

**Friends of Valena C. Jones
P.O. Box 2194
Bay St. Louis, MS 39521**

Mayor Mike Favre
City of Bay St. Louis
688 Highway 90
Bay St. Louis, MS 39520

Dear Mayor Favre,

The Friends of Valena C. Jones School Organization respectfully requests the City of Bay St. Louis's support for an important effort to honor a cornerstone of our community's history. During segregation, Valena C. Jones School served as Hancock County's educational, cultural, and social center for Black students and families—hosting concerts, competitions, performances, and community gatherings. It remained in operation until integration in 1969, and its legacy continues today as the home of the Hancock County Boys and Girls Club.

The Mississippi Historical Society has designated the school as an official historical landmark, allowing us to install a permanent Marker recognizing its profound impact on generations of students and families. To complete this project, we are requesting a \$1,000 donation from the City of Bay St. Louis. Your support will help fund the marker and demonstrate a meaningful commitment to preserving our shared heritage.

This marker will stand as a lasting tribute to Valena C. Jones School and its role in shaping the identity of Bay St. Louis and Hancock County. Attached are the plaque details and cost information. Please feel free to contact me for any additional information.

Friends of Valena C. Jones is a 501(c)(3) organization (EIN 99-3384088).

Thank you for your time and thoughtful consideration.

Sincerely,



Clarence Harris, President
Friends of Valena c. Jones School
harris.clarence@mchsi.com
228-343-1174



MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF
ARCHIVES & HISTORY

Thank you for your interest in obtaining a state historical marker. Since 1949, more than 1,100 sites across Mississippi - from prehistoric mounds, historic buildings, and cemeteries to battlefields, houses of worship, and persons who have contributed to the history of the state - have been recognized with a state historical marker.

To apply for a state historical marker, please complete the enclosed application and return to the address below. You may also send the completed application to **cellison@mdah.ms.gov**. To qualify, the site or subject of the marker must have historical significance to a local community, the state, or the nation.

You are welcome to suggest text for the marker. However, MDAH reserves the right to approve the final marker text. Once the text is finalized, the marker will be considered at the next quarterly meeting of the MDAH Board of Trustees. Upon approval by the Board, MDAH staff will order the marker. Because of current manufacturing schedules, please allow at least six months for delivery. If a marker dedication is planned in conjunction with an anniversary or special event, that should be noted on the application.

The cost of a state historical marker varies according to the size of the lettering requested. Prices are set by the manufacturer. All prices include the post and shipping. MDAH does not charge any fee for processing a state historical marker application. PLEASE NOTE: MDAH cannot receive payment for the markers; it is the sole responsibility of the sponsor(s) to pay the invoice directly to the manufacturer. The current pricing for a marker is included in the *Frequently Asked Questions* section.

Upon completion of a marker, the manufacturer will bill the sponsor directly and will ship the marker and post to the nearest Mississippi Department of Transportation District Office, unless otherwise specified by prior arrangement. If the marker is to be located on a state-maintained road, the MDOT may be able to erect the marker. Otherwise, it is the responsibility of the sponsor to receive, inspect, and erect the marker.

SEND COMPLETED APPLICATION TO:

Caleb Ellison
Mississippi Department of Archives and History
PO Box 571
Jackson, MS 39205-0571

(601) 576-6085
cellison@mdah.ms.gov

**STATE HISTORICAL MARKER APPLICATION
MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF ARCHIVES AND HISTORY**

TITLE / SUBJECT OF HISTORICAL MARKER Valena C. Jones School
COUNTY / MUNICIPALITY Hancock County

IS THIS REQUEST FOR A NEW OR A REPLACEMENT MARKER?

☒

NEW

☐

REPLACEMENT

APPLICANT INFORMATION

NAME (S) Clarence Harris
ADDRESS 602 Amar St.
CITY Waveland STATE MS ZIP 39576
PHONE 228-343-1174
EMAIL harris.clarence@mchsi.com

FOR MDAH USE

DATE RECEIVED:

IS THIS APPLICATION BEING SUBMITTED ON BEHALF OF AN ORGANIZATION?

