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MS sees long lines, historic turnout



BILLY SCHUERMAN
thedmphotos@gmail.com

For thousands of Lafayette County residents and millions of Mississippians across the state, Tuesday was a day of waiting — both to vote in the first place and to witness the results of some of the most contested political races in recent history. Some residents say they waited up to four hours to cast ballots, and at the Lafayette County Civic Center, the last vote did not leave until over an hour after polls closed.

SEE LINES PAGE 4

Voters approve medical marijuana

KENNETH NIEMEYER
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Mississippians voted to approve medical marijuana in the state today, voting in favor of the creation of a medical marijuana program and to approve Initiative 65.

Medical marijuana's appearance on Mississippi ballots has been a point of discussion for months, and many people criticized the way the initiatives were presented on the ballot. Mississippians were asked to choose whether or not they would approve a medical marijuana program, then they were asked to choose between Initiative 65 and Initiative 65A.

Initiative 65 is a ballot initiative that gained the signatures of over 200,000 Mississippians in order to be placed on the ballot. Now, an amendment to the state constitution will create a medical marijuana program. 65A was the competing initiative that was placed on the ballot by the state legislature following Initiative 65's qualification.

Proponents of 65 said that the state legislature put 65A on the ballot to confuse voters and split the vote.

Initiative 65 will create a system of self-funded medical marijuana growing operations and dispensaries administered by the Mississippi State Department of Health for patients who qualify by having one of 22 listed conditions. After a consultation with a medical doctor, patients will be allowed to possess up to 2.5 ounces of marijuana at once, and a sales tax rate of 7% will be placed on medical marijuana sales.

To qualify for medical marijuana treatment in Mississippi, an individual must

SEE MARIJUANA PAGE 8

Magnolia flag passes with flying colors

KENNETH NIEMEYER
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Mississippi voters decided in an overwhelming majority to approve a new state flag design in Tuesday's election. The decision to remove the flag came in the wake of nationwide protests following the deaths of George Floyd,

UM has not flown the state flag since 2015

Breonna Taylor and others due to police violence earlier this year.

The Mississippi legislature

has been unwilling to discuss changing the state flag design for many years but momentum and opinions

changed as protest broke out across the country this summer.

The state legislature voted to remove the former state flag which included the Confederate battle flag in its design in late June.

After fielding many designs from Mississippians,

SEE STATE FLAG PAGE 3



ENROLLMENT DROPS

Last fall, there were 22,273 students at UM, but fall 2020 numbers put the population down to 21,676 students, a 2.7% decrease. Enrollment has been in a steady decline since its peak in 2016.

SEE PAGE 3



CROSS COUNTRY SUCCEEDS

The men's cross country team was able to finish all in the top-three sweeping the race since Alabama did in 2017.

SEE PAGE 6

County votes in record numbers

HADLEY HITSON
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Lafayette County has been perfectly situated for a historic Election Day for weeks, and on Nov. 3, voters showed up in record numbers, waited in hours-long lines and voted on paper-based ballots for the first time in over a decade.

23,301 people voted in the county either via absentee ballots or in-person voting, resulting in a turnout rate of 70%.

Prior to the election, county circuit clerk Jeff Busby said these high turnout numbers were expected. Busby's office saw almost four times the usual number of voter registrations this year, with 600 coming in on the final day of eligibility.

Many university students, some of whom were voting for the first time, were among these numbers.

On Election Day, The Daily Mississippian conducted a survey on Instagram asking first-time voters to share their experience at the polls. All of the responses were demonstrative of the high voter turnout and subsequent long lines.

"I got there 30 minutes after the polls opened and waited for an hour," one student response read.

As the day continued, though, the lines and wait times lengthened. By 7 p.m., when the polls in Mississippi closed, dozens of people were still in line at various polling places in the county. At the Lafayette County Civic Center, over 150 people were waiting to vote at closing, and the last voter did not leave until over an hour later.

The record turnout ultimately gave President Donald Trump the state's six electoral votes, reelected Sen. Cindy Hyde-Smith, legalized a program for medical marijuana and approved the new state flag.

Trump wins Mississippi, but election still undecided

MADDY QUON
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The 2020 presidential election remains undecided, and the Associated Press has not yet called a winner in several critical states.

Thus far, former Vice President Joe Biden leads with 264 electoral votes, while current President Donald Trump has 214. Nevada, Pennsylvania, North Carolina, Georgia and Alaska are set to be the deciding states in this election. Biden leads by a slim margin in Nevada, while Trump holds a narrow advantage in the other three states.

