

The

Murfreesboro Diamond

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USPC 103-230

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Benefit set for former Delight resident

DELIGHT -- A prayer circle and benefit for Stephanie Cox-Ivy will be held on Sunday, Aug. 24, at the Delight School cafeteria beginning at 12:15, immediately following church services.

The menu will consist of spaghetti (regular or chicken), salad, bread, dessert and a drink. Take out will be available.

Event organizers ask that the community join to support Cox-Ivy on her cancer journey.

She has had multiple surgeries, suffered from sepsis, been on a wound vac and has a colostomy bag. She has developed a high output fistula which makes it difficult to leave her home.

Stephanie is on IV nutrition for 16 hours per day to help with hydration. She will have test in September to determine if she is cancer free. If her scans are clear, she will have another major surgery.

There will also be an online auction in the days prior as well.

"Most of all, come together with us as we pray for Stephanie and her journey," said the event realase.

If you would like to help in any way, please contact Celeste May, Pam Hayward or Carrie Tidwell. There is an account at the Bank of Delight for Stephanie's benefit.

"Although Stephanie has moved from our community, let's remember the countless hours she has selflessly volunteered helping with community events. She has been a Teen Group leader at the Delight First Missionary Baptist Church, Delight Cemetery Dinner volunteer, local benefits and fundraiser helper, community supporter, all sports bookkeeper, original Prom Promise organizer, class sponsor, homecoming coordinator, carnival worker and the ultimate Bulldog and Rattler fan. Now she needs our help. This is a great time for our community and those she has helped to repay generosity and kindness."



Submitted photo/Alan McRae

**LAKE GREESON RESIDENTIAL FIRE ...** A residential fire complete consumed a residence on Lake Greeson last Sunday. According to Fire Chief Ricky Branch, the Murfreesboro Fire Department would like to thank the Nathan, Bingen and Delight Fire Departments for their assistance, as well as all the neighboring individuals that provided the firefighters with liquid refreshment during the especially hot temperatures that day.

Delight cemetery board to hold public meeting

DELIGHT -- A meeting of the Delight Cemetery Association is scheduled for Tuesday, Sept. 2 at 6:30 pm at the Delight Cafeteria.

This meeting is open to the public and the association encourages all persons interested to come and support the on-going care of the cemetery and also offer any suggestions that they might have.

Fire engulfs home on Greeson Sunday

LAKE GREESON -- A home that has become somewhat of a landmark on the south end of Lake Greeson was completely destroyed by fire the afternoon of Sunday, Aug. 17, according to Murfreesboro Fire & Rescue Department Chief Ricky Branch.

Branch said the fire department arrived at the scene on Lake Village Drive, located on the hillside point of the cove across from Swaha Marina, around 3:30 p.m. and fought the fire

for more than five hours. He said the department's response time was around 23 minutes and involved loaded tanker trucks and personnel having to navigate Dynamite Hill and the winding roads that lead to the lake estates.

The local department was assisted by firefighters from Murfreesboro, Bingen, Nathan and Delight, as well as many who brought water and Gatorade to the scene. "We simply can't thank them enough," Branch said, adding that the scene was literally littered with hundreds of empty bottles.

Branch said that upon arrival firefighters first had to deal with a nearby home's roof that was smoldering and the grassfires spreading on the point. "Once we had that under control, we went on the defense to contain the fire."

"This fire was very challenging and difficult, given the heat and being on a hillside with little access and limited water supply, but with everyone's help we were able to contain it and keep it from spreading to other homes," Branch said in a social media post.

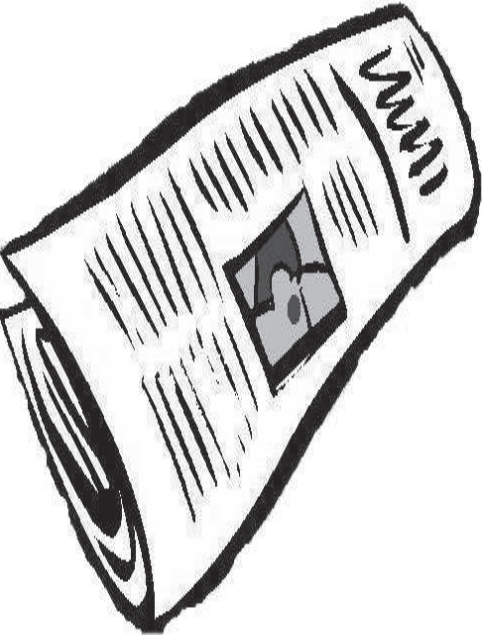
The home is owned by the Neece family of Texas, who Branch said were out on the north end of the lake when they received word their home was on fire. The family's pet dog perished in the fire, according to the fire chief.



