



# THE GREENWOOD Commonwealth



DECEMBER 28, 2014 – 118th YEAR

SUNDAY

GREENWOOD, MISS. \$1.25

## Wire theft affects many AT&T customers

By **BOB DARDEN**  
Staff Writer

CARROLL COUNTY — Thieves, in pursuit of copper wire, pulled off a post-Christmas heist Friday morning, taking a 350- to 400-foot length of phone line from along County Road 183.

The early-morning theft left some 235 AT&T customers, including businesses at Greenwood-Leflore Airport, without phone or Internet service.

Service was expected to be

restored by early Friday evening.

Carroll County Sheriff Jerry Carver said his department received a call from AT&T about the theft shortly before 6 a.m. Friday. Judging from the marks left behind, he said, the thieves must have used a climbing deer stand to go up the utility



Carver

pole and cut the cable at both ends.

The right of way where the theft took place runs parallel to County Road 183 and is shielded by woods, giving the thieves good cover in the early morning light, the sheriff said.

Carver said the clean and smooth cut shows that a special cutter was used.

Grady Perkins, acting airport manager, said the stolen copper cable, which he described as a "400-pair

See **WIRE**, Back Page



Bob Darden  
An AT&T repair crew works Friday afternoon to replace a section of transmission line near the Greenwood-Leflore Airport on Carroll County Road 183. Thieves took a 350- to 400-foot section of the copper cable early Friday morning.

## Digging into the past



AP  
Jimmy Hardin, an associate professor of archeology at Mississippi State University, at a dig site in rural Israel. Several small clay seals found over the summer at the site have been catching attention in the archeological community and may provide historical evidence for Old Testament accounts of the ancient Kingdom of Israel.

## GHS grad making mark in archeology

By **BRYN STOLE**  
Staff Writer

A few tiny clay seals found at a rural site in Israel could wind up key clues toward rewriting current understandings of the region in the 10th century B.C. and bolster biblical accounts of the rise of the Kingdom of Israel.

For Professor Jimmy Hardin of Mississippi State University, a 1982 graduate of Greenwood High School, the discoveries are also grabbing attention — both in academia and in the press —

like nothing else in his career as an archeologist of the Near East.

"I've been doing this for 20-something years and not had anything like this happen," Hardin said, adding that the findings have received a good response from the archeological community. "It's cool to have this debate and be able to talk about this."

The small fragments of clay stamps, called bullae, were used to impress wax seals on documents and expensive goods. Their discovery in a small rural site in Khirbet Summeily, about 14

miles east of modern-day Gaza, indicates a level of elite activity and administrative sophistication earlier than many other academics have suggested, Hardin said.

Although the small seals can't be directly linked to King David and King Solomon, biblical rulers of the Kingdom of Israel and Judah, Hardin said they may confirm that a real kingdom was on the rise in the area in the 10th century B.C. as told in biblical texts.

See **HARDIN**, Back Page

## White-Johnson, cancer network have busy year

By **BOB DARDEN**  
Staff Writer

Freddie White-Johnson has had a very busy year with the Mississippi Network for Cancer Control and Prevention.

White-Johnson, the network's program director, visited Washington earlier this month and met with policymakers in an attempt to get help for the network's community outreach. The network is program of the University of Southern Mississippi.

She is also the founder and president of the Fannie Lou Hamer Cancer Foundation.

White-Johnson visited the offices of U.S. Sen. Thad Cochran, R-Miss., on Capitol Hill on Dec. 11. She was accompanied by Dr. Gordon Cannon, vice president of research at the University of Southern Mississippi, and James Lofton, a consultant who is assisting the university in its lobbying.

"We, the University of Southern Mississippi and the Mississippi Network for Cancer Control and Prevention, have done something few other organizations have ever done: We have facilitated the emergence of true community empowerment," White-Johnson said. "And for this, we all can be truly proud."

"We have trained more than 1,000 community health workers, and one of the spin-

offs of this effort was the creation of the Fannie Lou Hamer Cancer Foundation," she said. "That program supports the activities implemented by the Mississippi Network."

White-Johnson said the year 2014 has presented challenges both large and small, but progress has been made.

Recently, the network received a 501(c)(3) nonprofit tax designation, which means that all donations made to it are now fully tax deductible.

White-Johnson said the foundation is moving into the second phase of its construction of a 12,000-square-foot building in Ruleville, which will serve as its future headquarters. The building, along with its furnishings, is expected to cost around \$5.5 million, she said.

The foundation will be receiving \$300,000 from the state to support the construction of the building, thanks to the help of state Sens. Willie Simmons, D-Cleveland; David Jordan, D-Greenwood; and Lydia Chassaniol, R-Winona. In addition, IMS Engineering of Jackson has agreed to do the environmental and soil testing on the site at no charge, saving the foundation \$18,000.

The foundation bears the name of Fannie Lou Hamer, a

See **CANCER**, Back Page

## Radio program to discourage DUIs

Staff reports

WABG AM 960 will ring in the New Year in with a little drinking as part of its fifth annual "Drunk Driver's Special."

The program is designed to discourage drinking and driving in the New Year, Station Manager James Poe said.

"Each year, we try to do our part to appeal to the reasonable side of people before they go out to their parties on New Year's Eve," Poe said. "So from 7 p.m. Wednesday until midnight we do a live radio show with our announcers drinking on the air to demonstrate how alcohol will dull their reflexes, impair their motor skills and affect their ability to operate radio equipment professionally."

"By demonstrating this," he said, "hopefully it will save a life or at least encourage our listeners to choose a designated driver."

Poe and guest disc jockey Floyd Bankhead will be the guinea pigs for the on-air experiment.

Bankhead, a tractor driver with the Whittington Plantation Co., said he looks forward to the event.



WABG AM 960 will host its fifth annual "Drunk Driver's Special," beginning at 7 p.m. New Year's Eve and running until midnight. Station Manager James Poe, right, and guest disc jockey Floyd Bankhead, will drink on air in an effort to demonstrate how alcohol will effect their reflexes and motor skills.

"I'm not a real DJ, but I enjoy working at the radio station in my spare time. I love the music, and this special program makes me feel like I'm making a difference in my community," he said.

Poe said the station contacted the Greenwood Police Department's DUI Enforcement Unit the first year they held the special program.

That interview is rebroadcast as part of the station's "News, Blues and Interviews" segment, and the station periodically plays the interview along with other updates throughout the year to discourage driving and driving.

"We just want to make a difference in our own way, and this Drunk Driver's Special is one of those ways," Poe said.



Freddie White-Johnson, second from right, program director for the Mississippi Network for Cancer Control and Prevention of the University of Southern Mississippi, visits with U.S. Sen. Thad Cochran, R-Miss., second from left, earlier this month. Accompanying White-Johnson on the trip were James Lofton, far left, a federal consultant with the university; and Dr. Gordon Cannon, vice president of research at the university. White-Johnson also serves as the founder and president of the Fannie Lou Hamer Cancer Foundation.

