

The

Murfreesboro Diamond

Wednesday, June 25, 2025
Issue 51 • 1 Section • 6 Pages

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Serving South Pike County, Arkansas Since 1975
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Pike City man likely to face charges of manslaughter

Incident leaves *Delight* man dead following shooting

MURFREESBORO -- A Pike City man is expected to be charged with manslaughter following a state police investigation of a shooting last week that killed a *Delight* man.

Gage King, 23, made a first appearance Monday in Pike County on the charge of manslaughter in the death of Daniel Cain Lamb, 44. King has been released from county custody on \$50,000 bond following his arrest the morning of June 18. He is set to hire an attorney and return to court for formal arraignment on July 28.

According to case information, a special agent with the Arkansas State Police Criminal Investigation Division was notified of a shooting on June 18 that occurred at 220 Pike City

Road. The agent first arrived at approximately 12:46 a.m. at the intersection of Pike City Road and Highway 26 where he observed paramedics and officers with the Pike County Sheriff's Department also at the intersection. He was informed Lamb had allegedly been shot in the chest by King at 220 Pike City Road. Lamb was ultimately pronounced dead at the scene.

Lamb had apparently gotten to the intersection in a vehicle driven by Melissa Campbell, 52, of *Delight*, who reported she had driven to the intersection to meet first responders following the shooting. Officers then went to the Pike City home and took King into custody.

Campbell told investigators that she and

Lamb went to the home to confront King regarding a prior incident. She said King came out holding a gun and Lamb got out and started to approach King when he fired a round from a .22 caliber rifle. Lamb was able to get back into the vehicle. Campbell said King pointed the gun at her vehicle so she allegedly drove forward and hit King before fleeing the residence.

King later told the ASP agent that Campbell and Lamb had come to the home and made threats towards him. He said he went inside and retrieved the rifle and that when Lamb began approaching he told him multiple times to stop before he fired the shot.

Kickoff to 2025 season now less than two months away

MURFREESBORO -- Now under two months until the start of the 2025 football season, the Murfreesboro high school Rattlers are set for another action-packed campaign.

The regular season will open on August 22 at home with Class 4-A foe Ashdown. The Panthers were 5-6 last season and earned a playoff berth.

The following week, on August 29, the Rattlers will travel to Rosboro to face off against their in-county foe, Class 3-A Centerpoint. The Knights were 6-5 last season, ending with a first round playoff loss. They defeated the Rattlers at home 28-14 in 2024.

The Rattlers will return home on September 5 to face off against Fouke. The Panthers were a playoff team last season with a 7-4 record that included a 39-22 win over Murfreesboro.

After an off-week, the Rattlers will return to action on September 19 when they host Geona Central for their annual homecoming game. The Dragons were on the wrong side of perfection last season with a 0-10 record, including a 40-6 loss to the Rattlers.

The conference season starts on September 26 with a home game against the Gurdon Go-Devils. Gurdon was 5-6 last season as the 4-2A's



fourth seed, including a 22-7 loss to Murfreesboro. Foreman was winless last season, falling to MHS by a 52-0 score.

The Dierks Outlaws will travel to Rattler Stadium on October 10. After missing the playoffs in 2024 with a 6-4 record, the Outlaws will seek revenge for the 28-16 loss to the Rattlers last season.

Lafayette County will host MHS on October

17. The Cougars, 4-6 last season, lost to the Rattlers by a 54-8 score.

Murfreesboro will host perennial power Junction City on October 24. The Dragons were 9-4 last season, including a third-round playoff berth. However, MHS was able to best them at their house by a 30-14 score last season, relegating them to the conference's second-seed.

On Halloween, October 31, MHS will travel to Spring Hill hoping for many treats and no tricks from the Bears. Spring Hill will look to improve on their 2-8 record last season, including a 42-8 loss at the hands of the Rattlers.

The regular season will conclude on November 6 at Mineral Springs. The Hornets, the third seed from 4-2A in 2024, held a 6-5 record in 2024, losing their first round playoff game. Mineral Springs was able to hold on for a 52-36 action packed victory against the Murfreesboro in last season's finale.

In 2024 the Rattlers finished with an 8-4 record, including a 6-1 mark as conference champions. The team lost to Mount Ida 48-22 in the second round of the playoffs, marking the second consecutive season the team was conference champions before losing a playoff game at home.

Fireworks display set for July 4 in Murfreesboro

MURFREESBORO -- Murfreesboro Rehab and Nursing has invited the public to their annual Fourth of July celebration.

The independence festivities will begin at 7 p.m. with the band Silver Smoke, followed by a fireworks display starting between 9 and 9:30 p.m. as full darkness allows.

The nursing facility will offer cold bottled water to any attendee.

The public is reminded to bring their own lawn chairs.

There will be no parking at the Gypsy Underground Flea Market or at the front or side of the nursing home, and West 13th Street between the nursing home and the Gypsy will be blocked off during the show.

"We hope to see you there," said the social media post from the facility, which is located at 110 West 13th Street in Murfreesboro.

4th of July Firework Show!

Free Water | Music

Join us for our annual 4th of July celebration!

Where: Murfreesboro Rehab & Nursing 110 W. 13 th Murfreesboro, AR 71958	When: Band: 7:00 pm Fireworks: ~9:15 pm
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Kirby resident to face terroristic threatening charges

MURFREESBORO -- A Kirby man is being held on \$100,000 bond after being charged in Pike County with felony terroristic threatening.

Nathan Peek, 46, was charged June 20 with two counts of first-degree terroristic threatening and being a felon in possession of firearms. Peek pleaded innocent to the charges Monday and a public defender was appointed for an Aug. 25 pretrial date. Peek remains in county custody, as of Tuesday morning.

Peek was arrested June 13 after the Pike County Sheriff's Department received a call about Peek allegedly being on their property and being mad about someone pushing the road across his father's land. The caller said they urged Peek to leave multiple times and that when he did he went to his father's home

nearby. A neighbor reportedly saw Peek later exit the home with a gun, which he placed into his car, according to case information.

The caller allegedly saw Peek driving by his home slowly before a neighbor reported seeing Peek walking across the yard with a gun and later making threats about shooting everyone. He also said he would have a shootout with the police.

Peek was taken into custody and was found to have shotgun shells in his pocket that matched the gun he had hidden under his bed.

Also on June 20 in Pike County Circuit Court, David Robert Rhodes, 46, of Nashville, was charged with felony possession of methamphetamine and drug paraphernalia.

Rhodes pleaded innocent to the charges

Monday and he was ordered to hire an attorney and report back to court Aug. 25.

Rhodes was arrested in Glenwood during a traffic stop by the Arkansas State Police. He was found to be in possession of approximately 0.87 grams of meth and a glass pipe.