Still, both campaigns claimed early on Wednesday morning that they would win the election, according to their predictions regarding states that are uncalled.

Voters in Georgia, Arizona and Nevada can still "cure" their votes. Meaning that, if their ballot had been rejected for some reason, they can resolve whatever issue there was with the ballot and have it counted.

Common reasons for ballots to be rejected are that someone did not sign it, signed it incorrectly or their signature did not closely resemble the signature in their voter registration file.

In the East Room of the White House shortly before 2:30 a.m. on election night, Trump claimed to have won the election. His remarks came as many battleground states were considered too close to call at the time and millions of votes across the country had yet to be counted.

"This is a fraud on the American public. This is an embarrassment to our country," Trump said. "Frankly, we did win this election."

Just before Trump's remarks, Biden said at the Chase Center in Wilmington, Del. that it's "clear" that he will reach 270 electoral votes to win the presidency. He also said his campaign was "on track," but Biden did not claim victory.

"I'm not here to declare that we've won, but I am here to report that when the count is finished, we believe we will be the winners," Biden said. "It ain't over until every vote is counted."



ILLUSTRATION: KATHERINE BUTLER / THE DAILY MISSISSIPPIAN
PHOTOS COURTESY: GAGE SKIDMORE

ished, we believe we will be the winners," Biden said. "It ain't over until every vote is counted."

Approximately 159.8 million people are projected to have voted in this election so far, which is the highest voter turnout in the United States since 1900. In 2016, the total number of votes cast was 136.6 million.

One key issue in the race between Trump and Biden was the COVID-19 pandemic.

National pundits speculated that the pandemic would be a leading issue for seniors in this election, as they are one population that is especially susceptible to the virus.

The Trump administration had already taken steps to stop the spread of the coronavirus,

but critics claim that Trump downplayed the severity of the pandemic, oftentimes going against the advice of medical doctors on his coronavirus task force. At a September rally in Ohio, just days before he was diagnosed with COVID-19 himself, Trump said that the coronavirus "virtually affects nobody."

Biden has criticized the Trump administration's response to COVID-19 throughout the election season, and if elected, Biden said his plans will be more focused on testing and tracing. He also said he wants to make coronavirus tests free for all Americans and double the number of drive-thru testing sites.

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FLAG continued from page 1

the state legislature narrowed their choice to two flags and eventually chose to place the “In God We Trust Flag” on the ballot for voters to approve or deny.

The “In God We Trust Flag” was the only flag design on the ballot for voters to choose.

The new flag design features a large magnolia flower in the center surrounded by 20 stars. The stars represent Mississippi as the 20th state admitted to the union. Under the flower are the words “In God We Trust.” The flag became one

of the most popular of the proposed designs before the legislature decided to put it on the ballot.

When Gov. Tate Reeves signed the removal of the old state flag into law, the law stipulated that the new flag design must include the phrase “In God We Trust.” If voters had rejected the new flag design, a new design would have been proposed by the legislature and gone to a vote in November 2021.

A referendum was placed on the ballot in 2001 for Mississippians to replace the state flag, but the former flag gained the majority of the vote to stay in place.

The university has not flown the state flag on campus since 2015.

Enrollment drops for fourth year

ELIZA NOE

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Enrollment at the University of Mississippi is down for the fourth year in a row, according to data from the state Institutions of Higher Learning.

A year ago, there were 22,273 students at UM, but fall 2020 numbers have the population down to 21,676 students, a 2.7% decrease. There has been a steady decline in enrollment since its peak in 2016.

“At the University of Mississippi, we are committed to attracting the best students regardless of the challenging environment across higher education to recruit and retain students,” Chancellor Glenn Boyce said in a statement. “We remain dedicated to offering renowned academic programs, powerful student experiences and a dynamic campus life to shape purposeful and strategic learners into creative and critical thinkers who will build their personal legacies and be the leaders of tomorrow.”

Almost all higher learning institutions in the states saw decreases in enrollment this year, excluding Mississippi State University and the University of Southern Mississippi. Delta State University faced the largest disparity with a 20% drop in students.

UM’s retention rate, which represents the percentage of first-year students who choose to continue their education at the university, also fell from last year from 86.6% to 85.7%.

5,276 students, or 24.3% of the student population, are underrepresented minorities at the university, a decrease of 119 students from last school year. African American enrollment this year totals 2,806 students, or 12.9%, overall, while last year, African American enrollment was 12.5%.

