

# The Museum News

The official newsletter of the Pearl River Community College Museum Patrons' Organization

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## First Space Day at PRCC's main campus a resounding success

POPLARVILLE - Space Day at Pearl River Community College held earlier this month was a resounding success with more than 250 high school students in attendance.

Space Day, the result of partnering with John C. Stennis Space Center in Hancock County, grew out of a request that Stennis provide an exhibit for the Museum. The event included a rocket launch on the old stadium field, a tour through the museum with emphasis on the new Stennis Space Center exhibit and the one-day presence of a Moon Rock, a tour of Stennis Space Center exhibits in the Great Hall, a presentation on rocket engine testing, and special exhibits by PRCC departments and programs.

PRCC alumnus Ronny Rigney, Deputy Director of Projects at Stennis Test Center, spoke to high school and college students and faculty about the new program to re-visit the moon for an extended period of time. Rigney also spoke of his decision to attend Pearl River Community College after a year at a major university because of the quality of education that Mississippi community colleges offer.

"I was able to do much better here (at PRCC) because I was able to get individual attention from my instructors, and that's not possible at a university where classes have 250 or more students," Rigney said.

The event was sponsored by the PRCC Museum, PRCC Office of Recruitment and Orientation, PRCC Office of Public Relations, and SpaceTEC, a consortium of 15 community colleges across the nation that are located in close proximity to NASA facilities. SpaceTEC was implemented to produce space career awareness in grades K-12 and design technical curriculum for community colleges targeting the space industry.

(See "Space Day" on page 3)



Rigney

## Interactive lighting installation underway; Interactive audio coming soon

When a Pearl River Community College Museum visitor approaches an exhibit, the lights dim up, illuminating the display. When the visitor walks away, the lighting dims down. This is all part of the new interactive experience that awaits the museum visitor.

This lighting, utilizing X-10 technology, is not only esthetically pleasing, it saves the museum's artifacts from damaging ultraviolet light and saves on air conditioning as well. The technology utilizes both the building's wiring and infrared signals sent from detectors mounted above the exhibits. When the sensor "sees" a visitor, it sends a signal to a controller which addresses the lights in that particular exhibit. To date, 12 exhibits have been outfitted, and eight more remain to be installed.

New interactive audio will also be installed and working by the museum's fifth anniversary (October 2006). This audio will "tell" the story of each exhibit, including information that may not be printed on the exhibit. This interactive audio will make the museum more appealing to its younger visitors, those who have vision impairments, and those who do not wish to take the time to read the exhibit's entire message.



High school students examine PRCC Homecoming exhibit during Space Day activities. The museum had more than 250 students and other guests during the day-long event. The new Stennis Space Center exhibit and the moon rock exhibit can be seen in the background.

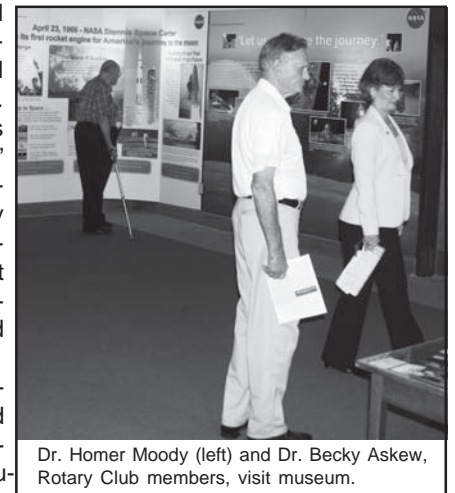
## Museum sees largest attendance ever in Spring 2006; more than 500 visitors

During the Spring semester, more than 500 people visited PRCC's Museum. Although Space Day played a large part in the museum's increased attendance during the semester, other events and visits helped the tally. Among the other groups attending were "Gear-up," a high school organization; Poplarville's Rotary Club; and PRCC students seeking extra credit for PRCC history instructors Stephen Black and Jim Walsh.

"Walk-in visitation was also up," said Ronn Hague, museum director. "We had PRCC students who heard about the

museum and wanted to see it for themselves. A number of students who visited for extra credit told their friends. The word is getting out that we have a museum we can be proud of."

The increased attendance can be attributed to the museum's educational outreach program. This program seeks to educate school grades K-12 about PRCC, the supporting district, and education in early south Mississippi.