Extension to host leader training classes

On Aug. 21-22 at the U of A Cossatot Campus in De Queen, the University of Arkansas Extension Service will hold training classes for anyone interested in leading an Extension GetFit class in their workplace/church/community.

Please call the Pike County office at (870) 285-2161 for more information.



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Rattlers hold Red-White game, to scrimmage Ashdown Friday

MURFREESBORO -- Following Friday's Red-White scrimmage, Rattler head coach Jay Turley was pleased with the team's effort.

"It was good to see what they could do when they went full out," he noted, stating that the scrimmage provided more intensity than a regular practice. "We saw some good things and some things we need to work on."

He said the team would review the film ahead of their scrimmage this week versus Ashdown.

"You still expect to see mistakes at this point," he reasoned, noting that some of the positives from the scrimmage included good pass blocking by the offensive line.

He credited QB Kooper Caldwell with good decision making and passing, and said WR Caleb Terrell showed good catching skills at the scrimmage in his opportunity to fill in for injured starting WR Kale Burns.

He added the receiving corps still needed to shore up their route running in the next week.

Turley said the defense played well until they tired in the hot and humid conditions on Friday night that was only exacerbated by the short rain prior to play began.

"Cameron Braden was a force on the line," he said of the defensive lineman's effort.

RATTLERS Continued on Page 2



Staff Photo

**BREAKING A TACKLE ...** Rattler wide receiver Caleb Terrell looks to move downfield following a catch at the Red-White scrimmage Friday.



# RATTLERS

## Continued from Page 1

Overall, he was proud of the team’s effort to “compete under the lights in front of people and step up their level of competition.”

While the format had yet to be officially finalized for Friday’s scrimmage versus Ashdown, Turley said he expected that it might look like a half of football and then a “controlled second half featuring JV players” depending on the game time temperatures.

“It will be nice to not be hitting each other this week,” Turley said of the upcoming scrimmage.

He said Ashdown was chosen specifically for their overall team speed, something that would help the Rattlers down the road.

“I think we are fast for a 2A team, but Ashdown is a 4A team, and that’s another level of speed.”

Turley said the experience against the Panthers would help the team down the road against the likes of Junction City and Gurdon.

“It will be good to get adjusted to [the speed] now.”

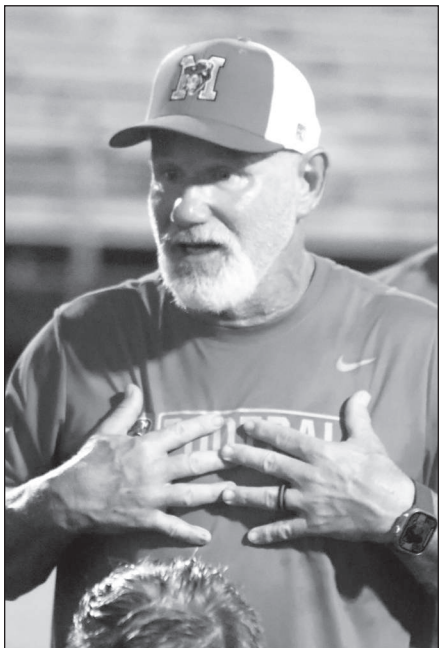
He said outside of the experience the team would gain in the scrimmage he simply hoped to come out of the contest “without injuries.”

“We will look to execute or base offense, but it will be very vanilla,” he said in reference to not going deep in the playbook. “We will just go out and do what we do best ... I just want to get better, I don’t care at all about the score.”

The junior high Rattlers will start their scrimmage at 5:30, while the high school will begin at 7 p.m. this Friday at Rattler Stadium.

“It would be nice to see the community come out to support us,” Turley said, noting that he expected Ashdown to bring a number of fans to the contest.

As a benefit scrimmage game, much of the gate receipts will go to the Arkansas Athletic Association’s catastrophic insurance program.



