



Description of WTVVA programming providing the most significant treatment of community issues.

1st Quarter 2024

WTVVA airs local news programming each week live during the following times on WTVVA 9.1 (NBC) and also simulcast most of these newscasts live during the times noted below on WTVVA 9.2 (ABC).

Monday through Friday 4:30 a.m. to 5 a.m. (NBC)

Monday through Friday 5 a.m. to 7 a.m. (simulcast)

Monday through Friday Noon to 12:30 p.m. (NBC)

Monday through Friday 4 p.m. to 5 p.m. (simulcast)

Monday through Friday 5 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. (simulcast)

Monday through Friday 6 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. (NBC)

Monday through Friday 6:30 p.m. to 7 p.m. (ABC)

Monday through Friday 10 p.m. to 10:35 p.m. (simulcast)

Saturday and Sunday 5 a.m. to 7 a.m. (NBC)

Saturday and Sunday 10 p.m. to 10:30 p.m. (simulcast)

Saturday 6 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. (simulcast)

Sunday 5 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. (NBC)

All the above are locally produced news programs presenting a mix of news, weather and sports and other related feature stories and segments that affect Northeast Mississippi and parts of Northwest Alabama.

List of Issues for This Quarter

Extreme Weather Conditions

Law Enforcement

Gun Violence

Politics

Community Improvements

Education

Severe Weather

LOCAL:

ISSUE

Extreme Weather Conditions

Program Title: WTVA 9 News

Date: Various

Time: Various

Duration: Various

A week of extremely cold weather and hazardous driving conditions started overnight early on January 15 and lingered across the area for at least a week. Icy conditions left many stuck at home and made travel treacherous, forcing some employees to stay at nearby hotels instead of going home. WTVA 9 News provided extensive coverage in its newscasts with live reports from across the area and updates from the Severe Weather Authority.

1/1 The Salvation Army in Tupelo has opened its warming shelter and will keep it open as long as temperatures remain below freezing.

1/9 A woman in Columbus and her pets died from carbon monoxide poisoning by using a charcoal grill to stay warm in an abandoned car.

1/10 Two homeless people in Tupelo died in a fire set to keep them warm even though there are safer options for the homeless to come out of the cold.

1/10 Ackerman police say the county courthouse will serve as a cold weather shelter when the temperatures nosedive the latter part of this week and linger into next week.

1/15 A week of extremely cold weather and hazardous driving conditions started overnight and lingered across the area. WTVA 9 News provided extended coverage in its newscasts during the event.

1/16 Tupelo's fire chief reported at least 30 traffic accidents since the roads froze, and he credits the low number to people following the advice to stay home during the bad weather.

1/16 The Mississippi Department of Transportation is using its plow trucks to try to make major roads across the area passable since they are icy.

1/16 A local horse owner says feeding them gut-friendly calorie sources is just one of the things he is doing to help his animals survive the freezing weather.

1/17 First Baptist Church has opened as a warming shelter for people in Starkville who need a place to go during the bitter cold weather.

1/17 Ice forced the closure of the runway at the Golden Triangle Regional Airport and grounded flights at the Tupelo Regional Airport.

1/17 Tombigbee Electric reported more than 2,000 power outages at the start of the day, but the area no longer has any major power outages.

1/18 A woman and her unborn child in Chickasaw County died in a vehicle crash blamed on the icy weather.

1/18 Wrecker services are busy locally with the roads refreezing, making travel almost impossible, especially on side streets and county roads.

1/19 The National Park Service plans to reopen the Natchez Trace Parkway Visitors Center Saturday after closing it Monday because of the winter storm.

1/19 Some local grocery stores have had trouble staying stocked because of the bad weather preventing trucks from coming in, but some convenience stores have held their own.

1/19 Customers of the Northeast Itawamba Water Association are asking customers to conserve water since the bitter cold may have caused leaks in the water lines.

1/22 A man died in a car crash Saturday in Marshall County because of the icy roads making him the 12th winter weather-related death in Mississippi in more than a week.

1/22 Tupelo Water and Light's director says the city has experienced at least one water main break a day during the winter blast with the single-digit temperatures causing the ground to shift.

1/23 Teachers and students in the Chickasaw County schools return for classes after being closed for several days because of winter weather.

