



Chamber to host ‘Gig Ready’ event

MURFREESBORO -- Kinetic, formerly known as Windstream, will hold a ribbon cutting event in conjunction with the chamber to celebrate Murfreesboro becoming a “Gig Ready Community.”

The even is set for March 13 at 11 a.m. in Murfreesboro City Hall. City Hall is located at 805 North Washington Avenue.

Light refreshments will be served.

Group seeks donations for garage sale benefit

NASHVILLE -- Operation Christmas Child’s (OCC) semi-annual garage sale will be held Friday, March 21, 8 a.m.-5 p.m. and Saturday, March 22, 8 a.m.-Noon in the Family Activity Building (FAB) of the First Baptist Church in Nashville, located at College and 2nd Streets.

In order for this garage sale to be successful, the effort is seeking donations of no longer wanted but still usable furniture, tools, dishes, lamps, decorations, art, collectables, electronics, toys, jewelry, books, clothing, etc.

OCC volunteers will accept your donations at the FAB, Monday-Thursday, March 16-20.

“Please mark your calendar with the donation times and especially the garage sale times. Thanks for your generous donations which will go toward helping children in need around the world,” said the press release.

Harvest Food Bank to distribute next Wednesday

TEXARKANA -- Harvest Regional Food Bank will distribute TEFAP USDA food boxes directly from their truck on Wednesday, March 19, from 8:30-10:30 a.m. or until all boxes have been distributed.

Recipients must come inside the municipal building located at 204 E. Main St. to check in.

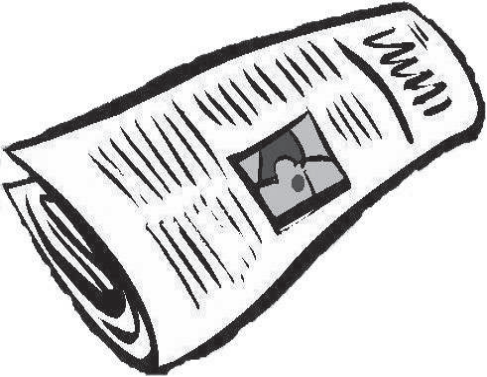
Once checked in, recipients will go back to their vehicle and proceed to line up along 2nd Avenue and Owens Street towards First United Methodist Church.

Food boxes will be loaded directly into vehicles from the back of the municipal building.

The next Mobile Pantry is scheduled for Wednesday, May 14, 2025.

Recipients must bring photo identification or proof of address to verify they are residents of Pike County.

Distribution is limited to one box per household and two households per vehicle. Vehicles start lining up early, so Harvest recommends participants arrive early.



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Chamber holds annual banquet, presents awards

MURFREESBORO – The Murfreesboro Chamber of Commerce held their annual banquet last Thursday at the Murfreesboro Senior Adult Center.

Under their “Mardi Gras” theme, the chamber handed out three awards -- Person of the Year Ricky Branch, Murfreesboro Elementary School Teacher of the Year Jane Caldwell and Murfreesboro High School Teacher of the Year Blake Simmons (Agriculture).

Several local restaurants participated in the event’s “Taste of Murfreesboro” meal, including Feed Bin Café, Terri’s Place, Telinga’s Mexican Restaurant and Branch Oil.

Murfreesboro Mayor Jim O’Neal gave an address on the state of the city.

Now three-quarters of the way through his elected term, O’Neal stated that the city’s current council was “a good group” that “has the best interest of Murfreesboro and we are fortunate to have these individuals serving our town.”

O’Neal said the city was working on an addendum of the 2020 census, which occurred in the middle of the covid pandemic. The city has since learned that they no longer qualify for many grants due to the census finding the city’s low to moderate income too high.

“According to the census data, over 51% of our citizens live above the poverty level, which disqualifies us for major grants until the next census is completed.”

Short of gathering additional resident information that the census did not gather, that is.

“We are hoping that was not an accurate number ... we are in the process of doing our own count and will challenge the findings. It is important that we do a fair count.”

He said that the city will soon start a mail out form to city residents.

“I am asking that everyone to fill out the one page form and return it as soon as possible in the self-addressed envelope that we furnish you.”

O’Neal then addressed what he called one of the biggest questions.

“When are we going to get a grocery store? The answer is that I really don’t know.”

He added that he has contacted a number of grocery chains and that “there is very little interest in coming to small town.”

“I have reminded them that we have a huge influx of tourists for eight months during the year, but I have been told there is a low-profit margin in groceries. That doesn’t seem possible from the prices they charge.”

O’Neal said he still in contact with a group that could provide some resolution, and visited one of their stores in Gurdon that “it was nice, carries produce and fresh meat.”