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

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NOTICE OF SALE

The Murfreesboro Water Department is requesting sealed bids for the sale of a 2007 GMC Sierra 4.8-liter V8 long wheel base white 1/2 ton work truck, mileage 137,460. Sealed bids must be received by delivery to 204 East Main Street or by mail to:

Murfreesboro Water Department  
Attn: Sealed bids  
P.O. Box 271  
Murfreesboro, AR. 71958

no later then August 29, 2005 by 4:30 p.m. Sealed bids submitted will be opened on September 2, 20025. The Murfreesboro Water Department reserves the right to reject any and all bids. Any questions may be directed to Murfreesboro Water Office or (870) 285-2655.

This publication was paid for by the Murfreesboro Water and Sewer Department. The amount paid for this publication is \$57.15 (m.w.d., 127w, 6,7)

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# Serving the fourth district of Arkansas an honor

BY BRUCE WESTERMAN  
U.S. House of Representatives (AR-04)

WASHINGTON -- Representing the Fourth District of Arkansas in Congress is the honor of a lifetime, and the ability to bring the voices of friends, family, and neighbors to Washington is certainly a privilege that will never be taken for granted. While the work in Washington certainly never ends, so do cumbersome federal issues that constituents face. This is why there are several representatives across the Fourth District from my office who are ready and eager to help with any problems our constituents may be facing.

Navigating the federal government can be cumbersome and certainly feel overwhelming. With the endless federal red tape and often delayed responses, our office is equipped to navigate these issues and work directly with the folks who need help. Regardless of what your issue may be: trouble renewing a passport, waiting on a tax refund, trouble with Social Security or healthcare benefits, and more – we’ve got your back.

Recently, one of my casework representatives was able to walk a constituent through a particularly challenging time as she was facing issues with her Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI). After a lot of patience and dedicated work, my staff was able to get the results that were desperately needed.

In a kind follow-up, my office received a letter of gratitude which said, “I want to extend my heartfelt thanks for all the support and guidance you’ve given me through the Congressman’s office regarding my SSDI case. Your kindness, patience, and dedication truly made a difference during a difficult time in my life. It means more than words can say to have someone not only understand the process but care enough to walk alongside me through it. Your help didn’t go unnoticed—and it won’t be forgotten.”

These kind words serve as an excellent reminder that at the core of our commitment to the people of the Fourth District of Arkansas is the unwavering determination to serve with compassion, dedication, and empathy. My staff is also proud to serve their community, and we look forward to every opportunity to deliver results for our neighbors with the kindness, patience, and dedication that were so kindly mentioned in this constituent’s response.

If you find that you are facing challenges with a federal agency, please don’t hesitate to contact my Hot Springs office at (501) 609-9796. It cannot be expressed enough how much of an honor it is to represent the Fourth District of Arkansas. Taking care of constituents is a responsibility not taken lightly, and it is encouraging to know that our office is well-equipped to serve and assist in any way possible.



Staff photo

**SUPPORTING THE RATTTLERS ...** South Pike County students are pictured on the sideline during last week’s Red-White scrimmage.

## Faith-based groups improve state’s children and family services

STATE CAPITOL WEEK IN REVIEW  
Senator Steve Crowell

LITTLE ROCK – The director of the state Division of Children and Family Services told lawmakers that much of the agency’s improvements in recent years is due to greater involvement on the part of faith-based groups, churches and private sector organizations.

For example, CarePortal is a program that the Arkansas Family Alliance uses to recruit volunteers, churches and potential foster care families. When the director of the Division of Children and Family Services (DCFS) described CarePortal, several legislators expressed interest and asked how to promote the program in their districts.

The division director said the program is operating in five of the largest counties in Arkansas, and the agency is working to add four more.

DCFS also partners with the state Health Department on a program titled “Baby and Me” for families who receive benefits through Women, Infants and Children, or WIC. It teaches parenting skills to mothers and fathers of newborns.

In late June it expanded from 15 to 18 counties. Lessons can be as simple as how to breastfeed. They’re designed to reduce the stress of parenting and thus to prevent possible abuse or neglect. There is no cost to the family.

The director of DCFS, alongside the Secretary of the Department of Human Services, updated the legislative Hospital, Medicaid and Developmental Disabilities Subcommittee. Legislators were so interested that the committee co-chairs plan to invite

leaders of CarePortal and several other private organizations to next month’s meeting.