Examples: a business; a church; preservation organization; civic club; historical society and/or alumni association

☒

YES

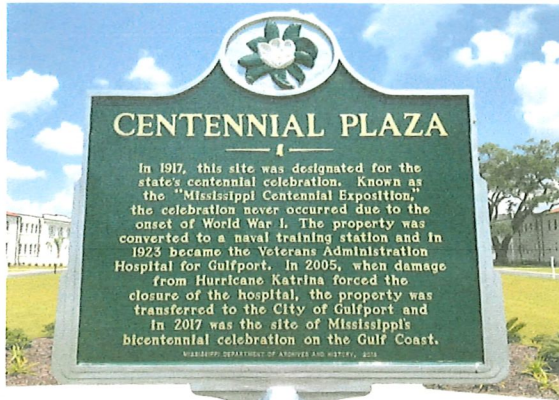
☐

NO

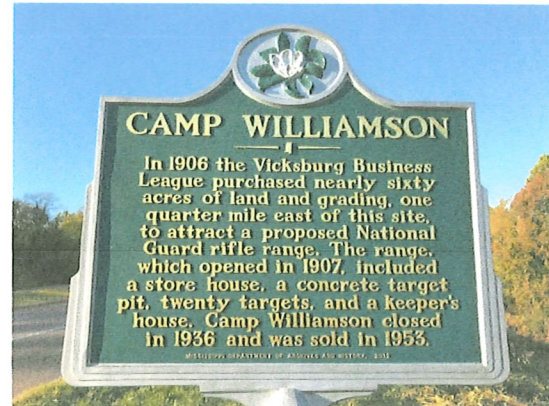
If **YES**, the application MUST include a letter from the organization supporting the application for a state historical marker and designating the applicant as the sole representative of the sponsoring organization for this application.

Name and address of sponsor organization (please include the chief executive office/president, etc. if someone other than the applicant):

ORGANIZATION Friends of Valena C. Jones School
ADDRESS P.O. Box 2194
City: Bay St. Louis STATE MS ZIP 39521
Phone 228-343-1174 Email: harris.clarence@mchsi.com



☐ 1"



☒ 1 1/2"

STYLE OF MARKER PREFERRED (Please check one)

The 1" and 1 1/2" size refers to the height of the letters on the marker. The 1" lettering is smaller, allowing more lines of text and more spaces per line. The 1 1/2" inch lettering is larger and, therefore, has fewer lines of text and fewer spaces per line.

MARKER QUALIFICATIONS

In order for a site to qualify for a marker, the applicant must show that the subject is of historical significance to the local community, state, or nation. For places of worship, preference will be given to historic structures and/or structures associated with significant historical events, persons, or communities. For cemeteries, markers should recognize the cemetery's association with a community or significant persons, and/or cemetery art. The Board of Trustees may accept or reject any application for state historical markers.

16 Miss. Code R. § 3-2.1

Applications recognizing living persons are not allowed.

DOCUMENTATION

Applicants should provide as much supporting documentation as possible, including National Register nominations (if applicable), excerpts from county/local histories, and/or information from other published works. Please include copies of any available research materials as separate documents or attachments.

IS THE SUBJECT OF THE MARKER (ESPECIALLY IF IT IS A HISTORIC STRUCTURE) LISTED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES?

☒ YES ☐ NO ☐ NOT SURE

IF THE SUBJECT OF THE MARKER IS A CEMETERY, HAS IT BEEN CERTIFIED AS AN ABANDONED CEMETERY BY MDAH?

☐ YES ☒ NO ☐ NOT SURE

SUGGESTED MARKER LOCATION [Please provide a street address if applicable]

IS THE MARKER TO BE LOCATED ON PUBLIC PROPERTY?

