

Gator Tales



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A newsletter for the citizens of the PRVWSD community

The Pearl River Valley Water Supply District

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Sunset Series brings music to Lakeshore

Good tunes, great sunset views and spicy shellfish are coming together at Lakeshore Park this spring, courtesy of a new neighborhood music series announced by the Barnett Reservoir Foundation. The Sunset Concert Series, sponsored by The Crawfish King of Flowood, will be held every other Thursday night beginning March 23 and ending June 1. The Crawfish King will sell fresh crawfish and shrimp boiled on site, and the Foundation will sell beverages, including beer, and kid's meals.

"Part of the Foundation's mission is to promote the residential community at Barnett Reservoir, and this neighborhood-based concert series is a first step," said series coordinator Jeff Roberts, a member of the Foundation Board. "Having good music on the point at the park provides one of the best views of the beautiful sunsets at The Rez. We think this is an ideal way to give our residents more of a neighborhood or community feel, and of course a new way for visitors to enjoy The Rez."

The music lineup includes:

March 23 - The Reservoir's own Jay Herrington.

April 6 - Sid Thompson of DoubleShot.

April 20 - Amanda Joullian and John Chappell of Traveling Jane.

May 4 - Chris Gill, a local favorite.

May 18 - Barry Leach and Andrew Pates, two of Jackson's most popular and best musicians.

June 1 - Lisa Mills, a singer/songwriter and Hattiesburg native now living in Mobile.

Herrington's set will begin at 6 p.m. and end at 8 p.m. Other event times will be announced and will usually include the official sunset about 30 minutes prior to the end of the show.

Admission is \$5 per vehicle, with no charge for vehicles with "Rez Tags," and \$1 for walk-ins or bicycles. No outside food or drinks will be allowed in to the park for the Concert Series, and guests are urged to bring chairs or blankets to the events. "We are also offering a \$20 Patron Sponsorship for those interested in showing support for the Foundation and for the series," Roberts said. "Their families will be admitted free for the spring series."



Rez App debuts for iPhones

The Pearl River Valley Water Supply District has introduced a new cell phone app, called The Rez, which is free and currently available for Apple devices at the App Store. It will be available to Android users in mid to late April.

The app brings to the device instant access to emergency announcements, such as boil water notices, plus immediate access to current weather, PRVWSD accounts, contact information for staff, recreational opportunities and a schedule of events at the reservoir.

One of the most important functions is a push notification function within the app that allows PRVWSD to notify residents of specific subdivisions affected by boil water notices.

It also includes a link to allow online payments for bills.

News Around the REZ

Outdoor Expo at the Bassmaster Elite

Over 100 of the best bass fishermen in the world will be coming to Barnett Reservoir April 27-30 for a Bassmaster Elite Series tournament, and local sponsors Ridgeland Tourism Commission and Barnett Reservoir Foundation have announced big plans for the weekend event.

The Outdoor Expo at The Rez, presented by the Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks, will be held on Saturday and Sunday beginning at 10 a.m. each day. MDWFP will fill the lower part of Old Trace Park with its assets, including:

- * Life animal exhibits from the Museum of Natural Science
- * An archery range from its Archery in Mississippi Schools program
- * A casting area and casting contest
- * Disc golf and putt putt golf
- * Conservation officers to answer questions and to display their trucks, command center and air boats
- * Boater education with patrol boats on site.

The agency will also have a license information and sales booth, plus biologists to answer questions on fishing and hunting.

The Expo will also feature the Jackson Ready Mix sound stage, with live music before and after the weigh-in on Saturday and before the weigh-in on Sunday. The music lineup includes Laurel-based Four Shots at 1 p.m. Saturday, headliner Lindsey Cardinale at about 5:30-7:30 on Saturday, and then Doug Hurd and Larry Brewer at 1 p.m. Sunday.

Admission is free to all events. There will be food and beverage vendors on site, and a beer garden area conducted by the Barnett Reservoir Foundation. No outside coolers will be allowed.

The Elite, which features 111 of the world's best fishermen, is a four-day tournament with the full field fishing on Thursday and Friday. The field will be cut to 50 for Saturday's third round and to the top 12 on Sunday. The top prize is about \$108,000.

Weigh-ins each day will be held at Old Trace Park in Ridgeland, with an approximate starting time of between 3 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. Blast off will be at safe running light out of Madison Landing and Main Harbor.



