“Don’t let me die, I’ve got a baby on the way.” As rescuers rushed Frank Elam of Eupora to the hospital following a car crash, the paralyzed 22-year-old was determined not to miss his firstborn’s birth. Duties he now accomplishes from the seat of his custom wheelchair.

Elam and his wife, Heavenly, relied on the spinal cord injury team at Methodist Rehabilitation Center in Jackson to teach them how to adapt to their new reality. And Heavenly says MRC’s expertise helped make the most of Elam’s hard work.

“They took us in like we were kids,” she said. “People at MRC care about patients and what they are going through.”

“Now that I’m in a wheelchair, I’m going to be best man in a wheelchair I can be,” Elam said. “At the end of the day, it’s all about making the best life for our son.”
Around

THE U

Everything that’s going on at UMMC
The Center for Telehealth at the University of Mississippi Medical Center is using a $1 million federal grant to speed expansion of services to meet the changing needs of patients during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The funding comes from the Federal Communications Commission’s COVID-19 Telehealth Program, which nationwide is awarding a total $200 million as part of the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security Act, also called the CARES Act. The money helps nonprofit and public-eligible health care providers deliver telehealth services to patients at home or in mobile locations by funding their telecommunications services, information services and devices necessary to provide telehealth.

Concerns for the safety of both patients and providers continue to play a significant role in the Center’s work, with providers ramping up televisits so swiftly that networks initially struggled to keep up, said Dr. Tearsanee Carlisle Davis, the Center’s director of clinical and advanced practice operations.

“We had to put a mechanism into place to make sure people continued to get the care they need,” Davis said of the first weeks of March, when the virus began to sweep through the state. “We had to stand those operations up pretty quickly, especially in primary care and family medicine and in pediatrics, and also in our specialty care areas.”

Before the pandemic, an average 73 telehealth appointments were completed monthly. Today, thanks to 144-plus trainings for providers and departments early in the pandemic by telehealth team members, about 459 Medical Center providers use telehealth to remotely visit their patients. Those caregivers practice across 14 School of Medicine departments.

The funding “will support a lot of the infrastructure that will position the institution to provide the highest quality digital and telehealth health care possible,” said Julio Cespedes, the Center for Telehealth’s director of telehealth innovation, design and implementation.

“The FCC recognizes the importance of strengthening telehealth capabilities as providers work to treat coronavirus patients while continuing to provide other medical services,” said U.S. Sen. Cindy Hyde-Smith, R-Miss., a member of the Senate Appropriations Committee, via a news release. “I’m grateful for these new FCC resources and hope to see more.

“Mississippi was a leader in telemedicine services before the pandemic, and these grants should work to build on that success.”
The FCC support “positions us to continue to be a leader in screening as many patients as possible for COVID-19,” Cespedes said. “It helps us to give our clinical areas the opportunity to continue to do telehealth in a way that best works for them.”

The pandemic forced the March cancellation or postponement of most UMMC outpatient appointments. The Center dramatically increased virtual visits using its UMMC2You platform, and in March alone, patients used it a total 4,723 times, a 286 percent increase over the 1,230 appointments in February 2020. That skyrocketed to 11,717 UMMC2You consultations in April, and remained high in May at 5,697 consultations.

Just as critical has been the Medical Center’s telehealth and physical support of COVID-19 testing at the Mississippi State Fairgrounds in Jackson and dozens of one-day testing sites throughout Mississippi. Testing at the Fairgrounds on June 1 moved to the West Street Farmers Market at the corner of West and Woodrow Wilson Avenue in Jackson. As of June 3, a total 10,134 had been tested at those drive-through collection sites.

Mississippians having symptoms of the virus or a known or suspected exposure continue to be screened by telehealth providers by calling the Center at (601) 496-7200 or by going to umc.edu/covidscreening. A provider schedules an appointment for those qualifying, either at the West Street Farmers Market or at the nearest one-day site coordinated by UMMC and the Mississippi State Department of Health.