☒ YES

☐ NO

Examples: on a courthouse square; on public school property; in a public park

IF **YES**, THE APPLICATION MUST INCLUDE A LETTER FROM THE PUBLIC PROPERTY OWNER APPROVING THE ERECTION OF A MARKER AT THAT LOCATION.

PLEASE NOTE: In some instances, erection of a marker on public property may require a Mississippi Landmark permit issued by the MDAH Board of Trustees prior to the approval of a marker application.

NAME OF ADDRESS OF PUBLIC PROPERTY OWNER

Include name of the mayor, county supervisor(s) and/or other public official(s)

PUBLIC OWNER City of Bay St. Louis

MAILING ADDRESS 854 Highway 90, Suite A

City: Bay St. Louis ZIP 39520

Phone(s) 228-466-8951 Email: mayormikefarve@gmail.com

CHECK ONE:

Municipal

☐

County

☒

State of Mississippi

☐

IS THE MARKER TO BE LOCATED ON A STATE-MAINTAINED ROAD OR A COUNTY ROAD?

☐ YES

☒ NO

☐ NOT SURE

IS THE MARKER LOCATION ON PRIVATE PROPERTY OWNED BY SOMEONE OTHER THAN THE SPONSOR(S) OR SPONSORING ORGANIZATION?

☒ YES

☐ NO

IF **YES**, PLEASE PROVIDE THE NAME, ADDRESS AND CONTACT INFORMATION FOR THE OWNER(S) OF THE PROPERTY. [Please print]

NAME(S) Mayor Mike Farve

MAILING ADDRESS: 688 Highway 90

City: Bay St. Louis STATE MS ZIP 39520

PHONE 228-466-8951 EMAIL mayormikefarve@gmail.com

PROPOSED MARKER TEXT

DOES THE SPONSOR WISH TO SUGGEST A MARKER TEXT? ☒ YES ☐ NO

IF **YES**, PLEASE INCLUDE A SUGGESTED TEXT IN THE SPACE BELOW OR ON A SEPARATE PAGE.

- For a **1" text style maker**, there are a total of fourteen (14) lines of text available, including the title line. In the main text, each line should be no longer than **42** spaces. The title (which will be in bold type) should be no more than **30** spaces. Please remember that each letter, space between words, and/or punctuation takes up one space on the line. For example, the following sentence would take up 42 spaces:

The school, built in 1920, burned in 1970.

- For a **1 1/2 " text style maker**, there are eleven (11) lines with 33 spaces per line: The top line is the title and should not exceed 25 spaces.

To check the length of each line, select the line, go to 'Review/Word Count/Characters with Spaces' in Word. Similar functions should be available in other programs.

Valena C. Jones School

Valena C. Jones School (1892-1969)

also known as Bay St. Louis Negro School,

was a public school for African American

students in Bay St. Louis, Mississippi.

the school was renamed after

Valena Cecelia MacArthur Jones,

a noted 19th-century

African American educator.

The last class graduated in 1969,

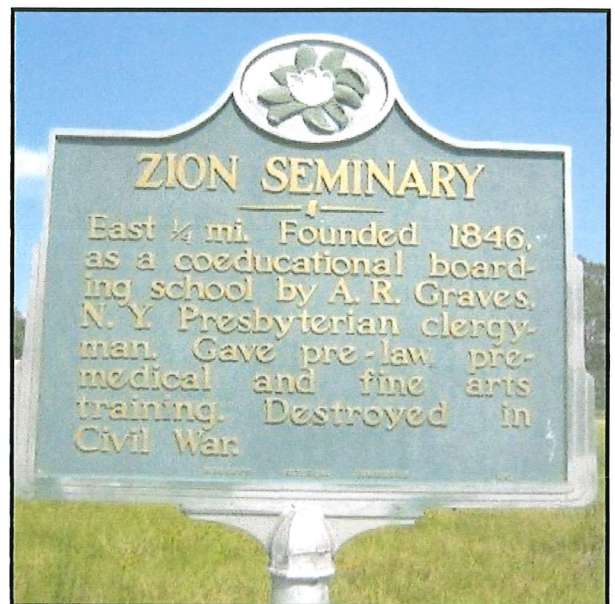
and the school closed in 1972.

