOY YOURSELF AND THE PEOPLE YOU LOVE.
Need to Know

BAR

- Set your bar up in advance whether your party is BYOB or you are supplying drinks.

- Have your ice chest easily accessible to the bar.

- In order not to use your glassware, buy festive holiday plastic cups. This makes clean up easier and who doesn’t like a holiday “go cup” as a party favor?

- Keep all wine and beer in the ice chest and at the bar. Try to keep your refrigerator clear of alcohol in order to allow space for food that will be served throughout the evening.

- Make sure your wine opener is at the bar before the party begins. Keep a backup opener on hand at all times.

- If the party is BYOB, always keep 1-3 magnum bottles of wine on hand. Undoubtedly, people will forget their drink of choice, so be a good host/hostess and be ready.

- Remember to buy or ask a host/hostess to bring a few flats of bottled water to be chilled.

Party Time

- Tell your hosts/hostesses to arrive 20-30 minutes early in order to make sure all food is placed on table prior to guests arrival.

  Your hosts/hostesses will often bring food that needs to be warmed. Make sure the food you prepared is finished in order to free up room in the oven. Foil will become your best friend.

- Send out an email the week before to remind your hosts/hostesses about their assigned food item and general reminders about party time etc. Be specific! Don’t be afraid to give jobs to your hosts/hostesses.

- Light your candles/votives 15 minutes prior to party time.

  If you have votives scattered throughout your greenery or garland, make sure they are far enough away from live greenery due to fire risk.

- For your host/hostesses that may be bringing wine, please have your cooler ready and iced down at least 3 hours prior to party time.

  If your party is BYOB have cooler ready for individuals to place their wine and beer in it.

- Music

  Make sure your holiday playlist is ready!

  Make sure your speakers work the day before. If you don’t have speakers, ask a friend to borrow theirs.

Pick up

- Time to clean! Grab a large trash bag and start throwing things away.

- Blow out the candles.

- Load the dishwasher.

YOUR PARTY IS GOING TO BE A HIT! I JUST KNOW IT.

Merry Christmas
to all and to all
a [great] night!
**EASY ANTIPASTO SKEWERS**

**Ingredients:**
- 1 can medium or large black olives
- 1 cup grape tomatoes
- 1 cup of small fresh mozzarella balls
- ¼ pound of salami, thinly sliced
- ½ cup of fresh basil leaves (you may substitute with spinach leaves to cut down on price if you don’t grow basil)
- 9oz package of cheese tortellini
- ¼ cup Italian dressing
- 12 inch wooden skewers
- Balsamic glaze

**Directions:**
1. Cook tortellini according to package instructions, then rinse with cold water and drain.
2. Fold salami slices into 4ths and fold basil or spinach leaves in half.
3. Arrange the first 6 ingredients on skewers until skewer is full. Place in a shallow baking dish; drizzle with Italian dressing. Cover and chill a couple of hours overnight.
4. Drizzle with balsamic glaze prior to serving.

*This recipe may be doubled, tripled etc. depending on guest list. All items on the list may be purchased at Sam’s Club or Cosco.

**HAM AND CHEESE POPPY SEED SLIDERS**

**Servings:** 12 sliders

**Ingredients:**
- For the butter sauce:
  - 4 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted
  - 1 tablespoon Dijon mustard
  - 2 teaspoons Worcestershire sauce
  - 1-1/2 tablespoons poppy seeds
  - ½ teaspoon garlic powder
  - ¼ teaspoon salt

- For sandwiches:
  - One 12 count pack square soft white dinner rolls
  - 2 tablespoons Dijon Mustard
  - 2/3 pound sliced Swiss cheese
  - 2/3 pound Black Forest ham