David Edwards, 19, of Glenwood, was charged June 20 with two counts of felony criminal trespass. He pleaded innocent to the charges Monday and a public defender was appointed for a July 17 pretrial date. He remains in county custody on \$5,000 bond, as of Tuesday morning.

Edwards was arrested by the Glenwood Police Department on June 6 following several criminal trespass warnings involving the Opal Street Trailer Park.



Pike County Library
Summer Reading Program
July 2nd - July 31st

Library summer reading programs announced

Parents asked to preregister attendees for participation

MURFREESBORO -- The Murfreesboro Library has announced their dates for the 2025 summer reading program under the theme "Color Our World."

Due to the overwhelming attendance last year, in order to make sure enough supplies are ordered, all children must be registered to attend any/all programs. You may pick up registration form at the library.

The library is located at 204 East Main Street in Murfreesboro.

All programs will be in Tuesdays through Fridays throughout July, at 1:30 p.m. each day.

The program schedule is as follows:

Wednesday, July 2 -- Courthouse reading and trip

Friday, July 4 -- Library closed

Tuesday, July 8 -- Chair volleyball

Wednesday, July 9 -- Post Office reading and trip

Friday, July 11 -- Colored sand art

Tuesday, July 15 -- Bean bag toss with Eva Langley

Wednesday, July 16 -- Veterans reading

Thursday, July 17 -- Alligators with the AGFC

Friday, July 18 -- Colored sand art

Tuesday, July 22 -- Chair volleyball

Wednesday, July 23 -- Police reading

Thursday, July 24 -- Black bears with the AGFC

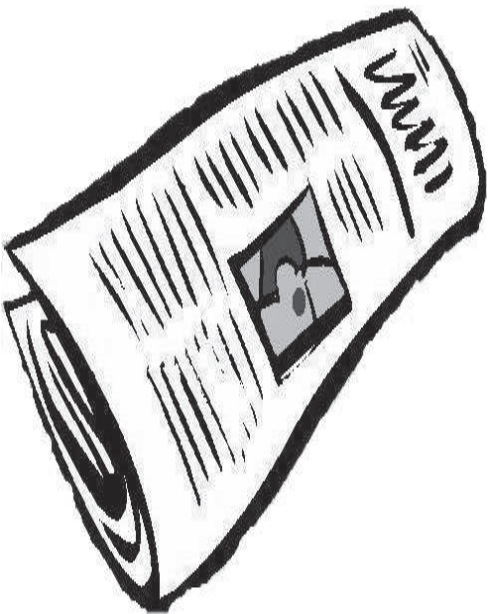
Friday, July 25 -- Colored sand art

Tuesday, July 29 -- Bean bag toss with Eva Langley

Wednesday, July 30 -- Diamond reading

Thursday, July 31 -- Water safety with the AGFC

For more information, contact librarian Dawson Sellers at 870-285-2575 or e-mail at murfreesboropubliclibrary@gmail.com.



DO YOU KNOW
SOMETHING
WORTH TELLING?

Submit Your Local
News to the Diamond!

mdiamond@windstream.net

Call (870) 285-2723 for More Information

Get fit, give back -- become a certified fitness leader through UA Extension training

Are you passionate about health and wellness? Would you love to bring the benefits of physical activity to your community, church, or workplace? The University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture Cooperative Extension Service is inviting you to turn that passion into purpose with its Extension Get Fit training program.

This innovative initiative is designed to create healthier communities across Arkansas by training everyday individuals to lead safe, effective, and engaging group exercise classes. Whether you're a fitness enthusiast or simply want to support your neighbors in living healthier lives, the Extension Get Fit program is your chance to make a meaningful, local impact.

Extension Get Fit is a community-based exercise initiative that focuses on improving strength, flexibility, and balance—all critical components of long-term health and mobility. The program provides you with the training, resources, and confidence to lead fitness classes in your own setting, from community centers to church basements to break rooms at work.

The next one-day leader training will take place Thursday, August 21, at the Cossatot Community College of the University of Arkansas in Dequeen. We will be offering hands-on instruction from qualified professionals. The cost is \$30. Lunch will be provided. Participants also get training materials and a T-shirt. Once you've completed this training, you'll be eligible to participate in a 12-week instructor-led class in Pike County from September 8 through November 28, with both daytime and evening sessions to suit your schedule.

An optional half-day Circuit Training instruction focused on leading circuit-style fitness classes will be offered on Friday, August 22 following the mandatory Get Fit Training on the 21st. This morning class will give practical instruction focused on leading circuit-style fitness classes. In this style, attendees move around the room in timed intervals, working at each station at their own pace instead of at chairs with everyone doing the same exercise at the same time.

Upon completion of the 12-week program, you'll be certified to lead Extension Get Fit classes in your community. You'll join



EVA LANGLEY, FAMILY AND CONSUMER SCIENCES AGENT

FAMILY • NUTRITION • FOOD SAFETY • FINANCE • FITNESS & HEALTH

a growing network of fitness leaders working together to make Arkansas a healthier place—one class at a time.

One of the key focuses of the Get Fit program is strength training, which becomes increasingly vital as adults age. Beginning around age 30, adults can lose 3–8% of muscle mass per decade if physical activity is not maintained. This natural decline can lead to reduced mobility, increased risk of falls, and a diminished quality of life.

Regular strength training offers numerous benefits for overall health and well-being. It helps preserve muscle mass and maintain bone density, reducing the risk of osteoporosis. It also improves balance and coordination, which can help prevent falls and injuries. Additionally, strength training supports joint health and enhances flexibility, making everyday tasks easier and more comfortable. It also boosts metabolism, aiding in weight management and increasing energy levels.

The Extension Get Fit classes are specifically designed to be safe, accessible, and effective for adults of all ages and fitness levels, making them a valuable resource for communities with aging populations.

There's never been a better time to give back while getting fit. By becoming a certified Extension Get Fit leader, you're not only improving your own health, but you're also empowering others to take control of theirs. The cost is minimal, and leaders might consider asking if their training fees can be covered by their community center, church or workplace in return for leading the exercise classes.

Ready to make a difference? To learn more or to register, contact the Pike County Extension Office at (870) 285-2161.

RECIPE OF THE WEEK:

Fried Green Tomatoes (serves 4)

- INGREDIENTS:**
2 Cups Cornmeal
2 Tablespoons Sugar
1 Tablespoon Salt
1 Teaspoon Pepper
2 Pinches Cayenne Pepper
1 ½ Cups Sour Cream
4 Large Green Tomatoes, Sliced ½ Inch Thick
½ Cup Vegetable Oil, Plus More As Needed

INSTRUCTIONS:
In a large bowl, combine the cornmeal, sugar, salt, pepper and cayenne. Put the sour cream in a separate bowl. Coat the tomato slices in the sour cream, the dredge them in the cornmeal mixture, coating both sides well.