The number of in-state students, however, has increased. This year’s numbers show that 59.7% of students are in-state, compared to 58.3% in 2019.

Hyde-Smith defeats Espy in Senate rematch

KENNETH NIEMEYER

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Incumbent republican Senator Cindy Hyde-Smith has defeated democratic challenger Mike Espy. The Associated Press called the race for Hyde-Smith at 10:45 p.m.

This is the second race between Hyde-Smith and Espy and the first matchup since a special election was held for the seat two years ago. In 2018, former Gov. Phil Bryant appointed Hyde-Smith to the Senate after former Sen. Thad Cochran retired. Espy challenged Hyde-Smith in a 2018 special election that Hyde-Smith won with 53.9% of the vote.

This time, the Espy campaign gained a significantly larger amount of campaign funds than Hyde-Smith’s campaign, out-raising her campaign by millions.

Healthcare was a central issue in the race between Espy and Hyde-Smith. Hyde-Smith supports President Donald Trump’s plan to eliminate the Affordable Care Act (ACA), also called Obamacare, and Espy supported the expansion of Medicaid under the ACA.

Hyde-Smith repeatedly de-

nied the Espy campaign’s requests to debate. When asked why she would not debate Espy, Hyde-Smith repeatedly said “losing candidates and reporters” were the only people interested in a debate.

Espy was the first Black congressman from Mississippi since reconstruction and served as the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture under former President Bill Clinton.

Hyde-Smith previously served in the state Senate as a Democrat district for 12 years, changing her party affiliation to Republican in 2010. She then served as the state commissioner of agriculture and commerce for eight years.

Incumbents won in all of Mississippi’s congressional elections. Democrat Bennie Thompson kept his seat in the House of Representatives for Mississippi’s second district. Republicans Trent Kelly, Michael Guest and Tony Palazzo were reelected in the first, third and fourth districts respectively.

Kelly defeated UM law professor Antonia Eliason — Mississippi’s first Democratic Socialist candidate — and Palazzo ran unopposed.



BILLY SCHUERMAN / THE DAILY MISSISSIPPIAN

Cindy Hyde-Smith speaks to constituents in Tate County about the future of the Republican Party on Oct. 5, 2020. Hyde-Smith was declared as the winner of the Mississippi Senate race by the Associated Press.

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LINES
continued from page 1

And now we wait.



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of up to three hours
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wait times
hours in
county.



Above: Voters waited in line until after 8 p.m. to vote at the Lafayette County Civic Center

Far left: Jan Hayes fills out her ballot for the 2020 election. This is Hayes's first time voting in Mississippi after moving from New Jersey.

Left: 'I Voted' stickers and hand sanitizer are offered to voters after casting their ballots.

Photos by Billy Schuerman

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UM athletes named Players of the Week

KELBY ZENDEJAS

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Ole Miss quarterback Matt Corral and senior soccer player Madisyn Pezzino were named SEC Offensive Players of the Week.

Corral garnered one of the conference's weekly accolades after a record-breaking performance during the Vanderbilt game last weekend. The quarterback completed 31 out of 34 passes for 412 yards and six touchdowns in the 52-21 victory against the Commodores.

With a 91.2% completion rate, the California native tied Tennessee's Joshua Dobbs in the 2016 record.

Corral tied Eli Manning's single-game record in touchdown passes with six which is also the most touchdowns in regulation history. In addition, Corral beat Manning's 18 consecutive pass attempts, completing 19 at the beginning of the game.

This week is bye week, but the Rebels will be back

in action on Nov. 14 against South Carolina at 6:30 p.m. in Vaught-Hemingway Stadium.

Meanwhile, Ole Miss soccer worked for a 4-3 win against No. 14 Georgia on Saturday with Pezzino scoring two of the four goals during crucial times in the game to put the Rebels ahead of the Bulldogs.

The accolade is the first of Pezzino's career. The New York native scored two out of three of her shot attempts in the Rebels' most recent game. One came from goalkeeper Ashley Orkus's kick into Molly Martin's header to finish in the net.

The second goal came from the same two teammates, and as before, Pezzino finished a volley after the Bulldogs had regained the lead to bring the Rebels back in the game.

The Rebels will head to Nashville on Nov. 7 for the last regular-season game against Vanderbilt before the SEC Championship tournament in Orange Beach, Ala.



