

# STATE GAZETTE

## Honorary Depot Day Race to follow up bike ride for Bart Williams event

Wednesday, August 11, 2021



Pictured above, community members gather at McIver's Grant Public Library—ready to take off around the Square.

State Gazette photo/submitted

Special to the State Gazette

On Saturday, September 18, the community is asked to celebrate the life of late educator and community leader Bart Williams by participating in this year's Newbern Depot Days Rev. George Butler Race. The annual 5K, youth races, and 2-mile walk will begin at 8 a.m. at the Newbern First Methodist Church.

The one-mile Choctaw Run begins at 9 a.m. followed by the half-mile Junior Choctaw race at 9:30 a.m. The Choctaw Run is open to runners grades six and under, and the Junior Choctaw race hosts runners in third grade and below. Pre-race registration for the 5K is \$15. Advance registration for the walk and youth races is \$10. Those who wait to register that morning will face an increase of \$5.



Local non-profit organization Matthew 25:40 closed the event by handing out hundreds of backpacks to children in attendance. Each backpack was filled with supplies and snacks. Many children also left the

event with their very own bicycle. Nearly a dozen bikes were refurbished and donated in memory of Bart Williams.

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Half of the proceeds from the event will go toward the George Butler fund, with the other half going to the cookie scholarship fund.

The run has been held for over 20 years and was started by the late Rev. Butler not long after Newbern began to celebrate its historic depot with a late-summer festival.

This year's Depot Days race follows the Bike Ride for Bart Williams. Sponsored by Matthew 25:40 and held in downtown Dyersburg. Those participating in the event rallied at McIver's Grant Public Library, where they set out on a 5-lap ride around the downtown Square.



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Closing the event, coordinators distributed hundreds of backpacks loaded with school supplies to children in attendance.

In memory of Williams, who was an avid cyclist and was known for his fondness of refurbishing bikes and gifting them to children in the community, the event ended with volunteers presenting nearly a dozen bikes to children in the crowd.

Special thanks are extended to Sonshine Life Group, Verneta Werkmeister, Burks Beverage, Omni-Tech, Sleep Inn & Suites, Ermco, Dyersburg High School cheer team, First Citizens National Bank, Security Bank, Dyer County Mission Blitz, Reelfoot Rural Ministry, Faith Deliverance Church and Bishop Denard Williams, and the many other supporters and friends of Bart Williams and the Williams family.



On Friday, July 30, in downtown Dyersburg, hundreds of community supporters, friends, students, and colleagues gathered to honor late educator Bart Williams during the Biking for Bart Ride. The next event, the Rev. George Butler Race, is scheduled to be held on September 18 at this year's Depot Days event.

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