“I will continue working for our own store,” O’Neal stated, and invited anyone who wished to know more about the census figures or grocery store issue to visit City Hall and discuss with him.

He said the sidewalk project, which the city got a grant for prior to the census reclassification, will look to complete the path on the west side of North Washington Street as well as adding light along the pathway. The existing lights around the Pike County Courthouse will also be altered to match the other new lighting that will be installed.

O’Neal said that the project will go through



Staff photo

MAN OF THE YEAR ... The Murfreesboro Chamber of Commerce named Ricky Branch as their 2025 person of the year after public nominations led them to that conclusion. Pictured (above) with Branch is Murfreesboro Chamber of Commerce secretary and treasurer Jane Fugitt, who presented him the award.

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CHAMBER Continued on Page 2



Staff photos

BANQUET SPEAKERS ... Crater of Diamonds State Park Superintendent Caleb Howell and Murfreesboro Mayor Jim O’Neal are pictured during their respective presentations at the Murfreesboro Chamber of Commerce last Thursday night.

Bonnerdale resident charged with theft after Delight incident

MURFREESBORO -- Felony charges of residential burglary and theft of property have been filed in Pike County against a Bonnerdale man.

Raymond Harr, 35, was charged March 7 as a result of a February investigation into a break-in at Delight, according to case information.

Deputies were called to a home on Westbrook Street in Delight in reference to a subject entering a home. The deputies made contact with Harr’s estranged wife, who said she was home alone on Feb. 24 when she heard someone reportedly come in the back door and found Harr inside. After being asked to leave, the wife attempted to call 911 and Harr allegedly threw her on the bed and took her phone.

The wife told deputies she was able to grab a flashlight and hit Harr on the head and then

run outside. She then flagged down a passing vehicle and called the police.

Harr left with the phone and the wife said a similar incident had happened where Harr stole her phone and fled before police arrived.

Harr plead innocent to the charges Monday in Pike County Circuit Court and an April 28 pretrial date was set. He bond was set at \$50,000.



VALENTINE ROYALTY ... Murfreesboro Nursing and Rehab named Marion Riley and Mary Turner as their 2025 Valentines Day king and queen during a party recently at the facility.

Local man to face drug charges in Howard County

NASHVILLE -- A Murfreesboro man has been charged in Howard County with multiple drug charges.

Stanley W. Gosnell, 52, was charged in Howard County Circuit Court March 10 with felony possession of methamphetamine and drug paraphernalia and tampering with physical evidence.

Gosnell is also facing a misdemeanor charge of possession of marijuana.

Gosnell was stopped by the Nashville Police Department on March 4 for disobeying a stop sign. Gosnell did not initially stop and was allegedly swerving on the roadway before stopping near the overpass in Nashville.

Nashville Police Department K-9 Officer Greg Parker noted in his report that he smelled marijuana as he approached the vehicle and that Gosnell told the officer the smell was from a partially smoked marijuana cigarette in the vehicle.

A search of Gosnell's vehicle found a crystal-like substance that was on the passenger side door and armrest and a small amount of the substance in a plastic bag. Two small bags of marijuana were also recovered, as well as a syringe.

A warrant for Gosnell's arrest was issued in Howard County on March 10.

Attorney General warns of home solicitation scams

LITTLE ROCK -- Attorney General Tim Griffin issued the following statement warning Arkansans about scams related to door-to-door sales:

“With the arrival of warmer weather, Arkansans can expect to see more door-to-door sellers visiting their homes. Home solicitations include a wide range of products and services, including home improvement projects, home security systems, and solar panels. While some of these sellers are legitimate, others employ high-pressure sales tactics and may misrepresent what they are selling, including the benefits, costs, and terms of the products and services they offer.”

Arkansans can keep themselves safe from door-to-door scams following these tips:

- Always require proper identification from a salesperson before allowing him or her into your home, and ensure you understand the exact purpose of the visit and what company the salesperson represents.
- Some cities require that door-to-door salespersons obtain a permit before engaging in sales. Know your local ordinances.
- Take the time you need to fully evaluate any sales offer.

Shopping around and conducting research is essential to ensure that the deal is legitimate. Be cautious if a salesperson pressures you to sign a contract immediately without taking time to think about the offer.

- Read the contract carefully and make sure it matches what the salesperson is telling you. Furthermore, make sure you get a copy of the contract.
- Do not allow a salesperson to install any product on the same day as the sale.
- Consumers in Arkansas have the right to cancel any home solicitation sale within three days of making a purchase. You have the right to cancel within that three-day window even if equipment is installed in your home.
- Be skeptical of “free” installation or equipment deals. Even if something is initially presented as free to entice you, you may end up paying for the product through expensive, long-term contracts.