Foundation supports Rez community



What is the Barnett Reservoir Foundation? It's a frequently asked question of the private non-profit group that supports the reservoir's residential and commercial community.

Its stated mission: "To assist the Pearl River Valley Water Supply District in promoting recreation and interest in the Ross Barnett Reservoir for businesses and families. The Foundation raises funds for projects to enhance and improve the quality of life for residents and provide recreational opportunities for visitors."

The Foundation sponsors the annual Independence Celebration and Fireworks Show, the Smokin' on The Rez BBQ and Music Festival, a boat show, craft show and this spring will begin a six-event Sunset Concert Series at Lakeshore Park. In April, the Foundation will be site coordinating sponsor for the Bassmaster Elite Series Tournament on The Rez.

For more information on the Foundation, including how to join and become involved, visit www.barnettreservoirfoundation.org.



Main Harbor Store is located on the water, next to Red Dot Road, inside Main Harbor Marina. We have a variety of products to offer at our store! From fuel and oil to snacks and boat accessories, Main Harbor Store is your one-stop shop! Our dockside fuel is **ethanol free**, and we have 87 and 93 grade. Sea Tow members receive a 10¢ per gallon discount on fuel. Main Harbor Store offers **pontoon boat rentals** ranging from 12 passengers to 16 passengers. We also offer **jet ski** and **kayak rentals**!

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SCHEDULED EVENTS AT REZ

Mar 23	Sunset Concert Series	LS	live music in park
Mar 24	Run Up 4 Downs	OT	5K
Apr 6	Sunset Concert Series	LS	live music in park
Apr 8-9	Barnett Reservoir Boat Show	RR	water recreation displays
Apr 8	Racing for a Seed	LS	5K
Apr 20	Sunset Concert Series	LS	live music in park
Apr 21-22	MS CajunFest	OT	Family event/food/music
Apr 22	Epilepsy Run	LS	5K
Apr 27-30	BASS Elite Series	ML/OT	Fishing Tourney
Apr 29-30	OUTDOOR Expo at The REZ	OT	MDWFP outdoor free event
May 4	Sunset Concert Series	LS	Live music in park
May 6	Century Ride	OT	Bike race
May 12	Pepsi Pops	OT	Symphony music
May 13	Dragon Boat	OT	Team boat race
May 18	Sunset Concert Series	LS	Live music in park
May 20	Hatchling Race	LS	Gator Bait kids kayak race
Jun 1	Sunset Concert Series	LS	Live music in park
Jun 3	Heatwave	OT	Triathlon race
July 1	Independence Celebration at The REZ	OT/LS	Family event / fireworks

OT- Old Trace Park / LS - Lakeshore Park / PSP – Pelahatchie Shore Park

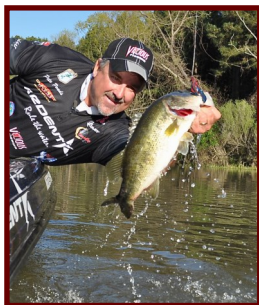
SP - Spillway Road / FL - Fannin Landing / ML - Madison Landing / RR - Rankin Ramp

Bass update: Rez in good shape

Biologists with the Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks presented its latest population assessment of largemouth bass in The Rez at an annual meeting with local fishermen. The report was excellent.

According to Ryan Jones, who oversees Barnett for the MDWFP, there are two causes for excitement. The main one is that a very strong class of bass found two years ago in the 9- to 12-inch range was located again during surveys last fall. Jones said that year class is now moving into the preferred catch range exceeding 14 inches. “We missed those fish in our fall 2015 sampling, which was a concern,” he said. “But they showed up this past fall. I think what happened is that we surveyed in 2015 during a drought and low water and we just missed them. Last fall (2016), we waited until the drought was over and water was rising before surveying and there they were.

“The other exciting news is that the 2016 survey turned up another strong class of 9- to 12-inch fish, meaning fishermen should have several good years of fishing ahead.”



Project updates

PRVWSD currently has several projects underway and more coming to improve facilities and infrastructure at Barnett Reservoir. Among them:

Road/traffic improvements: Grants received by Rankin County, the City of Ridgeland and by PRVWSD will fund improvements to reservoir traffic, including an overlay of the northbound upper road across the dam. In addition, changes will be made on Lake Harbor Drive from Northpark Drive to Breakers Lane, and on Spillway Road from Northshore Parkway/Fannin Road to Hugh Ward Parkway to ease traffic.