**Instructions:**
1. Adjust an oven rack to the middle position and preheat to 350 degrees.
2. In a small bowl, whisk together all of the ingredients for the butter sauce.
3. Using a serrated bread knife, slice the rolls in half horizontally, keeping the top and bottom halves separately intact. Spread the Dijon mustard evenly over the roll tops and bottoms.
4. Place the bottom half of the bread, cut side up, in a 9inch square baking pan. Place half of the cheese in an even layer over the bread. Top with all of the ham followed by the remaining cheese. Cover with the roll tops.
5. Evenly spoon the butter sauce over the rolls, allowing it to drip down the sides.
6. Bake for 22-25 minutes, until the top is golden brown and toasted. Let cool for 15-20 minutes in the pan. Using a large spatula, carefully transfer the sandwich block to a cutting board. Slice into sandwiches and transfer to a power towel lined serving plate.

**BRuschetta (**Moak Family REciPe**)**

**Servings:** 12-15

**Ingredients:**
- 1 French baguette
- 1 jar of bruschetta sauce
- 3 tablespoons capers
- 1b container fresh mozzarella thinly sliced (**BelGioioso mozzarella can be found at Kroger, Whole Foods, Fresh Market**)
- Salt/pepper for taste
- ¼ cup fresh basil

**Directions:**
1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees.
2. Slice the baguette horizontally and lightly brush with 2 tablespoons of olive oil. Place in oven for 10 minutes.
3. Coat each side of the baguette with bruschetta sauce evenly.
4. Strain capers and sprinkle them throughout both sides of the baguette.
5. Cover both sides of baguette evenly with fresh mozzarella.
6. Mince basil and sprinkle on top of the mozzarella.
7. Crack fresh pepper and ¼ teaspoon salt.
8. Bake at 350 for 25-30 minutes until cheese begins to bubble, then remove from the oven.
Mac and cheese might be the most nostalgic food in each of our personal histories. It would be impossible to tell the story of your life without it making an appearance: It may have been your favorite day in the elementary cafeteria. It’s possibly what you made yourself out of the blue box when the babysitter neglected to provide you dinner other than the generous offer of “I dunno, don’t you like cereal?” It’s an included item, perhaps a definitive feature, on the “vegetable list” at countless restaurants across the south. It’s even threaded into our fabric as Americans. In a list from thrillist.com “Ranking the 50 Most American Foods,” Mac and Cheese is number 11. Considering how difficult it is to define foods that distinctly represent American cuisine, the importance of cheesy mac should not be overlooked.

That brings us to our hero today. This is my great-aunt Betty Bobo’s recipe. She is an incredible woman with an enviable proficiency at story-telling, a sharp wit, and a big generous heart. Whenever my family makes a baked mac and cheese, this is our go-to recipe. The beauty of a baked pasta dish is you get the marriage of melty cheese with the toasted crunch of breadcrumbs. If you’re using cheddar it has to be sharp. Last time I made this I substituted with gouda (you can buy it already shredded at the grocery store). Don’t tell Aunt Betty I modified the sacred text, but I got to admit - the gouda was gooda.

Enjoy.
8 tablespoons butter
6 tablespoons flour
1/2 teaspoon cayenne
Salt and white pepper, to taste
3 3/4 cups hot whole milk
4 cups grated sharp cheddar
1 lb short macaroni (penne, ziti, small elbows, etc), cooked in salted water until al dente (I have a note saying “use 3 1/4 lb to make it soupsier”, but it’s been so long since I’ve made it that I don’t remember whether I always did that or not)
1/2 cup heavy cream (I used whole milk)
1/2 cup fresh bread crumbs

Preheat oven to 350. Butter a 9”x13” baking dish and set aside. Melt 6 T
butter in a medium saucepan over low heat. Add the flour and cook,
stirring constantly with a wooden spoon, for 3 or 4 minutes (flour must
foam as it cooks, or the sauce will have a raw flour taste) Stir in cayenne and salt and white pepper, whisk in the hot milk gradually and stir or whisk
constantly until the sauce thickens. Reduce the heat to low and stir in 2
cups of the cheese. Continue to cook, stirring constantly, until the cheese
melts, 2 or 3 minutes more.

