

The Murfreesboro Diamond

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O'Neal to be honored at retirement reception

MURFREESBORO -- The public is invited to join a retirement reception honoring Susan O'Neal on Friday, Dec. 20, from 1 to 3 p.m. O'Neal is an employee in the Pike County Circuit Clerk's office as a deputy clerk under Pike County Circuit Clerk Sabrina Williams. The reception will be held on the second floor of the Pike County Courthouse.

Library to hold new hours in 2025

MURFREESBORO -- The Murfreesboro branch of the Pike County Library system has announced new working hours that will start beginning in January 2025. The library will then open at 9:30 a.m. and close at 4:30 p.m. The new lunch hour will be from 12-1 p.m.

Pike County EHCs meet for Christmas council

BY AVONNE PETTY
EHC Council Reporter

MURFREESBORO -- Twenty members from the Glenwood, East Delight, and Pisgah Extension Homemaker Clubs joined together for their annual Christmas meeting on December 4th.

Their meeting was led by County Council President, Jeanette Deaton. David Lamb, of the East Delight club gave the devotional.

Karen Baker, Mrs. Arkansas Fair Queen and Pike County Fair Board member, was the featured speaker. She talked about how important EHC members were to the fair and have been throughout the fair's 104-year history.

Baker explained entries in the fair determined how much money was distributed to the county. Every entry counts on how much prize money and for other expenses will be available.

Being the current Fair Queen, she talked about the new age brackets for the Fair Queen contests with one for 60 and older ladies. Baker was instrumental in EHC being honored as Fair Parade Marshal of the 2024 Fair.

Each club member votes on their club's EHC Woman of the Year by secret ballot. This year's Glenwood Club Member is Marcel Knighten, East Delight chose Valerie Wingfield, and Pisgah Jeanette Deaton. All club members work hard for their communities.

The Extension Homemaker's Creed says, "I believe that through working together in a group we can enlarge the opportunities, enrich the lives of people, and create a more contented family and community life."

The public is invited join a Pike County EHC group. For more information, contact Eva Langley at the Extension Office in Murfreesboro -- (870) 285-2161 -- or any club member.

M'boro Church to host Christmas Eve services

MURFREESBORO -- The First United Methodist Church of Murfreesboro will host a Christmas Eve "Carols & Candlelight" service on Tuesday, Dec. 24, starting at 9 p.m.

The public is invited to come and take part in this special fellowship.

Area gets tour by state tourism officials in 2025

MURFREESBORO -- The Murfreesboro Chamber of Commerce has announced that the Arkansas Department of Parks, Heritage and Tourism will spend some time in Murfreesboro in 2025.

Set for Sept. 17-18 next year, a group of 30-40 state commission members will come to area to tour the Crater of Diamonds State Park and the surrounding community.

A public meeting will also be scheduled during those days, at a time and location yet to be determined.

"It's another huge opportunity for Murfreesboro to showcase all that we have to offer," said Chamber of Commerce President Lisa Harvill.

The events will be similar to a trip made by the commission several years ago to visit the area.



Submitted photo/PCEHC

EXTENSION HOMEMAKERS OF THE YEAR ... (L to R) Jeanette Deaton, Marcell Knighten, and Ginny Evans (accepting for Valerie Wingfield) receive 2024 EHC Club Woman of the Year awards from Pike County Family and Consumer Science Agent Eva Langley (second from left).

Florida entertainer to perform free concert

Wants to salute veterans, meet county residents before planned move to area

MURFREESBORO -- A Florida man, soon to be a Pike County resident, has announced that he will host a free concert at the former City Service pavilion on Monday, Dec. 23 from 5-8 p.m.

Cherokee Lee, a singer/entertainer from southwest Florida, is a native American on his father's side.

A proud American, Lee said he was supportive of Veterans.

"I am a very proud member of our sons of the American Legion and am active with our VFW here in Florida. My family and very closest friends in life are United States veterans and I do my best to be a man who honors the service of these brave men and women everywhere I go."

He also explained why he decided to move to Pike County, and how much he enjoyed the area.

"Madison [his wife of nine years] and I went traveling this year looking for a place that was beautiful still. A place where the people are kind and still believe in the things that we believe in. We believe in God, in God Bless America, In God bless family, and we believe in God bless the United States veteran. We found that place, those people and those beliefs in Pike County."

Therefore, he plans on becoming a permanent resident.

"We found a place filled with people so beautiful welcoming that we bought a piece of property in Kirby out near Lake Greeson, where we will be building our future forever home on it, in hopes of becoming a small part of this great community."

Lee invites the public to come join him for his concert during this holiday season and help honor local veterans in the process.



Submitted photo

CHEROKEE LEE

"I would be honored if you would come out to the Square on December 23 and listen to me sing some of my favorite songs from country music, southern rock, blues, and a few of the classics from the 50s. I sing several patriotic

songs in my show and honor of nations veterans and I'll be doing some Christmas songs as well. This show will be dedicated to the veterans of Pike County and around the world at Christmas."

Lee said we would greatly enjoy meeting the residents of Pike County.

"We would love to meet you, Pike County, and give you the opportunity to meet us. So if you can please make your plans to attend on Dec. 23 from 5-8 p.m. under the lights of the downtown Square at the Pavillion in Murfreesboro. Grab a blanket and a chair to bring with you and I'll bring the music and the fun -- I'll see you at the show."

CHEROKEE LEE BIOGRAPHY

Cherokee Lee is a 55 year old singer/entertainer and small business owner who currently lives in southwest Florida with his wife Madison and their dog Hank. He is native American on his father's side and white on his mother's side of his family.

Lee grew up in the Appalachian mountains, where country music and southern rock are a way of life.

His father and brothers are United States veterans and so are most of his closest friends. This had led him to be very active as a member of the Sons of the American Legion & VFW auxiliary -- he performs for these organizations regularly.

He is a member of Christ Communities Ministries Church in Florida and stands on his faith in God.

Lee and his wife are animal lovers and support the efforts of their local animal shelter.

Cherokee and Madison are spending Christmas this year in their favorite place, Pike County, Arkansas

MHS coaching search ongoing

Hire probably not to occur until 2025 as interviews continue through this week

MURFREESBORO -- Murfreesboro High School's search for their next head coach is progressing well, according to South Pike County Schools Superintendent Tanya Wilcher.

Wilcher said the school had received 15-16 applications as of Monday morning, and had interviewed three candidates last week and plans to interview three-four this week on campus.

"We are excited and very hopeful to find the right person and the right fit for us. We are getting a very good pool to look at -- quite a few with head coaching experience, which is something we haven't always gotten in the past."

Wilcher said the plan was to interview the most interesting candidates

prior to the district's Christmas break, which begins at the end of the school day on Friday, Dec. 20 and will run through Monday, Jan. 6 of 2025.

She said that it was likely, though not guaranteed, that any final decision would take place following the holiday break to ensure that the interviewing process was a thorough as possible.