Heat the oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Fry the tomatoes, working in batches, until they are crisp and golden, 3 to 4 minutes per side. Transfer them to a paper-towel lined plate to drain. Serve hot.

Celebrating the anniversary of Arkansas gaining statehood

LITTLE ROCK -- June 15, 1836, stands as a defining moment in the history of the United States, marking the day Arkansas transitioned from a frontier territory into the Union as the 25th state. This anniversary serves as an opportunity to reflect on the origins, struggles, and rich heritage of Arkansas, a state that has played a significant role in shaping the cultural and historical fabric of the nation.

Arkansas' journey to statehood was a story of ambition, persistence, and transformation. Originally part of the Louisiana Purchase acquired by the United States from France in 1803, the region that would become Arkansas was a vast and untamed land. In 1819, it was established as the Arkansas Territory, encompassing not only present-day Arkansas but also parts of what is now Oklahoma.

The territorial period saw rapid changes as settlers poured into the region, drawn by its fertile lands and opportunities for farming. The population grew swiftly, and with it, the push for statehood gained momentum. By the 1830s, Arkansas' population had surpassed the threshold required for statehood, setting the stage for its admission to the Union. On June 15, 1836, Arkansas was officially recognized as the 25th state of the United States under President Andrew Jackson's administration.

Arkansas was broken into five counties when it entered the United States as a territory in 1819. They were Arkansas Clark, Hempstead, Lawerance, and Pulaski Counties. Pike County was created from parts of Clark and Hempstead County on November 1, 1833, and was a one of the counties when Arkansas received statehood in 1836. Montgomery County was originally part of Clark County and then Hot Spring County before it was formed into a county December 9, 1842.

Statehood brought with it numerous challenges as Arkansas sought to establish itself within the Union. The state was initially characterized by a largely agrarian economy, with cotton as its primary cash crop. Plantations flourished in the Delta region, driven by enslaved labor, while smaller independent farms dotted the uplands.

However, the state's economy and infrastructure were still in their infancy. Roads were scarce, education was limited, and so-

cial services were virtually non-existent. Additionally, the rising tensions over slavery in America cast a shadow over Arkansas' early years as a state. The state's reliance on enslaved labor tied it closely to the Southern economy and foreshadowed its eventual role in the Civil War.

Beyond its early struggles, Arkansas developed a rich and diverse cultural identity that continues to thrive today. The state became home to an array of Indigenous peoples, including the Quapaw, Caddo, and Osage tribes, whose legacies remain deeply woven into Arkansas' history. European settlers, predominantly of British, French, and Spanish descent, added their customs and traditions, creating a cultural blend that is uniquely Arkansan.

The state's landscape played a profound role in shaping its identity. From the lush Delta to the rugged Ozark and Ouachita Mountains, Arkansas earned the nickname "The Natural State" for its breathtaking beauty. These geographical features not only provided sustenance and resources for its inhabitants but also inspired a wealth of art, music, and literature over the years.

Today, Arkansas is a vibrant state that balances its rich history with modern growth and innovation. Its economy has diversified to include agriculture, manufacturing, healthcare, and technology.

Educational institutions such as the University of Arkansas and Arkansas State University contribute to the state's intellectual and cultural growth. Meanwhile, the arts flourish in venues like Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art, reflecting a continued commitment to creativity and innovation.

As Arkansas celebrates another anniversary of its statehood, it also looks to the future. The state continues to grapple with challenges such as education reform, economic disparities, and

environmental conservation. However, the resilience and determination of its people promise a bright path ahead.

Through its history, Arkansas has shown a remarkable ability to adapt and grow. Whether through boom or bust, conflict or peace, the spirit of Arkansas remains steadfast, rooted in the values of community, perseverance, and hope.

The anniversary of Arkansas gaining statehood on June 15, 1836, is more than just a historical date. It is a celebration of the enduring legacy of a state that has grown and evolved over nearly two centuries. From its beginnings as a frontier territory to its place today as a cornerstone of the American South, Arkansas' story is a testament to the strength and resilience of its people.

As Arkansans gather to commemorate this occasion, they honor not just their past but also their future, carrying forward the rich heritage and indomitable spirit that make Arkansas truly unique. In doing so, they reaffirm their place in the larger narrative of the United States, ensuring that the lessons and values of the past continue to inspire generations to come.

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PUBLIC NOTICE

PUBLIC NOTICE REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS

The City of Antoine is seeking qualified architectural firms to provide professional design services for a new fire station.

IMPORTANT: This project is contingent upon the Community Grant Assistance award. Contract execution is subject to successful grant funding notification expected October 2025. Interested firms must demonstrate experience in similar municipal construction projects.

Responses must be received no later than July 2, 2025. Please email RFQ to Mayor David Hendrix at dbhantoin@outlook.com or townofantoin@outlook.com or mail to City of Antoine, P.O. Box 52, Antoine, AR 71922.

The City of Antoine reserves the right to reject any or all proposals. This is not a commitment to a contract for services.

This publication was paid for by the City of Antoine. The amount paid for this publication is \$59.85.
(c.o.a., 133w., 50,51)

PUBLIC NOTICE

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF PIKE COUNTY,
ARKANSAS
PROBATE DIVISION

IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF
BILLY RAY LEE, SR., DECEASED NO. 55PR-25-32

NOTICE OF APPOINTMENT OF EXECUTOR
AND FILING OF CLAIMS

Last known address of decedent:
377 Lewis Lee Road, Delight, AR 71940
Date of death: May 7, 2025

An instrument dated April 22, 2015, was on the 10th day of June, 2025, admitted to probate as the Last Will of the above-named decedent, and the undersigned has been appointed executor thereunder. A contest of the probate of the will can be affected only by filing a petition within the time provided by law.

All persons having claims against the estate must exhibit them, duly verified, to the undersigned within six months from the date of the first publication of this notice, or they shall be forever barred and precluded from any benefit in the estate.

This notice first published this 18th day of June, 2025.