Dr. Homer Moody (left) and Dr. Becky Askew, Rotary Club members, visit museum.

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## Pearl River College: Little Known Facts and Information

(This article is a result of research and interviews done for 100 Years of Educational Excellence: The Pearl River College Story)

### **John Hawkins Napier, Jr., early educator (1897-1949)**

Pearl River County Agricultural High School (PRCAHS) produced an extraordinarily large number of teachers in its early years. Some of these teachers came back to share their knowledge with PRCAHS students. For example, 1920 graduate Joseph Forrest Stuart, fondly known as "Rat" Stuart, returned to coach the first Mississippi Junior College football championship team in 1925, and he returned again in 1932 to take the helm as President. Frankie Durham, who won accolades at the AHS for her speeches and acting in the early twenties, returned to PRCAHS to teach Elocution. Some PRCAHS graduates shared their education in many of Pearl River County's consolidated schools. Some went on to other educational posts in other places. One PRCAHS student made a name for himself across three states in an educational career that began in Mississippi and went as far west as California. His name was John Hawkins Napier, Jr.



Napier's great-grandfather, John Staples Napier, was a War of 1812 veteran who was born in Virginia in 1778 and came to Mississippi in 1831. He settled in Covington County where he farmed and taught school. His son, Benjamin Brewton Napier resided in Seminary. Benjamin's son and Napier's father, John Sr., was educated at Southern Normal College in Huntington, Tennessee where he received a degree in law. He met Napier's mother, Laura Shanks Napier, who was also college educated and held a Bachelor of Science degree from Houston College. She later attended Meridian Medical College.

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Young John Napier attended high school at the newly organized Pearl River County Agricultural High School, where he excelled in all subjects. When he graduated in 1913 with the second graduating class, he did so as its valedictorian. At graduation, young Napier showed his mettle when, because of a family feud between his family and Theo Bilbo, he refused to take his diploma from Bilbo or shake his hand. Instead, he told Bilbo, who was handing out the diplomas that evening, "Just put my diploma on the table. I'll pick it up."

Immediately after graduation, he went to work teaching school. (In the early 1900s, a high school diploma was all that was necessary to teach grade school.) His first job, at age 16, was at the Industrial School at Henleyfield. In 1914, he was the first principal of Steep Hollow School, and later he served in the same capacity at White Sand School (1916-1917).

In 1917, Napier decided to extend his education and enrolled at the Mississippi Agricultural and Mechanical College (now Mississippi State University). That November, Napier enlisted in the Army. After serving his country during World War II in both the Air Service and the Artillery, he was discharged with the rank of Sergeant. He returned to his educational pursuits at Mississippi A. & M., where he earned his Bachelor of Science Degree in 1920. Before moving west, he did some graduate work at the University of Chicago.

Napier arrived in Prescott, Arizona in the fall of 1920, where he taught science and coached basketball. He then took part in the

organization of the first public school in St. John's, Arizona. His school board president was Levi Udall, father of future democratic leaders Morris and Stewart Udall.

In 1922, Napier married Lena Mae Tate of Picayune. Her father, Eastman Francis Tate, was a businessman and is known as the "Father of Picayune." The ceremony took place in Washington, D. C., where Miss Tate worked in the Treasury Department since the end of World War I. After they married, Napier took his new wife to St. John's, Arizona and continued his job as the town's school principal. The following year, they moved to California, first to San Francisco, then across the bay to Piedmont, where he taught science and coached basketball.

In 1925, Napier received his Master of Arts from the University of California at Berkeley. That same year, he was named the Superintendent of Schools at Emeryville, a suburb of Oakland, California. In 1927, he organized and built a junior-senior high school for the district. In 1932 Napier received his Ph. D. from Stanford University.

In 1936, Napier became Superintendent of Schools of the Placer Union High School District in Auburn, California. He immediately resurrected Placer Junior College (now Sierra College). The newly reopened college began with 87 students and immediately carried out a \$400,000 building program for the campus. The original college, founded in 1914, had been closed in 1920 due to enrollment losses during World War I. (Sierra College now has an enrollment of 30,000 students.)



Photo of John Napier (number six), coach and teacher at the Industrial School in Henleyfield. Napier also served as principal and teacher at Steep Hollow and White Sand schools. As was practiced in that day, Napier not only coached, but he played on the team as well.