"Just because we are interviewing all the way up through Thursday ... but we have some candidates now that we feel like are very, very qualified. If we happen to definitively find the one before then, then we'll do it."



Maroon signs to play at Rich Mountain in Mena

MURFREESBORO – Following his senior season and graduation in 2025, Brody Maroon will be taking his talents to Mena where he will next play for baseball the U-A Rich Mountain Bucks.

Maroon signed his national letter of intent to play for scholarship at the Murfreeseboro High School activity room on Wednesday, Dec. 11.

"It just seemed like a good fit for me at the time," said Maroon of UA-RM. "I went there and thought the staff was great, I had a really good visit. It just fit me better than any other offers I had."

Maroon agreed that the moment was meaningful to him as he had worked toward this moment since he was able to envision such.

"I've worked my whole life to be able to play college baseball. I've played the game since I was four years old and this is what I've worked for since the very beginning."

He didn't know if his baseball career would extend past Rich Mountain, and that he was simply going to do his best and see what happened.

"I don't know [if there is baseball after that] ... we're just going to Rich Mountain for two years and see how we develop. We're just going to take it one day at a time."

Maroon credited many along the way in helping with his success.

"All glory to God – friends, family and any coach that has coached me along the way from the time I started playing ... they have helped me be the best I can be."

To conclude his statement, Maroon was simple.

"Go Bucks."

Murfreeseboro Rattlers head baseball coach Marc McRae said he had enjoyed coaching Maroon and was excited about his future prospects.

"It's been a very fun three years getting to coach him – he is a fantastic person – and it will be a fun senior season, especially now that we have this as a finality ... now he gets to go have fun his senior season."

McRae said that Maroon possessed a gift that allowed him to reach this point – the ability to see an outcome and work toward it.

"The thing we've known about Brody for a long time is that he's had a plan to arrive here – and that's half of it. Having the intention to go and seek this, because it takes so much work



Staff photos

NEXT STOP MENA ... Senior Rattler Brody Maroon (above) signs his national letter of intent to play baseball at the University of Arkansas Rich Mountain in Mena next season. (Right) Maroon is pictured with MHS baseball coach Marc McRae. An event was held last week at the school to commemorate the event with Maroon's fellow athletes in attendance along with friends and family.

because you have to devote yourself to this a long time before today [signing day]. That's the thing about it – he's been putting in that work, going to all the different camps and summer ball, he's been doing all the things it takes to give him the opportunity to arrive where he is right now.

Also, what makes Maroon successful, is his mental toughness in combination with his physical capability.

"You knew early on that he had the physical ability – but there is a lot of people that have the physical ability to move on. It take more than just the physical ability, so when you see a kid that takes what physical talents he has and

is able to then take that to the level he has, it's a good thing. He had just set his mind – this is the goal – but how do we go achieve that goal? He has had a transformation of himself over the years from a guy who was really just relying on that physical ability to propel him into someone who can enhance himself and be better by getting his mind and his body in the right shape. He has been putting a lot of effort into that, and that's something that you don't talk about with kids. Brody has a transformation from ninth grade Brody to senior Brody – physically, mentally, emotionally – and all of that has been toward the light of this. It's exciting to see him meet that goal.

McRae also looks forward to both the near and more extended future.

"I'm excited for his senior season – because it will be an incredible season for him – and for us as a team because of that – and then to see that as he continues on to Rich Mountain and the where he goes from there."

While Maroon didn't wish to make predictions on his future, McRae thinks it's quite possible that Maroon finds a way to continue playing baseball after UA-RM.

"I think he can, I definitely do – he has the ability to. Getting him to Rich Mountain is a great, great place for him to develop at the college level. It's what you are going to see nowadays, when you see kids entering college, especially at the baseball level, you're going to need to have that building stage, that growing stage, and really just putting all your time and effort into baseball, as opposed to baseball just being something you are doing along with A, B, C, D, E, F, G. It's then 'this is what we do' – we go to class, we get better at baseball, and that's what's going to benefit him the most. He's going to get there and really devote some time and energy to it, and with that I full believe he's going to be able to move on who whichever the next guy that is lucky to get him is. I'm just super proud for him and excited to see what happens in his future," McRae concluded.



Basketball Rattlers move toward break with perfect record

MURFREESBORO -- Through seven games this season, the Murfreeseboro Senior Rattlers have maintained their perfect record.

Last week the squad competed against Horatio, Hampton and Foreman.

AT HORATIO

The Rattlers were in cruise control for their second win against a conference foe this season, jumping out over the host Lions to a 12-2 lead by the end of the first quarter and 27-4 by halftime. The lead ballooned to 44-6 by the end of the third before setting at the final score of 46-18.

James Silva would lead the Rattlers in scoring with 19 points on 9/12 shooting. Caden Dixon added 16 points, followed by Laytan Wilcher with five.

The Rattler defense would make life tough on Horatio, securing a total of 18 steals in the game, led by Silva and Dixon with five each.

The offense was efficient, shooting 16/30 from two-point range (53%) and only committing nine turnovers in the game.

The Rattlers, however, did only shoot 3/13 (23%) from three-point range and 5/15 (33%) from the free throw line.

Silva grabbed three offensive rebounds, while Kooper Caldwell led the team with four defensive rebounds.

Parker Sidwell led the Lions in scoring with nine points.

VERSUS HAMPTON

The Rattlers would return to the friendly confines of their home gymnasium last Thursday night to take on Hampton in a non-conference clash.

The Bulldogs would prove to be a step in competition, with the Rattlers notching a 71-50 win.

The first half proved to be highly competitive with a 20-17 Hampton lead after one quarter and a Rattler 36-32 margin at the halftime break.

Murfreeseboro would crank up the defense in the second half, holding the Bulldogs to four points in the third, allowing them to expand their lead to 49-36.

Silva would again lead the team in scoring with 34 points on 15/17 (88%) shooting. He would also add 18 rebounds (7 offensive, 11 defensive) and two steals to pace the squad.

Dixon would add 27 points with seven rebounds.

Point guard Wilcher had six assists for MHS, along with four points and two steals.

An unidentified Bulldog (#2) led his team with 31 points including a trio of three-pointers.

AT FOREMAN

Much like at Horatio and less like Hampton, the boys found the Gators to be not a great contest, winning 68-43.

The Rattlers would jump out to a 17-4 lead after one quarter and 33-18 by halftime.

Dixon would lead the team in scoring with 27 points, followed by Silva with 18 and Caldwell with 11.

Silva had nine rebounds (four offensive) and Dixon added eight (five offensive). Wilcher pilfered five steals against the Gators.

Three Gators – with only six on the scorebook roster – led the team in scoring with nine points each.

LOOKING AHEAD

The Rattlers will host a pair of games this week – against Gurdon on Monday and Mountain Pine on Tuesday to end the schedule for the holiday break until Dec. 28-Jan. 4 at the Mineral

Springs tournament.