Jeremy Robert Lee, Executor
BY: Victor Martin, ABN 2018116
Attorney at Law
420 N. Main, Suite One
P. O. Box 922
Nashville, AR 71852
(870) 845-5256 phone, (870) 845-5899 fax
(v.m., 192w, 50, 51)

Murfreesboro Diamond

Your Hometown Newspaper since 1975

Located in the County Seat of Pike County • Murfreesboro, Arkansas
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• John Robert Schirmer, Publisher
• P.J. Tracy IV, Editor
• Christy Coccarelli, Office Manager/Photographer

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

*Any erroneous statement published in the newspaper
will be gladly and promptly corrected if called
to the attention of the management.*

**SUBMISSION DEADLINE
FRIDAYS AT 3:00 P.M.**

Card of Thanks

**Thank you
to Mayor Jim O'Neal
and the
Murfreesboro Chamber of
Commerce for their
participation in making
the Juneteenth
celebration a big success**

Majornell Burton

PUBLIC NOTICE

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF PIKE COUNTY,
ARKANSAS PROBATE DIVISION

IN THE ESTATE OF
Dorothy Susanne Smith NO, 55PR-25-27-2
DECEASED

NOTICE

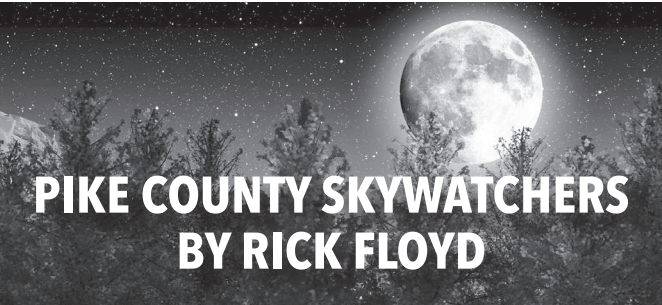
Last known address: 651 Channing Road, Nashville,
Arkansas 71852
Date of Death: November 4, 2024

An instrument dated July 25, 2024 was admitted to probate as the Last Will and Testament in the above-named decedent. Notice is hereby given that Lindsey Myrkle was appointed Personal Representative of the Estate of the above name Decedent and Letters Testamentary issued on June 10, 2025.

All persons having claims against the estate must exhibit them, duly verified, to the undersigned within six months from the date of the first publication of this notice, or they shall be forever barred and precluded from any benefit in the estate. Provided that claims for injury or death caused by the negligence of the decedent shall be filed within six months from the date of the first publication of the notice, or they shall be forever barred and precluded from any benefit in such estate.

This notice first published this 18th day of June 2025.

Estate of Dorothy Susanne Smith, Deceased
c/o Robert B. "Brad" Crayne
ROSS & SHOALMIRE, PLLC
1820 Galleria Oaks Drive
Texarkana, Texas 75503
(r.s., 206w., 50,51)



Summer provides excellent stargazing skies, albeit mosquitoes

Last week, on Friday, June 20, Summer Solstice marked the transition from spring to summer. I mentioned last week that even though such celestial events as solstice have been important occasions to past cultures it is not so much so these days.

It is interesting to note however that at the Stonehenge site in England this year there were 25,000 people there to celebrate the specific significance of that sunrise, the grandeur and awe of the place, and of the accomplishments of those ancients who made it. Solstices and other celestial events are actually celebrated every year by many people. We humans in various ways are still connected to the cosmic realm.

Summer weather seems to have waited for solstice to kick in. We now have heat and humidity and more clear skies. So, if you can find a dark place and tolerate warm nights (and mosquitoes) it is a good time to stargaze.

High in the sky after dark is an interesting part of the sky just to the west of the Big Dipper which itself is west of the North Star. Consult a star chart for details, but what you are looking for is a constellation called Canes Venatici (the Hunting Dogs), and its alpha star Cor Caroli. This star is actually a binary (two stars one revolving around another) and it is almost in line between the tail star (Denebola) of Leo and the end star of the Big Dipper (Alkaid).

It was thought until recently that the name Cor Caroli was first proposed by Edmond Halley to honor King Charles II, but actually whoever named it did so to honor the martyred father of Charles II, Charles I. The full name then was Cor Caroli Regis Martyris (Heart of the Martyred Charles I). It was however in this part of the sky that Halley first saw “his” comet (which last appeared in 1986 and calculated to return in 2061).

Also, in the area is a star named Canum Venaticorum (VCVn) that is strikingly red. From Earth It is visually small, but it is in reality the largest star we know of at about 250 million miles wide (the Sun is about 864,000 miles wide).

You can do a quick vision acuity check by looking at the star in the middle of the Big Dipper’s handle. If you see two stars instead of one then you have sharp vision. This is actually a very complex star grouping, more than meets the eye, so more on this later.

Obituaries

Marcus Randall McLelland, 70 Delight Dian Henderson, 72, Murfreesboro



Marcus Randall McLelland, age 70, of Delight, Arkansas passed away on Monday, June 16, 2025, in Arkadelphia, Arkansas. He was born December 22, 1954, in Prescott, Arkansas, the son of the late Imon McLelland and Gwendolyn Miller McLelland.

He was member of the Delight First Baptist Church and a United States Army veteran.

In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by one brother William “Billy” Ellis McLelland.

Survivors include one daughter Layla Keys (Buck) of Murfreesboro; brothers Kevin McLelland (Theresa) of Delight, Vaughn McLelland (Julie) of Camden, John McLelland of Delight; two sisters Cissie Denton of Delight, Missy McLelland of Delight; three grandchildren Alyssa, Chloe, and Peyton Keys all of Murfreesboro; one aunt Elcyon Smith of Caney, AR; one uncle Larry Miller of Delight, as well as a number of other family and friends.

Visitation was held on Wednesday, June 18, at Latimer Funeral Home in Murfreesboro.

Graveside services were held Thursday, June 19, at Antoinette Cemetery, with Brent Alexander officiating, under the direction of Latimer Funeral Home in Murfreesboro.

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



Dian Turner Henderson, 72, of Murfreesboro, passed away on Saturday, June 21, at the Murfreesboro Rehab and Nursing Center surrounded by her family and friends.

She was born on October 9, 1952, in Bluffton, Indiana, to the late Preston and Minnie Turner.

Dian was a member of the First Christian Church in Murfreesboro.

She was elected Pike County and Circuit Clerk in 1983, and continuing her position until 2000. Dian was elected by her fellow clerks of all Arkansas counties as President of the County Clerks Association and also the President of Circuit Clerks Association for many years. She was appointed by the Governor of Arkansas for the State Land Commission Board and the State Auctioneer Board.

Dian is preceded in death by her parents; in-laws Free-

man and Helen Henderson; brother, Doyce Turner; three sisters, Vernell Gaa, Wilma Dingler and Betty Hill and infant brother Michael Don, nephews, Mark Turner, David Turner, Mike Cox and niece Renee Cowart and brother-in-law, Mark Henderson.