As of June 3, 11,186 people had been screened for COVID-19 by the Center for Telehealth. Center providers also are staffing a COVID-19 testing hotline for UMMC employees that had fielded 3,741 calls as of June 3.

That testing re-directs patients who might have sought care in emergency departments or local clinics, possibly exposing others to the virus or unnecessarily taxing critical health care resources. Close to 76 percent of inquiries so far have led to testing, and a significant overall volume of all COVID-19 tests collected and completed for the Mississippi has originated from the mobile testing and employee hotline.

The Center makes phone calls to give those tested their results and coordinates testing site schedules, lists of patients with appointments, and collection of testing specimens at each site.

“One of the pluses of this has been that more providers have tried telehealth, and I expect that will continue to go up,” Davis said. “Those who were hesitant in the past have tried it, and they have found value in using it. On the patient side, some of them had no choice but to try it. Now, they’ve been exposed to it.”

Although dramatically increasing telehealth reach in the face of COVID-19 was a challenge, Davis said, “it was long overdue. You don’t realize how much you need something until you need it.

“We will be more prepared than ever going forward.”

The Center for Telehealth providers have screened thousands of Mississippians for COVID-19 symptoms and treated them through fly-through sites at sites including this one at Tougaloo College in Jackson.

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The afternoon sun is softened by the yellow brick of the new School of Medicine building, with only the occasional ray of light dancing off the large glass windows as you approach from the north. The brick is welcoming and familiar to UMMC students, faculty and staff; far less ostentatious than its red cousin and more reassuring than, say, stucco. The yellow brick, laid in running bond, serves as our chauffeur through time, a common thread on UMMC’s campus from 1955 to 2018. Newer buildings on
campus incorporate more concrete and glass than the older ones for a touch of modernity; contrast the old hospital with the new Translational Research building. But they all welcome visitors with certain warmth, a shining beacon that rises from the gray concrete and black asphalt that surrounds the campus.

But, really, why are the buildings yellow? Was it more cost efficient at the time? Or was it an afterthought that has stuck with us 60 years later, the butterfly effect played out in architectural design? And while we’re nitpicking, is it really yellow, or more of a tan? Beige? Taupe?

Most of the answers, as it turns out, are fairly simple. Dr. Jonathan Wilson, Chief Administrative Officer at UMMC, explained that this type of brick is called “blonde brick” owes its lighter color to a lower iron content than the clay used for red brick. According to Barbara Austin, Director Emeritus of Public Affairs at UMMC, “the blonde brick was in vogue at the time the original T-shaped building was designed and constructed in the early 1950s, and that’s why our first architects selected it.” It was not a question of cost, but one of style. We wanted Mississippi’s premier medical education center at the cutting edge, both inside and out.

Austin went on to explain that long-range planning started in 1958 with the appointment of a Long-Range Planning and Development Committee composed of faculty and staff from all major units of the institution. “The committee published the Medical Center’s first long-range plan in 1960, after several years of consultation with Todd Wheeler, an architect and partner in a Chicago planning firm... The original long-range committee asked architects on building projects to use the blonde brick to give the campus a unified, consistent appearance. And certainly, it has.” Wheeler, the Chicago architect, specialized in construction of hospital and medical schools and served as acting state architect for Illinois from 1951-1952. His opinion was highly regarded at the time UMMC was constructed, so the decision to use blonde brick for every building was an easy one. It’s why you see the same color brick on every structure on campus, from the main hospital down to the barrier around the dumpster outside the pharmacy building, “I’m glad we stuck to it for our building exteriors. Its use has given the campus a consistent, planned look— unlike some of our sister academic health centers in other states”, Austin said.