Even diligent people can be scammed; however, knowing the warning signs and carefully evaluating the sales offer can help keep you safe from deceptive sales practices.

If you wish to file a complaint against with the Attorney General's office, you can do so by contacting the Arkansas Attorney General's office at (800) 482-8982, emailing consumer@arkansas-ag.gov, or visiting ArkansasAG.gov.

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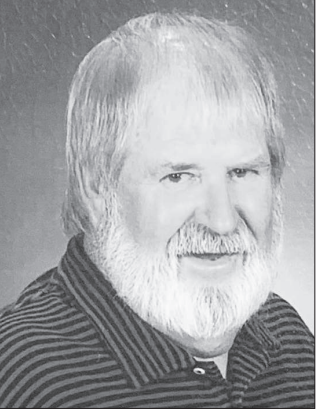
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Obituaries

Richard ‘Dick’ Lee Carroll, 82, Murfreesboro



of the First United Methodist Church in Murfreesboro. As an avid hunter, he took many hunting trips to Colorado with friends, but he reserved his best spot, the honey hole, for his girls and grandchildren. In his later years, he and Diane enjoyed camping with family and friends. One of his all-time favorite hobbies was making deals and trading.

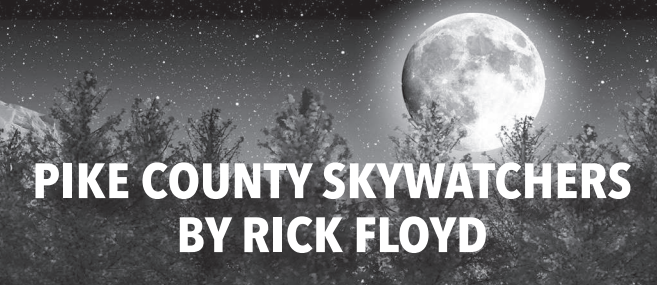
Dick is survived by his devoted wife of 54 years, Diane Richardson Carroll; his daughters Dana Couch, Anna Howard and husband Eddie, Gina Golden and husband Grant; grandchildren Amanda, Sara and husband Corey, Kane and fiancé’ Emma, Addison, and Ansley; a sister, Margaret Byrd and husband Tom; his great-grandchildren, many nieces and nephews, cousins, extended family and friends, and his “Chief”, LaDonna.

The family will received friends on Sunday, March 9, 2025 at Latimer Funeral Home in Murfreesboro.

Funeral services were held at 2:30 p.m. on Monday, March 10, 2025 at the First United Methodist Church in Murfreesboro. Interment followed in Murfreesboro Cemetery, under the direction of Latimer Funeral Home of Murfreesboro.

Memorials may be made to the Murfreesboro Cemetery at P.O. Box 185, Murfreesboro, AR 71958.

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



PIKE COUNTY SKYWATCHERS
BY RICK FLOYD

Pot hole Worm Moon to go through eclipse on Pi day

The March full moon is called the Worm Moon. The Moon will be full on March 14, but it will actually appear full from Wednesday to Saturday morning.

Worm Moon is a name given by southern Native American tribes. Recently it was suggested that the name be changed to Pot Hole Moon to reflect a more modern phenomenon.

As this full moon passes around Earth, opposite the Sun, it will move through Earth's shadow creating a total Lunar eclipse. People of Pike County will be able to view the eclipse in the following time-line:

- Thursday, March 13, 10:57 p.m. -- penumbral eclipse begins as the Moon enters Earth's outer shadow and begins to dim.
- Friday, March 14, 12:09 a.m. -- the Moon goes into partial eclipse and looks like a bite has been taken out of it.
- 1:26 a.m. -- totality begins. The entire Moon is in Earth's shadow, and is tinted a coppery red.
- 2:31 a.m. -- totality ends, and slowly the bite is taken from the opposite side.
- 3:47 a.m. -- partial eclipse ends, and the moon is again dimmed by Earth's outer shadow.
- 5:00 a.m. -- eclipse is over.

Friday, March 14 is Pi Day, a humorous holiday created in 1988, but in 2009 the U.S. House of Representatives passed a resolution recognizing the date as National Pi Day.

Pi is the Greek letter symbol used in mathematics to indicate the ratio of a circle's circumference to its diameter. Pi is a mathematical constant that stretches on forever. Its first three numbers are 3.14 (hence March 14).

One way to celebrate Pi Day is to begin at 1:59 and party for 26.5 minutes. This is one way to remember the first 9 numbers, 3.14159265. Also, many people have a pie of their choosing, even a pizza pie. I always have a chocolate pie with the symbol for Pi drawn in the meringue.