Survivors include her husband of 53 years, Bill Henderson of Murfreesboro, one son, Todd (Mariel) Henderson of Benton, one daughter, Amy (David) Lott of Murfreesboro. Grandchildren, Evan and Aiden Henderson of Benton, Adam (Lindsey) Lott of Benton, Valerie Lott (Zach) of Arkadelphia. Brian (Anita) Lott of Florida, Erica (Chad) Staggs of Texarkana, and great-granddaughter Hadley Staggs of Texarkana; brothers Preston (Maricon) Turner, Jr. of Conway, Dwight (Keitha) Turner of Hot Springs; sisters Peggy (Gerald) Litlcker of Oklahoma City, Velma Cowart of Lodi, Frances (Ed) Cowart of Lodi, as well as many nieces, nephews, and friends.

A memorial service was held on Tuesday, June 24, with visitation beginning at 10 a.m. with the service following at 11 p.m. at the First Christian Church in Murfreesboro, AR.

In lieu of flowers please send donations to the Murfreesboro Cemetery Fund Inc., P.O. Box 185, Murfreesboro, AR. 71958

Deborah Branch, 68, Murfreesboro



Deborah Teresa Branch, age 68 of Murfreesboro, Arkansas, passed away on Wednesday, June 18, 2025 at her home. She was born on February 21, 1957 in Murfreesboro to the late William Harlone Woodall and Clarice Jean Barnes Woodall.

Debbie loved her grandchildren and enjoyed spending time with them. She enjoyed camping, hunting, fishing and a good garage sale. She spent much of her time telling others about the Lord.

In addition to her parents,

she was preceded in death by her loving husband of thirty-eight years, Tommy Branch; two sons, Michael O’Neal and Zachary Woodall.

Survivors include her daughter, Christy Ellis; five brothers, Roger Woodall, Johnny Woodall, Eddy Woodall, Tommy Woodall and Scotty Woodall; three grandchildren, Virginia (Thomas) Yandell, Clifton Pate and Christian (Mallory) Pate; four great-grandchildren, Calley, Laney, Jed and Boman; as well as a host of nieces, nephews, other relatives and friends.

Graveside services were held at 1:00 p.m. on Friday, June 20, 2025 at Murfreesboro Cemetery.

Memorial services were held from 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. on Saturday, June 21, 2025 at the Murfreesboro Municipal Building.

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

Bobby Ray James, 89, Murfreesboro



In the famous words of Brother Bob, “I have lived a Super Fantastic life!”

Bobby Ray James was born June 19, 1936, in Stokes, North Carolina. Surrounded by his family, our beloved Pops entered his heavenly home on June 21, 2025, at the age of 89 years old. He was preceded in death by his only child, Randolph Sebastian James.

Bob was in the ministry for over 60 years. He knew from the time he was a little boy he wanted to be a preacher. As Bob quoted, “When I was four, I used to go to the woodpile behind the house, stand a log up and preach to the chickens.” Following high school Bob enrolled in Atlanta Christian College. He was ordained as a minister in the Church of Christ on September 2, 1956, while still a student. He spent two years as a youth minister at a church near Atlanta, Georgia, while he finished his Bachelor of Arts in Biblical Studies. His first full time pulpit was at Acworth Christian Church in Georgia. From there he moved to Pinetown, North Carolina, then accepted a position at First Christian Church in Murfreesboro, Arkansas. Bob preached at several other churches and in 1973, he left one of the largest Christian Churches in Mississippi to go to one of the smallest in Tupelo. The church was about to close due to the lack of members; therefore, they could not

afford to pay a minister. That did not stop Brother Bob! He worked odd jobs, doing whatever was necessary to pay the bills. Two years later when Brother Bob left, the congregation had grown to 90 members from six!

In 1998, Brother Bob arrived at First Christian Church in Dewitt, Arkansas, where he preached until he retired. He then moved back to Murfreesboro, Arkansas, where he continued to hold revivals and became the minister at First Christian Church in Nashville, Arkansas. Brother Bob never really retired. In his own words, “Why would I retire? I love life, I love people, and I enjoy what I do.”

Brother Bob was awarded “Good Neighbor of the Year” in 2003 by the Dewitt Chamber of Commerce. He was also recognized for many years of weekly devotionals by the Dewitt Senior Citizens Center and was selected as an Honored Member of The Heritage Registry of Who’s Who 2006-2007 edition. However, his real love was holding revivals! He held well over 120 revivals in his ministry career! As he stated, “All my life, that’s all I’ve ever wanted to be...a preacher.”

Survivors include his wife, Carol Steuart James of 18 years, daughters, Freela Barker (Jesse) of Murfreesboro, Arkansas and Jennifer Kirk (Shawn) of Vero Beach, Florida, Grandsons, Zane Barnett (Alisha) and Tate Barnett (Chanel) and Great-grandchildren Teegan, Meakayla, Izabella, Lucas, River, and Willow.

A private memorial will be held by the family. In lieu of flowers, memorials can be made to Murfreesboro Cemetery.

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

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UAMS
HOUSE CALL



Dr. Amber Norris is an assistant professor in the UAMS Department of Family and Preventive Medicine who treats patients at UAMS East Regional Campus in Helena.

Q: What causes ulcers?

A: Ulcers are open sores in the lining of the esophagus, the upper part of the small intestine or the stomach. Acid, enzymes and other chemicals eat through the mucus that protects the lining. Ulcers are a common and treatable condition but can become serious if they progress without attention.

The *H. pylori* bacterial infection and overuse of over-the-counter painkillers and nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) are the common causes of ulcers. Older adults, those with high calcium levels, those with type A or type O blood, and those with other bacterial, fungal or viral infections are also at risk for ulcers.

Symptoms include acid reflux and heartburn, bloating, dark blood in stools, nausea, or dull and burning pain. Diet and stress do not cause

ulcers, but they can worsen symptoms. Complications include blockage of the digestive tract, anemia from blood loss and an increased risk of stomach cancer.

A test to determine if *H. pylori* is present in the body or an endoscopy to examine the digestive tract are ways to detect an ulcer. Treatments include antacids, protein pump inhibitors and quitting smoking. Surgery may be an option for more serious cases. If you have ulcers, work with your health care provider to establish a plan.

Email your health questions to benjamin@uams.edu.

Faye Bailey Cheek, 87, Delight



Faye Bailey Cheek, age 87, of Delight, Arkansas passed away Friday, June 20, 2025, at her home in Delight, Arkansas. She was born November 17, 1937, in Delight, Arkansas the daughter of the late James Edward Bailey and Gladys McNalley Bailey.

Mrs. Cheek was a member of the Crossroads Assembly in Delight. Faye loved hunting, fishing, sewing, and cooking. She enjoyed spending time with her family, especially her grandchildren and great-grandchildren. But most of all she loved the Lord. She will be

greatly missed by family and friends.

In addition to her parents, she was preceded in death by her daughter Shauna Ponton, granddaughter Summer Hendrix Brown, and her special friend Harvey Edge.

