

The

Murfreesboro Diamond

USPC 103-230

Serving South Pike County, Arkansas Since 1975

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Wednesday, July 2, 2025

Issue 52 • 1 Section • 6 Pages



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

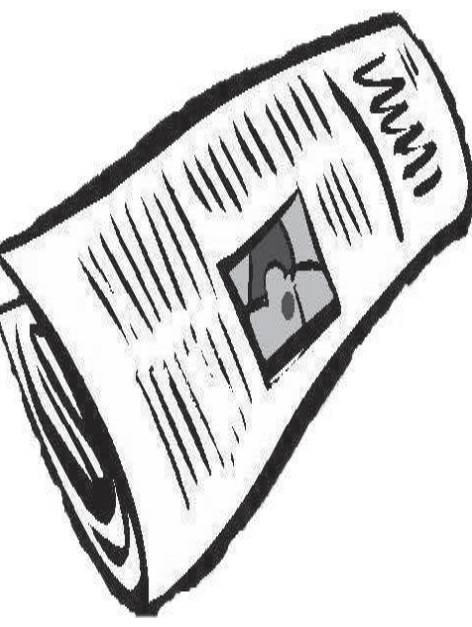
Friday, July 25 -- Colored sand art

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.



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Submit Your Local News to the Diamond!

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Call (870) 285-2723 for More Information

Fireworks display set for Friday 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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After public auction, nursing home remains in good hands

MURFREESBORO -- The building and land that houses Murfreesboro's nursing home has been purchased by the same company currently operating the business, according to information filed in the Pike County Courthouse.

The building and land was sold at public auction on June 24 to Sandra Barnett, who owns the Murfreesboro Nursing Center LLC. Barnett purchased the building for \$575,548.96. Barnett was the sole bidder on the property.

The sale stemmed from a mortgage foreclosure complaint filed Nov. 25, 2024 by Chambers Bank against the nursing center, described as a "limited liability company," Reliant Management Group, LLC, State of Arkansas Department of Workforce Services and Internal Revenue Ser-

vice.

The lawsuit stated that Murfreesboro Nursing Center executed and delivered to Chambers Bank its promissory note in the principal sum of \$1,384,048.65, payable in semi-monthly payments beginning, Feb. 5, 2009. The terms of the note were adjusted 12 times with the last change being July 2019.

"The defendant, Murfreesboro Nursing Center has failed to make the payments as provided by the terms" set forth in the agreement with Chambers Bank. As of October 2024, there was a balance due of \$575,548 in principal, \$16,307 in accrued interest and late charges and fees of \$59,140 and daily accrual of \$135.

A foreclosure was granted to Chambers Bank on April 21.

Senator speaks on issues at local town hall meeting

MURFREESBORO -- State Senator Steve Crowell was the speaker at a town meeting in Murfreesboro last Thursday at the Municipal Building.

Crowell spoke on a number of topics, including a study that proclaimed Arkansas as the leader in the nation on election safety.

He also said that the state was ready to return to executing inmates on death row, something that hadn't happened since 2017. He said there were currently 26 inmates eligible to be euthanized.

Crowell also touted recent legislation that allows for the death penalty for people that molest youth 13 years or younger. "They can't be rehabilitated," Crowell said simply.

Crowell was instrumental in getting the homestead exemption raised from \$500 to \$600 in the recent legislative session.

He discussed senate bill 307 that will work on energy increases in the state due to new building projects.

"It will move the timeline forward, and nuclear energy is the future," he said, stating that ultimately there needs to be a law that allows for rates to return to prior levels after the "energy monopoly in Arkansas" gets done with building projects -- especially in light of the length of a nuclear generator's lifespan.

Citing Governor Sarah Huckabee Sanders' desire to "get tough on crime," he spoke on bills that will improve anti-squatting efforts and derail organized theft rings.

On a topic Murfreesboro is familiar with, Crowell said that the state will lose \$8.2 billion over the next five years due to suspect work by the 2020 census effort.

"We have to figure out how to get [all] the numbers. People don't realize how important it is ... we'll put money aside to get action sooner than later and not in 2029. We need to educate people."

He agreed that a distrust in government may be a valid excuse for low participation, and he said for his part the census should be as simple as possible and not overreaching with questions like how many times do you flush your toilet daily.

"Workers and education will have to figure it out -- the process to improve it will begin next February."

While the state is socking away money to start looking into a better effort for the census in 2030, Crowell said he was a bit nervous over the amount of money the state is spending in relation to tax cuts.

"We are currently second in the nation in



Staff photo

MAKING HIS POINT ... State Senator Steve Crowell discussed the latest legislative session at a town hall meeting held last Thursday in Murfreesboro.

percentage of surplus, but we spent a lot of money this session ... as of December 31, all the covid-era money is gone and those programs are drying up. We want to cut taxes, but we are spending more -- I am nervous about a day of reckoning. We spent one billion dollars on education. The economy can change, things can happen."

He also noted a possible provider tax for the state for federal medicare dollars that could cost upward to four million dollars a year.

"The Trump cuts are good, but they will have an effect on us," Crowell said. "I'm afraid of taking a path where we spend too much."

He stated that Arkansas was racked as the second most affordable state in which to live, behind only West Virginia.

He added the highly regarded Texas with their no state income tax was still \$668 a year more expensive than Arkansas.

Crowell noted that while his detractors will paint him as anti-jail after he voted "no" for a new facility five times, he explained it was simply due to a lack of specifics being offered and that he is actually in favor of the project.

"It needs to be done right, and I will always

CROWELL Continued on Page 2

CROWELL Continued from Page 1

vote to do what is best for us,” he stated.

In response to a question, Crowell admitted that there probably needed to be income restrictions placed on the student voucher system that may ultimately make homeschooling more attractive to parents than the public school option.

“We worked on closing loopholes across the board ... many kids need breakfast and lunch because it may be the only meals they get that day -- but not mine, and that’s not right [for me to expect it],” Crowell admitted.

He said the voucher provision could affect local schools -- say, should a magnet school open in Arkadelphia.

“At \$8,000 per kid, it will hurt rural schools more that we might think. It is a big deal,,, I have a feeling there will be more work on it the next legislative session. There is an appetite to get it right.”

Crowell also noted rural hospitals were hurting -- to which those in attendance at the meeting agreed as Pike County has none -- and he said a plan for rural hospitals recently got some covid funds sent to the Nashville hospital.

“We have got to figure out a way to stand up for small hospital collections.”

He also responded to a question that there was also a need for higher capacity for intake across the state in the number of beds, which he called a “crisis.”