1/24 Sediment from water tanks kicked up during the extreme winter weather has discolored the water in Hamilton, Alabama, and has forced the city to tell customers not to drink the water for now.

1/29 Volunteers have set up showers in Hamilton, Alabama, for those left without clean water because of what happened during the recent cold snap.

ISSUE

Law enforcement

Program Title: WTVA 9 News

Date: Various

Time: Various

Duration: Various

For months, we had been hearing concerns from local law enforcement agencies about the struggle to keep its ranks full of some communities able to offer more money for officers. That led to multiple stories about how various departments were doing when it comes to hiring and recruiting. Our coverage also included stories on the performance of officers, including when they found themselves on the wrong side of the law.

1/3 Columbus police have hired two more officers, but the department still has ten openings.

1/30 Police in Booneville could move into their new home in just a few days, leaving the county building the city had been renting.

1/31 Lee County Sheriff Jim Johnson says a neighborhood watch program and the Neighbors app can help make your neighborhood much safer.

2/19 Tupelo is spending \$300,000 to buy a new armored truck for the police department's SWAT team to use for searches, serving warrants, barricade situations and hostage rescues.

2/19 Michael Edwards was sworn in along with three new police officers as West Point's new assistant police chief.

2/21 Columbus Police Officer Robin Conner was arrested after she was accused of stealing \$140 worth of shoes from Dick's Sporting Goods.

2/22 The Columbus City Council has fired the police officer arrested for shoplifting at a local sporting goods store.

3/1 Tupelo's police chief says the number of officers in his department looks good thanks to taking some new approaches in recruiting.

3/4 The police department at the Mississippi University for Women announced it is fully staffed for the first time in years.

3/11 Northeast Mississippi Community College Police Chief Anthony Anderson died during a basketball game on campus over the weekend.

ISSUE

Gun violence

Program Title: WTVA 9 News

Date: Various

Time: Various

Duration: Various

Newscasts during this quarter included reported stories about some unusually violent acts in our area. One local city seemed to have multiple shootings on consecutive nights. Also, a local nightclub was the site of a mass shooting. While we covered the crimes, we also aired stories about efforts to curb gun violence locally — one by a civil rights group, others by churches.

1/3 The Aberdeen-Monroe County NAACP plans to hold a march and a workshop Saturday aimed at reducing local gun violence.

2/2 Pastors in Grenada are marching against gun violence after recent shootings left one dead and eight injured, including a 9-year-old.

2/2 Lowndes County Sheriff Eddie Hawkins is urging parents to practice gun safety and to keep guns away from their children after a bullet recently grazed a child's skull.

3/8 A prayer night is being held tonight following a mass shooting at a nightclub near West Point that killed one and wounded 12.

ISSUE

Politics

Program Title: WTVA 9 News

Date: Various

Time: Various

Duration: Various

2024 is not a huge year politically in Mississippi, but the state's senior senator faced an in-party challenge in his reelection bid, which included an opponent from the senator's backyard. Multiple communities held special elections because of vacancies that happened because of what occurred in countywide elections in 2023.

1/3 Qualifying started today for the open Ward 1 seat on Starkville's Board of Aldermen with the election set for February 13.

- 1/3 Qualifying ends January 17 for the special election in Oxford being held to decide who should serve as alderman at large.
- 1/8 A special election will be held March 5 in Louisville to select an alderman for Ward 3 since Gwenita Mays resigned following her election as Winston County circuit clerk.
- 1/9 Governor Tate Reeves used his second inaugural address to share the vision for his second term, which includes tax cuts and pro-life initiatives.
- 1/25 Calhoun City's special election for Ward 4 alderman will not take place after all since A.D. Blount was the only person to qualify for the race and will take the spot on the board.
- 1/29 A special election will take place February 13 for mayor to replace Donald Gray, who resigned to become Yalobusha County's chancery clerk.
- 2/1 Absentee voting is underway for the March party primaries for president and for Congress.
- 2/6 Mary Martha Crowe won the special election for Oxford alderman at large.
- 2/29 Absentee voting will take place the next two Saturdays at circuit clerk offices for next month's primary elections.
- 3/4 Former Marine Colonel Ghannon Burton is one of the two Republicans challenging U.S. Senator Roger Wicker in next week's GOP primary.
- 3/11 Incumbent Roger Wicker and state Representative Dan Eubanks share why they should be chosen by the voters as the Republican nominee for U.S. Senate.
- 3/12 Roger Wicker wins the Republican nomination for U.S. Senate while President Joe Biden and former President Donald Trump each win their respective party primaries in Mississippi for the White House.