Survivors include her son Roger Cheek (Teri), granddaughter Season Hendrix (Nap), grandsons Justin Cheek (Becca), Jonathon Cheek (Ragan), brother Ray Bailey (Alta), sister Sybil Lewallen, great grandchildren Gage, Tristin, Noah, Price, Makaylyn, Jay Kizer, son-in-law Howell Ponton.

Visitation was held from 11:00 till service time Monday, June 23, at Crossroads Assembly in Delight. Funeral services began at 1:00 p.m., at Crossroads Assembly in Delight with Bro. Doug McClure officiating, under the direction of Latimer Funeral Home in Murfreesboro.

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


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Education Freedom Accounts prove popular enough to demand increase by state

STATE CAPITOL WEEK IN REVIEW
Senator Steve Crowell

LITTLE ROCK -- Due to its growing popularity, legislators allocated an additional \$90 million to Educational Freedom Accounts.

The chief financial officer of the Education Department said that without the additional funds the state would not be able to make first quarter payments before the upcoming school year.

The governor proposed and the legislature approved the creation of Education Freedom Accounts in 2023, phasing in the program over three years. The 2025-2026 school year will be the first in which all students are eligible, and the number of families applying for the accounts shows that it is very popular.

Education Freedom Accounts provide families who home school, or who send their children to a private school, with 90 percent of the amount that state government and local school districts would spend for each pupil enrolled in public schools. In the 2025-2026 school year that will be \$6,864 for each student who is eligible for an Education Freedom Account.

According to the state Education Department, it has received applications for more than 44,000 students, and almost 40,000 have already been approved. About 28,000 applications are from families who send their children to private schools and 16,000 are from families who home school their children.

The legislature anticipated higher demand for Education Freedom Accounts and earlier this year approved Act 1017, which set aside the additional \$90 million for the program.

Earlier this year the legislature increased funding for Education Freedom Accounts from about \$97 million to about \$187 million. Last week’s allocation of \$90 million will bring the total amount of funding to \$277 million for the upcoming school year.

School Insurance

In the 2025 regular session the legislature created a sustainable, new system of property insurance for schools, higher education institutions and state agencies. It was the result of several years of work.

A legislative subcommittee approved the creation of a captive insurance plan last week that would hold rates unchanged next year. Deductibles next year for schools will be \$25,000 if they have less than \$100 million in insured assets. For school districts with more assets the deductible will be \$50,000.

State agencies will have a deductible of \$250,000. A consultant’s report cautioned that schools and state agencies can expect deductibles to increase the following year.

The state Board of Finance has approved the plan. Another state agency, the Department of Shared Administrative Services, will operate the insurance program, known as a captive plan. The state will operate the program as if it were its own insurance company.

The governor and lawmakers have been shoring up school finances with one-time disbursements, after they had experienced rising costs for property insurance. Last fiscal year the state provided \$11 million to help pay for higher insurance premiums that were driven up by claims after severe storms. Consultants reported to lawmakers that rates had tripled from 2021 to 2024, in large part due to wind and hail damage.

TOWN HALL MEETING

A town hall meeting will be held on Thursday, June 26 at the Murfreesboro Municipal Building at 6 p.m.

The featured speaker will be state senator Steve Crowell, who will be discussing and answering questions about the recent state legislative session.



Submitted photoSPCSD

RECOGNIZED AT SUMMER CAMP ... The Murfreesboro Lady Rattler senior high cheer squad was highly successful at the University of Central Arkansas’ Game Day Camp held at Camden Harmony Grove recently. (Pictured front row, L to R: Macy Gills, Charleigh Wheeler, Chloe Cross, Bella Frazier, Ava Cox, Laini Liggin and Kyndall Henderson; back row: Ma’Shaylia Morris, Teegan Barnett, Gianna Draper, Josey Jones, Kinleigh Mounts, Ramsey Terrell and Kinley Fisher) Awards won at the event included the top pyramid award and the top overall camp routine. Draper, Frazier, Wheeler, Terrell and Henderson were named All-American cheerleaders while Draper was also named the camp’s top jumper. “Way to represent, MHS! So proud of these talented athletes and all their hard work!” said a social media post from the school.

A Bicentennial reflection: honoring a charge worthy to be remembered

BY BRUCE WESTERMAN
U.S. Representative
(AR-04)

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- Last week marks the 200th anniversary of the only quote which rests in the House of Representatives, just above the Speaker’s rostrum, serving as a weighty reminder of the significant duties and obligations for every legislator in the House of Representatives.

On June 17th, 1825, Daniel Webster was joined by another notable figure honored within the walls of this very same chamber: the Marquis de Lafayette. Webster and Lafayette were both in attendance for a memorial of the Battle of Bunker Hill in which more than 200 surviving Revolutionary War veterans were

in attendance. Webster was to deliver the dedication speech and Lafayette was to lay the cornerstone for the monument to memorialize the war.

Monuments usually stand to encourage reflections of the past, but Daniel Webster’s speech was a challenge to look toward the future. Mr. Webster’s oration included the quote which now hangs in the House chamber and says, “Let us develop the resources of our land, call forth its powers, build up its institutions, promote all its great interests, and see whether we also in our day and generation may not perform something worthy to be remembered.”

Looking up at this quote from Daniel Webster perfectly outlines the role each legislator plays in Congress – to develop our nation’s resources and utilize the vast opportunity which they present. As a licensed forester and engineer,

and someone who has dedicated a large portion of time to stewarding the resources of our land in a way that can be conserved, honored, and appreciated for generations to come, this call has always made perfect sense. The tireless work done in the House Natural Resources Community proudly embarks on championing these very ideals, and it is a privilege to serve on such an integral committee.

Upon the founding of our country, our forefathers crafted something so unique and monumental – establishing a way of life which, in that age, the world had never known. And over time, institutions and ideals were established which inspired watchful nations. Our forefathers drafted the blueprint for a modern-day democracy, and every generation since has taken up the mantle to preserve and defend it. While his original

audience may have only been a few hundred people on a field in the middle of summer 200 years ago, that number continues to grow with each generation. As his audience now, in 2025, he calls us to promote our nation’s great interests to see whether we – in our day and generation – may do something worthy to be remembered.

History’s watchful eye is witness to the decisions that are made in the House chamber and the work done in the halls of Congress. The legacy and mission we have inherited as a legislative body remains as true now as it did in Daniel Webster’s time. And we must never lose sight of the call to develop our nation’s resources, build up our great institutions, and make the work we do in our own day and age something worthy of being remembered.

‘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 angry 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.” I 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.” I 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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Learn tips for growing and cooking watermelon

LITTLE ROCK -- As part of the “Grow Your Own Groceries” series, the University of Arkansas Extension Service will host a Zoom meeting featuring watermelons on Tuesday, July 15.