Now, one’s opinion of how the blonde brick contributes to the overall look of the campus is a more complicated issue. When asked for his thoughts, Dr. Jerry Clark, Director of Student Affairs for the School of Medicine, noted that the new School of Medicine incorporates older design elements, such as the blonde brick, with newer ones such as natural light and soothing colors to contribute to student wellness. Austin was less approving, but kept sight of what is important. “Currently, the campus is a mess. It’s hard to navigate even for those of us who ‘grew up’ with the institution as it expanded. But all the construction underway today has the same purpose Medical Center growth has always had: to help Mississippi meet the identified needs of the state for health professionals and health care.”

UMMC’s blonde brick is a throwback to the early days of the state’s premier academic health center, but it is now incorporated in state-of-the-art buildings that use the newest technology in healthcare education. Here on campus, you will find a variety of opinions on how it looks, but its most important job is to provide a home for healthcare in Mississippi.
Talk of the Town

Your guide to the city of Jackson and beyond

Brent’s Drug Store

The secret passage into The Apothecary, a local speakeasy-themed joint you need to try. Yes they are open! Thurs-Sat 5-10pm
Talk of the Town

We pick a topic and ask two readers to make a case for why their pick is the best. Read their piece and decide for yourself.

Best Dessert

Zack Watson

Frozen Greek Yogurt + Baklava at Aplos

I am a creature of habit. Sure, I enjoy trying new things, especially when it comes to food, but once I’ve done my due diligence, and I find my favorite menu items from a restaurant, you better believe those are the things I’m going to order 99% of the time. Lately, I’ve been working my way through the menu at Aplos—Jackson’s newest Mediterranean restaurant that promises fast, fine, and simple cuisine inspired by eateries of Italy, Greece, and the Middle East. While I still have several things to try, I can officially announce my go-to dessert is the frozen Greek yogurt with baklava crumbs and honey, and full disclosure, I am very passionate about it. This dessert isn’t just my favorite at Aplos—it’s my latest food obsession in all of Jackson. For real, I crave this yogurt-baklava combo daily. When I first saw it on the menu, my immediate thought was “duh, gotta try that,” which was closely followed by my second thought of “WHY IN THE WORLD HAVE I NEVER THOUGHT OF THIS!”? I mean, this dessert just makes sense. Both Greek yogurt and baklava are quintessential Mediterranean fare, so why not combine the two, freeze the yogurt, and drizzle with all-natural, raw honey. Seriously, this dessert has it all—it’s sweet but tangy, soft but crunchy, smooth but goozy. With each spoonful, you get the tartness of the yogurt followed by the crispness of the phyllo finished off with the sticky sweetness of the pistachios and honey. Seriously, this dessert has it all—true it’s sweet but tangy, soft but crunchy, smooth but goozy. With each spoonful, you get the tartness of the yogurt followed by the crispness of the phyllo finished off with the sticky sweetness of the pistachios and honey. This is about the closest thing to the nectar of the gods we mere mortals can get here in Jackson. Even better, this dessert is easy on your diet and your wallet. Coming in at only $5, this Mediterranean frozen-yo is packed full of protein and probiotics, not to mention, the myriad of evidence-based health benefits of pistachios and raw honey. So seriously people, do yourself a solid and run on over to Aplos in Highland Village to try this guilt-free, frozen Greek delight—like me, it may just become your next obsession.

Sydney West

Turtle Tank Shake at Fine and Dandy

I am a big fan of desserts. Probably the biggest fan. I’m never too full to eat something sweet. And while cookies and cakes and bread puddings are all good, sometimes what you really need is a milkshake. This sweet, cold beverage can comfort you after, say, a week’s worth of tests or, perhaps, a 7-hour surgery that left your feet screaming for mercy. And if said milkshake comes infused with alcohol? ALL THE BETTER.