March 14 (1879) is also Albert Einstein's birthday. So, it can be a double celebration, of the number and of Einstein's achievements. Pi was used in many of his cosmic theories.

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2	1	6	3	5	4	8	9	7
4	5	7	9	8	2	6	3	1
9	8	3	1	6	7	2	5	4

Pike County 4-Hers see government in action at 4-H Day at the Capitol

LITTLE ROCK -- Pike County 4-H members, Prestan M., Joshua M., Ora K., Sophia C., Hadley C., and Cayden B. participated in 4-H Day at the Capitol. Where they met legislators, learned about the legislative process, and shared how they are making a difference in their communities through 4-H.

They were among the 500 4-H members from 54 of Arkansas' 75 counties who participated in the event held every other year when the Arkansas Legislature is in session. The statewide gathering is also a chance for 4-H to showcase its impact on a large scale.

The Pike County delegation, which included Prestan M., Joshua M., Ora K., Sophia C., Hadley C., and Cayden B. were joined by Staff Chair and FCS Agent Eva Langley, Ag Agent Codie McCalister, and 4-H Program Assistant Christina Myrkle.

"Despite the rain that day, our members really enjoyed the one-on-one talks with Senator Steve Crowell, and Representative Justin Gonzalez. You could watch their interest in the process come alive as they listened to these gentlemen explain the Legislative process. Yet, they really couldn't stop sharing about being able to hold the \$200,000 dollars cash while visiting the treasury!"

The Pike County 4-H member group attended a Tribute to Arkansas in the Capitol Rotunda where several of the state's elected officials spoke to them, including Lt. Gov. Leslie Rutledge, State Treasurer John Thurston, Secretary of State Cole Jester, and Attorney General Tim Griffin, who called the 4-H gathering "the single largest group ever assembled in the Arkansas Capitol" that he could recall.

Later in the day, members of the House and

Senate read resolutions proclaiming March 4 as 4-H Day.

A highlight of the members day was visiting Senator Crowell, and Representative Gonzalez. The members enjoyed the unique and inviting office set up in Senator Steve Crowell's office and the 4-H members thanked Senator Crowell, and later Representative Gonzalez for supporting 4-H and shared information about their service projects. Cayden B. highlighted starting Shop with a Cop, Prestan M. shared about his experience with the Cooking Challenge, Hadley C. and Joshua M. shared about competing at the 4-H State Shooting Sports Championships.

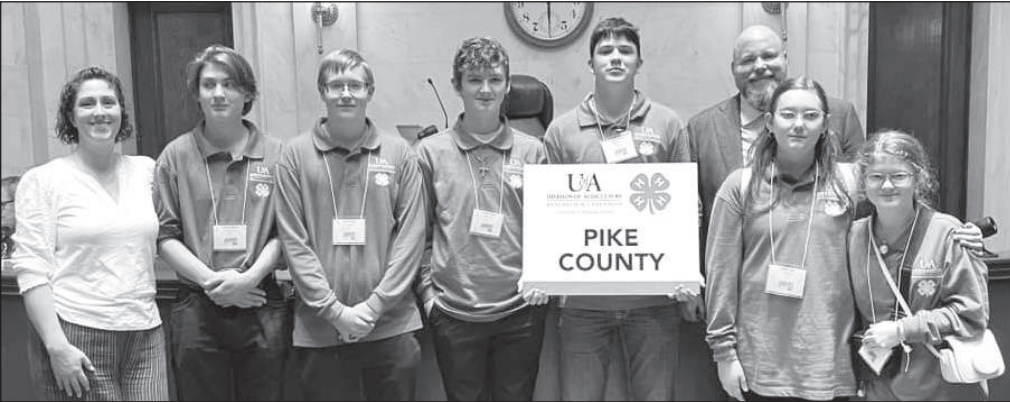
Civic engagement and leadership are part of Arkansas 4-H's mission mandates; the others are Healthy Living and Science. Pike County 4-H members were able to experience the con-

nection between those mandate area's and why they are important as they listened to Senator Steve Cromwell share about a bill he was introducing that day.

4-H Day at the Capitol is just one event that helps 4-H members understand how they can lead and make a difference. Whether serving as a local 4-H club president, conducting a community service project, or running for a state office, 4-H civic engagement programs empower young people to become well-informed citizens who are actively engaged in their communities.

For more information about Pike County 4-H, contact Pike County Extension at (870) 285-2161 or visit www.uaex.uada.edu.

The Cooperative Extension Service is the outreach arm of the University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture.