DCFS now uses evidence-based prevention services, and one result has been that the re-victimization rate for children remains low, at 7 percent. That is better than the national average.

From 2022 to 2024 the number of children in foster care decreased by 971 children. As of July 1, 2025, there were 3,390 children and youths in Arkansas foster care homes.

DCFS has more than 1,000 employees and the agency “continues to experience significant challenges with staff turnover,” the director told legislators. However, it is better than a few years ago when turnover among frontline staff was 60 percent to 70 percent. Since 2022 the turnover rate has improved by 19 percent, the director said.

Maintaining appropriate staffing levels has enabled the agency to lower case loads to an average of 17 cases per employee. In the recent past the work load has been significantly higher, which has negatively affected case management. For example, when the agency opens a case, family services workers are supposed to complete their findings and schedule regular visits to the home. High caseloads make it difficult to make scheduled visits on time.

Of all the children who went through the foster care system last year, 43 percent were reunited with their parents or a close caregiver. Another 30 percent were adopted, either by foster parents, by a relative or by families recruited by DCFS.

The agency has a budget of \$261 million this year. Of that, \$81.5 million is for salaries and benefits of staff. About \$70 million is for room and board for children in the system. The state pays foster families, relatives and others with whom foster children are placed.

About \$59 million is for contracts for services such as mental health counseling, therapy, substance abuse treatment and prevention and teaching parenting skills.

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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: How important is dietary fiber?**

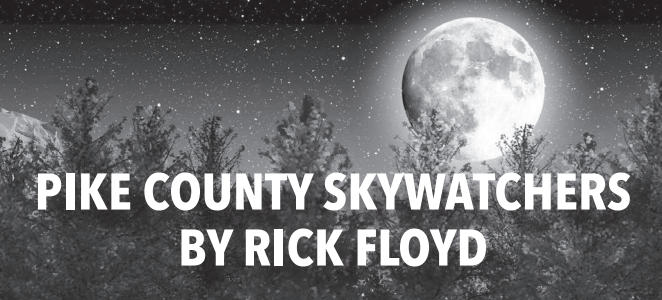
**A:** Fiber is a carbohydrate found mostly in plant foods such as beans, fruits, whole grains and vegetables. The body cannot digest fiber, so it passes through the digestive system mostly intact. Foods high in fiber are more filling, so you are more likely to stay satisfied longer. Fiber is important for improving blood sugar levels, regulating bowel movements, lowering cholesterol, and controlling weight.

The two types of fiber are soluble and insoluble. Soluble fiber can be dissolved in water and slows digestion, taking the body longer to absorb glucose and preventing blood sugar spikes. Apples, beans and oat bran are sources of soluble fiber. Insoluble fiber cannot be dissolved in water and helps move material through the

digestive system, adds bulk to stools and aids in preventing constipation. Sources of insoluble fiber include green beans, cauliflower and potatoes.

Possible complications of a low-fiber diet include high blood pressure, colorectal cancer, Type 2 diabetes, heart disease and obesity.

It is best to consume fiber through food, but fiber supplements may be an option. See your health care provider if you have questions, particularly if you’re considering making changes to your diet and you have health conditions that require consideration.



**PIKE COUNTY SKYWATCHERS  
BY RICK FLOYD**

## Astronomy popularity on rise since covid pandemic

The brightest objects in the sky as dawn approaches continues to be the Moon, Venus and Jupiter. The two planets get a little further apart each day, and on 20 and 21 August they will be joined by the Moon, by then a thin waning crescent.

During the Covid lock-down astronomy became one of the fastest growing hobbies in the U.S. Its popularity has not waned as increasing numbers of people become observers on some level. Getting started is not difficult or expensive because all that is needed is a reclining camp chair or a blanket and time. Binoculars are not an expensive addition and may be all that is required equipment wise (10 x 50, or slightly larger astronomical ones 11 x 70 or so work fine).

Across the country so called star parties are held to let amateur astronomers and any interested public gather and have observing sessions. Such events are good ways to become familiar with the night sky but also with the different kinds of optical equipment available. The Arkansas Natural Sky Association (ANSA) will host the 4th Annual Dark-Sky Festival on 19 and 20 September on the Buffalo River, Arkansas’ only International Dark-Sky Park. They will have activities during the day including guest speakers and nature walks. During the night, of course, there will be some good astronomy going on. Check out their web-site for more details and registration information.

