

## ■ SoundOff

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that lives inside a very limited geographical city limits will never see such progress.

The police need to do something about a boy that keeps riding up and down the Barrytown Road with his radio booming. Is there anybody I can call that can do something?

**(ED. NOTE:** If it is in the Gilbertown Police Jurisdiction, call 843-2766. If its outside their JD, call the Choctaw Co. Sheriff's Department at 205-459-2166, or the 911 dispatch center the next time your walls begin to vibrate. — Tommy.)

Way to go, Gilbertown! My family and I are from Panama City, Florida and we plan to be there on June 2nd for the Rhett Akins/Clay Walker show. We are also coming back in October for the Ty Herndon Homecoming. For a small town, Gilbertown sure knows how to bring the "big names" to town!

I was told by a State Senator that the county's Parks Board did NOT have to be set up as a non-profit corporation. He said that the bill authorizing the Board did not include such language. He helped pass that bill so he should know, right? If that is true, why did the county do such a thing? Was it political? Was it to get certain people off the board so they could get certain new people on the board? I am upset about this and I hope that others who feel the same as I do will be at the Commission meeting next Monday (May 7th) at 8 a.m. and sign up to speak your mind. It seems that there are hidden agendas at work here that we don't know about.

I would vote "no" on annexation. That's just my opinion. My neighbor says he would vote "yes", but to tell you the truth, it's not worth getting worked-up over. If it passes, I will live with it. If it doesn't, I will still live with it. I say the town needs to set a date for an election and let us residents vote, then, whatever happens, happens.

How did the Commissioners come up with the names for that new Parks Board? Seems to me like some big time political strings may have been pulled. Look at how it was done! Politics, politics, politics! My, my. And here we voters thought things were going to be different.

As a business owner in Butler, I think steps could have been taken by officials to make it less of a hassle for customers to get in and out of our stores during the sidewalk work. This has been an absolute mess. I'm not happy about this and I want the mayor and council to know it.

This is regarding the Sound-Off that began with the question "Advantage for whom?" This person stated that "house insurance is based on how far you live from the fire department and the department's rating." According to my insurance company my house insurance premiums are based on how close I live to the nearest fire hydrant and the distance to the Department, which determines the rating on which premiums are based. I live in an annexed area and there are pros and cons to annexation. We receive two property tax bills each year, one from the county and one from the city. I've found that by living in the city my real estate value is higher than living in the county. When a sewage treatment plant is involved, it takes millions of dollars to build a sewage treatment plant and sewage lines. Somebody has to pay for them and it's going to be the users who receive a bill each month. On the other side of the issue you have continuous police protection and the assurance that they won't be on the other side of the county if you ever need them.

I have a suggestion for Butler officials — please, please, do not schedule another Spring Fling on Easter weekend. There are too many other activities that weekend and folks just don't have time. It is a good idea, just not on Easter weekend.

I don't understand why Alabama is apologizing for slavery. Are there any former slave owners alive to apologize to? Are there any former slaves alive to apologize to? No. So, what is the reason for this and can someone who has done nothing wrong apologize for something that happened over 100 years ago? I think we all know the answer to that.

I think they are doing a GREAT JOB with the food at the Gilbertown ball park.

As far as annexation of Barrytown Road into the town limits of Gilbertown, I am totally against it.

This SoundOff is to the veterans and the soldiers of the United States ... THANK YOU for what you did for our country! Unlike some of the people today, I appreciate our military and love our country. I am a junior at Southern Choctaw High School and I am planning to join the Marines as soon as I graduate. I have had a lot of offers from colleges but I have turned them down to join the military and do my part to defend our freedom.

What's so wrong with being inside a town? I heard all of the arguments a few years ago against this and not one of them made a lick of sense to me. Some folks just want to complain and fuss and be against anything that would help us grow.

A lot of us students have been talking about that moron who sounded off about our veterans. My dad is a veteran, my grandfathers on both sides of my family were in the Navy, and I have two brothers in the Army right now, one in Iraq and one in Germany. I am proud of what they did and are still doing, which is more than I can say for that guy. I say we all chip in and buy him a one-way ticket outta here!