Set for 12-1 p.m., participants of the free virtual meeting can learn how to grow healthy, nutritious watermelons in their own backyard

and get some tips for new ways to cook and prepare your harvest.

For more information, please call the Pike County Extension Service at (870) 285-2161 or visit uaex.uada.edu.

To register for the webinar, please visit uada.zoom.us/join/9T9QRxvFR7yBB-MYsiGzJzA.

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.

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

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HUMAN BODY
* -- Theme Related Clue

- ACROSS
- 1. Composer Joplin’s first name
 - 6. Stomach pain-causing acronym
 - 9. Boxing practice
 - 13. Horatio ____ of “Ragged Dick” fame
 - 14. Not cooked
 - 15. This and desist
 - 16. *Torso, pl.
 - 17. Wrath
 - 18. *DNA half
 - 19. *Body part, not Elvis
 - 21. *Part of blood, not type of TV
 - 23. *Lung filler
 - 24. Same as on top
 - 25. Seth MacFarlane’s bear
 - 28. Helps
 - 30. Genus, pl.
 - 35. Paper unit
 - 37. Comme ci, comme Áa
 - 39. Burdened
 - 40. Egg on
 - 41. *Pumps blood, not tires
 - 43. Type of nuclear missile, acr.
 - 44. River in West Africa
 - 46. Fraternity recruitment season
 - 47. Purse to go with evening gown
 - 48. “Annie Hall” star
 - 50. Urban myth, e.g.
 - 52. Kenan Thompson’s TV show, acr.
 - 53. Target of a joke
 - 55. Cemetery jar
 - 57. *Fingers, not numbers
 - 60. *Muscle, not skeletal or cardiac
 - 63. Enticed (2 words)
 - 64. ____ Baba
 - 66. Scary movie consequence
 - 68. “ ____ came a spider...”
 - 69. Old towel, e.g.
 - 70. Nail salon file
 - 71. *Gallbladder contents
 - 72. ____ of Sam

73. Poet ____ Alighieri
- DOWN
- 1. Fri follower
 - 2. Hoofbeat sound
 - 3. Princess Fiona, by night
 - 4. Unit of magnetic flux density
 - 5. Ken Jennings’ forte
 - 6. *Part of an eye, not a flower
 - 7. “Cheers,” e.g.
 - 8. Moved under the rug
 - 9. Witnesses
 - 10. *Part of a hand, not a tree
 - 11. Continent
 - 12. Tyrannosaurus follower
 - 15. “ ____ of Love” by The Dixie Cups
 - 20. Like one from Dublin
 - 22. Lincoln lumber
 - 24. Battery’s partner
 - 25. *Torso, not part of a tree
 - 26. Fear-inspiring
 - 27. Cannabis, in South Africa
 - 29. Not talker?
 - 31. Umberto Eco’s “The ____ of the Rose”
 - 32. Marks on a manuscript
 - 33. Old episode
 - 34. *Part of an ear, not blacksmith’s block
 - 36. Swimming competition
 - 38. Guesstimate phrase (2 words)
 - 42. Monotonous hum
 - 45. Dressing a priest, e.g.
 - 49. Bolt’s partner
 - 51. Washed away
 - 54. Nicholas I and Alexander III
 - 56. Marilyn Monroe’s original name
 - 57. Cold cuts shop
 - 58. Graven image
 - 59. Departed
 - 60. Manual communication gesture
 - 61. Thirteen-year-old, e.g.
 - 62. Wagner or Powers in a TV classic
 - 63. Chemist’s office
 - 65. Burmese neighbor
 - 67. Yellow #5, e.g.

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Insurance provider names brain-boosting tips

LITTLE ROCK -- Research confirms regular movement supports cognition, emotional well-being, and long-term brain function. Today, QualChoice is sharing expert-backed strategies—drawn from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention—to help Arkansans strengthen their minds through everyday physical activity.

Regular exercise not only helps reduce the risk of cognitive decline and dementia, but it also boosts mood, improves sleep, and builds emotional resilience. And the good news: it doesn’t take extreme workouts. Small, consistent steps can make a big difference starting today.

- WHY PHYSICAL ACTIVITY MATTERS FOR YOUR BRAIN
- Even a single session of moderate-to-vigorous exercise enhances memory, thinking speed, and mood nearly immediately.
 - Over time, staying active can reduce the risk of cognitive decline and dementia—physical inactivity nearly doubles the odds of cognitive deterioration .
 - It also supports sleep quality, lowers anxiety, and fosters emotional resilience .

- QUALCHOICE’S BRAINBOOSTING ACTIVITY GUIDE
- Get moving today – A brisk 20-minute walk, dance session, or night-time gardening can help sharpen your mind right now. Even small bursts count.
 - Make it regular – Aim for at least 150 minutes of moderate activity (or 75 minutes vigorous) weekly, plus two muscle-strengthening days.
 - Mix it up – Walk the dog, climb stairs, garden, dance—varied activities hit your endurance, strength, balance, and coordination.

- Break sedentary streaks – Stand, stretch, or march in place during long periods of sitting. Frequent breaks support blood flow and brain health.
- Make it social – Walk with a friend or join a class. Combining activity with social engagement enhances mood and mental performance.
- Turn habits into routines – Park farther away, take the stairs, or ask your office for a standing desk. These easy swaps build lasting brain-healthy habits .

HEALTHCARE SUPPORT MATTERS

Health professionals can play a key role by offering guidance, referring programs and helping individuals tailor brain-boost-

ing activity plans.

QualChoice encourages Arkansans to visit the CDC’s Move Your Way resource for free tools and planning guides. By embracing active routines now, we can all support healthier brains, better mood, and stronger futures.

ABOUT QUALCHOICE HEALTH INSURANCE

Since 1994, QualChoice has provided the best value in health benefits for Arkansas businesses. They’re committed to transforming the health of their community one person at a time and strive to make health insurance simple with an approach based on the core belief that quality healthcare is best delivered locally. More information can be found at qualchoice.com.

COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

JULY -- The Pike County Ham Radio Club plannings to host license classes and tests this summer. We will hold Technician and General level classes on July 11-12 from 9 a.m.-4 p.m. both days. They will hold license testing on July 26 from 9 a.m. to noon. These events will take place at the conference room in the Glenwood Police Department at 210 N. 2nd St in Glenwood. Anyone interested on classes or testing should contact one of the following:

Mark Reed, 903-701-5954, mark.reed.ii@gmail.com
Will Henderson, 870-925-0168, redhenderson@hotmail.com
Pat Chaloner, 870-285-5023, n5wcl1991@gmail.com

SEPTEMBER 12-13 -- The fourth annual Keith Stone Memorial Car Show is set for Friday and Saturday, Sept. 12-13 in Murfreesboro. On Friday night, a “show and shine,” cruise and poker run is planned starting at 6 p.m. on the Pike County Courthouse square. Then, on Saturday morning from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. the show will be held around the square. There is a \$20 entry for the vehicles to be judged in a number of categories, including a participant’s choice award. After the awards, a \$500 drawing will be held along with door prizes and a 50/50 pot. Contact Kirk Stone at (870) 703-1860 for more information.