Crowell said the legislature approved \$2,900 more in funding for each county fair and that the senior citizen funding for centers across the state will ultimately depend on what the Trump administration does.

It was stated that taking care of an aging population was important because it will cost more in the end should no care be provided.

He said ultimately that he thinks it was all work out -- especially in southern Arkansas -- because of the “family first” attitude in his district.

“That’s how the district works, and why we will survive.”

Man in custody charged after allegedly threatening to ‘blow up the school’

MURFREESBORO -- A review of recorded inmate communications at the Pike County jail have resulted in a Hot Springs man being charged with terroristic threatening.

Matthew Lee Montgomery, 45, was charged in Pike County Circuit Court June 27. Montgomery remains in county custody this week with a \$20,000 bond. He pleaded innocent to the charge Monday and an Aug. 25 pretrial date was set.

According to case information, Pike County Investigator Jason McDonald was recently reviewing recorded inmate communications between inmate Anna Davis and Montgomery. During the review, Montgomery appeared distressed concerning a family matter and allegedly made the following comment: “I have all the gas to blow up the school so they will admit what they did and give us our lives back.”

Montgomery was arrested when he came to the jail to talk with the sheriff on June 2 about his girlfriend’s criminal charges.

The report does not mention any other details concerning the threat or school.

Davis has been incarcerated since Oct. 27, 2024 and is being held on \$50,000 bond while she awaits trial for failing to meet requirement of being a sex offender. She has pleaded innocent to the charge in March and a July 7 pretrial date was set.

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 e-mail to mdiamond.editor@windstream.net

Murfreesboro Diamond

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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.

Watermelon season is here

How to pick the best one -- and why it’s so good for you

As summer heats up and thermometers creep into the upper 90s, one thing is clear—watermelon season has arrived. Whether stacked high at farmers markets or lining roadside stands, watermelons are a sweet symbol of summer and one of the healthiest ways to stay cool and hydrated.

Vining plants originally from Africa, watermelons belong to the same plant family as cucumbers, cantaloupe, pumpkins and other squash. The melon or fruit is actually a modified berry, called a pepo. The inside of the fruit can be red, pink, or yellow, and there are varieties with and without seeds and they come in a range of sizes from micro varieties (less than 3 pounds) to giant varieties, being over 30 pounds. The largest watermelon ever grown in Arkansas weighed 268.8 pounds grown by Lloyd Bright in 2005 grown on a farm, east of Hope, Arkansas.

As the name suggests, watermelons are mostly water (92%). This makes watermelon a great food to keep you hydrated during the summer. Melons are also great sources of vitamins A and C, which help our skin and eye health as well as to fight infections and heal wounds. They also contain lycopene, which helps improve cholesterol and blood pressure levels.

A one-cup serving of cubed melon is estimated to be 45-60 calories. Watermelon does contain natural sugar that may affect your blood sugar levels. One cup of cubed watermelon contains about 10 grams of natural sugar and 12 grams of carbohydrates.

Selecting the best watermelon can be tricky, but with a few visual cues, you can dramatically increase your chances of picking a juicy, ripe one. Look for a “yellow belly” or field spot. This is the pale spot where the fruit rested on the ground while it grew. For riper melons, this spot will be larger and a deeper, creamier



PIKE COUNTY EXTENSION

EVA LANGLEY, FAMILY AND CONSUMER SCIENCES AGENT

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butter-yellow, while less ripe melons will have a smaller, paler yellow or whitish spot. Also, check the shine. Ripe watermelons tend to have a dull or matte finish rather than a glossy shine. They also feel heavier for their size, which means more juicy flesh inside. Finally, watch the ends. A well-rounded end and overall symmetrical shape can indicate even growth and ripeness.

Another tip you might have heard is tapping or “thumping” a watermelon, using the sound to tell if it is ripe. However, this method is not very reliable, as there are many different shapes and sizes of watermelon, so it can be difficult to consistently gauge ripeness based on its sound.

Once you’ve chosen your watermelon, store it at room temperature until you’re ready to eat it. Watermelon doesn’t do well in cold temperatures for long periods, so avoid refrigerating it until just before serving. A couple of hours in the fridge before slicing will chill it nicely. Wash the rind thoroughly before cutting, using cool water and a scrub brush. This helps prevent pathogens from being transferred into the flesh by the knife.

After slicing, refrigerate immediately and store in airtight containers. Any leftover slices should be refrigerated and eaten within a week. At picnics or outdoor events, keep cut melon on ice or in a cooler to prevent spoilage.

Whether you enjoy it as thick slices, diced in fruit salads, blended into smoothies, or frozen into sorbets, watermelon is

endlessly versatile—and always delicious. With its unbeatable blend of hydration, vitamins, and flavor, it’s no wonder watermelon is a seasonal favorite.

This week’s recipe is something a little different – grilled watermelon! Give it a try and see how you like it. Enjoy!

RECIPE OF THE WEEK:

Grilled Watermelon with Honey-Lime Sauce

DIRECTIONS:

Slice a small watermelon into ½-inch thick triangles, leaving the rind (or skin) attached.

Arrange the melon slices on the grill or indoor griddle in one single layer.

Grill over high direct heat for 2 to 3 minutes, until grill marks appear. Watermelon cooks quickly on the grill. Don’t overcook the watermelon as it can taste burnt and become too mushy.

While the watermelon slices are grilling, whisk together a ¼ cup honey, juice and zest of 2 limes, and a good dash of red pepper flakes. Cover and warm up for no more than 10 seconds in the microwave.

Grilled watermelon slices should be enjoyed warm, straight from the grill. Only grill as much as you think will be eaten immediately, because cooked watermelon does not keep well. Arrange the grilled watermelon on a plate and drizzle with the chili and honey-lime sauce. Top with a little feta cheese if desired. If you would like to serve it as desert, top a slice with vanilla ice cream!

Extension to offer tips on food self-reliance

BY TRACY COURAGE

U of A System Division of Agriculture

LITTLE ROCK — The Cooperative Extension Service’s Grow Your Own Groceries Series has three new online sessions – each focused on how to grow and prepare a healthy, nutritious food.

Each hour-long presentation is offered through Zoom and begins at noon. Upcoming sessions include the following:

- July 15 — Watermelons
- Aug. 21 — Carrots
- Sept. 11 — Figs

Registration for the free sessions is available online at <https://uaex.uada.edu/grow-groceries>.