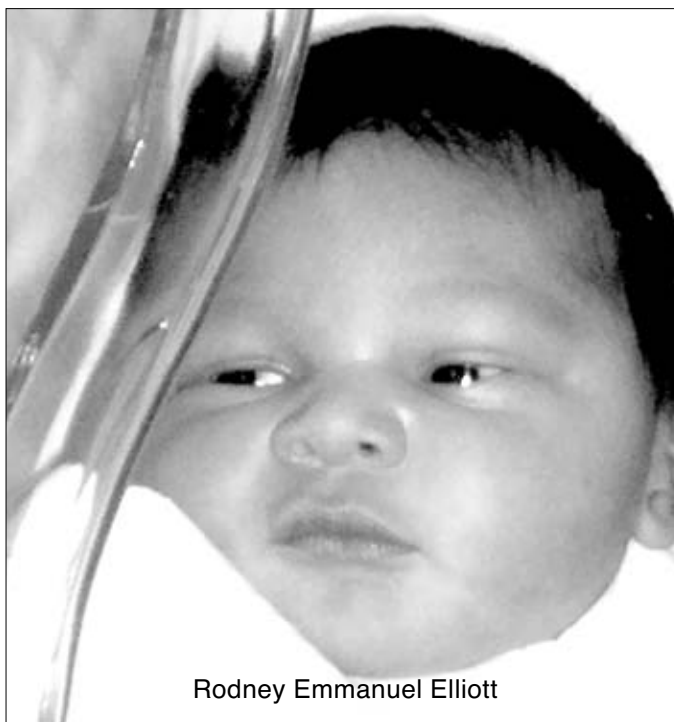
I guess giving themselves big, fat pay raises is more important than doing something that would really help the people of this whole region. I am talking about the four-laning of U.S. 84. We will be lucky if that happens in our grandchildren's lifetimes. The only thing they care about in Montgomery is seeing how many liberal Democrat lawyers they can pack in the House and Senate and how big they can make their paychecks.

Slavery was evil, but I think that apologizing for it now, more than 140 years after the Emancipation Proclamation was signed, and after every former slave owner and enslaved person has been dead for several generations, is a meaningless, political ploy designed to appease the Al Sharptons and Jesse Jacksons of the world. I am sorry if that offends some people but it is the truth. I am of Japanese descent, and I do not expect anyone to "apologize" for the manner in which my own Japanese-American grandparents were rounded up and interned in prison camps in WWII. It is ridiculous. They have been dead for years and what good would it do to apologize to them now? Absolutely none. No one owes me an apology, either. We just need to treat each other with respect and make sure that such things never happen again.

Someone needs to tell those skateboarders to watch where they are going. I almost hit a boy who skated out into the middle of the road.

If the Judge and Commission wanted to show the people that they are serious about changing "the way things are done", they failed. I am referring to the decision to "re-vamp" the Parks and Rec. Board. Can any of them explain why only ONE former member was allowed to remain on the new board? And why did no one have the courtesy to call ahead of time and talk to the former board members about the decision to give them the boot? Why did they have to read about it in the paper? NOTHING has changed as far as politics go, and if you don't believe it, just look at how this was handled.

# New arrivals!



Rodney Emmanuel Elliott

## Rodney Emmanuel Elliott

LISMAN -- Rodney and Amy Elliott of Lisman proudly announce the birth of their son Rodney Emmanuel. Emmanuel was born April 5, 2007 at 1:15 a.m. in Meridian, MS. at Jeff Anderson Hospital. He weighed 6 lbs. 7 oz. And was 19 inches long.

His maternal grandparents are Johnny Lee Elliott of Tuscaloosa and the late Annie Lee Elliott.

Emmanuel was welcomed home by his big sister Be'annca, Family and friends.

## ■ Dee Ann

From page 5-A

American flag while sitting in the back of his pickup.