COACH'S COMMENTS

Rattler head coach Buster Bonner said his team had a slow start against Horatio, who he labeled as a "struggling team a little bit."

However, the Rattlers recovered enough to pull the starters out by the mid-third quarter when Horatio still had six points.

"They had a hard time scoring," Bonner said. "We just didn't get off to our normal start, but we did well and our bench got some playing time, and that's always a good thing when they get to do that."

Bonner said Dixon was playing well since being down with a bout of the flu last week.

"He's really getting his legs back under him."

He also said the Rattlers inside-out game was progressing well, much due to the strength and high percentage shooting from senior center Silva.

"He shoots such a high percentage and is so strong, it's hard to stop him once he gets position ... and that only helps the other guys when the collapse down on [Silva]."

Hampton provided much more of a challenge for the Rattlers, who according to Bonner was "the quickest team we've seen

BASKETBALL Continued on Page 5

Murfreeseboro Diamond

Your Hometown Newspaper since 1975

Located in the County Seat of Pike County • Murfreeseboro, Arkansas

Home of the Crater of Diamonds State Park
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- John Robert Schirmer, Publisher
- P.J. Tracy IV, Editor
- Christy Coccarelli, Office Manager/Photographer

Published by Nashville Leader Inc.,
418 North Main Street
Nashville, AR 71852

Periodical Class postage paid at Murfreeseboro, AR

The Murfreeseboro Diamond (USPC 103-230) is published every Wednesday.

Subscription Rates: \$40 per year in area: Pike, Howard, Hempstead, Clark, Nevada & Montgomery counties; \$55 per year elsewhere.

\$30 for 6-months in area; \$35 for 6-months elsewhere.

College Subscriptions- \$25 for 9-months.

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 550, Murfreeseboro, AR 71958

Telephone: 870-285-2723

Business Hours: Monday, Tuesday & Thursday 9 a.m.-5 p.m.

Wednesday 9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

Friday 9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.

Please Send Change of Address Information to:
Murfreeseboro Diamond
P.O. Box 550
Murfreeseboro, AR 71958

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FRIDAYS AT 3:00 P.M.**

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ONLINE VIRTUAL PUBLIC MEETING NOTICE



WHAT: Online Virtual Public Meeting via a pre-recorded presentation, to gather public input, on the proposed replacement of the Wolf Creek Bridge on Hwy. 29 near Antoine, AR (Pike County).

WHEN: Monday December 9, 2024, through Tuesday, December 23, 2024

Visit anytime during the scheduled hours.

Link to project information:
www.ardot.gov/publicmeetings
Website availability begins

December 9, 2024, and ends at 4:30 p.m. on December 23, 2024

Sponsor: Arkansas Department of Transportation (ARDOT)

Special communication or accommodation needs under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) may contact Matt Strawn @ 501-569-2281 or email environmentalpublicmeetings@ardot.gov. The hearing or speech impaired, may contact the Arkansas Relay System at (Voice/TTY 711). Requests should be made at least 4 days prior to the public meeting.

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Free language assistance for Limited English Proficient individuals is available upon request.

This notice is available from the ADA/504/Title VI Coordinator in large print, on audiotope and in Braille.

Job 030603

Lady Rattlers drop first game of season but regain momentum

MURFREESBORO -- The Murfreesboro Lady Rattlers went 2-1 this week to see their first loss of the season against Horatio. The girls' overall record now stands at 7-1.

AT HORATIO

The Lady Rattlers would jump out to a 10-9 lead after the first quarter and would still lead 17-6 by halftime. The Lady Lions would gain the edge 28-27 by the end of the third and then put the defensive clamps down – holding MHS to a pair of fourth quarter points – to claim the 37-29 victory.

Sydney Braden would lead the Lady Rattlers with 13 points and 9 rebounds.

Natalie Perrin added six points and Jenna May five.

The Lady Rattlers shot miserably in the effort – 29% from two-point range, 22% from three points range and 39% from the free throw line.

Combined with 25 turnovers cumulatively, the team was destined to accumulate their lowest point total on the season.

The Lady Rattlers did gather 11 steals in the games – five players with two each – and Chloe Scoggin led the team with three assists.

VERSUS HAMPTON

The girls would return to form against Hampton at home, scoring a 59-50 victory.

The game was close throughout, with Hampton holding a slim 16-14 lead after the first quarter and MHS holding the edge at halftime 32-28. Hampton would regain the lead by the end of the third 46-43 before the Lady Rattlers were able to impose their will in the fourth to claim a win.

The team was hot from three in the first half – hitting eight of them before halftime.

May would lead the team with 21 points, including five three-pointers.

Scoggin added 13 with a trifecta of threes.

Holt added eight and Perrin seven.

Braden and Holt each had five rebounds to lead the team, while Scoggin had seven assists and five steals.

Ja'Kayla Stephens had 23 points for Hampton.

AT FOREMAN

Last Friday night the Lady Rattlers secured a 48-20 over Foreman to cap the week's action.

MHS would start tight, and trailed 7-5 after the first period, but would wake up in the second quarter to hold a 23-12 lead at half. They would start mercy clock rules in the second half.

Perrin scored 13 to lead the team, followed by Holt's 12 and Scoggin's 11.

Scoggin and May each had eight rebounds to lead the team, while the pair also both recorded three assists and steals apiece.

Madison Click would lead the Lady Gators with six points.

LOOKING AHEAD

The Lady Rattlers will host a pair of games this week – against Gurdon on Monday and Mountain Pine on Tuesday to end the schedule for the holiday break until Dec. 28-Jan. 4 at the Mineral Springs tournament.

COACH'S COMMENTS

Lady Rattler head coach Nicole Martin said the team had benefited from the season's opening and inaugural two-day Lady Rattlers Classic in allowing the team to get off the ground prior to the boy's start after losing in the football playoffs.

"That's something that we will try to continue to do in the future. There are teams in the area in a similar situation [waiting on football to end] like Mineral Springs and Magnet Cove and it was a success. It was good to host other schools and get in some competitive games. At the beginning of the year you're

just wanting to see the stuff you worked on in offseason and get up and down the court."

The Classic also included Blevins and Umpire, allowing Martin to add that the travel wasn't prohibitive to participate.

The three girls' teams – seventh, MJHS and MHS – then got bonus action in a "girl's night" against Magnet Cove the next week.

"Junior high went into an overtime game in their second game of the season, so that was awesome to get to experience an intense game ... we ended up losing by one [point] but I was proud of them."

Martin said Magnet Cove holds the best record thus far of all the teams they have played, so it would be great experience down the road to build upon.

"They've only lost one game thus far, so that ten-point win is looking pretty solid [for us]," she added. "We had a really good non-conference slate before Thanksgiving break, letting us know the things we had to improve upon during the break."