“We haven’t covered watermelons since 2021, and we’ve never offered virtual programs on carrots or figs,” said Faulkner County extension horticulture agent Krista Quinn, who hosts the series. “We always ask attendees what topics

they’d like to see us cover in the future, and these three topics were ones that attendees asked that we cover this year.”

In each session, experts with the University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture discuss variety selection, growing methods, soil health and how to deal with common pests or problems. Extension Family and Consumer Science agents and specialists also share information on how to store and prepare homegrown produce and demonstrate healthy recipes.

“I’m excited about all three of our upcoming programs because we have very knowledgeable and experienced presenters lined up,” Quinn said.

Matt Bertucci, assistant professor of horticulture for the Division of Agriculture, has been studying watermelon production in Arkansas for several years. He will lead the watermelon session in July.

Ryan Neal, county extension agent for

horticulture in Benton County, will lead the August session on how to successfully grow carrots in both fall and spring.

Andrea Klokow, a Benton County master gardener, will lead the fig program in September. Klokow has been heading a fig variety trial as part of a Benton County Master Gardener community service project. The trial will help determine which varieties perform best in Arkansas and how to best care for fig plants.

The Grow Your Own series started in 2020 during the Covid-19 pandemic was as an innovative way for extension to share research-based information with home gardeners. Since then, experts have offered 72 sessions, each averaging around 480 registrants, Quinn said.

To learn more about the series, visit uaex.uada.edu/grow-groceries or contact the Pike County Extension office at (870) 285-2161.

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PUBLIC NOTICE

Vehicle for Sale – Bid Opportunity

South Pike County School District is accepting bids for a 1997 Chevy S-10 Truck, 99,000 miles.

Viewable at the district’s Transportation Department

Contact: Troy Stone for more info

Bids must be received by July 9th at 3:00 PM

(s.p.c.s.d., 46w., 52)

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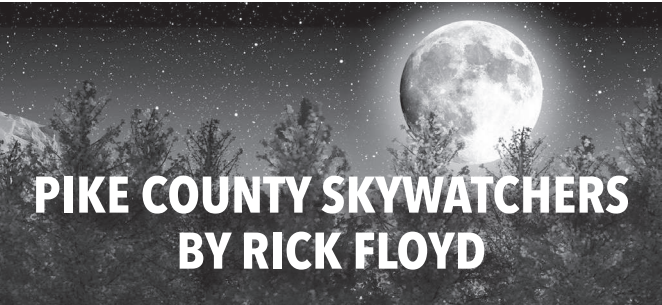
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PIKE COUNTY SKYWATCHERS
BY RICK FLOYD

Tilt negates cooler temperatures as earth reaches farthest point from sun

The Earth’s orbit around the Sun is elliptical meaning sometimes we are closer to the Sun and sometimes farther away. The Earth will reach aphelion, its farthest distance from the Sun, on July 3.

The Earth at aphelion does receive less solar radiation, but because our hemisphere is now tilted (at 23 ½ degrees) toward the Sun we will not experience a break from summer heat despite the extra distance. This winter Earth will reach perihelion, its closest orbital point to the Sun, but because our hemisphere is tilted away from the Sun, we are cold. In short, the Earth’s axial tilt is the major factor determining temperature and summer is still summer.

Summer usually brings strings of cloudless days and nights, so it is a good time to stargaze. Arkansas offers several good sites for stargazers and amateur astronomers to go to.

The Lake Greeson area has several good dark locations, especially away from the lights of the dam. The number one place for a dark-sky experience in the state by all accounts is the Buffalo National River Park. To date, it is the only certified International Dark Sky Park in Arkansas. This is a designation made by the non-profit International Dark Sky Association (IDA). To get this designation the park adopted responsible outdoor lighting practices. The park offers several night-sky programs throughout the year (check their calendar of events). The IDA is a good group to join if you are interested in helping to preserve the natural darkness of the Earth’s shadow side.

The Edmond E. Griffin Planetarium is another astronomy place in the state. It is located on the University of Central Arkansas Campus. Its one-hour programs this summer are on Fridays starting at 3 p.m. and at 7 p.m. They mention that seating capacity is 94 on a first come first seated basis. This is a great resource for learning about the night sky, astronomy and science, and in air-conditioned comfort. Take a look at their web-site for more details.

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UAMS

HOUSE CALL



Dr. Bala Simon is an associate professor in the Department of Family and Preventive Medicine in the College of Medicine at the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences.

Q: What is amyloidosis?

A: Amyloidosis is a disorder in which an abnormal protein called amyloid builds up in organs and tissues. Amyloidosis may be localized to the bladder, heart, kidneys, lungs and spleen as well as the skin, but may also spread throughout the body to areas such as the digestive tract and nervous system. It is a rare but possibly life-threatening illness if not treated.

Inflammatory diseases, long-term infections and blood cancers such as multiple myeloma can cause amyloidosis. An inherited gene mutation may also result in amyloidosis. Most people diagnosed with the condition are between the ages of 60 and 70. Amyloidosis affects men more than women.

Symptoms may vary depending upon which organs or systems in

the body are affected. Amyloidosis symptoms also mirror other common conditions, often making it harder to diagnose. Constipation, fatigue, numbness in the hands, purple circles around the eyes and sudden weight loss are some common symptoms of amyloidosis.

Treatment includes managing the symptoms and limiting the production of the amyloid protein through targeted therapy. Chemotherapy to destroy abnormal cells is an option, as well as an organ transplant. Contact your health care provider if you have symptoms that do not resolve.

Email your health questions to housecall@uams.edu.

Obituaries

Daniel Austin Nuttle, 28, Austin



Daniel Austin Nuttle, age 28, of Austin, Arkansas passed away Tuesday, June 24, 2025, in Little Rock, Arkansas. He was born October 22, 1996, in Hot Springs, Arkansas, the son of Frank and Milly Cox Nuttle.

Firstly, he was an amazing father to three beautiful girls, Raelynn Nuttle, Sadie Connelly, and Sawyer Cardin, not to exclude his niece he was also like a father to, Abby Cox. He was an amazing girl dad, always present in the moment. He loved being a father to these girls. He had an obsession with his shoes, he stated “he would have a shoe collection bigger than any woman could ever dream”. He loved basketball, especially when he could play one on one with Raelynn. He could bust a move like no other, and singing along to whatever song came on. He also favored his hair, in his infamous man bun.

Danni Cardin, came into his life years ago, but they didn’t put lock to key until February 6th, 2025, the short four months they got to spend together was the best Danni could have asked for. He asked her to marry him all the time, but she would say no it was too soon, in two years time she would say yes, but he knew

she was his from the very beginning. Abby was like his own, he was there to cut her umbilical cord, she was his baby before Raelynn was. His best buddy and brother from another mother, Nate Garner, if you seen one the other was right behind, fought like husband and wife, but would do anything for each other. He had over came so much and wanted to prove to everyone what he was capable of, which was great things.