Madison Landing: A grant through the Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks has allowed Phase 1 of an upgrade to Madison Landing boat launch facility. The initial phase included the purchase of floating courtesy piers and funding an engineering and design of a permanent breakwater for the popular boat ramp to be built in Phase 2. Eventually, the six-lane ramp would either be replaced or upgraded, along with possible improvements to the parking area and comfort station.

New landing at Highway 43: A grant through the Mississippi Department of Transportation will help design and build a new boat landing on the south side of Mississippi Highway 43 across the highway from Tommy’s Trading Post and adjacent to Sunset Marina. It is currently in the design stage. The landing would give much-needed public access to the upper main lake, reduce traffic at Goshen Springs Landing and include a harbor for the PRVWSD fleet.

New kayak piers: Three new kayak launches were ordered, have arrived and are awaiting good weather for installation this spring at Pelahatchie Shore Park, Brown’s Landing and Ratliffs Ferry. That will give kayakers, the fastest growing user group of the lake, four dedicated sites, including the existing one at the Turtle Point Nature Trail in Pelahatchie Bay.

Park upgrades: A new kid’s playground has been completed near the water at Old Trace Park, and work should begin soon on a new exercise and fitness trail at Lakeshore Park.

Dredging program: The main part of the Phase 2 of the long-term dredging program in reservoir subdivisions was completed in February, including the east side of Forest Point and the west side of Arrowhead. Contracts have also been signed to finish dredging in Twin Harbors, the other part of Phase 2. PRVWSD officials are currently planning Phase 3.

VOLUNTEERS are needed for Barnett Foundation events!

The Barnett Reservoir Foundation is host to several events at The REZ, including the upcoming *Bassmaster Elite Series* tournament in April. Volunteers are always needed and appreciated. Get involved and help the Foundation celebrate life in the reservoir community. Visit www.BarnettReservoirFoundation.org for more information on volunteering.

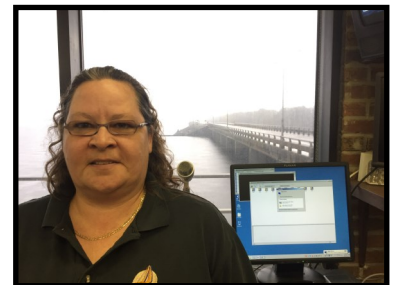


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Meet PRVWSD **Laura Jones, Senior Spillway Operator**

Laura Jones enjoys helping people and making a difference, which makes her a perfect fit for her job as Senior Spillway Operator for the Pearl River Valley Water Supply District. It also explains a lot about her career path.

“I was in the Coast Guard for four years prior, and that included two years on a 270-foot cutter out of Portsmouth, Va., said Jones, a native of Kosciusko. “I’ve worked in the Spillway Tower 19 years, and what I like most about it is that I feel like I am helping people, making an impact. Whether its monitoring the weather, lake levels or spillway discharge, or answering emergency calls, I feel like I am making a difference.”



The reservoir control tower is manned 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 52 weeks a year, making it a perfect choice to handle after-hour calls to the Reservoir Police Department, emergency and 911 calls. “We also monitor all the systems, including sewer lift stations, water wells and tanks,” she said. “I like that we can handle about anything at any time.”

Jones is one of five tower employees for PRVWSD. Dick Gilbert is the Spillway Supervisor, and Chad Cockroft, Darren Ross and Kim Lloyd are Spillway Operators.



Feathered Cow to open mid to late April

The Rez community’s next restaurant is coming this spring to the Northshore Crossing Shopping Center, a few doors down from the Kroger store on Spillway Road in Rankin County.

Nathan Glynn, owner of the Feathered Cow, said his new venture should be open “either in mid or late April, depending on our contractors.” The restaurant will be similar to Glynn’s original Feathered Cow in Jackson.

“We’re working on some new menu items for the reservoir restaurant and we’re excited about joining that community,” Glynn said.

Good News

Add Polk’s Discount Drugs at 1866 Spillway Road to the list of Reservoir area sources of non-ethanol gas, which is recommended for use in out-board motors and small engine tools.