In 1941, Napier became superintendent of schools at Tulare, California. Then, in 1943, Napier was persuaded to come back to Mississippi and take over the Picayune City Schools. The school board was led by businessman-philanthropist Lucien Owen Crosby, Jr. After wartime restrictions ended, Napier led the city in a half-million dollar building project to construct the new Picayune Memorial High School (dedicated to the soldiers who had given their lives in World War II) and the new George Washington Carver School (for African-American children).

While at Picayune schools, Napier became visiting professor of education at Mississippi Southern College (now USM) in

1946, a position he held until his death. While in Picayune, Napier was also president of his wife's family-owned insurance agency, director of the Bank of Picayune, owned a tung farm with his son, John H. Napier, III, and was secretary-treasurer of the Poplarville based American Tung Oil Association. He was also active in professional education associations in California and Mississippi during his career.

On September 23, 1949, Napier suffered a heart attack while watching Picayune High School's football team in contest with Gulfport High School. He died at a New Orleans hospital the following morning at age 52. A bronze plaque hangs in his honor in the Picayune Junior High School building.

## Space Day *(continued from page 1)*

"It was a great inaugural event," said Ronn Hague, Museum Director. "We hope that future events will see greater participation, more exhibits, and the opportunity for district students to see what PRCC and Stennis Space Center can do for their futures."

The Stennis Space Center's education division of the Office of External Affairs, Public Affairs Office, and Stennisphere took part in the day's activities, as well as other support departments.

Those PRCC departments and programs that participated included: Department of Science, Mathematics and Business with a "Solar Sun Spots" exhibit; Department of Health, Physical Education and Recreation with a "Wellness in the Space Age" exhibit; Automation and Controls Technology with a "Battling Robots" exhibit; Electronics Technology with "Sparky the Robot"; and Drafting and Design Technology with a "3D Printing" exhibit.

## Hague attends first disaster recovery workshop on textiles and costumes

Pearl River Community College museum director Ronn Hague recently attended a disaster recovery workshop sponsored by the Mississippi Department of Archives and History and taught by the Winterthur Museum and the University of Delaware. The grant-funded workshop is one of a series that will be held this year in response to Hurricane Katrina's August 29, 2005 devastation.

The May 18 workshop, held in Biloxi, focused on textile and costume recovery. After a four-hour lecture on recovery tech-

niques, the group was given a mock disaster scenario with water and debris damaged textiles and costumes. Their job was to try to salvage as many of the artifacts as possible, using the techniques they had learned during the lecture.

"This was beneficial for our museum in case of a water-related disaster," said Hague. "We learned that there are things that you do and things that you do not do in order to salvage historical costumes." For one thing, you don't just throw them in a washing machine. They will come out in shreds. The clothing must be carefully gathered on flat plexiglas sheets, cloth window screens, slings, or other acceptable materials, then the decision is made whether to "wet" the clothing a second time to remove debris or simply let the costume dry and brush the debris off with a brush.

This workshop is one of six that will be offered over the next seven months. According to Hague, the cost of attending a single workshop would be in excess of \$1,000. "We really appreciate the Andrew Mellon Foundation for funding it and the folks at Winterthur Museum for teaching it."

Other workshops will feature disaster recovery of photographs, books and papers, furniture, metals, plastics and leathers, and paintings and painted surfaces.

## Annual Museum Patrons' meeting format changed to accommodate members

At the May meeting, The Museum Advisory Board decided to change the way the Museum Patrons' Organization gathers for its annual meeting because of the many other activities during Homcoming day when the annual meeting normally occurs.

The board voted to change the meeting from the traditional type to one in which the annual report and voting procedures would take place by mail, enabling every patron to participate in the decision-making process no matter where they live.

A packet will be sent out on August 1, 2006 with the annual report, proposed budget, and list of candidates for the Museum Advisory Board. The packet will include an official ballot and a self-addressed, stamped envelope for the patron's convenience.

Any patron who wishes to nominate a candidate for the board or comment can do so by calling 601-403-1316, by mailing the nomination to: Museum Patrons' Organization, PRCC Museum, 101 Highway 11 North, Poplarville, MS 39470, or by emailing rhague@prcc.edu.