ISSUE

Community improvements

Program Title: WTVA 9 News

Date: Various

Time: Various

Duration: Various

A variety of stories aired in the first quarter that focused on efforts aimed at making services better in local cities and towns. Some of those efforts had to do with recreational opportunities, but others involved life-saving services that people in larger cities may take for granted. There was also what appears to be a major development in a years-long effort in one county toward getting a new jail.

- 1/4 Tupelo's director of development services says 2024 will include improvements to Ballard Park, pickleball courts and a new Fire Station Number 5.

1/9 The head of the Tupelo Regional Airport says plans this year include the possibility of adding service by Breeze Airways and improving the terminal to provide a first-class experience for passengers.

1/11 The Chickasaw County School District now has five new all-electric school buses paid for with federal funding.

1/26 The local chapter of Mississippi United to End Homelessness says the homeless population in the city has dropped from 89 last year to 54 this year.

1/31 New owners of the hospital in Houston say its emergency room will reopen in a few weeks after a ten-year absence.

1/31 A federal grant of nearly a quarter of a million dollars is being used to renovate and restore a bank building that can be used by businesses and by non-profit organizations.

2/1 Tupelo is moving forward with the first phase of improvements to Ballard Park, which will include a new parking lot as well as entrance upgrades.

2/7 Tupelo Municipal Court sent a crew to Beech Springs Road to pick up trash after seeing a WTVA report about litter being left in the area.

2/8 Lee County E911 has new software that allows callers to use Facetime to show what they are experiencing in an emergency.

2/9 North Tupelo is getting a new power substation on North Green Street that one official says should make electricity more reliable in that part of the city.

2/9 A motel in Pontotoc that has been a haven for drug use through the years is being turned into a sober living home.

2/14 Nettleton is replacing water lines from the 1930s with 17,000 feet of new water mains and 30 new fire hydrants serving 260 households.

2/19 City leaders and residents are trying to figure out how to raise \$1.5 million to renovate the historic Okolona Elementary School.

2/22 The Grenada School District has added two new electric buses to its fleet.

2/28 Crews are installing new playground equipment at Latimer Park in Baldwyn.

2/28 Construction is expected to be completed in April on new lanes and other improvements that will make it easier to access Interstate 22 from Highway 25 in Fulton.

3/19 Lee County supervisors hire construction managers in case the county moves forward on a proposal to build a new jail.

3/27 The hospital in Amory adds six new beds to its intensive care unit, bringing the overall total to 15 beds.

ISSUE

Education

Program Title: WTVA 9 News

Date: Various

Time: Various

Duration: Various

One of our local universities received plenty of attention during the first three months of the new year. Part of the coverage had to do with efforts by that school to rebrand itself so more males would feel comfortable getting an education there. Other stories involved an effort by the Mississippi Legislature to move or change who controls the magnet school that operates at that same university.

1/8 The Mississippi University for Women announced its plans to change its name to Mississippi Brightwell University to be more inclusive, especially for male students.

1/23 MUW President Nora Miller said she has heard feedback on the proposed new name for the school and a task force will explore other options for a name as well as ask for opinions on them.

2/12 A new name for the Mississippi University for Women will be revealed tomorrow, and it will be one of the following three: Wynbright, Welbright and Wynbridge.

2/13 MUW makes another attempt at a name change by announcing the latest proposal being Wynbridge State University of Mississippi.

2/21 The Mississippi University for Women says it is pausing the effort again to change its name after hearing concerns from graduates about the school possibly going to Wynbridge State University of Mississippi.

2/28 Columbus and Lowndes County leaders are appealing to the Legislature to keep the Mississippi School for Mathematics and Science at the Mississippi University for Women instead of moving it to Mississippi State University.

