



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

ANDY GIPSON  
COMMISSIONER

## **PRESS RELEASE**

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### **Dixie National Celebrates the Life of Longtime Rodeo Performer Lecile Harris**

**JACKSON, Miss.** – The life of the late Lecile Harris, professional rodeo clown and longtime performer at the Dixie National Rodeo, was celebrated on the Mississippi State Fairgrounds with a processional and memorial service that included a mural unveiling.

The processional around the State Fairgrounds was led by family members of Lecile Harris, including Matt and Joy Harris, and Indie and Cody Rhoda with their son, Coy. The procession also included special dignitaries, mounted horse groups and the famous Dixie National Wagon Train. Following the procession, Commissioner of Agriculture and Commerce Andy Gipson and the Harper Morgan Rodeo Company held a brief memorial service and mural unveiling in the Mississippi Coliseum.

Miss Mississippi Mary Margaret Hyer opened the memorial service with a rendition of “How Great Thou Art,” followed by words from Commissioner Gipson and PRCA Rodeo Announcer Mike Mathis. Commissioner Gipson recognized Lecile’s wife Ethel who could not be present, as well as family members in attendance. Matt Harris shared sentiments about his father. State Representative Dan Eubanks presented the family with a Proclamation recognizing Lecile Harris’s contributions.

“I want to thank Lecile’s son, Matt, his wife Joy, and their family for joining us today as we remember Lecile Harris, and the incredible legacy he left behind,” said Commissioner of Agriculture and Commerce Andy Gipson. “His loss has been felt not only by the Dixie National Rodeo’s faithful spectators, but all Mississippians and those within the rodeo community around the nation. Though we mourn the loss of our dear friend, who passed away one year ago today following his last performance of the 2020 Dixie National Rodeo, we want to celebrate his life today and the impact he has made on multiple generations.”

Commissioner Gipson and the Harris family cut the ribbon to the newly designed mural featuring Lecile Harris. The extensive mural is located inside the front lobby on the north side of the Mississippi Coliseum for visitors’ viewing, and guests can have their picture taken with Lecile for years to come.

For more information on the Dixie National Livestock Show and Rodeo, visit [www.dixienational.org](http://www.dixienational.org), download the mobile app, “like” the Dixie National Livestock Show & Rodeo on Facebook or call 601-961-4000.

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**Photo attached.**



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