PHOTO COURTESY: OLE MISS ATHLETICS

Cross country teams succeed in SEC Championship

RUBY DRAAYER

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Ole Miss cross country had a successful day at the SEC Championship in Baton Rouge, La. last Friday with the men's team finishing second in the 8k and the women's team finishing third in the 6k. Ole Miss runners took all top three spots, sweeping the race for the first time since Alabama did so in 2017.

"On the whole, I think any time you have both teams in the top-three in the SEC, that's not something that you are ashamed of," UM head coach Ryan Vanhoy said in a press conference on Monday. "Obviously, finishing top-three in a Power-5 conference is a nice result, but I think here we always

strive to finish a little bit better than that, whether that's winning the conference or being top two."

For the men's race, junior Mario Garcia Romo finished first, and sophomore Cole Bullock and senior Waleed Suliman finished in a close 2nd and 3rd, making Ole Miss the 10th men's team to ever podium sweep the SEC Championship.

"We were pretty fast at the end. We tried to just save energy during the race," Garcia Romo said to the SEC Network. "When we started to go, I just followed Waleed. I didn't know Cole was behind us. I think we closed pretty well and everything went like we planned it."

Garcia Romo is one of only three Rebels to ever place first at an SEC cross country title. His win helped lead Ole Miss to second

place overall, just behind Arkansas.

"It feels incredible. I've been dreaming about this for 11 months now," Garcia Romo said. "I knew this was a goal I've had since I came (to Ole Miss). This is one of the biggest races of my life. This win means a lot to me. I couldn't be more proud of this team. We did a really good job this year."

Meanwhile, the women's team was also able to place high in the competitive match up, coming in third place. Alabama took second place, and Arkansas won the top seat.

Senior Anna Elkin led the Rebels again as the Texas native came in eighth overall with a personal record of 20:15.9.

"The conference is much better, much more competitive this year than last," head coach Vanhoy said. "I think we have a better team than we did last year, but just a couple things didn't quite come together for us on the season, and we never really quite had a full team performance that I thought we were capable of on the women's side."

The Rebels will now look to the NCAA Cross Country Championship, which will possibly take place in March.

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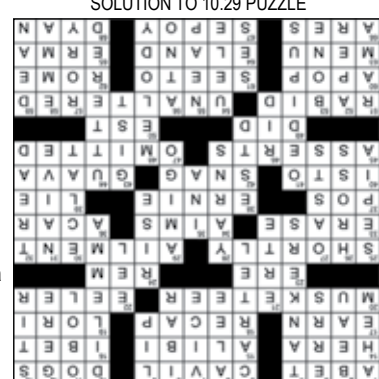
ACROSS

- 1- Adds;
- 5- Emulate Cicero;
- 10- Golden;
- 14- Turn over;
- 15- Lion sounds;
- 16- Romain de Tiroff, familiarly;
- 17- Andean country;
- 18- Body of values;
- 19- Votes against;
- 20- Immortal;
- 22- Ogles;
- 23- Votes against;
- 24- Musical ability;
- 25- Upsetting team;
- 29- Aged;
- 33- Similar;
- 34- Greasy;
- 36- Jazz singer Laine;
- 37- Actor Kilmer;
- 38- Mediterranean island;
- 39- Gal of song;
- 40- French summers;
- 42- Scandinavian capital city;
- 43- Steeple;
- 45- Inactive;
- 47- Least original;
- 49- Gasteyer of "Saturday Night Live";

DOWN

- 1- Dirty Harry's org.;
- 2- Peter Fonda title role;
- 3- Paul Sorvino's daughter;
- 4- Soviet satellite;
- 5- Threat finale;
- 6- Routine;
- 7- Contented sighs;
- 8- Speaker of Cooperstown;
- 9- PC key;
- 10- Nonproprietary;
- 11- Dies ___;
- 12- Interstellar dist.;
- 13- Actress Harper;

SOLUTION TO 10.29 PUZZLE



- 21- Gap;
- 22- Fond du ___, Wis.;
- 24- "Only Time" singer;
- 25- Rescued;
- 26- Aristotle's teacher;
- 27- Fuel transport;
- 28- Way to cook;
- 29- Choir members;
- 30- Beast of Borden;
- 31- Approaches;
- 32- Apartment sign;
- 35- Ailing;
- 38- ___ Lisa;
- 41- Dollar;
- 43- Delhi wrap;
- 44- Highland;
- 46- ___ questions?;
- 48- SAT giver;
- 51- He ran from Iran;
- 52- Tent stick;
- 53- Bakery worker;
- 54- ___-Japanese War;
- 55- Author Hunter;
- 56- Zilch;
- 57- Apple variety;
- 58- Pill bottle;
- 59- Socialite Maxwell;
- 61- Hog;

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

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

OPINION



ILLUSTRATION BY: NAKIYAH JORDAN / THE DAILY MISSISSIPPIAN

To do list: Buy tissue. Paint. Remember to eat lunch. Take antidepressants.

