

# The Farm

## News Briefs from Southern Miss

18-Nov-2010

### **\$1.5 Million Bond Set for Alleged Shooting Accessories**

*The Hattiesburg American* is reporting that a \$1.5 million bond has been set for two of the three suspects in the recent shooting (at 1:30 a.m. on 14-Nov-2010) of three USM football players outside of Hattiesburg's notorious Hunt Club. The suspects are Cleothus Wilkerson (below, at left) and Patricia Brown (below, at right).



(Matt Bush for *The Hattiesburg American*)

The three USM football players, Deddrick Jones, Martez Smith, and Tim Green, are reportedly still listed in fair condition at Forrest General Hospital. However, national media outlets have provided sourced reports stating that Smith is paralyzed from the waist down, and that Green is unable to speak, with both conditions resulting from the shootings.

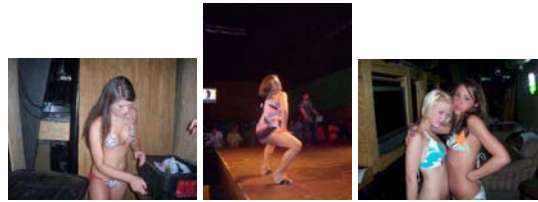
### **Salary Released for New USM Legal Eagle**

At its Nov-2010 meeting, the Mississippi IHL approved a contract for USM's new legal counsel Jon Mark Weathers, the retired district attorney who was recently hired by Martha Saunders to replace current USM legal counsel Lee Gore. According to the contract, Weathers will be paid a salary of \$150,000 per year. Gore, the long-time USM legal counsel, will depart in early 2011.

### **Hattiesburg Mayor to *Leave No Stone Unturned* at Hunt Club**

According to a 16-Nov-2010 [report](#) by *The Hattiesburg American*, the City of Hattiesburg has temporarily suspended the Remington Hunt Club's permit, forcing it to close its doors on 17-Nov-2010. Now, Hattiesburg Mayor Johnnie DuPree [is publicly stating](#) that his office will “. . . look at their occupancy rate, security personnel, hours of operation, loitering and making sure that

the people that attend the establishment are the right age.” It is not known if Hunt Club activities like those pictured below will fall under the scope of DuPree’s investigation.



Hattiesburg City Council president Kim Bradley is seeking to go much further than DuPree, [offering up](#) to *The Hattiesburg American* the Rahm Emanuelesque, “. . . [t]his [tragedy provides] . . . an opportunity to re-write nightlife in Hattiesburg because from the outside looking in, it's not so pretty.”

### **Giannini Dissembles in Interview with *The Student Printz***

Not only do USMNEWS.net sources believe that USM president [Martha Saunders was disingenuous](#) with a reporter for *The Student Printz* regarding its story on the \$35,000 raise awarded to USM football coach Larry Fedora (pictured below), they also tell USMNEWS.net that Saunders’ director of athletics, Richard Giannini, also dissembled when it came to [clarifying](#) for *TSP* issues surrounding the same \$35,000 raise.



According to Giannini, part of the rationale for [increasing](#) Fedora’s base salary to \$685,000 per year, *and* adding an additional year to his contract, is that Fedora has secured USM’s 17<sup>th</sup> consecutive winning season, and he has USM bowl eligible once again with a 7-3 record to date. Giannini also attempted to ease faculty concerns about the \$35,000 raise, telling *TSP*’s Mary Margaret Halford that “[s]ixty-five percent of athletics’ [revenue](#) is self-generated and no state [funds](#) are being used for coaches’ salaries.” Reports from USMNEWS.net and elsewhere, however, indicate that about \$1 million of Giannini’s \$19 million [annual budget](#) is the result of a direct transfer of funds from USM’s E&G (i.e., general fund) accounts. Another \$6 million comes from the so-called “tuition tax” paid by USM students each year. These figures, which account for the 35 percent of revenue Giannini alludes to as *not* being self-generated, can both be classified as “state funds.” The \$1 million E&G transfer is directly funded by Mississippi taxpayers. The \$6 million [tuition tax](#) revenue is collected by USM, a state entity, only later to be turned over to Giannini’s athletics division. Sources tell USMNEWS.net that if *any* state funds, let alone \$1 million in taxpayer monies, are turned over to Giannini, then “state funds” are being used to help the USM athletics department pay coaches’ salaries.