*Enter Fine and Dandy* The almost-1-year-old restaurant has curated a menu that is unique, creative, and delicious, and the milkshake selections are no exception. In full disclosure, I was planning to write about the James Beard Incident because it. Is. Amazing. However, in an effort to keep things fresh and interesting, the chef creates an entirely different menu each season, milkshakes included. While I was initially distraught over this, my waiter assured me that he had the low-down on the best shake for the fall season. He suggested the Turtle Tank Shake, complete with chocolate, salted caramel, cheesecake, pecan pieces, and graham crumbs (Pro Tip: ask them to add Kahlua, a coffee-flavored liqueur), and it did not disappoint. Initially, I was worried that the shake might be too rich, as milkshakes can often be. This shake, however, is smooth and not at all overwhelming. With each sip, you are introduced to a flurry of flavors—never knowing whether you’ll get a chocolate chip, cheesecake or graham crumb. The Kahlua adds an enticing hint of black coffee and sweet butter, and the salted caramel and pecan pieces bring just the right amount of salty to cut the sweet. Truly, it was the best shake I’ve had in a while (and I’ve had a lot). If the Turtle Tank Shake doesn’t sound appealing, 1) you’re crazy but 2) you’re in luck. Other options include: Cap’n Crunk, 80’s Kid Throwback Shake, #basic, and The “Yes We Can Make You A Plain Vanilla Shake.” There’s a milkshake for every taste palate at Fine and Dandy. So, head over there to experience the best dessert in Jackson!
THE CURBSIDE COLLECTION

by John Bobo and the Group Text

The best eats for your quarantine

with some quality recs and a good number for ordering

Pig and Pint
the bacon melt (omg it’s the bomb), disco fries, ribs
601 326 6070

Elvie’s
Duck fat french fries are a must. Chef Hunter Evans was featured in the latest issue of Garden & Gun. (@elviesrestaurant)
601 863 8828

Saltine
their po boys are fire, catch their monday ramen or their weekend brunch
601 982 2899

Green Ghost Tacos
tacos tacos tacos! $2 tacos on tues, (p.s. ask for verde salsa if that’s your thing)
601 487 6082

Babalu
roasted chicken tacos, the baba burger, $4 barbaita mix (just add tequila)
601 366 5757

Crawdad Hole
crawfish duh
601 982 9299

Aladdin
hummus and lamb plate, aladdin sampler for 2 (or 1, no judge)
601 366 6033

Fine & Dandy
their grandma chick sandwich made the list for best chicken sandwich in america by the daily meal...remember when chicken sandwich wars were a pressing national issue? [sigh]
601 202 5050

Sophomore Spanish Club
drive thru hot meal pick up with a menu that changes daily, drive thru grocery store for all your pantry and household needs (seriously, their online grocery will blow your mind)
601 203 3333

Picantes
there’s a thing called “pollo carley” and it was sent from heaven,
also curbside margs!
601 398 1344

Krilakis
“lamb + chicken gyro, any of the salads, burger, badass fries” -Dr. Matthew Alias
601 790 9463

Thai Tasty
“chickens pad thai (thai hot), chicken fried rice (thai hot)” -Katie Brown, MD
601 540 2534

EDO
“volcano roll is dank” -Dr. Will Dungan
601 899 8518

Apolos
“mezza sampler: try the grape leaves, cheese rolls, and cauliflower” -Dr. MM Hitt
601 714 8989

Amerigo
“goat cheese + penne w/ chicken + extra goat cheese is "kisses fingers”” -Katie
“cheese fritters are a must” -Dr. Kelsey Berry, pediatrician to the stars
601 977 0563

Fine & Dandy
“Grandma Chick” -Katie

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Need to Know

First Aid to Basic Student Travel:

Plan Ahead

- PLAN AHEAD. I honestly can’t say this enough. It will make your vacation more enjoyable in the long run.
- If you are traveling in a group, it’s always great to split up the planning. This allows each traveler to get an opportunity to have their input on what they feel is important from their vacation experience. If you are traveling to multiple states, cities, or countries, set a territory for each traveler to plan.

Select your location carefully

- Location can make or break the wallet. While an exciting, yet expensive city is alluring, geography alone could ruin your budget.
- If you are planning on visiting a more expensive city, consider shortening your stay in the city and spacing the trip with cool off the beaten path places outside of a city.
- Instead of an overpriced hotel, consider Airbnb. This is a great option when splitting with other travelers in a group.