Your civic duty starts with voting. It doesn't end there.

KATIE DAMES
thedmopinion@gmail.com

Powerless. That's how I normally feel on a Monday morning, but with Election Day approaching quickly, I woke up especially lost.

Hoping to follow my civic responsibilities, I requested my absentee ballot in August and submitted it nearly a month before Election Day. 10 days after I mailed my ballot, I began to panic. I waited a few more days, anxious while reading headlines about delays in the United States Postal Service and dozens of stories about stolen or destroyed ballots. After calling three different officials at my local election commission, I finally talked with the person I needed — who told me to tough it out and wait. I learned that short of making the 12-hour round trip ride home — hoping that my three jobs and classes would allow me to fill out a provisional ballot — I just had to hope for the best that my ballot would be received on time.

Scarred by the headlines of ballot boxes set ablaze and stolen mail, I had zero hope that my ballot arrived. I assumed I was part of the unlucky 3.5-4.9% of

mail-in voters whose ballots are lost forever. Today, I checked the tracker again and finally saw that glorious green checkmark next to the words "Ballot Received."

Working perfectly through a flawed system does not guarantee perfect outcomes. I felt like I failed my most basic civic duty, even while taking as many measures as possible to make sure my voice was heard loud and clear. However, when I assumed my ballot disappeared, instead of wallowing, I took action. I had difficult dialogues with family members and explained down-ballot issues to anyone who would listen. While phone banking, I left dozens of voice messages on voting information in a swing state whose classification as a battleground has only been amplified by lawsuits and discarded ballots.

By engaging behind the scenes of the electoral process, I have a deeper understanding of the value of voting, but I have also felt how insignificant that vote may feel when the country is facing one of its most high-stakes elections during a pandemic. The solution to this disconnect? Treat every day like Election Day, or better yet, treat every day like you believe your voice will never be heard. Our votes matter more when

we consistently commit to our civic duty during the four years between presidential elections. The next presidents, governors and other public officials will determine who gets desperately needed COVID relief, but we can do the next best thing to reduce deaths: stay at home as the country reaches a record-high number of deaths and a third wave. As disinformation tears apart at the fabric of our democracy, we can debunk conspiracy theories for family and friends, and possibly even more important, we can fact check posts before we share them on social media.

According to the Pew Research Center, Gen Z is more likely than other generations to wish for an activist government, meaning one that is more involved in solving the nation's problems. More than ever, I agree with this sentiment, but I also firmly believe that we have to continue to be involved in solving the nation's problems as well. Being an active citizen means far more than simply showing up at the polls. It's never too late to make your voice count, even after the polls close.

Katie Dames is the opinion editor from Saint Louis, Mo., majoring in international studies.

Opinion Policies:

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No-touch posing and social distancing will be implemented. Photographers and assistants will not make physical contact and will keep 6ft distance from subjects, customers & employees. All work areas will be cleaned after each sitting and all clothing (studio-provided attire) will be steam cleaned between each subject. All photographers and assistants will be wearing face masks at all times.



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MARIJUANA

continued from page 1

have cancer, epilepsy or other seizures, Parkinson's disease, Huntington's disease, muscular dystrophy, multiple sclerosis, cachexia, post-traumatic stress disorder, a positive HIV status, AIDS, chronic or debilitating pain, ALS, dementia, Crohn's disease, ulcerative colitis, sickle-cell anemia, autism with aggressive or self injurious behavior, pain that can't be managed by opioids, spinal cord disease or injury, uncontrollable nausea, or severe muscle spasms. Initiative 65A would have only

allowed terminally ill patients to smoke marijuana and did not have specifications for qualifying conditions, possession limits, sales taxes or administering agencies. Funds for the medical marijuana program would have come from the state under 65A, rather than a self-funded system.

Opponents of Initiative 65 pointed to the concern that local governments would not be able to zone medical marijuana dispensaries because they would be overseen by the state health department. Though, the initiative does stipulate that treatment centers can not be located within 500 feet of a school, church or childcare establishment.



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