He is preceded in death by his paternal grandmother Donna Nuttle Vail; maternal grandparents John Floyd and Dianna Kay Cox; and one Aunt Christy Staten.

Survivors include his daughter Raelynn Marie Nuttle of Goodland, KS; fiancé Danni Cardin of Austin, AR; two step daughters Sawyer Cardin, and Sadie Conlley both of Austin; his parents Frank and Milly Nuttle of Nashville, AR; one sister Brittney Cox and husband Hunter of Pike City, AR; paternal grandfather Larry Frank Nuttle and wife Debbie of Nashville; one niece Abby Cox, three nephews Bentley, Maverick, and Dutton all of Pike City; one uncle John Mark Cox and wife Brandy of Murfreesboro; one aunt Angie Lingo and husband Junior of Murfreesboro; as well as a number of cousin and many, many friends.

Memorial services were held on Saturday, June 28, 2025, at Latimer Funeral Home in Nashville, under the direction of Latimer Funeral Home in Nashville.

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

Daniel Cain Lamb, 44, Delight



Daniel Cain Lamb, 44, of Delight, Arkansas passed away on Tuesday, June 17, 2025 in Delight, Arkansas. On the night of May 7, 1981, Autumn finally became a big sister—to a surprising baby boy! Daniel Cain Lamb was born that night to Danny Ray and Theresa.

Growing up, Cain spent many Sundays attending Smyrna Church with Big Mama and Pop at 9:00 a.m., and then, with Theresa at the wheel, they would quickly make their way to 10:00 a.m. Sunday School at Delight First Baptist Church with Mamaw Bell. Cain would later be saved at Bogg Springs Church Camp and was baptized on December 20, 1992.

He spent his youth in the woods of Smyrna, learning to live off the land. Although he was reluctantly pulled away from the woods to attend school in Delight, he graduated from Delight High School, leaving behind plenty of stories to be told. Much like school, work also took him away from the woods he loved. At a young age, he began mixing mud and toting bricks for his dad and the Lamb Masonry crew. Over time, he picked up many skills. As his sister would say, he was a “Jack of all trades.” He worked in the logging woods, carpentry, steel work, and electrical fields.

A miracle came that changed Cain’s life forever. On May 6, 2007, Cameron Cooper Campbell was born in

Hope, Arkansas, making Cain a father. It was then he truly learned to live life to the fullest and to love unconditionally every single day.

He was preceded in death by paternal grandfather Bill Lamb and his wife Shirley, and grandmother Barbra Sue Spradlin Lamb, maternal grandfather Jerry Bob Mitchell and his wife Ruby Copeland Mitchell, and grandmother Willa Dean Bell Miller. He is also preceded in death by Imon McLelland; cousins Cory Don Lamb and Liam Rainn Miller; and one uncle, Billy Don Lamb.

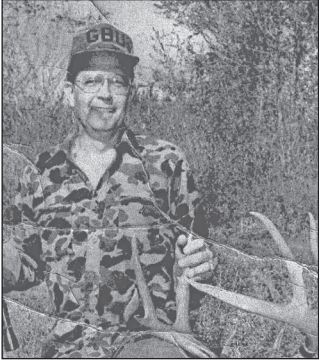
Survivors include his son, Cameron Campbell of Delight; father Danny Ray Lamb of Delight; mother Theresa (Kevin) McLelland of Delight; his big sister Autumn Lamb Self and special brother in law Jason “Squint” Camp of Delight; his bonus brother Matthew (Celine) McLelland of Nashville; his bonus sister Audra (CW) Griffin of Ozan; bonus grandfather Larry Miller of Delight; nephew Payten Diffe of Delight; niece Chesney (Brantley) Cupples of Caddo Valley; niece Trista Howard of Murfreesboro; bonus nieces Lily and Jolie McLelland of Nashville; bonus nephews Jack, Sam, and Will Griffin of Ozan. His very special cousin Chris Campbell of Pisgah; his girlfriend Kassi Hibner of Delight; as well as numerous aunts, uncles, cousins, other family, and so, so many friends.

Visitation was held on Monday, June 23, at Latimer Funeral Home in Murfreesboro. Graveside services were held on Tuesday, June 24, at Smyrna Cemetery under the direction of Latimer Funeral Home in Murfreesboro.

Memorials may be made in his honor at the Bank of Delight.

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

John Wayne Lamb, Delight



He left behind three children -- two daughters, Sherry Singleton of Delight, and Karen (David) Pinkerton of Joesphine, Texas -- and one son, Steve Lamb of Wylie, Texas; two brothers, Kelley Eugene Lamb of Dandridge, TN., and Jerry Lynn Lamb of Sulfer Springs, Texas; one sister, Mary Louise Whitaker of Longview, and many grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

He loved the Church of Christ at Pisgah and the Church of Christ in Delight, he had many friends and family that he loved there.

There will be a memorial service at a later date

John Wayne Lamb departed this world on June 20, 2025 to be with his Heavenly Father. He was born in Delight, AR, on February 11, 1940, to Samuel Kelley Lamb and Oza Udelle Lamb, who both preceded him in death.

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John David Watson, 62, Tokio

John David Watson, age 62, of Tokio, Arkansas passed away, Saturday, June 28, 2025 at St. Vincent Hospital in Hot Springs, Arkansas. He was born September 4, 1962 in Murfreesboro, Arkansas the son of the late Olen Watson and Johnnie (Greer) Watson.

In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by one niece, Shelly Hoover, and a great niece, Abby Patterson.

Survivors include; one son, John David Watson JR and wife Allie (Featherston) Watson of Pisgah; three grandchildren, Jolee Watson, Jones Da-

vid Watson, and Jack Watson; one brother, Larry Watson and wife Eva of Murfreesboro; one sister, Patti (Watson) Graves and husband Gary of Murfreesboro; three nieces, Kelley Campbell and husband Eric, Mandy Stone and husband Kirk, and Haley Graves; one nephew, Justin Watson and wife Jenny, as well as many more relatives and friends.

The family received friends from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. on Sunday, June 29, 2025 at Latimer Funeral Home in Murfreesboro.