The team's first conference win over Spring Hill 43-34 on Dec. 6 was "guttled out" according to Martin, who said her team that week was especially taxed due to all their activities including basketball.

"In the past, when we needed to kinda gut out a game, we weren't able to just lean on mentality, and do the little things to get a win. We hadn't been able to just push through that – even though we didn't shoot well, we did come to play."

Next came the loss at Horatio – the team's first loss of the season.

"We had gotten spoiled, playing all our games at home ... we were really confident heading in. Horatio is a good young team that will try to do all the little things right. They want a low scoring game, whereas we want to be in the 50's. Well, their mentality won and we got into some foul trouble, which made us back out of some things we like to do. We ended up just falling into the hands of what they wanted to do and shot horribly. We missed 11 free throws – and the rest of the stats bizarrely matched up ... we hit the same number of two-pointers and three-pointers – they beat us from the free throw line."

The team also didn't rebound very well, according to Martin. Whenever you are having a night you are not shooting well, you have to be lights out defensively, and we weren't. We could not get off the defensive end, giving up like 50 offensive rebounds," she said. "It was them shooting until they either scored or we fouled them ... we couldn't rebound, didn't box out, and I was disappointed on how we handled the 50/50 balls."

While Horatio "smacked them in the face," Martin admits that's not always a bad thing for a team, giving the team some "intense practices" the next day before heading into the Hampton game.

"We got after it and they didn't like me, but I don't care ... we had to reset in a toughness way."

Martin said playing Hampton in a non-conference tussle was perfect – they were a good team that was perhaps a "regional-type team."

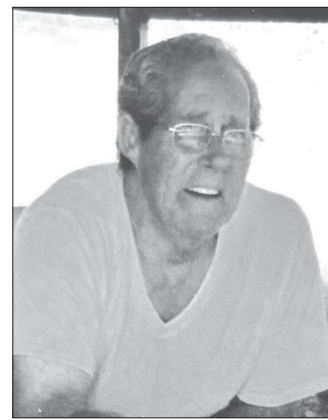
"If we can get there [to regionals] – it's a long ways away – they look like a Junction [City] type team we might play in post-season. We saw the biggest kid (6'1") we've seen that was very athletic for a sophomore, and had some quickness at the guard. That was a really good non-conference game in a really good spot, because we needed a gut-check game. I didn't want a cupcake game, I didn't want to just go through the motions after a tough loss – I wanted intense, and have the kid really challenged to step up and play better, or lose two straight games."

Martin was satisfied with the outcome.

"It was a battle and we hit some big shots – where were those threes [against Horatio]? We went 10/20 from the three-point line. Jenna and Chloe stepped up – that was one of Chloe's best games from the outside on the year after resetting herself from the Horatio game, which was good to see. I was proud of the

Obituaries

Danny Ray Happy, 76, Delight



Danny Ray Happy, 76, of Delight, passed away December 9, 2024 at the VA hospital in Little Rock. He was born on June 28, 1948 in Delight to Ernest and Martha Happy.

Danny was a Navy veteran and served in the Viet Nam war. He was a member of the church of Christ.

Danny worked in Florida as a marine mammal trainer. He also was a musician and played in a band in his young-

er years. He started doing taxidermy in his early teens and became a very well respected taxidermist in southwest Arkansas. His past time hobbies included carving and making his own fish baits. He loved hunting, fishing, trapping and gardening. He was an all around outdoorsman and also very artistic.

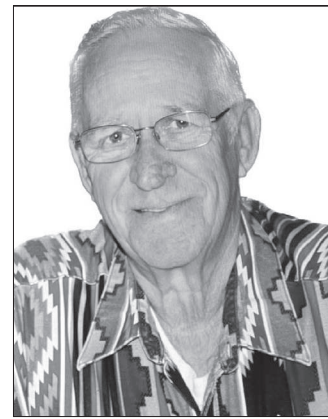
He is predeceased by his parents and his brother, Tommy Happy.

Survivors include, two sisters, Judy Fisher and husband, Buddy, of Royal, Pam Campbell and husband, Tommy, of Billstown, Sister-in-law, Nancy Happy of Hot Springs, numerous nieces, nephews, cousins, friends and his long time friend, Diane and all of her family.

A memorial service will be announced at a later date.

You may send an online sympathy message at www.latimerfuneralhome.com

Clyde Keys, 81, Murfreesboro



Clyde Keys was born on December 10, 1943 and passed from this life peacefully at his home surrounded by his family on December 14, 2024.

Clyde was born to the late Delton Keys and Zera Mae Kelley Keys.

Clyde was a 1963 Graduate of Murfreesboro where he was known as Cefus. He was also known in school as the friend that if anyone needed anything all they had to do is whistle and he'd come running. In 1970, he married the love of his life, Diane. The two would have been married fifty-five years this coming March. Clyde and Diane had a marriage and love for each other like no other. There was never a question of how they felt for each other. Their unwavering love is what got them through it all until the end. Their unconditional love for one another is a true testament.

In 1975, Clyde moved his family to Florida with his job where he spent the next ten years as an asphalt plant superintendent.

Clyde moved back to Murfreesboro in 1985 to be closer to his mom to help take care of her.

He spent thirty years with the Pike County Road Department before retiring in 2017 where he filled various positions. He took great pride in his job and looked forward in going to work with his work buddies. I'm sure they all were

up to all kinds of shenanigans over the years. He worked under many county judges and created life lasting relationships with all he worked with. It's been said that he was one of the best drivers the county has seen. To know Clyde was to love him.

Clyde's hobbies included hunting, trot-lining, and (back in the day) loved talking on the CB where he was known as "Pineneedle." He loved riding around in the hills looking for deer. Clyde enjoyed telling stories about the log woods and the time he spent working there.

Clyde loved any time he got to spend with family. He was such a jokester and loved making people laugh. He loved to dance any opportunity he had and making Tik Toks with the grandkids.

Clyde is preceeded in death by his parents Delton and Zera Keys; his grandparents, Eual and Eula Kelley and John and Ivie Mae Keys; one grandson from Florida, John Rivers Underwood; and a daughter-in-law Caprice Keys.

Clyde is survived by his loving wife, Diane of almost fifty-five years; son Dell Keys of Pike City; daughter, Trish Underwood and husband Kelly of Hernando Beach, Florida; daughter Detra Westfall and husband Eric of Murfreesboro; son Buck Keys and wife Layla of Murfreesboro; eleven grandchildren, Jordan Westfall and Max, Morgan and Tyler Hanson, Brooke Westfall, Alyssa Keys, Chloe Keys, Peyton Keys, Harley and Ashlyn Keys and Fancy Keys; four great-grandchildren, River and Olive Underwood and Parker and Jenna Hanson.

A memorial service is scheduled for Clyde on Saturday, December 21, 2024 at 10:00 a.m. at Latimer Funeral Home in Murfreesboro.