MURFREESBORO SENIOR ADULT CENTER LUNCH MENU


MONDAY, MARCH 17 BBQ pulled pork sandwich, baked sweet potato, coleslaw, pickle & onion, fruit	WEDNESDAY, MARCH 20 Salisbury steak w/ peppers, onion & gravy, cauliflower & carrots, dinner roll, cookie
TUESDAY, MARCH 18 Chicken tenders w/gravy, potatoes, green beans, herb corn, dinner roll, pineapple upside down cake	<i>Lunch served at 11:30 a.m. For more information (870) 285-2312. Open Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday at 8 a.m. Carry out is now available for \$6.00</i>

‘Dear Preacher’

By Buddy Ray, Murfreesboro Church of Christ

PRAYER

Jesus gives us personal, productive insight on effective prayer in Matthew 6:1-15. He says not to be hypocritical when we pray or to pray to be seen of men. Proper prayer and proper meditation go together. God will reward prayer openly. Prayer should not be repetitious. In Matthew 6:9 we are told to begin prayer in this way, "Our Father in Heaven, hallowed be thy name." God deserves our praise and devotion. We should always give God honor and glory for He is the Lord of lords and the King of kings. Heartfelt prayer will be a time of praise for all He has done and is doing for us. "Thy Kingdom come, they



will be done on earth as it is in Heaven." The church-kingdom was a reality on the first Pentecost following Jesus' resurrection. The kingdom has not come for the whole world because all people have not heard the gospel of salvation. We must continue to work and pray that each and every

soul may have the opportunity to hear and obey the Word. Daily bread (word of God) is a necessity. We should pray for physical blessings and be thankful for them. We are debtors to Jehovah for grace, mercy and all other spiritual blessings – a debt that can never be paid. Only God's divine instructions can keep us from temptations and help us to overcome Satan. The power, glory and kingdom forever will be the final victory. Jesus prayed He and prayed often, long and fervently. He knew the most potent weapon in our spiritual arsenal would be a well-used prayer life with the Father. Amen.

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SOUTH PIKE COUNTY SCHOOL MENU

THURSDAY, MARCH 13
Breakfast: Chocolate muffin or cereal, juice, fruit, milk
Lunch: Chicken nuggets, mashed potatoes, green beans, whole grain roll, peaches, milk

FRIDAY, MARCH 14
Breakfast: Breakfast pizza or cereal, juice, fruit, milk
Lunch: Pk-6 cheese pizza, 7-12 deep dish pepperoni pizza, fresh broccoli & cauliflower, seasoned corn, pears, milk

MONDAY, MARCH 17
Breakfast: Blueberry muffin or cereal, juice, fruit, milk
Lunch: Cheeseburger, potato smiles, lettuce, tomato, 7-12 pickle & onion slices, pineapple, milk

TUESDAY, MARCH 18
Breakfast: Sausage croissant or cereal, juice, fruit, milk
Lunch: Chicken quesadilla, fire roasted corn, refried beans, 7-12 salsa, 7-12 whole grain cookie, pears, milk

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 19
Breakfast: Apple frudel, w/cheese stick or cereal, juice, fruit, milk
Lunch: Chicken spaghetti, California blend vegetables, seasoned corn, garlic breadstick, mixed 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*

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Facts About The BIBLE

BY JOHN LEHTI

GARDENS AND VINEYARDS IN BIBLICAL TIMES!

GARDENS WERE, AS THE HEBREW WORD (GEDERAH) INDICATES, ENCLOSURES, USUALLY ON THE OUTSKIRTS OF TOWNS PLANTED WITH VARIOUS TREES AND SHRUBS. FROM ALLUSIONS IN THE BIBLE, WE LEARN THAT THEY WERE SURROUNDED BY THORN HEDGES (IS. 5:5,6) OR STONE WALLS (PROV. 24:30). SOME LANDOWNERS BUILT WATCHTOWERS THAT WERE USED BY WATCHMEN SO THEY COULD DRIVE AWAY WILD ANIMALS OR PEOPLE WHO WOULD DESTROY OR EAT THE FRUIT GROWING IN THE GARDENS. THE GARDENS OF THE HEBREWS WERE PLANTED WITH FLOWERS AND AROMATIC SHRUBS BESIDES OLIVE TREES, WALNUT TREES, FIG TREES AND OTHERS FOR DOMESTIC USE (EX. 23:11, JER. 29:5). GARDENS OF HERBS (DEUT. 11:10; 1 KINGS 21:2) CUCUMBERS WERE GROWN IN THEM (IS. 1:8) AND PROBABLY ALSO MELONS, LEEKS, ONIONS AND GARLIC WHICH ARE SPOKEN OF (NUM. 11:5) AS THE PRODUCE OF A NEIGHBORING COUNTRY. THE CLIMATE WAS IDEAL FOR GROWING GRAPES AND ALL GARDENS HAD THEM. IN THE SECLUSION AND COOLNESS OF THEIR GARDENS, PEOPLE SPENT THEIR LEISURE TIME OFTEN SPREADING REPASTS FOR JOYOUS FEASTING. NO ONE WHO HAD A GARDEN WOULD EVER CONSENT TO GIVING IT UP--SOMETIMES TO THE POINT OF DEATH! WHICH HAPPENED TO A MAN NAMED NABOTH WHOSE GARDEN A KING WISHED TO POSSESS! ALTHOUGH NABOTH WAS KILLED FOR HIS GARDEN KING AHAB NEVER DID ENJOY THE COMPLETE POSSESSION OF IT, FOR ON THE DAY THAT AHAB STEPPED INTO NABOTH'S GARDEN TO ACQUIRE ITS OWNERSHIP...