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Pike County’s community spirit shines bright at state EHC conference

BY EVA LANGLEY,
Pike County FCS Agent

NORTH LITTLE ROCK -- Community service is thriving in Pike County, thanks to the commitment and leadership of devoted individuals like Pisgah Extension Homemakers Club (EHC) President Avonne Petty and EHC Council President Jeanette Deaton. Their dedication was recognized at the annual State Extension Homemakers Conference, held in North Little Rock. Also attending were fellow Pisgah member Susie O’Neal and Pike County FCS Extension Agent, Eva Langley. The conference carried the uplifting theme, “Shine Bright,”

encouraging members to carry the mission of EHC forward for future generations—just as members have done for over a century. Avonne Petty was recognized for her 60 years of EHC membership. She has often spoken about how welcoming the women in her community were and how much she learned from them. Always one to give back, she has continued the EHC tradition through teaching, mentoring, and leadership in both her local club and neighboring clubs in the county. Jeanette Deaton was honored for serving two years in her position as Ouachita District Director. Deaton spent her term planning district and state events, traveling across Arkan-

sas, and forming friendships that she says she will treasure forever. During the state gathering, she passed the role on to the new Ouachita District Director, Judy Vann-Hamilton of Sevier County. The annual state conference provides a powerful opportunity for EHC members from all 75 Arkansas counties to connect, share ideas, and bring home valuable information. Attendees participated in educational workshops covering critical topics such as Medicare fraud prevention, the connection between stress and mental health, aging well, health for the mind and body through chair yoga and environmental concerns like forest fires. Creative arts and crafts sessions were also popular, with classes like paper quilling, up-cycling projects, sock penguins, Kime Komi ornament and the whimsical “smashed can art” with several more options available. Evenings were filled with fun and fellowship, including bingo games, board games, cards, live music, and dinners with old and new friends. This year’s guest speaker was Arkansas Ozark author Tayla Tate Boerner, known for her heartfelt stories that celebrate the heritage of our rural communities. Her books include The Accidental Salvation of Gracie Lee and Gene, Everywhere, and her most recent novel “The Third Act of Theo Gruene” all of which capture the beauty, struggles, and enduring spirit of small-town life. She shared that she draws inspiration from the little things in life—old photographs, childhood hymns, and favorite flowers were a few of her examples. Boerner encouraged each person to find their source of inspiration and to daily enrich their life with their own unique creativity. EHC members consistently say their lives are most meaningful when they are helping others. Whether it’s through organizing events, sharing educational resources, or simply lending a hand to a neighbor, they embody the spirit of service. Members are encouraged to consider how their unique talents can bring peace, joy, security, or fun to those around them. Working together as a team, their collective impact can

be powerful and far-reaching. With service in mind, project books from county clubs are submitted for consideration for awards and to inspire other county clubs by showcasing different ideas and successful service projects. The 2023–2024 Service Project Book for Pike County EHC told the story of much-needed NICU covers that county members made for Children’s Hospital. Pisgah EHC’s project book was titled “PJ Pants for Seniors” and shared how members made cotton pajama pants for each of the residents at the Murfreesboro nursing home. If you’re interested in joining an existing EHC club or starting a new one in your community, contact your local extension office. In Pike County, call 870-285-2161 for more information. Here’s a refreshing summer salad recipe sure to shine bright at your next gathering. Who knew that watermelon, tomatoes, and onions could make such a delicious combination? Give it a try—you might be surprised at just how much you like it! Enjoy!

WATERMELON AND TOMATO SALAD WITH FETA AND MINT
Servings: 4 -6

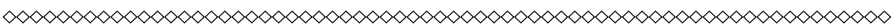
INGREDIENTS
¼ Of a Large Watermelon Cut into Large Chunks
3 Medium Tomatoes Cut into Wedges
4-6 Ounces of Feta Cheese Diced or Crumbled (Or Less Cheese If You Prefer)
Handful Of Mint Leaves Sliced
Juice Of 1 Lime
Unrefined Cold-Pressed Extra-Virgin Olive Oil for Drizzling
Honey for Drizzling - Optional but Delicious!
Sea Salt To Taste

INSTRUCTIONS
Place the watermelon and tomatoes on a platter. Scatter the cheese and mint on top. Drizzle with lime juice and a little olive oil. Place a fork in a jar of honey and drizzle the honey all over the melon, tomatoes and feta. Season with salt just before serving.



Submitted photo/UAEX

60 YEAR AWARD ... Pike County EHC member Avonne Petty was recognized for sixty years of service as a member of EHC at the recent state conference. Petty, third from left with award, is pictured with Dr. Deacue Fields, Vice President for Agriculture; Deb Teague AEHC President and Dr. John Anderson, Sr. Associate Vice President for Agriculture-Extension and Director of the Cooperative Extension Service. (Below) Pike County’s Jeanette Deaton (right) is pictured with Judy Vann-Hamilton of Sevier County. Hamilton will succeed Deaton as the EHC Ouachita District Director.



Staff photo

STATEWIDE RECOGNITION ... Penny Lamb, Recorder/Treasurer for the City of Murfreesboro, was recently awarded the Municipal Clerk of the Year for the state of Arkansas by the state’s City Clerks Recorder/Treasurer Association. Lamb said the award was given on a nomination basis in which eight other nominees were considered. Lamb was nominated for the award by North Little Rock Clerk Diane Whitby, a 30-plus year clerk. “It’s just an honor to be recognized by my peers,” she said. The final determination for the award is a points-based system from a number of duties both for the organization and the work in the community. In May, Lamb also earned her Master Municipal Clerk certification from the International Institute of Municipal Clerks. She said that education was not only for her to be able to serve the city in a better fashion, but also allows her to promote the town at international events to both U.S. citizens and those who attend from abroad. “The education allows me to make myself a better version to serve this community. I am proud to have the backing of the council and mayors to achieve these goals ... and I expect that will continue in the future.” Mayor Jim O’Neal said he is “proud of Penny for her accomplishments,” nothing that she weekly fields calls from other clerks around the state for advice. “She does a wonderful job for this city.” Lamb has been in the position since December 2008 when she was appointed by O’Neal (in a previous term as mayor) and the then city council.

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