Combine the pasta and sauce in a large bowl and season to taste with more
salt and white pepper, if needed. Sprinkle 1/2 cup cheese over the bottom
of the buttered dish. Put in 1/3 of the pasta, sprinkle with 1/2 cup cheese,
then repeat, layering pasta and cheese, ending with cheese, making three
layers in all.

Pour the cream (or 1/2 cup whole milk) over the assembled mac and
cheese. Melt 2 tablespoons butter over medium-low heat. Add the bread
crums and stir to coat, then sprinkle the buttered crumbs over the
casserole. Bake until the crust is golden, about 30 minutes. Allow to rest
15 minutes before serving.

MM - Good to hear from you. I want to know what little Elane is going to do
now that she's a Cordon Bleu cook. Tell her to stay in touch with me! We're
okay, but I still miss the Delta. Give your tribe my love, Betty
Need to Know

Red Velvet Cupcakes

BY EDDIE MAC HUDDLESTON

My mom reminded me recently that red velvet cake wasn’t always this ubiquitous thing. There weren’t red velvet cake mixes or Duff Goldman Red Carpet Red Velvet Cake Ice Cream for Blue Bunny® readily available when she was growing up, so red velvet cake had to be made from scratch or sought out at a special place. In other words, the presence of red velvet cake meant that something special was going on. I want to bring that special status back.

The first red velvet cake I had was at this BBQ restaurant in New Albany, Mississippi. This was (is) a family-run place with BBQ that’s quite pedestrian but homemade cakes and pies that are very special. My favorite growing up was always the red velvet cake. It was sold by the slice and served on a small white plastic fork sticking straight into a Styrofoam plate with a small white velvet cake. It was sold by the pound and always use salted butter, and you can’t stop me)

Ingredients

2 cups all-purpose flour
1 teaspoon baking soda
1 teaspoon baking powder
1 teaspoon salt
2 tablespoons unsweetened cocoa powder
2 cups granulated sugar
1 cup canola or vegetable oil
2 extra-large eggs
1 cup buttermilk (I always use whole buttermilk)
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
1 oz red food coloring
1/2 cup freshly brewed coffee, cooled to room temperature
1 teaspoon white distilled vinegar
1 teaspoon baking powder
1 teaspoon baking soda
2 cups all-purpose flour

For the cupcakes, preheat oven to 325º. Line a standard muffin/cupcake tin with paper liners and set aside.

In a medium bowl, stir together flour, baking soda, baking powder, cocoa, and salt. Set aside.

In a separate larger bowl, combine oil and sugar. I find my hand mixer works well here, but this is a good job for a stand mixer too. Add eggs one at a time, followed by buttermilk, coffee, vinegar, and food coloring. Add the flour mixture to the wet ingredients a little at a time, stopping as soon as the mixture is well-incorporated, taking care to scrape the bottom and sides of the bowl. Finally, add the vanilla (I always add vanilla last because the flavor is volatile; you don’t want to beat the vanilla flavor out of your cake).

Transfer the mixture into the lined baking tin to about two-thirds of the way up each cup. The mixture is pretty thin, so this step is tricky. I found placing the mixture in using a small scoop to be marginally less messy than pouring directly from the mixing bowl.

Depending on how many cupcakes you put in the oven at one time, it can take 20-30 minutes to bake. Start checking after 20 minutes. The finished cakes are pretty shiny, so don’t let their sheen fool you into thinking they’re not done.

For the frosting, combine the milk and sugar in a small saucepan over medium heat and whisk constantly until thick. Remove from heat, cover, and let cool to room temperature.

In the bowl of a stand mixer, cream the butter and sugar until light and fluffy. Add the cooled milk mixture, crank the mixer up medium-high, and let it go for a few minutes. Stop to assess after two minutes or so, and if it looks separated, keep mixing until it’s light and smooth and almost like whipped cream. Finally, add the vanilla and whip the frosting until the color is uniform, scraping down the sides and bottom of the bowl to ensure full incorporation.

