



The Mini Page

Next Week:
\$ Money \$

Issue 35, 2024

Founded by Betty Debnam



photo by Christopher Barnette

Mississippi became our 20th state when it entered the Union in 1817. The state in the Deep South was the second to **secede**, or separate, from the Union before the Civil War.



Early history

Several American Indian tribes lived in the area before Europeans arrived, including the Choctaw, Chickasaw and Natchez. The Natchez Indians were almost completely wiped out by the French and never recovered. Today, most Natchez people are found in Oklahoma.

Hernando de Soto was the first European to explore the area, in 1540, claiming it for Spain. More than 100 years later, the French claimed the region.

After the French and Indian War in the mid-1700s, the British gained control of the area.

Mississippi today

About 3 million people live in the Magnolia State. The largest city and capital is Jackson, with a metro area of about 600,000 people.

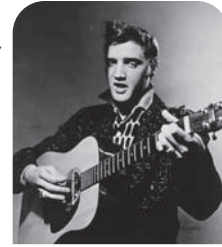
Although cotton was a huge crop for Mississippi before the Civil War, the state fell behind afterward because its leaders would not invest in **infrastructure** (like roads and railroads), public education and development of industries.

As a result, the state still ranks last in income and 49th in education.

Today, automobile plants in Mississippi make Toyota and Nissan cars. Other products made there include processed meats, grain and dairy products and beverages. People also work in furniture-making.

Living in Mississippi

Mississippi is thought to be the birthplace of the **blues**, a type of music that sprang from the songs of slaves as they worked in the fields. Elvis Presley, known as the king of rock 'n' roll, was born in Tupelo; his music was inspired by the blues.



Elvis Presley

Mississippians are no strangers to hurricanes. Not only does the state border the Gulf of Mexico, but almost all of its territory is considered **lowlands**, on average only 90 meters above sea level. The most recent damaging hurricane was Katrina in 2005, with wind gusts of 134 mph.

Mississippi's Petrified Forest in Flora is thought to have formed 36 million years ago when a flooding river snatched trees out of the ground. The sections of trunk were buried in debris from the flood. Over time, they decayed and then **petrified** into stone logs.



Working for change

Many historical figures in the civil rights movement got their start in Mississippi. They include:

- **Ida B. Wells** was born into slavery in Holly Springs in 1862. She was one of the founders of the NAACP (National Association for the Advancement of Colored People); she was also a journalist and teacher. Wells fought for women's rights, including the right to vote. She died in Chicago in 1931.



Ida B. Wells

- **Medgar Evers** was the NAACP's first field secretary in Mississippi. He was born in Decatur in 1925. Evers worked to integrate the University of Mississippi Law School. He was **assassinated**, or killed, at his home in Jackson in 1963.



Medgar Evers

- **Ruby Bridges** was born in Tylertown in 1954. You may have seen pictures of her as a 6-year-old as she integrated an elementary school in New Orleans. Today, Bridges is the chair of the Ruby Bridges Foundation, which promotes "the values of tolerance, respect and appreciation of all differences."



Ruby Bridges

Resources



On the Web:
• bit.ly/MPMiss

At the library:
• "The Mississippi River" by Colleen Sexton

Try 'n' Find

Words that remind us of Mississippi are hidden in this puzzle. Some words are hidden backward, and some letters are used twice. See if you can find:



BRIDGES, CIVIL WAR, EDUCATION, ELVIS, EVERS, GULF, HURRICANE, INFRASTRUCTURE, LOWLANDS, MAGNOLIA, MEXICO, MISSISSIPPI, NATCHEZ, PETRIFIED, RIVER, SECEDE, UNION, WELLS.

J D E I F I R T E P W E L L S
Y M C I V I L W A R G U L F I
K E N O I T A C U D E M E Y V
E X B Z M A G N O L I A V P L
R I P P I S S I S S I M E Q E
I C V U N A T C H E Z Z R U D
V O B S E G D I R B H I S N E
E R U T C U R T S A R F N I C
R L O W L A N D S P E Y M O E
S Z E N A C I R R U H U V N S

Cook's Corner

Easy Cheesy Cake

You'll need:

- 1 box lemon cake mix
- 1 (2-pound) carton ricotta cheese
- 4 eggs

- 3/4 cup sugar
- 1 teaspoon vanilla



What to do:

1. Prepare lemon cake mix according to directions on box, but do not bake.
2. Pour batter into a greased 9-by-13-inch pan.
3. Combine remaining ingredients in a large bowl. Mix well.
4. Pour cheese mixture evenly over batter.
5. Bake in a preheated 350-degree oven for 1 hour. When cool, cut into squares. Serves 8.

* You'll need an adult's help with this recipe.

1. White, soft and fluffy material spun into thread or yarn (6-letter noun)

□ □ □ □ □ □

2. Kind of music often showing sadness (5-letter noun)

□ □ □ □ □

3. Tropical storm with high winds, rain, thunder and lightning (9-letter noun)

□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □

4. A fish with a big head and whiskers near its mouth (7-letter noun)

□ □ □ □ □ □ □

1. _____ made Mississippi a very rich state.
2. The _____ inspired music like jazz, country and rock.
3. The winds from the _____ raced at 74 mph.
4. Most farm-raised _____ come from Mississippi.

ROOTONYM®

by Jan & Carey Orr Cook



Study the definition. When you know the missing word, fill in the letter boxes and the sentence blanks.

Answers: Cotton, Blues, Hurricane, Catfish.

Mini Jokes



Malcolm: What has four eyes but cannot see?
Margaret: Mississippi!

Eco Note



Israeli scientists say a marine pandemic that has violently wiped out the Red Sea's sea urchin population in just a matter of months is now spreading rapidly. The deaths were first noticed in the Gulf of Aqaba and have quickly spread southward into the Indian Ocean and eastward toward Southeast Asia. The same parasite responsible for the deaths also killed 95% of the urchins in the Caribbean two years ago. The urchins are known as the "gardeners" of the sea because they trim algae off coral reefs that otherwise block sunlight, allowing the coral to thrive.

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For later:

Look in your newspaper for articles that mention Mississippi.

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