You may send an online sympathy message at www.latimerfuneralhome.com

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LADY RATTLEERS Continued on Page 6

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UAMS

HOUSE CALL

Dr. Daniel Knight is a professor in the Department of Family and Preventive Medicine in the College of Medicine at the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences.

Q: What causes myasthenia gravis?

A: Myasthenia gravis is an autoimmune neuromuscular disorder that affects communication between the nerves and the voluntary muscles. Voluntary muscles include those in the diaphragm, face and throat, as well as muscles that connect to bones. The condition causes those muscles to become weak and tire more easily. Myasthenia gravis is rare — the Myasthenia Gravis Foundation of America estimates that 70,000 people in the United States have the condition.

A breakdown in how nerves and muscles interact causes myasthenia gravis. A malfunctioning immune system creates antibodies that block receptors from receiving signals, resulting in muscle weakness. Myasthenia gravis is more

common in women around the age of 40 and among men around the age of 60, but it can occur at any age.

Symptoms include shortness of breath, drooping of one or both eyelids, changes in facial expressions, problems swallowing, and weakness in the arms, legs and neck. These symptoms may come about suddenly but get better with rest.

Myasthenia gravis cannot be cured, but treatment can effectively manage symptoms. Medications such as corticosteroids or immunosuppressants may be prescribed. Infusions of antibodies to suppress the immune system may also be an option. Contact your health care provider if you have questions.

Email your health questions to housecall@uams.edu.

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All letters to the editor must be signed, along with a phone number (that will not be published) provided for confirmation purposes. The Murfreesboro Diamond reserves the right to edit letters for length and clarity. Letters must not be libelous or contain any profanities.

Send letters to P.O. Box 550, Murfreesboro, AR 71958 or email to mdiamond.editor@windstream.net

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Submitted photo/MVFD

FIREFIGHTER OF THE YEAR ... The Murfreesboro Volunteer Fire Department voted Dylan Branch (left) as their Firefighter of the Year for 2024. Dylan is pictured with his father, Ricky Branch, the town's assistant fire chief, who presented him with the award earlier this week.

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SOUTH PIKE COUNTY SCHOOL MENU

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 19

Breakfast: Sausage biscuit or cereal, fruit, juice, milk

Lunch: Chicken tenders, mashed potatoes, green beans, whole grain roll, fruit, milk

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 20

Breakfast: Blueberry muffin or cereal, fruit,

juice, milk

Lunch: Pepperoni pizza, seasoned carrots, steamed broccoli, fruit, milk

**Due to food item shortages menus are subject to change without notice. Any changes to the menu will be posted on the website at www.rattlers.org*

Christmas Break

Monday, December 23 - Friday, January 3

'Dear Preacher'

By Buddy Ray, Murfreesboro Church of Christ

GOD'S GOODNESS

"Or do you despise the riches of His goodness, forbearance, and longsuffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leads you to repentance?" A Christian who does not appreciate the great patience of Jehovah is in dire danger. The problem with human nature is that we tend to think we are not as weak as those around us. If we are not careful, we attribute sinful things to others. The difficulty with this is that we cannot know why people act and talk as they do. Only God can judge the motivation of the individuals of our acquaintance. On occasion, we will think a family member is an-



gry because of an expression on the face or in the tone of voice. The truth many times is a result of a family emergency or an upsetting situation. It is evident that we cannot know what is going on in the lives of our peers. God wants us to understand that He has a perfect grasp of what is happening in our heart. God blesses

us every day to show how much He loves us. Satan will tempt us, and we will sin. "If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us." 1 John 1:8. He goes further to tell us. "If we say we have not sinned, we make Him a liar and the truth is not in us." 1 John 1:10. Paul says God's goodness is the motivation for us to repent and turn away from sin. God is always ready to forgive us if we will repent with all our heart. The inspired writer tells us, "Glory, honor and peace to everyone who works what is good; to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile. For there is no partiality with God." Romans 2:10,11.

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Legislators talk drugs, jails

STATE CAPITOL WEEK IN REVIEW

Senator Steve Crowell

LITTLE ROCK -- Arkansas won a long and hard-fought legal battle against large pharmaceutical manufacturers when the United States Supreme Court let stand a lower court ruling in the state's favor.

The decision means that Act 1103 of 2021 is constitutional and remains in effect. "This is a big win for Arkansas's drug access law," the state Attorney General said in a statement after the Supreme Court ruling.

In essence, the Supreme Court upheld Arkansas law that allows hospitals to use contract pharmacies without financial penalty, under a federal drug pricing law commonly known as the 340B program. It requires pharmaceutical companies to offer discounts to eligible hospitals in order for their drugs to be on the approved list of drugs paid for by Medicaid and Medicare.

Some hospitals pass along the savings to patients, while others use the savings to pay physicians and nurses, or to expand services. The Supreme Court has noted that "340B hospitals perform valuable services for low-income and rural communities..."

A few years ago pharmaceutical companies began refusing to offer the discount to drug stores under contract with hospitals. The manufacturers would only offer the discounts to in-house pharmacies located within hospitals, a development that had a significant financial impact on many hospitals.

Only four percent of hospitals use their own in-house pharmacies, according to evidence entered in the case. More often, hospitals contract with pharmacies all around the state, which means that patients who have been treated in a Little Rock hospital don't have to return to Little Rock to get their prescriptions filled. They can get their prescriptions at a contract pharmacy closer to their hometown.

Act 1103 of 2021 was a bipartisan bill, with sponsors from both political parties. It passed the Senate by a vote of 35-to-0.

Pharmaceutical manufacturers quickly sued the state Insurance Department, alleging the Act 1103 was unconstitutional and that it was an attempt by the state to pre-empt federal regulations and that it violated federal patent law. A federal judge in Little Rock ruled in favor of the state and his ruling was upheld by the Eighth Circuit Court of Appeals in St. Louis.

Also, some pharmaceutical companies argued that some hospitals used the discounts to boost profits, rather than to add services or lower prices for patients.

By refusing to hear any further appeals, the U.S. Supreme Court affirmed the lower court rulings and essentially declared Act 1103 to be constitutional.

The Insurance Department said earlier this year that 23 of 32 listed pharmaceutical manufacturers are now in compliance with Act 1103.

The original legal challenge was filed by a trade group, the Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America, also referred to as PhRMA.

Arkansas was the first state to enact a law requiring pharmaceutical manufacturers to offer equal discounts to contract pharmacies. Louisiana followed suit in 2023 and in 2024 six other states have enacted similar laws.

STATE JAILS

The state Department of Correction has been in the news recently because of its efforts to build additional prison space, in order to improve public safety.

Much less public attention has been paid to the Department's agency that supervises parolees and people on probation, even though Arkansas has many more offenders out of prison than inside. The number of parolees and probationers is more than triple the number of inmates inside prison walls.