...BUT EVEN AS HE BREATHES THE AROMATIC SCENT OF NABOTH'S BEAUTIFUL GARDENS, A FOREBODING SHADOW FALLS ACROSS HIS PATH!

"HAST THOU FOUND ME, O MINE ENEMY?" SAID AHAB... BUT WHY DON'T YOU READ IT FOR YOURSELF? THIS TALE OF A KING'S GREED FOR OTHER PEOPLE'S POSSESSIONS IS FOUND IN 1 KINGS, CHAPTER 21.

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THE 1980'S
* -- *Theme Related Clue*

ACROSS

1. **"Sunday Bloody Sunday" author, with The

5. *Saget of "Full House" fame

8. Last month

11. "Howdy, ___!"

12. Hurtful remark

13. *Actor Hudson of Winston Zeddemore fame

15. Give the cold shoulder

16. *Musical based on 1980s rock "Rock of "

17. *Comedy horror "___ Hell"

18. *Transparency, to Gorbachev

20. Slangy "Follow me!"

21. Coffee shop order

22. Pro vote

23. Heart abnormality

26. Act out Civil War battle, e.g.

30. Eisenhower, familiarly

31. Mediterranean island

34. Small island

35. *Oscar-winning "Tootsie" actress Jessica

37. Not hers

38. Dionysus' pipe-playing companion

39. Not on land

40. Water pipe

42. Dog tags, e.g.

43. First lunar phase (2 words)

45. Higher education reward

47. Biblical mother

48. *What "I love Lucy" did in the '80s

50. Name of the Blue Ox

52. *Gull-winged sports car

55. Party handout

56. Smoothie berry

57. Clickable image

59. Follows orders

60. Mixed breed canine

61. *Air Jordan, e.g.

62. *"Cheers" setting

63. Byron: "Maid of Athens, ___ we part"

64. Dispatched

DOWN

1. Ambulance squad, acr.

2. "Shoot!"

3. Person of French descent

4. Preserve, as in body

5. Prejudiced one

6. Falstaffian in body

7. Cr me de la cr me

8. "Do ___ others as..."

9. Property right

10. ___ Aviv

12. Bridge-like structure

13. Wedding singer, e.g.

14. *Ceausescu's country

19. Pasta accompaniment

22. *"Owner of a Lonely Heart" band

23. *Arrigo Sacchi's Associazione Calcio

24. Tsar's edict

25. Re-establish

26. Zwieback

27. Up and about

28. *Blinky, Pinky, Inky and ___

29. To the point

32. Sound unit

33. *Duran Duran's hit

36. *Hand-held "Tetris" device (2 words)

38. Give sheep a haircut

40. Gardening tool

41. Quick and skillful

44. Sets, in cricket

46. Metamorphic rock

48. Happen again

49. Fill with spirits

50. Rum cake

51. Affirm

52. ___ Maggie Smith

53. Pain

54. "High" time

55. Watch chain

58. Nothing but this in basketball?

CROSSWORD

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59						60				61		
62						63				64		

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Delight Cemetery to hold meeting March 18

DELIGHT -- The Delight Cemetery Association has scheduled a meeting for Tuesday night, March 18, at 6:30 p.m. at the Pickett Building in Delight.

The purpose of this meeting is to review bids and make a decision about mowing of the Delight Cemetery.

Everyone is encouraged to attend.

LETTER TO EDITOR POLICY

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.

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PIKE COUNTY EXTENSION

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Eating Gluten-Free: What You Need to Know

In recent years, the trend of eating gluten-free has grown significantly, but for most people, it remains a choice rather than a necessity. Let's look at gluten to better understand why people are avoiding it.

Gluten is a group of proteins found in certain grains, including wheat, barley, rye, and triticale (a wheat-rye hybrid). When mixed with liquid and manipulated, gluten forms an elastic substance that gives dough its structure, allowing baked goods like bread to rise and maintain their shape.

