



# Southern Miss unveils upgrades to M.M. Roberts Stadium

SPORTS, 1B

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## Best-selling author Greg Iles dies at 65

**Bonnie Bolden**  
Mississippi Clarion Ledger  
USA TODAY NETWORK

Greg Iles, a Mississippi author of several New York Times best-selling novels, has died at the age of 65. According to an obituary in The Natchez Democrat, Iles passed away around 5 a.m. Friday, Aug. 15. His literary agent, Dan Conaway, confirmed his death Saturday, Aug. 16, on Facebook.



Iles

The Natchez resident had multiple myeloma, an incurable blood cancer. Iles was born in Germany in 1960 while his father ran a medical clinic at the U.S. Embassy. According to a profile on his website, Iles spent time in Mississippi in his youth. He was a 1983 graduate from the University of Mississippi. Iles went on to write novels sold

around the world. Many of his books were thrillers and Southern Gothics that explored politics, legacy and racism in Mississippi. Some have been made into movies. He was also a member of The Rock Bottom Remainers, a charitable rock group made up of authors. Bandmates included Stephen King, Amy Tan and Dave Barry. He is survived by his wife Caroline and four children.

### What did Greg Iles write?

Iles was the author of the popular Natchez Burning Trilogy, which is a subset of his Penn Cage series. The trilogy includes “Natchez Burning,” “The Bone Tree” and “Mississippi Blood.” In a statement on his website, Iles called them his “magnum opus.” In all, there are seven Penn Cage

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Passengers board the Amtrak Mardi Gras train, which runs between Mobile, Alabama, and New Orleans, Louisiana, with four stops in Mississippi: Bay St. Louis, Gulfport, Biloxi and Pascagoula. The service's inaugural ride was held Aug. 16. LICI BEVERIDGE/CLARION LEDGER

## Amtrak's Mardi Gras service is up, running

**Lici Beveridge and Bonnie Bolden**  
Mississippi Clarion Ledger  
USA TODAY NETWORK

Riding the Amtrak Mardi Gras service that runs between New Orleans and Mobile is like a celebration every day, or at least that's what Amtrak and public officials hope passengers experience from the moment they climb on board.

The inaugural ride on Saturday, Aug. 16, was a Mardi Gras-style celebration with revelers dressed in full Mardi Gras regalia greeting passengers at every stop in Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama. “This is very exciting,” one reveler said. “We’ve been waiting so long for this day. I’m glad it’s finally happening.” “Welcome back, Amtrak!” another one shouted.

Bands and cheer teams performed for the crowds and strands of Mardi Gras beads flew through the air as they welcomed the shiny new train into their cities. Dignitaries gave speeches at each stop, and encouraged revelers to book their rides for the Mardi Gras service, which officially opened to the public on Monday, Aug. 18.

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## Mississippi starts week with dangerous heat, cooler temps ahead

**Brian Broom**  
Mississippi Clarion Ledger  
USA TODAY NETWORK

The National Weather Service is warning of dangerous heat in Mississippi this week with indices up to 110 degrees, but the state is expected to get a break with cooler temperatures ahead, so it won't quite feel like the dog days of August. “It's really just a ridge locked in place,” said Orion Jones, meteorologist with the National Weather Service in Jackson. “There's really no change in the pattern.” That ridge is causing temperatures to near 100 degrees in Jackson and other parts of the state for the first part of the week and combined with Gulf Coast humidity, heat indices are expected to be in the range of 105-110 degrees. “The afternoon humidity is going to be around 50% for the next week or so,” Jones said. Relief is on the way, though. By Thursday, high temperatures will begin to dip into the mid-to-low 90s and remain there through the weekend. “It's just a slow shifting of that upper ridge to the east bringing in a little cooler air,” Jones said.

### How to stay hydrated in dangerous heat

According to the American Red Cross, you need to drink enough water to prevent heat illness. An average person needs to drink about 3/4 of a gallon of water daily, but everyone's needs may vary. ● Talk to your doctor about how to prepare if you have a medical condition or are taking medicines.

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