2/29 The Mississippi Senate Education Committee finished its day without considering the proposal to move MSMS from MUW to MSU.

3/1 A state senator says MSMS officials are asking for millions of dollars to make repairs that will keep the school at MUW.

3/5 The full Senate has been sent a bill that would keep the Mississippi School for Mathematics and Science at the Mississippi University for Women but would put the school under the control of Mississippi State University.

3/6 Mississippi State University President Mark Keenum says his school did not seek taking control of the Mississippi School for Mathematics and Science.

3/13 The state Senate narrowly rejects the proposal to move the Mississippi School of Mathematics and Science under the control of Mississippi State University.

ISSUE

Severe Weather

Program Title: WTVA 9 News

Date: Various

Time: Various

Duration: Various

The WTVA Severe Weather Authority faced multiple threats of severe storms during the period, which did involve cutting into regular programming overnight on the morning of March 15. However, most of the coverage was connected to tornadoes that tore through Monroe, Lee and Pontotoc counties one year ago. Besides the stories below, newscasts also aired stories in our multi-part series "After the Storm," which looked at how those damaged areas are doing today.

1/12 Bad weather is blamed for blowing the roof off of a woman's house in Ackerman while she was at work.

1/24 The non-profit organization Eight Days of Hope will bring 1,000 volunteers to Monroe County in March to help rebuild homes damaged in the March tornado.

1/26 Heavy rain this week washed away Berry Road in Webster County, adding time to the drive by residents and forcing county supervisors to come up with a plan to address the problem.

2/2 Amory Mayor Corey Glenn says a generous donor provided enough money to restore a tornado siren that was damaged in the tornado last March.

2/6 Construction is underway on a convenience store on Amory's north side that was destroyed in last year's tornado.

2/20 The Amory School District has applied for funding to build domes on a couple of its campuses that would serve as tornado shelters for teachers, students and the community.

2/26 Multiple groups plan to distribute mattresses March 9 at Amory High School to people still recovering from last year's tornado.

3/11 Eight Days of Hope is in the Amory area working to repair homes damaged in the tornado last March and will stay until March 16.

3/19 The National Weather Service determines two minimal tornadoes touched down Friday in Lowndes County.

3/26 More than 1,000 people in the Grenada area lost power during last night's storms.

Local Public Service Campaigns

ISSUE

Community Improvements

Program Title: Mississippi National Guard "Take Flight"

Date: 1/1/24 – 3/31/24

Time: ROS

Duration: :30s

Detailed Description: We ran 243 PSA spots to promote the Mississippi National Guard, and the opportunities they have to offer the viewers of Northeast Mississippi. The spot was provided by the Mississippi Association of Broadcasters.

ISSUE

Education

Program Title: Mississippi Museum of Art "Picasso"

Date: 1/3/24 – 1/31/24

Time: ROS

Duration: :30s

Detailed Description: We ran 58 PSA spots to help promote a Picasso show happening at the Mississippi Museum of Art. A limited opportunity for education and enrichment for our community to visit while happening. The spot was provided by the Mississippi Association of Broadcasters.

ISSUE

Community Improvements

Program Title: Substance Abuse "Be There"

Date: 2/3/24 – 2/29/24

Time: ROS

Duration: :30s

Detailed Description: We ran 51 PSA spots to promote the "Be There" campaign by the Mississippi Public Health Institute. This campaign promoted the positive actions that our communities could take in

order to help those suffering from substance abuse. The spot was provided by the Mississippi Association of Broadcasters.

ISSUE

Politics

Program Title: Mississippi Votes “Suffrage”

Date: 2/3/24 – 2/29/24

Time: ROS

Duration: :30s

Detailed Description: We ran 53 PSA spots to help raise awareness to the amount of people who have lost their rights to vote, and how they can connect with Mississippi Votes to regain those rights if available. The spot was provided by the Mississippi Association of Broadcasters.

ISSUE

Politics

Program Title: Mississippi Votes “Hotline”

Date: 2/3/24 – 2/29/24

Time: ROS

Duration: :30s

Detailed Description: We ran 53 PSA spots to promote the Mississippi Votes Hotline as the go-to source for voting information ahead of the primary election in March. The spot was provided by the Mississippi Association of Broadcasters.