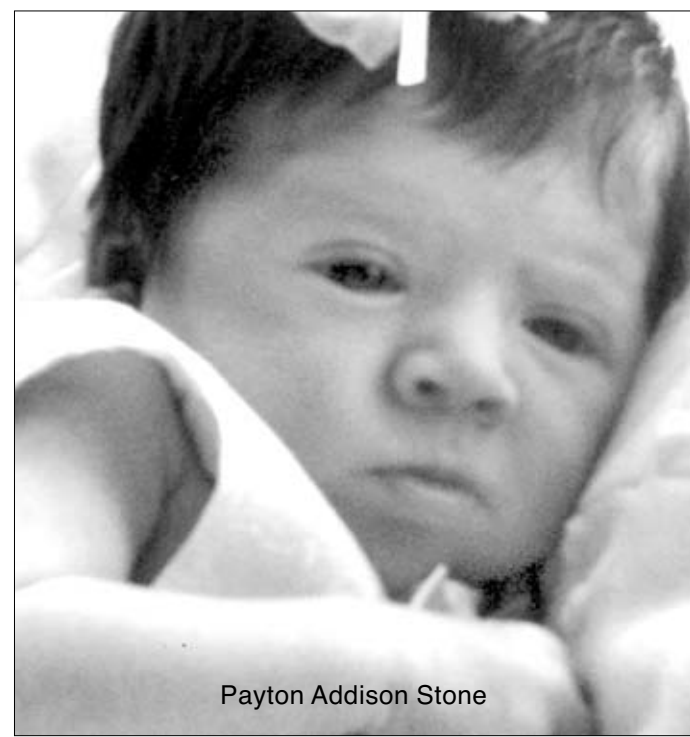
While there were obvious differences in the faces and attitudes of every person in every vehicle on that highway, when it came down to it, we were all in the same situation, sharing the same dilemma, and crawling like snails through the same traffic jam.

During that time, we were forced to be still long enough to give each other that second glance, to smile and wave from our car windows, or to challenge a few truck drivers to honk their horns. We had time to watch with amusement as the guy with the American flag ran up and down the side of the highway waving Old Glory and picking flowers from the roadside.

After about two hours of moving a mere two feet every 10 minutes, the

traffic began to move, slowly at first, then a little faster and a little faster, until we were all, once again, setting our cruise controls on 75 or 80 and cruising to our destinations. In that moment, we became separate again, traveling in our own worlds and no longer sharing the moment, no longer sharing the dilemma, no longer taking time to give each other a second thought.

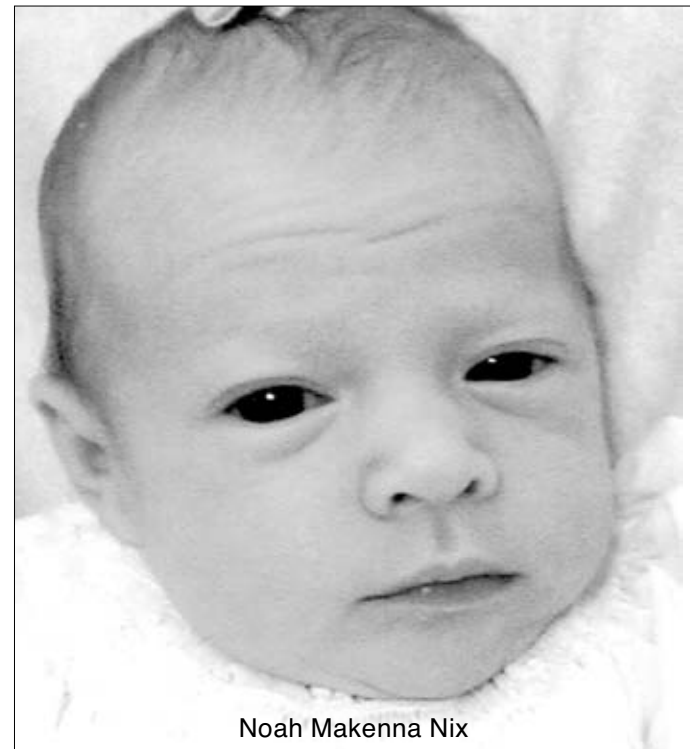
As I drove the rest of the way back to Choctaw County, I thought of that traffic jam, those cars and trucks, and the two hours I'd spent with them, and I realized that, in this rat-race world of looking out for number one with no time for anyone else, we all need to take time to give each other a second glance. We need to take time to smile and to honk our horns in fun, and even to wave our flags and pick a few flowers by the roadside. We all need to stop along the highway and share a traffic jam for a little while — on the interstate and in life.



Payton Addison Stone

## Payton Addison Stone

Keith and Alana Stone wish to announce the birth of their daughter Payton Addison Stone, born February 2, 2007 weighing 5 lbs. 6 oz. And 19 in. long. Paternal gradparents are Tommy and Judy Stone of Boaz and the maternal grandparents are Maxie and Shirley Nix of Silas.



Noah Makenna Nix

## Noah Makenna Nix

BUTLER -- Neal and Brandi Nix of Butler, AL. Proudly announce the birth of their daughter Noah Makenna. Noah was born on March 10, 2007 at 3:26 p.m. She weighed 6 pounds and 10 ounces and was 19 1/2 inches long.