The “mysterious” interstellar object dubbed 3iAtlas continues to zip across the Solar System headed eventually to deep space. So far it is not coming our way and does not appear to be an alien spacecraft. If it changes course suddenly and heads toward Earth then that would be a hint that maybe we were wrong. I was not correct a few articles ago about its speed, having written that it was moving about 15,000 miles per hour. Estimates are that it is traveling at a rate of 130,000 or more miles per hour.



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## ARDOT launches curriculum to improve road habits for students

The Arkansas Department of Transportation (ARDOT) is set to launch road education and safety curriculum for the 2025-2026 school year called “Street Smart” – the first program of its kind in Arkansas.

The goal of the program is to instill proper road safety habits in students before they begin operating a vehicle, and then to reinforce these skills through their early driving years.

Initially, Street Smart will be taught to sixth through eighth grade students in Arkansas. The future plans include building Street Smart curriculum into a kindergarten through 12th grade road safety education program.

The curriculum was developed by ARDOT in partnership with the Arkansas Department of Education (ADE), which included a panel of Arkansas teachers and instructors who reviewed the curriculum to ensure all materials are in line with state education standards.

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# PIKE COUNTY EXTENSION

EVA LANGLEY, FAMILY AND CONSUMER SCIENCES AGENT  
FAMILY • NUTRITION • FOOD SAFETY • FINANCE • FITNESS & HEALTH

## The science of happiness: choosing to notice the good in each day

In recent years, researchers who study the science of happiness and well-being have identified key principles that can help individuals lead more fulfilling lives. Their findings point to a simple yet powerful truth: choosing to focus on what is positive, good, and meaningful in your life — past, present, and future — creates happiness and forms the foundation of lasting well-being.

Experts describe well-being as a structure. The foundation is built by focusing on the good in life, the walls are formed by knowing and using your strengths, and the roof is completed by serving others. This week, I will focus on the first happiness principle: noticing and appreciating the good in each day. According to research, people who regularly seek out the good in their lives are not only happier but also more productive and accomplished.

Many people believe their emotions are tied to daily circumstances. If a day brings frustration, disappointment, or stress, they assume feeling unhappy is inevitable. However, studies show that the happiest people aren't happier because they have easier lives — they are happier because they've learned to recognize and appreciate the good, even in difficult times.

So, how can you practice this principle today to make your day more enjoyable and meaningful? Start small. Here are a few simple ways to shift your focus toward the positive:

1. Close your eyes and picture something you've already enjoyed today.
2. Take a walk, paying attention to the beauty of nature and your surroundings.
3. Look around your home and appreciate items that hold special meaning.
4. Think of people who enrich your life and reflect on the ways they bless you.
5. Begin a gratitude journal and write down at least two good things that happened today.
6. In the morning, look ahead and anticipate positive moments in your schedule.
7. At day's end, review both the ordinary and difficult parts of your day to find hidden benefits.
8. Call a friend and share something that brought you joy.
9. Celebrate the successes and happiness of those around you.
10. Don't let daily irritations block your view of the positive.

By practicing these habits, you train your brain to replace negative thinking with more constructive, uplifting thoughts. Over time, this intentional focus on the good leads not only to greater personal happiness but also to stronger relationships and increased productivity. Happiness is not just a feeling — it's a choice. And that choice begins with noticing and appreciating what's good about today.

This week's recipe is one that guarantees a smile. Partly because of its name – Snickerdoodles! Are you smiling yet? If not, get to cooking. Simple ingredients. Simple instructions. Simple goodness. Enjoy!

Preheat the oven to 375°F. Line 2 baking sheets with parchment paper.

In a large bowl, whisk together the flour, cream of tartar, baking soda, and salt until thoroughly combined. Set aside.

In a separate bowl, combine butter, brown sugar, and 1¼ cups of the granulated sugar. Beat on medium-high speed until light and fluffy then add the eggs, 1 at a time, on medium speed. Add the vanilla. With the mixer on low speed, slowly add the dry ingredients and beat until combined.