MURFREESBORO SENIOR ADULT CENTER LUNCH MENU

MONDAY, DECEMBER 23

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TUESDAY, DECEMBER 24

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WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 25

CLOSED FOR CHRISTMAS

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 26

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Facts About The BIBLE BY JOHN LEHTI

This is a dramatized version of facts taken from the Book of 1Chronicles Chap. 24 and 2 Kings Chap. 12 consolidated.

ZECHARIAH A VISION PROPHECY

THE POLITICALLY MINDED PRINCES OF JUDAH, ON SEEING PROPHECIES, FROM THE HILLS SPEAK OUT IN THE STREETS OF JERUSALEM, AGAINST WORKSHIPPING IDOLS, WASTE NO TIME IN HURRYING TO THE KING....

NOT TO MENTION THE LOSS OF THOUSANDS OF SHEKELS, WHICH WE OBTAIN BY THE SALE OF INCENSE FOR THE PEOPLE TO BURN AT THE TEMPLE, IN BAAL'S HONOR!

HE INTENDS TO TURN THE PEOPLE AGAINST WORSHIPPING THE IDOLS OF OUR NEIGHBORS--AND IF THIS HAPPENS, WE WILL HAVE NO FRIENDS AND ALLIES IN TIME OF WAR!

THE PRINCES LEAVE THE KING IMMEDIATELY! THEY HAVE OBTAINED EXACTLY WHAT THEY CAME FOR--NO NEED TO TALK TO THE KING WHO KNOWS THE KING COULD CHANGE HIS MIND!

AT THIS SAME TIME, ZECHARIAH, IN DEEP MEDITATION, FEELS THE SPIRIT OF THE LORD UPON HIM--NOW, HE KNOWS WHAT HE MUST DO!

JOHN LEHTI

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AT THE RESTAURANT
* -- Theme Related Clue

- ACROSS**
1. Be's predecessor
6. Ogre-like creature
9. Attorney's bargain
13. Old but in
14. *Restaurant waiting area?
15. Located near crannies?
16. List of Catholic saints
17. Down Under runner
18. White heron
19. * ___ meal, or staff meal
21. *Meat and fish, in Italian restaurant
23. Singer/songwriter Yoko
24. *What appetizers do to appetite
25. *Deuce
28. Like a reliable move
30. Not a desktop
35. "My bad!"
37. Painter Chagall
39. Beyond suburban
40. Wisecrack
41. *Nigiri, e.g.
43. *Middle Eastern bread
44. Of an arm bone
46. That time
47. Let it stand, to proofreader
48. Swellings
50. Chancy
52. Between E and NE
53. Stomach reflex
55. *Fish eggs
57. *Second C in CDC
61. * ___ d'hotel
64. Not mainstream, as in art
65. "To His ___ Mistress"
67. Bracelet add-on
69. Covers with gold
70. Stiff grass bristle
71. Irving of Dallas Mavericks
72. Eyelid affliction
73. Fairytale princess test

74. Winter driving hazard
- DOWN**
1. Curved one
2. Table extender
3. Sicilian erupter
4. Movie trailer, e.g.
5. Perfecting, as in skill
6. Toe the line
7. Popular pickup
8. Puppy love
9. Jumping stick
10. Forsaken
11. Barely got by
12. Spumante-producing town
15. Greek god's libation
20. Rumpelstiltskin's machine, pl.
22. *Freshwater staple in sushi restaurant
24. Idolize
25. *Chef's hat
26. Modified "will"
27. Offer two cents
29. Drawn tight
31. Baby porcupines
32. Commonplace
33. Like Cheerios
34. *Blue-___ special
36. Unsubscriber's focus
38. * ___ de partie, or line cook
42. ___ structure or ___ red
45. Cujo's disease
49. Ray shooter
51. Foxhunter's call to hounds
54. Short version
56. C2H5
57. Marlboros or Camels, slangily
58. Army group
59. Lazily
60. *Complimentary dish
61. Asian starling
62. *Steak choice
63. Great Lake
66. Be in the red
68. Were introduced

CROSSWORD

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BASKETBALL Continued from Page 2

this year – it was a real concern entering the game.”

“We were down after one [quarter] but we adjusted after improving our passes. At a time out I told them, ‘hey, we can’t float those things any more ... you have to have zip on it or they will get ahold of it.’”

He said the other component of Hampton’s speed that harried the Rattlers a bit was the fact that they were able to get back on defense, somewhat negating the Rattlers fast breaks.

“That impressed me,” said Bonner.

He said that the high scoring totals of Dixon and Silva would have to be better buffered by other players down the road.

“We’ll have to have others step up, they haven’t been scoring like before,” while noting earlier this year they had four scorers in double figures which only makes them a harder team to guard.

He said Hampton’s #2 could very well be the best player the Rattlers have seen all season.

“He could come from the three-point line and dribble in for a pull-up jump shot over everybody. He was that good ... ain’t no doubt about it. A lot of his [31] points came in the fourth quarter when they just turned him loose – which they may be better off doing the whole game.”

Games like this only help build character for him team, Bonner said.

“I was leery about it before a conference game, but yes, we benefitted from it a lot,” admitting this game was much more like a postseason game that the Rattlers’ other two contests last week.

He said the only downside was that the team was a “little leg weary” headed into the Foreman contest.

“But, we knew what we had to do.”

Bonner said he was impressed with Foreman’s shooting ability, especially in light of a 6’4” forward and a guard they didn’t have on the roster that night. I don’t know how much of a difference they would have made if they were available, but they’ll probably be around next time we play them. We jumped out on them 17-4, but they didn’t go away.”

Bonner said he is happy with them team’s standing thus far into the season, but admits that’s an easy thing to say about an undefeated team.

“You have to be happy with that – but most of our bigger conference games, outside Spring Hill, like Caddo Hills, Dierks, Cutter Morning Star ... the big ones will be after Christmas.

MJHS
The Murfreesboro Junior High Rattlers face a pair of battles last week against Horatio and Hampton, coming out of the action with a split.

AT HORATIO
The junior Rattlers would drop their contest at Horatio by a 45-34 score.

They would keep the game close in the first quarter, closing the period at an 11-9 deficit. By halftime, the junior Lions expanded that lead to 22-16.

James Burgess would lead the Rattlers in scoring with 14 points, followed by Hunter Sweat’s eight and Isaac Smith’s six.

VERSUS HAMPTON
A pair of nights later, MJHS saw a different result, coming away with a 45-34 win over the junior Bulldogs.

The Rattlers held a lead of 14-7 after one quarter, 30-14 at half-time and 43-20 by the end of the third.

Burgess again led the team in scoring with 17 points, followed by Cale Humphry with 13 and Sweat with seven.

LOOKING AHEAD
MJHS will not see action again until Jan. 7 against Cutter Morning Star at home.