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PIKE COUNTY DISTRICT COURT DOCKET

June 17, 2025
BF=Bond Forfeited

PIKE COUNTY

Boatright, Theodore R., 75, Sheffield, Ala., \$135 BF, speeding
Patel, Drupadbhai B., 76, North Little Rock, \$220 BF, open container in vehicle
Wallace, Ashton Brent, 37, Delight, guilty of third-degree battery, fined \$530; guilty of third-degree battery, fined \$530

CITY OF MURFREESBORO

Boss, Leigh A., 58, Newhope, \$155 BF, speeding
Mendoza, Ryan Michael, 40, Memphis, Tenn., \$145 BF, no child restraint device

ARKANSAS GAME & FISH COMMISSION

Dillard, Jaxson Ross, 24, Gurdon, guilty of violation of regulations while accompanying youth, fined \$220; guilty of hunting/fishing/trapping on property without permission, fined \$870

Jennings, Tyler C., 24, Texarkana, Texas, \$220 BF, insufficient PFD
Patterson, Benjamin, 48, West Monroe, La., \$220BF, fishing without license

CITY OF GLENWOOD

Barron, Jason M., 42, Glenwood, guilty of criminal trespass, fined \$210; guilty of first-degree criminal mischief, fined \$375
Estrada, Estela G., 31, Glenwood, \$145 BF, failure to register tags/expired
Price, Susan D., 47, Glenwood, \$315 BF, driving with suspended license

**BENCH TRIALS
PIKE COUNTY**

Marinov, Jery Nicolas, 50, Frisco, Texas, guilty of defective equipment, fined \$215
Mills, Jayden R., 22, Springhill, La., possession of controlled substance, under advisement for one year to dismiss, fined

\$1,050; guilty of minor in possession of alcohol, fined \$260; guilty of obstructing government operations, fined \$230
Royalty, Jason, 50, Delight, guilty of third-degree domestic battery, fined \$2,500
Shankles, Joe C., 56, Bismarck, speeding, deferred adjudication for six months to dismiss, fined \$185
Wolcott, Carla Dorene, 65, De Queen, reckless driving, deferred adjudication for three months to dismiss, fined \$445

CITY OF GLENWOOD

Day, Andrea Sherlena, 43, Glenwood, guilty of resisting arrest, fined \$520; guilty of disorderly conduct, fined \$240; guilty of driving with suspended license, fined \$345
Edwards, David, 19, Glenwood, guilty of criminal trespass, fined \$210
Endsley, Kevin, 44, Glenwood, guilty of fleeing, fined \$650
Mitchell, Jeremy J., 34, Glenwood, third-degree domestic battery, under advisement for one year to dismiss, fined \$600

More than 4,000 teachers statewide set to receive merit bonuses

LITTLE ROCK – More than 4,200 Arkansas teachers will receive merit bonuses averaging \$3,325 as part of an incentive program created two years ago to retain the best teachers and recruit them in subject areas that are most in demand.

The incentive program is part of the LEARNS Act, a sweeping series of education reforms that were proposed by the governor and enacted by the legislature. It raised starting salaries for teachers from \$36,000 to \$50,000.

Last year fewer than 3,000 teachers received bonuses, which averaged \$3,299. Last year the state spent about \$9.8 million on incentive bonuses and this year it will spend \$14.2 million.

To be eligible, a teacher must have three years’ experience. One category is to show outstanding growth in student performance. Another is to teach in a subject that has a shortage of teachers. Those are foreign languages, secondary mathematics, secondary science, middle school mathematics, middle school science and special education.

Teachers also can qualify for bonuses if they teach in areas with a shortage of teachers, and if they act as mentors to aspiring teachers. Teachers can receive up to \$10,000 in bonuses if they

qualify in more than one of the categories, and this year 76 teachers will receive the maximum amount. Last year 47 teachers received \$10,000.

This year the median bonus is \$2,500, meaning the same number of teachers received more than that amount as received less than that amount. Last year the median bonus was \$3,000.

This year 831 teachers received a bonus of more than \$5,000, compared to 52 teachers receiving that much last year.

The state will send money to school districts by June 30 for the incentive bonuses to be distributed to teachers.

Arkansas has almost 33,000 certified classroom teachers. Retention has improved since the pandemic, but still remains a challenge for school districts. According to a recent report by the Office of Education Policy at the University of Arkansas, last year 12.8 percent of teachers left their classroom. They either left the teaching profession, transferred to a different school district or switched to a non-teaching job within their district.

According to the university report, 77 percent of Arkansas teachers remained in their jobs, while 2.7 percent retired. The retiring

teachers were part of the 9.2 percent who left the teaching profession entirely. The analysis showed that 3.6 percent switched to a non-teaching job within the district and 10.1 percent moved to a different teaching job. Of those, 4.7 percent moved to another job within their district and 5.4 percent took a teaching job at another district.

Retention rates for teachers this year were very similar to last year’s rates, and still not quite as good as before the COVID pandemic.

For example, the retention rate in 2017-2018 was 79 percent, or two percentage points higher than this year’s rate.

Retention rates in southern and eastern Arkansas tend to be lower. Seven school districts in Arkansas had a teacher retention rate below 65 percent, and five of those districts are in southern and eastern parts of the state.

This year’s rate of teacher retirements is close to traditional rates.

Experience life after incarceration through simulation

BY KARALEE BLACK
*Montgomery County Extension Staff Chair
UA Division of Agriculture*

ARKANSAS -- Every year, 11 million individuals cycle through local jails in the U.S., with another half-million released from prisons. In Arkansas, county governments allocate more than a third of their budgets to public safety—yet the challenges faced by those re-entering society are often misunderstood or overlooked.

To bridge that gap, the Montgomery County and Pike County Extension offices is bringing the Arkansas Re-Entry Simulation to Montgomery County on July 17 at Community Bible Baptist Church, 149 Slate Mill Road in Glenwood.

This eye-opening event will allow community members to walk in the shoes of a formerly incarcerated person and experience the barriers they face when trying to reintegrate into society.

WHAT TO EXPECT:
Participants will engage in a “four-week” simulation condensed into 2.5 hours, rotating through 14 interactive stations that represent real-life post-incarceration tasks -- such as obtaining ID, securing housing, finding work, and navigating social services. The exercise fosters empathy, sparks conversation, and highlights the need for systemic support.

“This simulation creates an opportunity for communities to reflect on their resources and policies around re-entry,” said Karalee Black, Montgomery County FCS agent. “It’s a valuable experience for community leaders, landlords, employers, elected officials, students, and agencies.”

WHO SHOULD ATTEND?