For individuals with celiac disease, eating gluten triggers an immune system response that damages the lining of the small intestine. This damage affects fingerlike projections called villi, which are responsible for nutrient absorption. As a result, individuals with celiac disease may develop deficiencies in important nutrients, leading to conditions like bone disease and anemia.

Approximately 1 percent of the U.S. population has celiac disease, with an additional 5 to 10 percent potentially suffering from some form of gluten intolerance or sensitivity. Non-celiac gluten sensitivity doesn't damage the digestive tract but can cause symptoms similar to those of celiac disease, including stomach pain, diarrhea, and fatigue.

Although celiac disease may appear to be similar to a wheat allergy because of the need to avoid certain foods, these two conditions are entirely different, with different health effects and treatments. Celiac disease is an autoimmune disease that damages the small intestine, while a wheat allergy is an allergic reaction to wheat proteins.

Celiac disease manifests in various symptoms that can range from mild to severe. These include stomach pain and bloating, gas and diarrhea, extreme fatigue, unexplained weight loss, skin rashes, growth problems in children, and changes in mood and behavior.

The only way to manage celiac disease is through a strict gluten-free diet. Consuming gluten-containing foods will continue to damage the small intestine, so avoiding these foods is

essential for healing and maintaining health. Gluten-containing foods include all types of wheat, barley, rye, and triticale, as well as products derived from these grains (e.g., wheat bran, wheat starch, and hydrolyzed wheat protein).

The marketplace has expanded to include a variety of gluten-free products. It's important to read labels and make informed choices, as not all gluten-free products are equally healthy, often having higher calories, carbohydrates and fat content compared to their gluten-containing counterparts.

If you're looking to avoid gluten, there are many naturally gluten-free foods that can be enjoyed without concern. These include fresh meats, poultry, fish, eggs, fresh fruits and vegetables, dairy (plain varieties), fats and herbs, legumes (beans, peas, lentils), nuts and seeds, quinoa, sorghum, and buckwheat as well as almond flour, coconut flour and rice flour.

Here is a simple, delicious gluten-free shortbread cookie made with almond flour. Enjoy!

GLUTEN-FREE SHORTBREAD COOKIES

INGREDIENTS:
1/2 cup unsalted butter
6 tablespoons powdered sugar
1/2 teaspoon salt
2 teaspoons real vanilla extract
2 cups almond flour

DIRECTIONS:
Preheat oven to 350 degrees Fahrenheit.
Beat together the butter, sugar, salt, and vanilla for 2-3 minutes or until soft and combined.
Slowly add almond flour and mix until combined.
Line a large baking sheet with parchment paper.
Take a small spoon and scoop the batter (about ½ Tablespoon) and roll into a ball (makes about 32 cookies, depending on how large you make them)
Place on parchment paper and press with a fork.
Bake for 10 minutes and let cool.
NUTRITION: Serving: 1 cookie
Calories: 72, Carbohydrates: 3g, Protein: 2g, Fat: 6g

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Week of March 10, 2025

5

4-H Gets “Sneessed” At Recent Meeting



Staff photo

LEARNING ABOUT DR. SUESS ... The Diamond City 4-H chapter learned a little about Dr Seuss at their recent meeting. They made “Cat in the Hat” skewers for a nutritious snack and also made insects using their artistic expression inspired by Dr Seuss. If you’re looking for a program your kids will love, sign them up for 4H Diamond City Club that meets the first Wednesday of each month at the Pike County Extension Office “Fore more information, call (870) 285-2161. Today you are You, that is truer than true. There is no one Youer than You,” ~ Dr Seuss



