

2001. The *Herald* published his entire speech October 4, 2001.

"My childhood years in Water Valley have shaped so profoundly who I have become as an adult," he said. "In a very meaningful sense, none of us who grew up here have ever really left Water Valley – the playmates, friendships, food, values and landscape endure as attributes which influence our thoughts and behavior. Many of the indelible memories, not surprisingly, are related to the period that Davidson High School was located on Cemetery Street." In what sounds like a charge to all gathered and still relevant to us today, Kerry added, "My father's generation struggled to create opportunity in an environment of educational deprivation and despair. We must continue this struggle, while maximizing the advantages which currently exist."

On May 17, 1990, The *Herald* printed an article recognizing Ezra C. Davidson, Jr., MD as the first African American president of the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists. We are including this article (right). Dr. Davidson passed away on March 12, 2018 at age 84. His nephew, Kerry Davidson Jr., recalled recently that Dr. Davidson did not want a funeral or memorial service. The accomplishments of the Davidson children and grandchildren speak for themselves as do those of the many students who attended Davidson Schools over forty-six years, including those from the twenty-eight graduating classes that began in 1942.

In the fall of 1970, thirteen years after Professor Davidson died, the doors of the all-black/segregated Davidson school system were shut. All students had to attend what were the practically all-white schools in the Water Valley School system. Three black students, Dorothy Boston, Dorothy Neely Middleton and Annette Hervey Westmoreland, had enrolled at Water Valley High in 1966 through the freedom of choice option. They were featured in Article 9, November 29, 2018. Many white students refused to attend school with blacks and enrolled in newly formed private academies, several of which still exist today.

Professor Davidson defines leadership, organizational development, fortitude and fatherhood. In an era of strict segregation, he refused to let any obstacle deter him from his vision. Just think how desolate our community would have been had he not provided an opportunity for blacks in Yalobusha County to get an education. Let's salute him on this Father's Day by sharing his story with our little ones who may be students at Davidson Elementary this fall or have gone through there without knowing its history. Let's continue his legacy. The epitaph on his tombstone reads, "To live in hearts we leave behind is not to die."

The obituary that appeared in the *Herald* on Thursday, September 5, 1957 sheds even more light on how much Professor Davidson meant to the Yalobusha Community and the many students who passed through the halls of Davidson. Hail to thee our dear old Davidson and to thee be true. We will love our Dear Ole Davidson, Hail oh Hail to thee!

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## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### Blackmur Library Offers Curbside Services

Blackmur Memorial Library is offering curbside service to patrons during the COVID-19 pandemic. To check out an item, go to the on-line card catalog, select the items you want and call the library at (662) 473-2444 with your selection. Library workers will give you an estimated time when your order will be filled or you can provide an estimated pick-up time. To access the library's card catalog, simply Google Blackmur Memorial Library and go to the web-page. A link on the page will take you to our on-line card catalog.

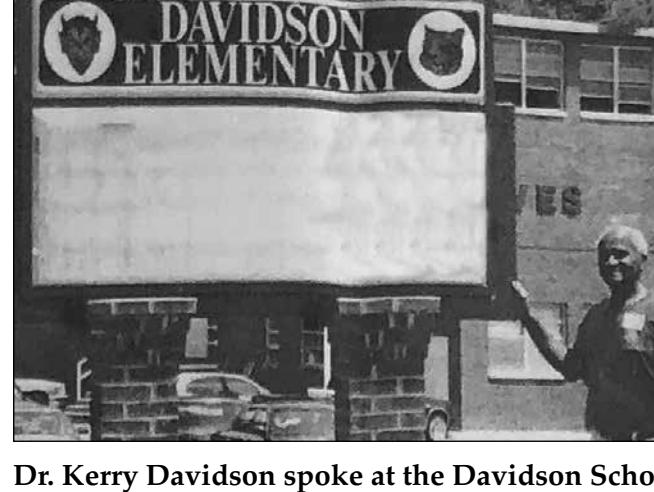
The library is also offering curbside copying and faxing services. To utilize this service, call beforehand to make arrangements. The cost to send a fax is \$1 per page (no charge for toll-free numbers). Copies and incoming faxes are 20 cents per page.

### Absentee Voting Is Underway For Republican Primary Runoff

The Republican primary runoff for U.S. District representative in the Second District is scheduled June 23. Brian Flowers and Thomas L. Carey are battling for their party's nomination and the winner will face Democratic incumbent Bennie Thompson. The election was originally scheduled March 31, but with the outbreak of COVID-19 Governor Tate Reeves pushed back the election date to June. Voters who did not vote in the first primary on March 10 or voters who voted on the Republican ballot in the primary are eligible to vote in the runoff. Voters who cast a Democratic ballot in the March 10 primary cannot vote in the Republican runoff.

Absentee voting is underway for the election and eligible voters can visit either courthouse in the county to vote absentee. You can also request a mailed absentee ballot by contacting the circuit clerk's offices at (662) 473-1341 in Water Valley or (662) 675-8187 in Coffeeville.

In Mississippi, registered voters are eligible to vote absentee because of age, health or work demands, or their affiliation with the U.S. Armed Forces. For example, voters who will be outside their county of residence on election day are entitled to vote by absentee ballot.



Dr. Kerry Davidson spoke at the Davidson School reunion and re-dedication of Davidson Elementary School on July 7, 2001.

### Water Valley Native Heads American OB/GYN College

Ezra C. Davidson, Jr., MD, has been named president of the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG) at the group's 38th Annual Clinical Meeting in San Francisco, May 7-19.

Dr. Davison, a native Water Vallian and the son of the late Professor and Mrs. E. C. Davidson, is chief of obstetrics and gynecology at the King/Drew Medical Center in Los Angeles.

Since 1971, Dr. Davidson has been a professor and the chairman of the OB/GYN department at Charles R. Drew University of Medicine and Science. From 1982 to 1986 he was the University's vice-president for academic affairs. He is also vice-chairman and professor of OB/GYN at the center for Health Sciences, University of California, Los Angeles.

Because of his interest in delivery of perinatal care, especially for high risk communities and adolescent perinatal health care, Dr. Davidson has served as chairman of the first Surgeon General's Workshop (U. S. Public Health Service) on Maternal and Infant Health, as a panel member for the Institute of Medicine on Access to Prenatal Care, a member of ACOG's Committee on Health Care for Underserved Women and former chairman of its Committee on Adolescent Health Care.

For the past year he has served ACOG as president-elect and before that, as national secretary for six years.

He was an elected officer for his California District, a member of several task forces on adolescent pregnancy, medically underserved women, and regional planning. He was also a member of the Health Care Commission which recommends standards and policy for the practice.

Dr. Davidson has been actively involved in other organizations as past president of the Association of Professors of Gynecology and Obstetrics, the Los Angeles Obstetrical and Gynecological Society, and the Golden State Medical Society. Presently, he is examiner for

Ezra C. Davidson, Jr., M.D., FACOG, PRESIDENT

The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists

Health Sciences, University of California, Los Angeles.

Medical College in Nashville. He did his ob/gyn residency at Harlem Hospital and a fellowship in blood coagulation at the College of Physicians and Surgeons, Columbia University, both in New York City.

ACOG is a national professional organization of more than 29,000 physicians who specialize in the health care of women.

### Early Paper Next Week

Next week's *Herald* will be printed on Tuesday, May 22 and mailed Wednesday, May 23.

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