Staff photo

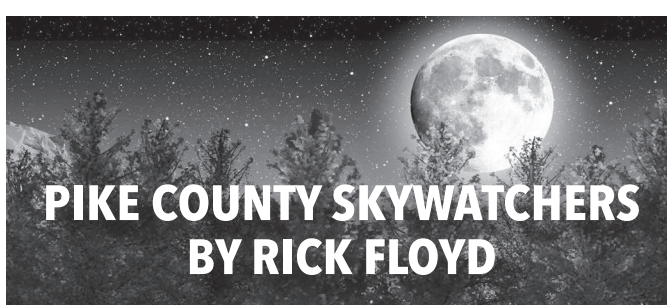
UP AND OVER ... Murfreesboro Rattler James Silva rises above the Hampton defense for a two point basket in the lane during last week’s action at home.

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Winter solstice historically impactful

It is late December and Christmas. Astronomically, it is the time of winter solstice. The northern hemisphere is now slanted away from the sun as Earth goes around the Sun, which means the Sun is at a lower angle and days are shorter. In other words, ingredients for winter. It is summer in the southern hemisphere.

Winter solstice this year is on 21 December. Technically, it occurs at a little past 3:00 a.m. C.S.T., but the general time to mark the event is to get out early and observe sunrise.

That is what our ancient ancestors did. Worldwide, there are remnants of their ways of commemorating the annual event. Stonehenge in England, Machu Picchu in Peru, and here in Pike County the mound complex at what we now call Ka-Do-Ha near Murfreesboro, to name a few.

Our modern attitude to this celestial occurrence is informed by science taking most of the mystery out of it. We know with mathematical precision the dynamics of the Earth’s orbit around the Sun, and the reasons why we have seasons. To those of long ago, however, the complexities we now often take for granted, were in the past very much mysterious, explained by myth and related to through rituals and ceremonies. Winter solstice, in particular, was a powerful turning point when the Sun appeared to come to a standstill at its most southern point of movement across the eastern horizon, before starting to move back toward its summer position.

At Ka-Do-Ha there is good evidence that winter solstice sunrise was observed from the largest mound there. The Sun rises over the Twin Knobs a few miles away, and would have been the site on the horizon that, to the dignitaries on the mound, marked where the Sun would begin to reverse itself.

We are free to ignore the passing of this particular time, or we can acknowledge our relationship to our planet, and its place in the solar system. I am glad, at least, that we do not have to worry that the Sun will not stop on 21 December, and slide off the edge leaving us in darkness and cold.

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LADY RATTLERS

Continued from Page 3

girls for bouncing back off the disappointment from Tuesday, and not spiraling and dropping game after game. It set us up to go into Foreman with confidence in our play, and be back on track with starting another winning streak.”

She would laud her supporting cast in the game as well.

“You go your spittfire kids – Jocee and Nat[alie] – and their energy. Jamie [Howell] comes in and gets a fast break layup that set the tone going into the fourth [quarter]. Sydney and Kinslee [Howell] had their hands full inside, but they battled all night for position and rebounds. That will probably be the biggest kid they see, so that was good for them to experience. Faith [Teel] came in and hit a big corner three. I thought we played one of our more together games, a very team oriented win – one that we needed. [Hampton] was 8-3, so they were a really good team – they’ve won a tournament and you could see they were solid and give teams fits.”

Martin said the team’s mentality was good. “We got waylaid in Horatio, but we put that aside. It was noticeable they prided themselves in rebounding more, after being nonexistent against Horatio. [Hampton] was gritty – Natalie took a screen shot that probably would have knocked anybody else out – she just jogged down the court and played some defense. It’s too bad she was never used at linebacker for the football team,” Martin said with a laugh. “She looked like Sloan Perrin [her older brother] out there last night taking that shot and keep on ticking. But, I was excited to see we could let the tough loss go and settle ourselves.”

Martin said Gurdon was “pretty athletic” with a new coach that “does a really good job with them.”

“They are still implementing stuff, so we need to try and lay the hammer down on them and try to do the things we want to do, rather

than play their style of game.

The other game this week, Mountain Pine, Martin said would be a good test for her team headed into the Christmas break.

“Not taking anything away from Spring Hill, but Mountain Pine might be the best conference game we see before break. It will be a good test to see where we are at. They have a lot of seniors, and not a lot of depth. They have a new coach as well that works them really hard. I’m excited about that game.”

Martin said if her squad can finish strong with a couple of wins this week, they would be exactly where she hoped prior to the season starting.

“Obviously, I’d rather be undefeated and not have that Horatio loss, but we learned a lot about ourselves. The girls are really motivated – and I liked it when our practice wasn’t as intense as normal headed into Horatio and our captains (May, Holt, Perrin) wanted more intense practices. I like that they understand they needed to get a little more ferocious.”

Martin said that its possible this team has a mental block about playing well in Horatio, but as it is the last time they will have to go there this season, they will get a shot a revenge soon.

“When we play them here [Jan. 21] it will be different ... but we will also get them in the first round of the Mineral Tournament during the break. I’m looking forward to get to see them again pretty quick, because we were all disappointed with that game, our preparedness and our approach and even my coaching. We needed to look a lot sharper than we did, but there will be a lot of adjustments on how we approach that game next time. When you play a team that is sophomore led like them, with not a senior on the team, you can’t look like you’re not the veterans, and we looked like we were the newbies against them.”

She said that this season was building differently than last season.

“Everyone can see they are carrying themselves differently, playing really hard and this senior nucleus has been together for so long and played so much ball – and that’s helping

them now. With how hard we are working, I like where we are trending if we can stay healthy.”

Martin said sophomore Gianna Draper returned to the team in the Foreman game as her ankle injury had healed.

“I’m excited about getting her back – she’s a big rebounder ... loves to rebound ... in case we get into a situation like we did at Horatio. She treats rebound like points, which is an awesome mentality. Her offense will come on, but her defense is top notch.

Laini Liggin, the team’s other sophomore and transfer from Kirby, is coming along according to Martin.

“I’m excited about her future – every practice she gets better. Super sweet kid that does everything we ask her to do. Shows up every day with a great attitude and a smile on her face. She just on the younger side, but an awesome kid.”

Centers Braden and K. Howell are providing “good minutes” and Martin said she is waiting for Braden to have a moment.

“I’m ready for Syd to have that breakout game, because when she has it, it’s going to be scary. She’s still banged up a little from her ankle, and I know in games she says she’s good, but it’s still swelling a bit. She’s not 100% right now, so struggling a little bit with contact inside, but even having off nights right now she’s still getting almost double doubles. When she feels healthy – hopefully in a few weeks – I’m excited to see what she will be able to do inside.”

She felt the girls were a bit high strung at the start of the Foreman game.

“We really wanted that game and were a little uptight on the road – it wasn’t a scared thing, more of a we have to perform pressure – so we were only up 11 going into half. We settled a lot ... for a quarter and a half we went with a solid senior lineup. Foreman doesn’t have a true center, so we really didn’t have to worry about size. We put Nat[alie] in for a center and Jamie at forward and rolled five seniors, switched to man-to-man defense and they got us settled.

