



**STATE OF MISSISSIPPI
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND COMMERCE
MISSISSIPPI AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY MUSEUM**

**CINDY HYDE-SMITH
COMMISSIONER**

PRESS RELEASE

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10-Year-Old Ashland Clark Presents New Mule Harnesses to Commissioner Hyde-Smith and MS Ag Museum

Jackson, Miss. – On Friday, January 30, 2015, 10-year-old Ashland Clark, from Raymond, Miss., presented new mule harnesses to Commissioner of Agriculture and Commerce Cindy Hyde-Smith and the Mississippi Agriculture and Forestry Museum. The harnesses were purchased through Ashland’s birthday fundraising efforts to replace those lost in the devastating November 13 fire.

Ashland Clark, who is a regular volunteer at the museum, planned to spend his tenth birthday there during its Country Christmas event. After the fire ruined that plan, this special young man decided to celebrate by giving back to the museum rather than asking for presents for himself. He decided to do this by raising money to replace Joe and Sally’s, the museum’s resident mules, harnesses. “It is refreshing to see youth like Ashland volunteering at the Ag Museum. Through his effort, visitors get a fist-hand look at history being brought to life. He demonstrates the importance of agriculture to our history as well as our present and future, and in his time here, he has grown to love Joe and Sally as if they were his own,” Commissioner Hyde-Smith said.

His mother, Amie Clark, created a Facebook page called “Ashland’s 10th Birthday Wish” with the goal of raising \$2,000. Ashland’s efforts far exceeded expectations by raising over \$2,600. “I’m really glad I got the harnesses, and I want everyone to know that no one is too small or too big to make a difference,” said Ashland Clark.

Anyone who wishes to make contributions and donations to assist with other rebuilding efforts and future improvements at the Mississippi Agriculture and Forestry Museum needs to make checks payable to the Ag Museum Foundation, 1150 Lakeland Drive, Jackson, MS 39216 or call 601-432-4500 for more information.

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