- Community leaders and elected officials
- Employers and landlords
- Students and educators
- Nonprofit and social service organizations
- Individuals impacted by the criminal justice system

WHY IT MATTERS:
This simulation isn’t just an exercise—it’s a conversation starter. It reveals how a criminal record can limit access to employment, housing, transportation, and basic necessities. The goal is not to minimize trauma, but to foster awareness, understanding, and advocacy.

RESERVE YOUR SPOT TODAY!
Space may be limited. Register by contacting Karalee Black at (870) 867-2311 or kblack@uada.edu.

SUBSCRIBE TODAY!

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‘Dear Preacher’

By Buddy Ray, Murfreesboro Church of Christ

TO THE YOUNG AND YOUNG AT HEART...
“Dear God... Next to You He’s My Best Friend”

Cats and dogs are great friends and companions. They make you laugh and keep you entertained. You take good care of your pets because you love them. Just as you are the master of your pets, God is the master of all of us. Your pet trusts you to feed and shelter it. You can put your trust in God. He will always take care of you.

Isaiah 40:11 – He shall feed His flock like a shepherd; He shall gather the lambs with His arm and carry them in His bosom and shall gently lead those that are with young.

“Dear God...Am I Listening?”

Can you hear God’s voice? Psalm 107:43 – Let the one



who is wise heed these things and ponder the loving deeds of the Lord.

“Dear God... Give Me a Hint – Where Are You?”

I cannot see you. I cannot hear your voice. I am having a rough time following ... please help me find you! When I have difficulty hearing God’s voice, I ask God to open my ears. I learn to stay silent. As I quietly listen the Lord speaks to my heart. I must obey His instructions. If I have a rough time obeying His instructions, I ask God to help me. The Lord quickly answers my call.

James 1:5 – If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally ... and it shall be given him.

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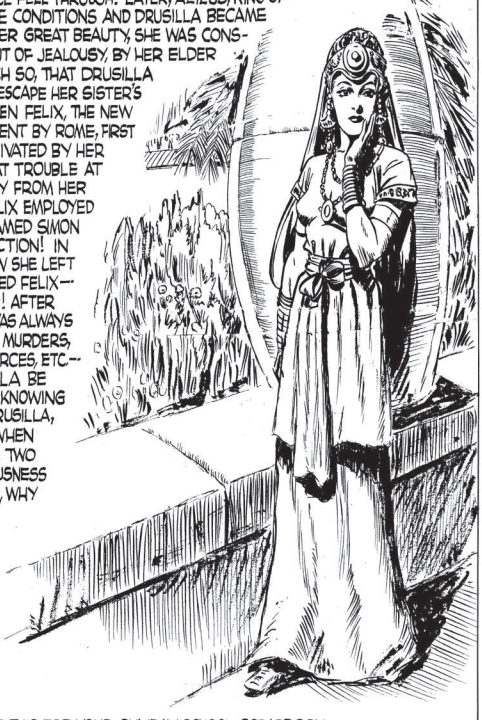
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Facts About The BIBLE

BY JOHN LEHTI

HER BEAUTY WAS A BURDEN – NOT A BLESSING!

DRUSILLA WAS THE YOUNGEST DAUGHTER OF KING HEROD AGRIPPA I (BORN C.A.D.36). BEFORE SHE WAS SIX, HER BEAUTY WAS DAZZLING AND SHE WAS PROMISED IN MARRIAGE TO THE SON OF KING ANTOCHUS OF COMMAGENE, HOWEVER, THE YOUNG BRIDEGROOM WAS TOLD HE HAD TO BECOME CIRCUMCISED AND ACCEPT THE JEWISH RELIGION – WHEN HE REFUSED, THE ALLIANCE FELL THROUGH! LATER, AZIZUS, KING OF EMESA, ACCEPTED THESE CONDITIONS AND DRUSILLA BECAME HIS WIFE. BECAUSE OF HER GREAT BEAUTY, SHE WAS CONSTANTLY PERSECUTED, OUT OF JEALOUSY, BY HER ELDER SISTER BERNICE, SO MUCH SO THAT DRUSILLA WOULD DO ANYTHING TO ESCAPE HER SISTER'S PETTY TYRANNY! SO, WHEN FELIX, THE NEW PROCURATOR OF JUDEA, SENT BY ROWE, FIRST SAW HER, AND WAS CAPTIVATED BY HER BEAUTY, IT WAS NO GREAT TROUBLE AT ALL TO SEDUCE HER AWAY FROM HER HUSBAND – ALTHOUGH FELIX EMPLOYED A CYPRIOTE MAGICIAN NAMED SIMON TO HELP HIM IN HIS SEDUCTION! IN DEFIANCE OF JEWISH LAW SHE LEFT HER HUSBAND AND MARRIED FELIX – A GENTILE AND IDOLATER! AFTER ALL, HER WHOLE FAMILY WAS ALWAYS MIXED UP IN FOUL DEEDS, MURDERS, INCESTS, UNLAWFUL DIVORCES, ETC -- SO WHY SHOULD DRUSILLA BE DIFFERENT?! HOWEVER, KNOWING THIS ABOUT FELIX AND DRUSILLA, ONE CAN UNDERSTAND, WHEN PAUL SPOKE BEFORE THE TWO OF THEM ABOUT RIGHTEOUSNESS AND JUDGMENT TO COME, WHY IT WAS THAT FELIX TREMBLED SO! (ACTS 24:24,25)



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* -- Theme Related Clue
- ACROSS
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5. Protestant denom.
8. Large edible mushroom
11. Mischievous Norse deity
12. *Thumbelina emerges from a flower in a fairy ____
13. Brick and mortar destination
15. Garner wages
16. Guinness and such
17. “Poison: “Every Rose Has Its ____”
18. **If you go to San ____, be sure to wear some flowers in your hair”
20. Electric one and moray one
21. Killer whales
22. p in mpg
23. Fatwa, alt. sp.
26. Spain’s neighbor, across Strait of Gibraltar
30. “Back To The Future” actress
31. Leaked, as in ship
34. Miso bean
35. Operatic solos
37. H+, e.g.
38. Is dressed in
39. Leave a Hancock
40. Cast-off skin
42. Egyptian boy king
43. Clearance, as under a bridge
45. Neglectful in duty
47. ***“Dandelion Wine” author ____ Bradbury
48. Dear one
50. Black cat, to some
52. ***Build Me Up ____”
56. Adult
57. ____ bowl, frozen dish
58. Poetic “through”
59. Latin dance
60. “Buffalo ____, won’t you come out to-night..”
61. Kids’ building block
62. Altitude, abbreviated

