In July, nine years ago, I accepted the position of editor and publisher of The Yazoo Herald. Moving from Pontotoc to Yazoo City was a big change for Linda and I but a very pleasant one. These have been some great years, and we have met some wonderful people.

I continue to have the same outlook for Yazoo as I did when I first came. The opportunities are limitless, but everyone has to share in the growth. It is hard for just a few to try and move the city forward while others are sitting on the sidelines, wanting the growth, but not helping.

On the other side, I have seen much progress that has been made. Having the opportunity to be president of the Yazoo County Chamber of Commerce enlightened me to the possibilities that lay before us. All we have to do is have a common bond and work ethic, and the city and county can be one of the best in the state as far as a bright future.

Having the opportunity over my 36 years of newspaper service, I have been in five Rotary Clubs, serving as president of three of these, the last being in Yazoo City. I had the privilege of working with and serving as president of the Yazoo Main Street Association and the many fine people that worked so hard to make this a viable function for our city.

As a member of First Baptist Church I have been blessed beyond measure through my fellow Christians. Having the pleasure of teaching an adult Sunday School Class, attending another class as a member, being elected deacon, and trustee of the church has been God's hand touching and leading me where He wants me to be.

One of the greatest highlights of my entire career has come through working and traveling with the senior adults. We have made many bus trips together, and these are some of the greatest people I have known during my lifetime. I will treasure these memories forever.

Since my first publishing job, which occurred in 1978 at the Madison County Herald in Canton, I have come a long way. I went straight from ad sales staff at the Hattiesburg American to a position of newspaper management and had no clue of what I was doing. Many will say I still don't have a clue of what I am doing. Maybe not, but it has taken me a long time to figure that part out.

Serving newspapers in Opelousas, La., Aberdeen, Starkville, and Pontotoc eventually brought me to Yazoo City. In the mid 1980s I had the opportunity to serve as president of the Southern Classified Managers Association which consisted of 21 states. Here again, it was a learning experience since I was working with people from metro dailies, such as Atlanta, Kansas City, Memphis, Little Rock, Dallas, etc.

I have had the opportunity of serving on the Mississippi Press Board of Directors, the MPA Foundation and Education Board.
Starting the Leadership Pontotoc program was a highlight during my career but doesn't rank as high being elected Man of the Year in Aberdeen in 1989 and presented the Spirit of Yazoo Award in 2007.
Last year I was able to print my first devotional book called, Encouraging Words; 30 Days in God's Word. Thanks to all of you who have bought these books and the many comments you have made to me.
In 1970 I married the love of my life, Linda Williams from Hattiesburg. We both graduated from the University of Southern Mississippi. We are very proud of our children, who have never disappointed us. My oldest daughter Jennifer and her husband Craig, both graduates of Mississippi State, live in Hilton Head, S.C. They have two of our grandchildren, Hayden and Alexis.
Another great highlight for me was seeing Alexis baptized after she accepted Jesus as her Savior. She was baptized in a big old pond called the Atlantic Ocean.
Second daughter is Melanie and she is married to Bubba. Melanie is a graduate of Ole Miss and a high school math teacher. They are the parents of two of our grandchildren, Grayson and Madelyn, and will give us another baby girl in September.
Grant and Mary Catherine live in Yazoo City. Both are teachers in the public school systems, and Grant is a coach. They have two of our grandchildren, Lily Cate and Will. Grant graduated from Harding University and Mary Catherine graduated from Millsaps.
Kristi, our youngest daughter, lives in Horn Lake and is also a high school math teacher, coach, and next year will be a counselor. She is a graduate of Mississippi State also.
Linda is retired from school teaching after 21 years. As you can see, our children followed in her footsteps, and none of them wanted to do newspaper as their dad. However, all of them did get to work for me in this business at some time of their life. Maybe this was the turning point in their lives.
I would be remiss if I didn't speak about the employees of this newspaper. They are and have been the best I have worked with.
I wish I could tell you little snippets about each one of them but Jason can only put so many pages in this issue. I will always love this group of people who have worked so hard and made me look good.
Yazoo and The Yazoo Herald have been good to Linda and I, and we will cherish our memories.
God Bless all of you.