We got it to the clock [mercy rule] and that’s always what you want is to put it on a team and put it out of reach. It was a good win to bounce back into conference play.”

MJHS

The junior Rattler’s lone game of the week resulted in a 41-18 victory over Foreman.

MJHS would hold the junior Lady Gators scoreless in the first quarter to hold a 8-0 lead. Foreman would fight back to trail by five at half 16-11, but MJHS would hold them to three points in the third quarter to build and insurmountable lead.

Maci Price led the team in scoring with nine points, followed by three teammates – Shaylia Morris, Kyndall Henderson and Kyndahl Posey – with six points each.

“I thought they did really good,” Martin said with a sardonic laugh, “despite one key factor ... the first half was played with a boy’s basketball instead of a girl’s – which is slightly lighter and smaller.”

“It’s the first time in 14 years that’s happened to me. Maci said with about 90 seconds before half that she thought it was a boy’s ball, which I first dismissed ... but we were shooting abnormally bad. Like can’t make a layup bad. As we went to half I checked it, and sure enough it was a size 7, so boy’s ball, and I looked at the referee and he said ‘we’ll let you shoot a little bit coming out of halftime.’”

She said her Rattlers then settled themselves.

“You do the classic, ‘hey ... you were shooting with the wrong ball but are playing hard’, tricking them into thinking that’s why their first half score was low. They came out in the second half and put it on them. Henderson had been down with the flu prior to them game, so we had a lot of seventh and eighth graders step up. Shaylia as well – she’s having a good freshman year.”

LOOKING AHEAD

After seeing action at home on Dec. 17 against Mountain Pine, MJHS will be off until Jan. 9 in home action against Prescott.

Pike County Sgt. Furr selected as 2024 officer of the year for Pike County

LITTLE ROCK – Attorney General Tim Griffin recently honored law enforcement officers from across Arkansas at the 2024 Officer of the Year Awards luncheon.

Sergeant Shaun Furr of the Pike County Sheriff’s Office was selected as the local recipient this year.

At the conclusion of the event, Griffin issued the following statement:

“Each year we honor the

service, sacrifice, and dedication of Arkansas’s law enforcement with the Officer of the Year Awards. The men and women we’ve recognized today have shown outstanding courage and commitment to their communities in the past year. As we celebrate the ways they have gone above and beyond to keep Arkansans safe, we honor not just these few, but all law enforcement officers.

“This year’s state Officer of the Year is Chief Deputy John Cutrell of the Calhoun County Sheriff’s Office. During the mass shooting at the Mad Butcher grocery store in Fordyce on June 21, 2024, Chief Deputy Cutrell was near the scene when calls began to come in. Chief Deputy Cutrell immediately jumped into action to assist law enforcement, paramedics, and victims. While on scene, he aided a

paramedic by driving the ambulance to the hospital while the paramedic was treating a severely injured victim. Chief Deputy Cutrell then helped the paramedic transport the victim to their room so the medical staff could provide further medical treatment. Afterward, Chief Deputy Cutrell immediately returned to the Mad Butcher grocery store and began preserving the crime scene.

“The victim Chief Deputy Cutrell assisted that day is alive because of the chief deputy’s actions. In a situation of chaos and violence, Chief Deputy Cutrell demonstrated strength, compassion, and courage. He was among many heroes in Fordyce that day, and his actions are representative of the best of law enforcement in our state. “As the top law enforcement officer in the state, I am committed to supporting and working with Arkansas’s law enforcement community to ensure they can continue to protect and serve our citizens at the highest levels of excellence and professionalism.”

Honorees are officers from each of the state’s counties, five regional winners, two recipients of the Dwayne Yarbrough Distinguished Service Award, four valor tributes (officers who died in the line of duty) and one statewide Officer of the Year.

Other officers selected for the honor in 2024 include:

- Clark County -- Lieutenant Dean Palmer, Arkansas Police
- Hempstead County -- Trooper First Class Trevor Dew, Arkansas State Police
- Howard County -- Investigator Tim Bowlin, Dierks Police Department
- Montgomery County: Sergeant Emily McCaghren, Montgomery County Sheriff’s Office
- Nevada County -- Sergeant Jeremy Hendrix, Nevada County Sheriff’s Office

Department



Submitted photo/PCSO
SGT. SHAUN FURR



Submitted photo/Chamber of Commerce

RUNNING FOR THE KIDDIES ... (Above) Participants of the Diamond Jingle 5K take off from the starting line on December 7, while (below) contestants are pictured post race. The event, which just completed its third year, raised over \$4,000 for Angel Tree efforts to help give local underprivileged children gifts during the Christmas season.



Diamond Jingle 5K raises over \$4,000 for Angel Tree efforts

MURFREESBORO -- The Murfreesboro Chamber of Commerce 5K Team sponsored their third annual Diamond Jingle 5K on Saturday, Dec. 7.

The 5K was Powered by Husqvarna and all proceeds from the event will go the Angel Tree program to help sponsor gifts in the Murfreesboro and Delight areas.

The Diamond Jingle 5K annual event was created to help support The Angel Tree program. This program is a non-profit that collects monetary or physical gifts purchased by individuals who have adopted an angel from the tree. The gifts are then given to needy children in the area who may not otherwise have gifts at Christmas. Gifts the children request are often items that most of us take for granted, such as socks, pajamas, shoes, and jackets, in addition to toys.

This year the 5K was able to raise over \$4,000 to help support their fundraising efforts. It is with much gratitude that they would like to thank their very generous sponsors:

- DIAMOND JINGLE SPONSOR – Husqvarna
- DIAMOND SPONSORS – First State Bank of Murfreesboro, Jackson Title, and Dr. Abigail Wilhite
- JINGLE BELL SPONSORS – Bank of Delight, Caddo Antiques, Harvill and Associates Insurance Agency, and Kirby Kwik Stop
- JINGLE SPONSORS – Cash Savers of Nashville, J & S Auto Supply, Dr. Rhodes at Murfreesboro Dental Care, and Texarkana Machine Shop

“We truly appreciate our sponsors, many volunteers, and participants in making this event such a success for our fundraising ... we hope to continue to grow this year after year!” said Murfreesboro Chamber of Commerce President Lisa Harvill.

Age bracket winners of the 5K event included:

- Overall Male – Alec O’Neal
- Overall Female – Maddie O’Neal
- Ages 11-19 Male – Kelton York
- Ages 11-19 Female – Nykia Dixon
- Ages 30-39 Male – Sam McClendon
- Ages 40-49 Male – Jacob Gold
- Ages 40-49 Female – Misti Gold
- Ages 50-59 Male – Jorge Bautista
- Ages 50-59 Female – Kim Conant
- Ages 60-69 Female – Sondra Lingo
- Ages 80+ Male – David Samuel