PIKE COUNTY, ARKANSAS ANNUAL FINANCIAL REPORT FOR YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2024			
	General Funds	Road Funds	Other Funds
REVENUES			
State aid	\$412,711.54	\$ 1,452,213.17	\$ 342,970.60
Federal aid	\$117,053.95	111,373.30	-
Property taxes	\$287,621.31	186,226.41	1,198,942.02
Sales taxes	\$1,898,922.08		-
Fines, forfeitures, and costs	\$191,523.09		88,707.66
Interest	\$2,099.26		-
Officers' fees	\$15,774.00		71,205.71
911 fees	\$0.00		197,919.05
Jail fees	\$288,439.00		
Insurance premiums collected	\$2,810.09	6,919.89	
Other	\$291,288.09	\$103,128.17	\$651,324.40
TOTAL REVENUES	\$3,508,242.41	\$1,859,860.94	\$2,551,069.44
Less: Treasurer's commission	\$79,492.08	\$36,129.60	34,194.05
NET REVENUES	\$3,428,750.33	\$1,823,731.34	\$2,516,875.39
EXPENDITURES			
Current			
General government	\$1,369,555.45		530,223.11
Highways and streets	\$0.00	2,133,736.60	
Health	\$38,600.68		
Law enforcement	\$2,505,142.07		144,960.08
Public safety	\$57,711.55		217,289.35
Recreation and culture(Libraires)			66,117.75
Sanitation			1,427,634.16
Social services	\$99,643.24		
Transfer Out	\$631,279.96		20,000.00
TOTAL CURRENT	\$4,701,932.95	\$2,133,736.60	\$2,406,224.45
Debt Service:			
Note principal	\$0.00	103,587.64	\$0.00
Note interest	\$0.00	16,478.40	\$0.00
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	\$4,701,932.95	\$2,253,802.64	\$2,406,224.45
EXPENDITURES	\$ (1,273,182.62)	\$ (430,071.30)	\$ 110,650.94
OTHER FINANCING SOURCES (USES)			
Transfers in	924,685.75	11,063.55	95,030.88
Transfers out	(151,959.14)	-	(97,691.25)
Interest	124,588.37	315,825.14	235,431.04
Voided Checks	20,418.99	(3,491.70)	12,270.62
Voided Receipts	(6,183.35)	-	(411.97)
Other Checks	(20,043.13)	(8,362.97)	(5,292.68)
TOTAL OTHER FINANCING SOURCES (USES)	\$ 891,507.49	\$ 315,034.02	\$ 239,336.64
EXPENDITURES AND OTHER USES	\$ (381,675.13)	\$ (115,037.28)	\$ 349,987.58
Beginning cash balance - January 1, 2024	\$2,559,033.81	\$876,780.46	\$3,073,058.77
Ending cash balance - December 31, 2024	\$2,177,358.68	\$761,743.18	\$3,423,046.35
Randee Edwards County Clerk			
Loletia Rather County Treasurer			
This Publication was paid for by Pike County - Treasurer Loletia Rather \$ 131.63			

State senate approves bill to cut property taxes

STATE CAPITOL WEEK IN REVIEW
Senator Steve Crowell

LITTLE ROCK – The Senate has approved a property tax cut that will save Arkansas homeowners \$56 million every year.

The tax reduction is in Senate Bill 263, which will take effect in 2026. It raises the homestead property tax credit by \$100 to \$600 a year. The credit is currently \$500. About 708,000 homeowners will benefit from the lower real property taxes.

The governor and legislative leaders announced that they will push for another tax reduction, House Bill 1685 to exempt food and groceries from the one-eighth cent state sales tax approved by voters in 1996 to benefit conservation efforts.

HB 1685 will lower taxes by about \$10.9 million a year. The bill does not repeal any local option city and county sales taxes on groceries.

In a statewide election in 1996 Arkansas voters approved an eighth-cent sales tax, with 45 percent of the revenue dedicated to the Game and Fish Commission and 45 percent to the what was then known as the Parks and Tourism Department. The Heritage Department receives nine percent and Keep Arkansas Beautiful receives one percent.

At a press conference announcing the proposal to repeal the grocery tax, the governor said she was confident the affected agencies would still have healthy budgets in spite of the loss of revenue.

The February revenue report from the state Department of Finance and Administration indicated that the Arkansas economy remains healthy. Revenue came in at five percent above forecast.

The House of Representatives approved HB 1489 to authorize the use of nitrogen gas for ex-

ecuting inmates sentenced to the death penalty. After its passage by the House it was sent to the Senate, where it will be heard next by the Judiciary Committee.

Arkansas is holding 25 men on death row.

Supporters of HB 1489 say it is humane, and the ingredients are more readily available than the chemicals currently used when executions are carried out by lethal injection. Opponents dispute the claim that nitrogen gas is humane.

Alabama, Louisiana, Mississippi and Oklahoma allow nitrogen gas for executions.

Both chambers have approved legislation to criminalize unlawful squatting. It is Act 238. Squatting is defined as taking up residence on property that one does not own. The act makes it a Class B misdemeanor.

It will be simpler for law enforcement to evict squatters because it is now a crime and doesn't require a civil lawsuit that can be cumbersome.

The Senate approved a lengthy bill to change the way juvenile justice statutes are found in law books. The juvenile code has long been difficult to navigate because of overlap in jurisdictions among various courts. That makes it difficult for a juvenile's family to know their rights, and for social services workers to keep track of their duties when protecting vulnerable children.

People within the juvenile justice system have spent hundreds of hours dividing juvenile laws into separate "sensible" sections. According to section one of the bill, SB 320, it only makes technical corrections, not substance changes to the juvenile code.

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