Frost the cupcakes with a butter knife like your mom always did for school birthday parties. That works better than a piping bag for this icing.

Share with friends and enjoy!
Need to Know

QUICK AND EASY by JOHN BOBO

Holiday Recipes

Christmas Hummus

What you’ll need:
Hummus
Arugula
Parsley
Chives
Pomegranate

Step 1: Buy hummus. Or make it yourself if your food processor is big enough. Aladdin sells trays of their delicious hummus for $30 and it will feed a large crowd. When you’re planning a party this is an incredibly helpful corner to cut.

Step 2: Use a food processor or blender to combine hummus with handfuls of arugula, parsley and chives to taste. You’ll have to do this in multiple batches and spoon it out into a casserole dish. What you’ll get is a peppery herby hummus that, dare I say, is a pleasant improvement to whatever hummus you choose to use as your base. Plus, the color is awesome.

Step 3: Seed your pomegranate (find a helpful YouTube video on how to do this. Don’t be scared, it’s easy!)

Step 4: Garnish with chives, parsley and pomegranate seeds. Serve with pita.

Bourbon Punch

There is an old apothecaric practice of creating syrup by extracting fruit oils and letting those fats liquify some sugar, creating an oleosaccharum. We’re doing this with lemon. The result is a deep intoxicating aromatic lemon syrup without all the acid and pucker you would get from the juice. Most importantly it’s incredibly simple. Think of it as the truly simple, simple syrup.

What you’ll need:
4 lemons
1 cup granulated sugar
750 ml bourbon
750 ml water

Step 1: Make your sugar mixture aka “The Goo”. To do this, peel your lemons with a potato peeler. Combine in a bowl with your sugar and muddle with a wooden spoon or (if you’re me and your old roommate left town with the only wooden spoon in the kitchen), use the bottom of a salt shaker. Cover and leave out on your counter. It will turn to goo like magic in an hour or so. I like to leave it overnight.

Step 2: When you’re ready to serve your punch, pour bourbon and water into a punch bowl and stir in the goo.

Step 3: Garnish with rosemary and lemon slices.

Pro Tip: Make a giant ice cube with whatever tupperware you have lying around. Throw in some sliced citrus and rosemary if you’re feeling fancy (of course you are).
WAITING FOR EDEN | BY ELLIOT ACKERMAN

Published September 25, 2018

Waiting for Eden, the first read-in-one-sitting five star book I’ve ever read, is a novel narrated by a dead man. Eden, lying in a San Antonio burn unit, is a soldier who was sent home from the Iraq War after his Humvee hit an IED. His friend, the narrator, does not survive, but guides us through a tangled love triangle involving himself, Eden, and Eden’s family, slowly lifting each piece of the wreckage left on them by the war, unpacking the truth as only perfect fiction can do. Waiting for Eden illuminates the gray area between right and wrong and paints something terrifyingly beautiful on the fine line between life and death. This book gets 5 shining stars and a standing ovation from this newfound Ackerman fan.

Elliot Ackerman is a recipient of the Silver Star, the Purple Heart, and is a finalist for the National Book Award for Fiction in 2017 for his second novel “Dark at the Crossing.” And boy can he write a heck of a novel.

WHERE THE CRAWDADS SING | BY DELIA OWENS

Published August 14, 2018

So, this novel was not my favorite, but I think it might actually be good enough for it to be some of y’alls. This book explores the life of Kya, a girl in the Carolina marshes whose family, one at a time, leaves Kya to fend for herself. This book explores the creative genius of childhood, allows for a derecho love story, and is all the time a painstaking murder mystery. The best part of the novel is the setting—it acts against the backdrop of an excellently painted marsh, where wildlife, both animal and human, lives and breathes and does a little bit of singing. A strong 3.5 stars from me, but Reese Witherspoon picked it for her book club pick of the year, so if you tend to trust Reese a little more than me, as anyone probably should, this book is for you.