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**The Pearl River Community College Museum depends solely on contributions for new exhibits, improvements, and preservation supplies. We have no other funding source except you. Make your contribution to the museum today! Cut out this form and send it with a check payable to the PRCC Development Foundation (write "museum" in the for space on your check).**

I would like to contribute \$ \_\_\_\_\_ to (check one)

Historical Marker for the College

General Fund

Holden Exhibit Fund

I would like to purchase \_\_\_\_ DVD(s) "The Pearl River College Story" (\$25 each), winner of the AASLH Certificate of Commendation

I would like to become a member or renew my membership. (\$25 per year single membership, \$35 per year for 2 members of the same household.)

Please fill in the following information:

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Ph. \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

Alumni? Yes  No  Years attended \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_

*Please allow 2 weeks delivery for items ordered. Please include \$3 for postage. Mail this order/donation to:*

**Pearl River Community College Museum**  
 101 Highway 11 North  
 Poplarville, MS 39470  
 visit us at [www.prcc.edu/museum/](http://www.prcc.edu/museum/)

Have an article of clothing, a catalog, photos, or other memorabilia you would like to share? The PRCC Museum is always looking for items of interest from the past. Call 601-403-1316.

## PRCC career-technical classes contribute to new exhibit cases

A set of six wood and steel exhibit cases are ready for assembly and finishing. This project is the combined effort of PRCC's career-technical classes, the Buildings and Grounds office, and the museum.

At the beginning of the spring semester, rough sketches were given to Drafting and Design Technology instructor, Eddy Gammel, who assigned the project to Tessa Mitchell of Picayune. Mitchell turned the sketches into professional drawings for Leland Kennedy's welding class. The welding class built a "jig" (an apparatus for assembling the units exactly alike) and then built all six of the cases. "They did a very professional job," said Ronn Hague, PRCC Museum director.

The cases were transported from the welding shop to the college's maintenance shop where the wooden panels will be custom fitted. After the panels are fitted, they, along with the steel cases, will be brought to the museum for finishing, where the panels will be fitted with cloth for the interior and the steel cases will have a finish applied. After glass panels are cut and placed, the cases will house the new Academic, Technical, and Fine Arts exhibits.

"This fills a real need for the museum," Hague said. "The cases, which can cost as much as \$1,500 each, are being built for one tenth that figure. We're saving money, but that's what we do. We try to squeeze every bit of worth from every dollar we receive." The museum has been storing the artifacts for the exhibits for more than two years, waiting on funds to build cases. This need was met when Jean Baughman Wessel Templeton, a PRCC alumna, made a generous donation to the museum recently. The cases will be ready for the Museum's fifth year celebration in October 2006.

### Did you miss an issue of *The Museum News*?

You can find back issues on the PRCC web site at:  
<http://www.prcc.edu/museum/news.html>

## Holden forum planned

At its May meeting, the Museum Advisory Board voted to begin planning a forum titled: "Dobie Holden: His Methods, His Magic." The forum will include a panel of former players and assistant coaches who will field prepared questions during the event. The museum will videotape the meeting with copies going to the museum's reading room and to Johnston library. The forum will also honor Mrs. Earlora Holden, wife of Dobie Holden, and their two children, Dr. Thomas Holden and Dr. Carole Holden Lund. The time and place for the event has not yet been decided, but the board hopes to hold the event in the fall. The forum will be open to the public.

"So much of Dobie Holden's methods and motivation is locked in his former players' minds," said Ronn Hague, the museum's director, "and we want to get this information onto videotape for future generations."

Holden holds the PRCC state championships record with eight state championships and co-championships. His 1961 team won both state and national championships. Many of Holden's players went on to be successful businessmen, educators, and professionals. Called the "Master Motivator," Holden took average players and made champions out of them. In the late 1950s, Holden began using the "pro set" passing game, long before it was popularized by professional football.

The museum, in cooperation with a private group of former Holden players and fans, plans to memorialize Holden in an exhibit to be located in the future sports complex that will replace the coliseum damaged by Hurricane Katrina. Some funds have already been raised for the exhibit. If you would like to make a donation to the Dobie Holden fund, make your check payable to the PRCC Development Foundation. Include the words "Holden fund" in the *for* space at the lower left hand corner of the check. For more information about the forum, contact Ronn Hague at 601-403-1316.

*The Museum News* is a publication of the **Pearl River Community College Museum Patrons' Organization**. If you wish to receive a subscription to this publication, you must be a member of the Museum Patrons' Organization. Membership dues are \$25 annually. For more information, call Ronn Hague at (601) 403-1316.

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