The text for a state historical marker is drafted by MDAH staff with input from the sponsor(s). You are welcome to provide a suggested text. However, MDAH, in accordance with the policies adopted by the Board of Trustees, reserves the right to approve the final marker text. On the following page are some guidelines and helpful hints for writing the text for the marker. Also, for those who wish to use a grid in drafting a text, we have provided both the 1" and 1 1/2" grids on a separate page for your convenience.

GUIDELINES FOR MARKER TEXTS

Please observe the following guidelines in drafting a suggested text:

- Whenever possible, write in complete sentences.
Example: Rather than "School built in 1920," write "The school was built in 1920."
- Do not use abbreviations, including postal abbreviations (as in MS for Mississippi).
Example: Use "He later moved to Jackson, Mississippi," rather than "He later moved to Jackson, MS."
- Avoid subjective language. Instead, allow the reader to form his/her own opinion.
Example: Rather than "Rev. Brown served faithfully from 1950 to 1955," use "Rev. Brown served from 1950 to 1955."
- Do not hyphenate words or continue them onto the next line.
- Do not use honorary titles such as Mr. and Mrs. but do use and abbreviate occupational titles and ranks (e.g., Rev., Col., Maj. Gen., Dr., etc.).
- Avoid superlatives or the use of "first," "largest," "only," etc. unless the documentation proves without *any* doubt that the statement is factual.
- Write the marker text for those who are unfamiliar with the subject of the marker. In other words, do not assume that the reader will know anything about the history of your town, church, school, etc.
- Generally, lists of family names should be avoided.
- Numbers are spelled out if they are under twenty, but numbers 21 and higher are numerical.
- In writing a marker text, keep in mind that the subject may not be there in the future. For example, if a marker is for a historic structure, it is best to write the text in such a way that the marker will still be relevant even if the historic structure is no longer there.
- Marker texts recognizing living persons are not allowed.



Many of the older historical markers in Mississippi, some dating back to the beginning of the program in 1949, have texts that would no longer meet the guidelines.

STATE HISTORICAL MARKER PAYMENT RESPONSIBILITY ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I / We the undersigned sponsor(s) do hereby acknowledge and understand that the sponsor(s) are solely responsible for the cost of this state historical marker. Upon receipt of this application by MDAH and subsequent approval of the marker text drafted by MDAH staff in consultation with the sponsor(s) by the MDAH Board of Trustees, I/ we also certify that funding has been secured to pay for the marker and agree that payment will be submitted to the manufacturer upon receipt of an invoice and in a timely manner.

Sponsor(s) Name, Billing Address, Email and Phone Number(s):

Name of Sponsor (*please print*): _____

Billing Address: _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

Signed _____

Date: _____

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. Where are the markers manufactured?

Mississippi's state historical markers, since 1949, have been cast by Sewah Studios in Marietta, Ohio. For more information about the company, please visit their website at <https://sewahstudios.com/americas-finest/>.

2. How long does it take to cast a marker?

Once the marker has been ordered, please allow *at least* six months for the marker to be completed.

3. Who pays for a marker?

All Mississippi state historical markers are privately sponsored. There are no public funds available for state historical markers.

4. How much does a marker cost?

The cost depends on the type of marker requested. As of February 1, 2026, here are the prices for a Mississippi State Historical Marker. The prices are set by the manufacturer.

1" text with 7' Post \$2,850.00

1" text - No Post \$2,725.00

1 ½" text with 7' Post \$2,655.00

1 ½" text - No Post \$2,530.00

Refurbishment \$1,230.00

Refurbishment with cap repair \$1,485.00

Replacement 7' post \$375.00

The above prices are good until December 31, 2026

5. When is payment due?

Payment is due after the marker has been approved by the MDAH board of trustees. At that time, Sewah Studios will bill you directly. Please do not send any payments to MDAH.