Maternal grandparents are Bobby & Kathy Johnson of Barrytown. Paternal grandparents are Kenny Wayne & Angie Nix of Melvin.

Maternal great grandparents are Andrew & Barbara Rhodes of Silas and Grady & Avelle Johnson of Barrytown. Maternal great-great-grandmother is Bertie Jackson of Silas.

Paternal great-grandparents are Bea Nix and Mary Evans of Melvin and J.B. Evans of Gilbertown.

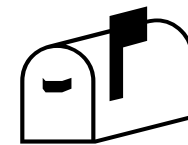
Noah was welcomed home by her big brother Evan.

# Readers can sign up to take part in "Hats Off to Veterans"

Civilians coping with the demands of everyday life often forget the sacrifice of our soldiers. As we pay the rent and go shopping and raise our children, we take for granted our relative security and prosperity compared to the rest of the world. Soldiers, however, know all too well the chaos and turmoil of trouble spots because they witnessed it firsthand. May is National Military Appreciation Month and a fitting time to recognize the sacrifices American service members and their families make for freedom.

Furthermore, our Veterans deserve, and many desperately need, continuing confirmation of the value of their service as they cope with the aftermath of war. If the United States wishes to remain a society of justice and opportunity, we must continually find ways to support the people who laid their life on the line to preserve it. In addition to providing adequate healthcare, and educational benefits we must tend to psychological needs as well. Faced with budget cuts and swelling admissions, VA Medical Centers are not always able to fully address these psychological needs on an individual, veteran-by-veteran basis. Furthermore, a chasm exists between Veterans with needs, and independent citizens who are willing to pitch in, but don't know how. On the one hand, many Veterans would like to participate

## Letters



in special outreach programs but are unable to find a sponsor. On the other, individuals and groups would like to help a Veteran, but are often limited in the forms of assistance they can provide.

To bridge this gap, Manhattanville College, created a program called Hats off to Veterans ("Hats Off"). "Hats Off" promotes recognition to veterans especially for those home or hospital bound due to injury while serving our country.

When a person enrolls in the "Hats Off" program, they agree to mail or deliver a respectful greeting and note of encouragement to a hospitalized Veteran. They sign up at www.mysoldier.com to receive a "Hats Off" starter kit containing Veteran contact information, guidelines for letter writing and optional care package preparation, a My Soldier bracelet (to wear in support of Veterans and American service men and women) and a specially designed My Soldier baseball hat to include with the greeting they send to their Veteran.

The program and kits are free to all who register, but donations are

appreciated. Participation is not limited to Manhattanville College, but is open to the public. In fact, it is the goal of the program to have participants from all 50 states. We hope every American registers to use "Hats Off" to honor, support and thank a Veteran. It's an easy way for anyone to do his or her part to recognize and cheer a hospitalized Veteran.

**Richard A. Berman,**  
President  
Manhattanville College

We would like to thank our family, Pastor Robert Webb, Sr. and Pleasant Hill Baptist Church family, faculty and staff of Choctaw Co. Elementary School, employees of Choctaw Co. Courthouse, Choctaw Co. EMS Ambulance Service, E-911 Dispatcher Michelle Harris, Dr. Purdy and Staff, Dr. Naef and Staff, Dr. Seale, and the labor and delivery nurses at Jeff Anderson Regional Medical Center for the love, support, care, gifts, and most of all for the prayers during my pregnancy and the birth of our son.

We are true believers God is still performing

miracles. May God continue to bless each of you.

**Rodney, Amy, and Emmanuel Elliott**

The family of the late Esau Ridgeway would like to thank everyone for the many kind acts of love, phone calls, flowers, food, and most of all your prayers during the loss of our love one. May God bless each and everyone of you.

**Wife, children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren**

The family of Mamie Jones wants to express our thanks and appreciation for calls, visits, cards (we read every card), food, and all the kindness and comfort given us during our sorrow.

God Bless You All

**The Jones Family**

The Town of Toxey would like to thank all those who had a part in the success of this year's Toxey Reunion.

To all those who donated items, bought cakes, provided entertainment, or helped get the town ready for the event, we want to thank you so much for all the hard work and dedication. This is an important event for our town, and we want to thank everyone who turned out to support it. Thank you so much,

**Mayor Jeanette Carney and the Town Council**