63. Like a fox
64. Water carrier
- DOWN
1. Staff symbol
2. Zoo sound
3. Gumbo pod
4. Separate grain from chaff
5. Model-building wood
6. Smart ones?
7. 100 centavos
8. Refrigerate
9. Commits a faux pas
10. Mont Blanc, e.g.
12. a.k.a. meditation in motion (2 words)
13. Ranch grazer
14. *Bette Midler’s 1981 Grammy winning song (2 words)
19. Dungeness one and snow one
22. *Poppy’s seed container
23. Banned camera setting, in a museum
24. Falcon’s home
25. Boreal forest, in Russia
26. Ma tre d’s list
27. Raccoon’s South American cousin
28. *2024 Grammy winner for “Flowers”
29. Hop-drying kilns
32. *Lis in fleur-de-lis
33. * ____ Goo Dolls of “Gutterflower” fame
36. ***Flowers in the Attic” author V.C. ____
38. One of journalism’s Ws
40. Declare
41. Costing nothing
44. Want to
46. ____ Beach, SC
48. Belonging to duke
49. Miuccia Prada’s homeland
50. Like traditional storytelling
51. Lose skin
52. Tea servings
53. Tobacco
54. Strong desire
55. Standard’s partner
56. Govt. property org.

CROSSWORD

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AG announces number of arrests, convictions in Arkadelphia

ARKADELPHIA -- Attorney General Tim Griffin has announced a string of arrests and convictions related to issues at the Arkadelphia Human Development Center.

Guilty pleas were entered by Princess Dansby, 42, of Preston and Alissa Rivera, 27, of Arkadelphia on charges of Abuse of an Endangered/Impaired Person:

“On June 11, my office’s Medicaid Fraud Control Unit secured negotiated guilty pleas by two caregivers at the Arkadelphia Human Development Center. In both cases, clients with intellectual and developmental disabilities were pushed by their caregivers, resulting in one victim breaking her ankle.

“Abuse of this kind is despicable and intolerable. I congratulate Special Agent Laura Glover and Assistant Attorney General Gabby Davis-Jones for their work to secure this conviction. I also thank the office of 9th East Judicial District Prosecutor Dan Turner for its assistance in this case.”

Dansby pleaded guilty to a Class B Misdemeanor count of Abuse of an Endangered/Impaired Person for pushing a client with intellectual and developmental disabilities. She was sentenced to 90 days of jail suspended, a \$500 fine plus court costs, and 20 hours of community service.

Rivera pleaded guilty to a Class D Felony count of Abuse of an Endangered/Impaired Person for pushing a client with intellectual and developmental disabilities, which resulted in the victim falling and breaking her ankle. She was sentenced to five years of probation, a \$1,000 fine plus court costs, enrollment in an anger management class, and 100 hours of community service.

On June 9, Takobe Larry, 19, of Arkadelphia pleaded guilty to one count of abuse of adults, a Class ‘D’ felony, and ordered to pay a \$700 fine, court costs, and serve 36 months of SIS. Larry was arrested after he was caught on camera using a utility vehicle to purposely run into and cause injury to a resident of the Arkadelphia Human Development Center.

On June 25, Davanna Wiley, 38, of Arkadelphia, was arrested

on one count of abuse of a vulnerable person, a Class D felony. Wiley was a caregiver for individuals with developmental and intellectual disabilities and was arrested for pushing a client to the ground while the client was leaving home.

“My office will continue to pursue those who commit Medicaid fraud and exploit Arkansans. These arrests demonstrate our commitment to holding bad actors accountable, and our work is far from over. I would like to commend our Medicaid Fraud Control Unit (MFCU) for its outstanding work and its unwavering commitment to protecting Arkansans,” said Griffin.

The Arkansas MFCU receives 75% of its funding from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services under a grant totaling \$4,685,736 for the Federal fiscal year 2025, of which \$3,514,304 is federally funded. The remaining 25%, totaling \$1,171,432 for State Fiscal Year 2025, is funded by Arkansas General Revenue.

On June 24, Kanita Williams, 49, of Arkadelphia was found guilty of one count of failure to report adult maltreatment, a Class B misdemeanor. She was sentenced to 90 days’ probation, ordered to pay a \$500 fine with \$250 of the fine suspended, and added to the Adult Maltreatment Registry. Williams, a Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) and mandated reporter at the Arkadelphia Human Development Center, witnessed a fellow CNA physically abuse a resident. Williams was terminated from the Arkadelphia Human Development Center after failing to report the abuse.

“My office will not sit by and tolerate the abuse or neglect of our most vulnerable. Reporting abuse isn’t just a professional duty, it’s a moral one. We all have a responsibility to protect those who cannot protect themselves. I commend the exceptional work of our Medicaid Fraud Control Unit (MFCU) for their continued commitment to protecting Arkansans. And I especially thank Special Agent Laura Glover, Assistant Attorneys General Gabrielle Davis-Jones and David Jones, as well as the Prosecuting Attorney for the 9th Judicial District of Arkansas, Dan Turner.”

COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

JULY -- The Pike County Ham Radio Club is planning 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 19-20 -- The fourth annual Keith Stone Memorial Car Show has changed their dates to Friday and Saturday, Sept. 19-20 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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Submitted photos/Murfreesboro Chamber of Commerce

READY TO OPEN ... According to the Murfreesboro Chamber of Commerce on Monday, Nanny's Kitchen will officially open Wednesday morning at 5 a.m. Nanny's Kitchen is located in the former Cash Saver grocery store building located at 300 East 13th Street in Murfreesboro.

Area 4-H'ers experience recreation at Star Camp

BY REBEKAH HALL
U of A System Division of Agriculture

AMITY -- Nestled among towering pines and a glittering 40-acre lake, Arkansas 4-H members from five counties gathered at Timber Lodge Ranch for the 4-H Star Camp, building pool noodle boats, coming out of their shells and living the camping experience.

Seventy 4-H members from Howard, Miller, Montgomery, Pike and Sevier counties joined 20 adults, including extension county agents, summer interns and parent volunteers, for three days of outdoor recreation and team-building activities from June 18-20.

Campers faced off in a water balloon Battleship-style game, created abstract art using paint-filled water guns and built boats from cardboard, duct tape and pool noodles, which they put to the test on the lake.

"For years, this program actually involved camping in tents and cooking everything outside," said Eva Langley, Pike County extension staff chair for the University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture. "They really got the true camping experience. We've been coming here for several years now, and even though the kids are staying in air-conditioned bunks, we still want it to feel authentic, because not every kid goes camping."