Budget

- COMMUNICATION IS KEY. Talk about the budget EARLY. Set your budget and try to respect the limitations. Whether it’s accommodations, flights, restaurants, activities, it’s important to talk about what each traveler is comfortable splurging. While this may seem like a headache in the planning process, you will be thankful you aren’t arguing over discrepancies in restaurant or hotel prices while you are trying to sip your mojito by the ocean.

TRAVEL IS POSSIBLE ON ANY BUDGET! THE MOST IMPORTANT STEP IS TO HAVE A PLAN, SO YOU CAN ENJOY YOURSELF AND YOUR FABULOUS TRIP.

For the Flying traveler

- Flying will add a big expense to your vacation if you aren’t careful
- If you are looking for the cheapest flights (let’s be serious, of course we are!), you’ll likely have better luck by cross checking multiple booking sites.
- Here is the lowdown on a few handy websites from a quick google:
  - Hipmunk
  - Skyscanner
  - Airfare watchdog
  - Points guy (great for skymiles)

For the driving traveler

- Split the gas money. It’s a no brainer. Venmo is necessary.
- Consider buying road friendly snacks and picnicking along the way at a state park or rest area. Chicken salad and bagels is always a good option. If you buy a rotisserie chicken and whip up your own, you can save big dollars vs buying it at your favorite Jackson restaurant. Save your dollars for the restaurant you spent weeks researching about!
- Make a killer road playlist. This is as cheap as it comes but vital for a good road trip.
Need to Know

Accommodations

• Talk with your travel companions about what is important to you about accommodations.
• If traveling with a larger group, Airbnb is a good option and sometimes it’s nice to have a home base that isn’t a hotel room.
• Here is the low down on a few handy websites from a quick google search that will make the accommodation process easier (from hostels to hotels):
  - Hostelworld.com
  - Hotels combined.com
  - Booking.com
  - Airbnb

Renting a Car

• If you are renting a car, make sure someone in the group is 25 or older.
• Make sure you are present with your driver’s license if you would like to drive the car that your friend is renting in his/her name. This is a liability issue, so if you want to drive, show up to the kiosk with your driver’s license in hand.
• Try to book the car early.
• Keep a lookout for companies that offer student discounts.

Top destination for the budget friendly traveler

DING DING DING and the winner is...NATIONAL PARKS:

• If you aren’t afraid to get in touch with your wild(nerness) side, national parks are a great option. No matter what time of year (as long as the park is open), there are always outdoor activities.
• While hotels in national parks can get pricey, there are multiple options for accommodations.
• If you aren’t afraid to camp, this is always a reasonable option and definitely the cheapest. However, keep in mind lots of parks make you apply for a camping permit months prior to visiting (ex: Grand Canyon). There is a small fee for the permits.
• If you plan to stay in a hotel, there are often cheaper options a few miles outside popular national parks. If you chose to stay in the park, make sure to plan this at least 4-6 months in advance. Hotel rooms book quickly for busy season months and prices can sky rocket.
• Plan your trip during the off season. Hotels are cheaper and crowds are more manageable during the non-summer months.
• Make sure the park is open. Many parks deal with large amounts of snow in the winter and conditions force them to close. For most parks, you are safe between March-November, minus Glacier National Park (conditions only permit it to open certain summer months).
• Pick up groceries at a local grocery store. If you’re in an area close to Trader Joes, this is your one stop shopping for tasty and affordable foods for packing lunches for your hikes.
• Pick up a cheap cooler and continue to refill with ice to keep your items chilled.
• Your biggest expense will be airfare (if you plan to go out west) and accommodations. Use your booking sites wisely and try to avoid last minute booking.

