



Mississippi State baseball breaks attendance record

SPORTS, 1B

Clarion Ledger

MONDAY, JUNE 15, 2026 | CLARIONLEDGER.COM

PART OF THE USA TODAY NETWORK



Miss Capital City Jane Granberry waves to the crowd after being named Miss Mississippi 2026 at the Miss Mississippi competition at the Vicksburg Convention Center in Vicksburg on June 13. CHRIS TODD/SPECIAL TO THE CLARION LEDGER

Granberry crowned Miss Mississippi

Bea Anhuaci
Mississippi Clarion Ledger
USA TODAY NETWORK

After months of preparation and days of competition, a new Miss Mississippi was crowned in Vicksburg. Miss Capital City Jane Granberry won the

2026 Miss Mississippi pageant on June 13.

Despite bright lights shining on each competitor on the stage, Granberry said she could see every face in the audience. That included her parents, two siblings, countless aunts and friends who filled in the bleachers along the back of the

Vicksburg Convention Center.

“I feel like I’m floating right now,” Granberry told the Clarion Ledger in an interview after her win. “I don’t have an adrenaline rush. It’s all kind of sinking in now.”

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Prison stories from solitary

Mina Corpuz, Daja E. Henry and Grant McLaughlin
Mississippi Today, Marshall Project and Lagniappe Daily

Warning: This story contains descriptions of suicide in prison.

Danny Austin has been out of prison for more than a decade. These days, he focuses on life with his wife in North Mississippi and his work as a commercial truck driver. It’s not often that he reflects on his incarceration — especially the four years he spent in solitary confinement.

That was a bleak time at the Wilkinson County Correctional Facility. He still remembers the view looking outside his single cell. The noises of other incarcerated men, sometimes in crisis, banging on their doors. The smell of cells that were hardly ever cleaned.

“I’m not bitter about it anymore,” said the Corinth resident, who was released from prison after he left solitary.

Restrictive housing, as state corrections officials call it, exists across the Mississippi prison system, and the use of solitary confinement has persisted across multiple administrations for decades.

A 2024 investigation by the U.S. Department of Justice called the torturous conditions inside the state’s restrictive housing units “breeding grounds for suicide, self-inflicted injury, fires, and assaults.”

At least 47 people died by suicide while in restrictive housing in Mississippi prisons in the past decade, records from the Department of

See **SOLITARY**, Page 4A

Court: Auditor White can’t sue in welfare fraud case

Bea Anhuaci
Mississippi Clarion Ledger
USA TODAY NETWORK

The Mississippi Supreme Court unanimously sided with Attorney General Lynn Fitch in an appeal related to the welfare fraud scandal, stopping State Auditor Shad White from suing to reclaim interest.

The state’s action in the scandal began in October 2021, when White filed a demand against Brett Favre, Robert Cullumber and one of Favre’s companies for the “illegal expenditure of public funds.” He referred the case to Fitch’s office around a month later when his demand went unmet.

Fitch initially filed suit against 38 defendants in May 2022, nearly six

months afterward, and amended her complaint in December of that year. She didn’t include the interest on the money in her December filing, despite White including it in his demand, as a “legal strategy,” according to the Supreme Court decision released on June 11.

The Attorney General’s litigation is ongoing, and Favre has not been criminally charged in the investigation. He

repaid speaking fees of \$500,000 to the state in May 2020 and \$600,000 in October 2021.

Favre sued White for defamation over the course of the case and White, dissatisfied with Fitch’s decision to omit the interest from her suit, filed a counterclaim to recover the money and interest.

See **COURT**, Page 2A

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