The 4-H Star Camp, named after its five participating counties, has gone by a few different names since its inception more than 55 years ago. Originally called Quad County Camp for its partnership among Sevier, Howard, Miller and Little River counties, the program has welcomed generations of 4-H members and their families.

"We work very hard to keep this camp a tradition," said Rex Herring, Sevier County extension staff chair, who has been involved with Star Camp for the past 21 years. "You've got kids coming here whose moms and dads and grandparents have come through this camp. Our theme every year incorporates educational elements, but we have a lot of fun — otherwise, they wouldn't want to come back."

The camp brings together extension family

and consumer sciences, agricultural and 4-H agents, as well as extension summer interns, who lead the activity rotations for the 4-H members.

"One of my favorite parts of Star Camp is the way we get to collaborate on it as agents," said Samantha Horn, Howard County extension staff chair. "We put a lot of time and effort into planning this and making sure our kids get the best experience out of it."

Children must be nine years old by the first day of camp to participate. Kim Frachiseur, Sevier County extension 4-H agent, said this threshold gives the Cloverbuds 4-H members, who range from five to eight years old, "something to look forward to."

"We like that this makes participating in Star Camp feel like a right of passage for our Cloverbuds," Frachiseur said. "They look up to all the older kids and hear them talk about how much fun they had at camp, then they get to come and see what it's all about."

Gayle Herring, 7, daughter of Rex Herring, was able to participate in camp a couple of years early because she attended with her father.

"My favorite thing so far has been swimming," Gayle said. "And that lake is really, really deep."

On the first night of camp, 4-H members were tasked with hunting for "the Cropster" — Howard County extension agriculture agent Dawson Bailey, dressed in a lobster costume — while navigating the dark using only glow-in-the-dark necklaces and bracelets. Some extension agents hid along the road with water guns to thwart campers, and other agents gave out dry beans to successful teams.

"We got to run down the road last night until 10:00," Gayle said. "We had this thing called the Cropster, and we had to go get beans, and whoever got the most beans got prizes. It was really fun."

Star Camp costs \$100 per camper, which makes it relatively affordable compared to other summer camp fees. To help teach responsibility, campers from each county were assigned to help serve meals and clean up the dining

area afterward. On the last night of camp, homemade ice cream — churned by campers and their family and consumer sciences agents — was on the menu.

"You want the kids to leave here with fun memories, a new friend and maybe a new interest," Horn said. "I feel like that's what 4-H is all about: helping our members grow in their confidence, their curiosity, and in their relationships with each other."

CONNECTING MEMBERS, STRENGTHENING 4-H

Herring said the camp is an opportunity for 4-H members to interact with their peers, and for county agents to strengthen their relationships with 4-H clubs.

"These kids get to commingle with others, and I love it from a county agent standpoint," Herring said. "I've been with extension for nearly 28 years, and in the past, people have asked me, 'What do you think about camp? Is it worth doing?' And I say, 'Absolutely.' This is a big rapport-building experience with my 4-H'ers. They get to see me as a human being instead of just their county agent. You grow a

better bond with the kids, and I really think that helps the success of our county programs."

For shy or introverted 4-H members, Herring said the camp is also a chance to find their voice and practice social skills.

"What I love about it is that these quieter kids, I call them 'shelled up,' those are the ones I'm encouraging the most," Herring said. "The way I evaluate myself is if next year, whenever those same kids come back, the first thing they say is 'Hey Mr. Rex,' when the year before, you had to stomp their foot to get them to say anything. That's how you know you've left a positive mark."

Herring said he hopes that 4-H members' experience at Star Camp helps keep them involved with the 4-H program.

"The camp is very important," Herring said. "I hope to make an impact on all the kids, to where they'll stay in 4-H. We'll do this as long as we can to provide this for the kids of south-west Arkansas."

To learn more about the Cooperative Extension Service's youth development program, visit 4h.uada.edu or contact your the Pike County Extension office at (870) 285-2161.



Submitted photo/UAX

SWEET TREATS AT CAMP ... Eva Langley, Pike County extension staff chair, and a star camp 4-H'er churn homemade ice cream at 4-H Star Camp near Amity recently.

Hemp ban upheld in court

Griffin: 'If you are selling these products, you are now doing it in violation of the law'

LITTLE ROCK -- Attorney General Tim Griffin issued the following statement after the United States Court of Appeals for the Eighth Circuit reversed a lower court's decision to enjoin Act 629 of 2023:

"Today's ruling isn't just a win for Arkansas, it's a win for common sense and the rule of law. If you are selling these products, you are now doing it in violation of the law."

"Bio Gen LLC and others brought this lawsuit against Governor Sarah Huckabee Sanders, myself, Arkansas's prosecuting attorneys, and many other state officials in an attempt to preserve an unchecked market in which dangerous drugs could be purchased by anyone, including children. At issue was Act 629's prohibition of hemp products like Delta 8 and Delta 9, which have been known to have adverse health effects on users, particularly children. These substances are often packaged to mimic popular candy and other snacks, making it easy to fall into the hands of children. While the federal judge's preliminary injunction was in place, we were unable to enforce the law."

"Bio Gen claimed that Act 629's prohibition of such products violated provisions of the 2018 Farm Bill. But the Eighth Circuit agreed with me and determined that 'there is no support for this argument in the text or structure of the 2018 Farm Bill.'"

"I am grateful to Senior Assistant Attorney General Jordan Broyles, Senior Assistant Solicitor General Asher Steinberg, and many others in my office who have worked tirelessly on this case to protect Arkansans from these harmful substances."

"Today's win could not have been possible without the advocacy and work by Governor

Sanders and her staff along with State Representative Jimmy Gazaway and State Senator Tyler Dees. They championed this legislation to protect Arkansans, and it passed with overwhelming supermajorities in both the House and Senate."

Sanders provided the following statement:

"Today's win is a huge victory for the safety of every Arkansan — and especially our kids. Dangerous, unregulated synthetic marijuana products like Delta-8 have no place in our state, and today's ruling allows our ban on them to go into effect. I'm thankful to Senator Dees and Representative Gazaway for passing this law and Attorney General Griffin and his team for vigorously defending it in federal court."

Dees added the following statement:

"This law has always been about protecting our children and the rest of society from a growing problem related to Delta 8 and other THC products. I co-sponsored this law to help solve that problem. We can no longer allow the profits of those who peddle these products to take priority over our kids' protection."

Gazaway added the following statement:

"These products are essentially recreational marijuana, and I am glad the court confirmed the state's ability to ban them. Before our law, there was no regulation, no oversight, and no protections for consumers. Today's ruling is a victory for Arkansans."

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