HOW TO PLAN YOUR STAYCATION:

While vacations are wonderful, sometimes a staycation is just what the doctor ordered. The key to the staycation is to try to match the amount of relaxation and entertainment you might have felt on vacation in a different place. Here are some tips:

1. Plan 2-3 fun, relaxing things to do throughout the week that you wouldn’t normally do in your home city.
2. Plan a “treat thy self day.” This day is all about taking care of you. Call your local spa and book the most relaxing treatment you can imagine. Whether it’s a pedicure, facial, or massage, make sure you find yourself in your most relaxed state. You deserve this.
3. Don’t use the entire week as an excuse to catch up on work. While it’s perfectly okay to try to get a few things done, this staycation is about taking a step back and recharging your body and mind.
4. Learn how to do something new. Whether it’s learning how to make spaghetti and meatballs in a cooking class at Livingston or taking your first tennis lesson, reset your mind and keep it open to new things. You might just find a new hobby.
5. Be a tourist in your own city. Find the local attractions and see what makes people want to visit your city.
5 Things You Have to Eat

by John Bobo

AUGUST 2018

The Hummus. There’s always been a battle for “best hummus” in town. Chef Alex Eaton took a culinary sabbatical to the middle east to reconnect to his roots. It has paid off. The aplos hummus is lemon-garlic perfection topped with a delicious schug sauce (think spicy pesto without the cheese). Where other hummus can have the texture of mashed potatoes, this one is irresistibly smooth.

Anything with the roasted chicken on it. I know, I know, chicken is rarely the pick when you want something new, exciting, and delicious. But this chicken is incredible. You can see them slow roasting on a spit behind the bar, taunting you, as soon as you walk in. Get it on a wrap, get it on a salad, get it on a pizza, get it on an ice cream cone, I DON’T CARE just get it. Trust me.

The Falafel. These mediterranean hushpuppies have the perfect spice profile, avoiding the standard pitfall of so many dry bland falafel before it. Dressed up with some marinated cabbage and schug tahini dressing, these are great to share with a friend or eat on your drive home straight out of the bag buckled safely in your passenger seat.

The Frozen Greek Yogurt with Baklava. It is such a solid dessert creation. Tart, sweet, cold, and crunchy. I could go on about this but Zack makes an excellent case for it on page 52.

Frosé. When I think frosé, I think an overly sweet slush that kind of tastes like it might have been wine in a past life. This is a very different, and very good, dry rosé frozen and slurred into a flavorful icee. Exactly what you need when the Mississippi fall still thinks it’s summer.
Need to Know

Advice, Recs, and Fun Stuff from the Outside

WHAT?
Crazy Rich Asians

Wow. Best movie I’ve seen in a while. This film renewed my hope in the midst of the yearly movie drought. If I wasn’t literally laughing out loud at knee-slapping one-liners and hilariously witty quips, I was instead gasping in shock at every plot twist, pretending my allergies were acting up while holding back tears at every poignant, intense moment, gaping in awe at the spectacular visions of brilliant colors in extraordinary production settings, extravagant parties, and stunning costumes, trying not to be jealous of the ridiculously beautiful cast, and obnoxiously cheering on the characters on the screen as if they could hear me and as if my fellow theater-goers couldn’t (not that they cared because they were doing it too). From start to finish, there’s never a dull moment through every twist and turn in this perfectly paced, wonderfully taken movie.

The Big Sick meets The Great Gatsby (DiCaprio/Luhrmann version, obviously) in this refreshingly delightful romantic comedy about two people in love raised in two different cultures struggling to hold on to family, love, their identities, and each other. Constance Wu brilliantly plays a self-made, no-nonsense, and independent female lead who meets her boyfriend’s family in Singapore. He casually chooses not to mention how his family is the one of richest in the country, and we follow their love story as she strategically and courageously maneuvers through each scheme from the family members designed to scare her away. Little did they know, they were messing with a master of the game theory. I know what you’re thinking. Haven’t I already seen a million movies with this same plot of two lovers from different worlds trying to fit in with the family and persevere through conflict? A.k.a. almost every romantic comedy ever? Well, maybe. But without giving away any spoilers, just trust me that this must-see is worth your time and even the movie theater ticket price.