6. Once the marker is cast, where is it shipped?

The Mississippi Department of Transportation assists MDAH with the marker program by accepting shipment of state historical markers at their district office warehouses. The appropriate district office is determined by the county in which the marker is to be located.

7. When the marker arrived, it was damaged. Can it be returned to the manufacturer?

Yes. If the Mississippi Department of Transportation and/or you note that the marker is damaged upon arrival, please contact MDAH as soon as possible, and we will make arrangements with the company to return the marker for repair or replacement.

8. After the marker was installed, someone hit the marker and damaged it. Is there any insurance available for a marker?

Unfortunately, there is no insurance available for a state historical marker. Once it has been received and inspected, it is the responsibility of the sponsor(s) to replace any damaged or missing markers.

9. Can I order a replacement post without ordering the entire marker?

Yes. The current price of a replacement post is \$375. This price will remain in effect until December 31, 2026.

10. After the marker was erected, we noticed an error. Can it be corrected?

If the error is the company's, we will contact the company about correcting the marker with either a repair kit (for minor repairs) or by providing instructions for shipping the marker back to the factory. If the error is the sponsor(s), you are responsible for the cost of correcting the error. Before the marker is ordered, you will receive a PROOF COPY

of the order for the marker. **It is extremely important that you closely examine the proof copy of the order to correct any errors before the marker is ordered.**

11. Can I include an illustration or photograph on the marker?

Illustrations, images and/or photos are typically not included on a marker. However, it is possible to do so on the reverse side of the marker for an additional cost. To discuss the process of adding a photo or other image to the marker, you will need to contact Sewah Studios directly to determine the cost and process for adding an image. All images, photos, and illustrations must be approved in advance by MDAH.

12. Can I include the name and/or logo of the organization that sponsored the marker?

The only credit line allowed is to the Mississippi Department of Archives and History (located at the bottom of the marker), and the only "logo" is the magnolia design at the top of the marker.

13. Once the marker is installed, is there a standard dedication format available?

If you choose to have a marker dedication or an unveiling, the specifics of the event are totally up to you. However, it is a great way to involve the local community and bring awareness to the historic place or event you are recognizing with a marker, especially by inviting elected officials, local celebrities, and/or family and church members to the ceremony. Once you make plans to dedicate your marker, please remember to invite a representative from MDAH, and we'll make every effort to be there to celebrate with you!

INSTALLATION PROCEDURES FOR ONE-POST MARKERS

The single 7' post historical markers are manufactured to sit down on top of an octagonal extruded aluminum post that has been provided. The marker is secured to the post by eight (8) set screws that are provided with the marker.

The post is designed for 36" insertion in the ground. This leaves approximately 4' of post above ground.

Using a post hole digger, dig a hole 10"- 12" in diameter and 36" deep. Place the post in the hole with one of the flat faces on the post facing the direction that the marker is to face. Place the post in the hole then plumb and brace it.

Fill top of hole with concrete (sacrete works fine). You might cut the bottom out of a 5 gallon plastic bucket to use as a form. Slip the bucket down over the post so it is resting on the ground at the top of the hole. When you fill the top of the hole with concrete, bring the concrete up about 4 – 6" above the ground. When hardened, cut the plastic form away and you have a nice curb around the post which will deter mowers and trimmers from damaging the post.

Before trying to place the marker on the post, use an Allen wrench to back the set screws part way out of their holes. They have been screwed on for shipment and unless they are backed out part way the marker will not sit down on the post.

Place the marker on the post. Check it for alignment looking straight at the marker and then moving 90 degrees to view the edge of the marker. Secure the marker by tightening the set screws. Adjustments in alignment can be made using the set screws.

The marker can be made theft proof by drilling the flats off the set screws after the marker is secured to the post. Simply take a 1/4" drill bit and drill down into the center of the set-screws going only to the bottom of the hole this will prevent removal of the set screws. To remove the marker, the set screws will have to be drilled out.

Install takes less than an hour; allow 24 hours before removing the bracing.