In a medium bowl, whisk together the cinnamon and the remaining 6 tablespoons granulated sugar. Using a 2-tablespoon cookie scoop, form balls of dough and gently roll them in the cinnamon sugar, coating generously. Transfer to the prepared baking sheets, spacing the dough balls about 3 inches apart.

Bake until puffed and just barely set in the center, 8 to 10 minutes (the cookies will continue to set as they cool). Let the cookies cool on the baking sheets for 5 minutes before transferring them to wire racks to cool completely.

## M'boro tourism commission works toward ATV trail grants

MURFREESBORO – The Murfreesboro Advertising and Tourism met last week with a very short agenda, with the only action taken was the passage of the minutes and financials from July's meeting.

Boardmember Caleb Howell gave a short update on the recent diamond find by a New York resident's diamond find that was featured in last week's paper.

As of July 31, the commission has \$65,164.30 in their coffers.

Commission chairman Jamie Terrell told the newspaper after the meeting that the group was in the process of filling out paperwork for matching grants for local ATV trails.

At the July 8 meeting the group hosted Becky Flynn, the Deputy Director of the state Office of Outdoor Recreation and Susie Cowan, Industry Relations Manager for the Arkansas Parks, Heritage and Tourism office.

After presenting some of their ideas for ATV trails locally that would include some county roads, the group was told of existing matching grant opportunities for rural road recreation.

The group also decided at that meeting to develop a plan including definitive streets and roads that would be used in a ATV trail plan. It was also noted that a partnership with the Corps of Engineers would be necessary for access to land around Lake Gresson.

## Great summers in Arkansas' great outdoors

BY JOHN BOOZMAN  
*U.S. Senator, Arkansas*

Our state's natural beauty, framed by stunning landscapes, majestic mountains, rolling national forests and rivers and diverse wildlife, often reminds us how blessed we are that Mother Nature favors Arkansas.

These stunning features make The Natural State an excellent destination for Americans and people from all around the world who are interested in connecting with nature and enjoying the outdoors. From hiking and camping, mountain biking and fishing to duck hunting, Arkansas is truly the ideal location for outdoor enthusiasts.

Our home has earned national recognition for its offerings, such as its elite cycling trails that have earned Bentonville's crown as the mountain biking capital of the world and Stuttgart's pristine habitats that make it the "Duck Capital of the World." The Crater of Diamonds State Park is the only site in the United States where visitors can mine for diamonds – and keep what they find – while Hot Springs National Park boasts one-of-a-kind historic bathhouses filled with thermal waters heated deep underground.

While our state offers a wide variety of recreational outdoor activities year-round, it especially shines in summer.

Arkansans and their families enjoy fishing or kayaking down the country's first national river, the Buffalo National River, and our plethora of national and state forests, such as the Ozark-St. Francis National Forest and the Ouachita National Forest, welcome camping, bird watching, hunting and hiking.

In addition to the variety of sporting activities, Natural State residents also look forward to fun, time-honored August traditions like the City of Hope's Watermelon Festival. During these family-oriented, community-based gatherings, families, friends and communities look forward to good food, good music and good times together.

The City of Hope's Watermelon Festival, founded in the 1920s, continues the tradition of serving ice-cold watermelon and treats to thousands of festivalgoers over the course of three days. It also holds a special place among the Arkansas political scene as current and hopeful officeholders face off in an eating contest for bragging rights that doubles as entertainment for their amused constituents.

Both annual summer events, among many others statewide, are highlights for anyone looking to enjoy our state's strong spirit of community that extends to longtime neighbors and visitors alike. Enjoying time with one another is an important component of fostering connection and the feeling of belonging while supporting small businesses and bolstering our state's local economies.

Our state is fortunate to share its wonderful landscapes and traditions with people across Arkansas and the country to enjoy. We can easily take pride in our commitment to connect people to each other and the outdoors, all while encouraging all Arkansans to cherish The Natural State's treasures for generations to come.

RECIPE OF THE WEEK: SNICKERDOODLES

Ingredients:  
2 3/4 cups all-purpose flour  
2 tsp. cream of tartar  
1 tsp. baking soda  
1/2 tsp. kosher salt  
1 cup (2 sticks) salted butter, at room temperature  
1/4 cup light brown sugar  
1 1/2 cups plus 2 Tbsp. granulated sugar  
2 large eggs  
1 1/2 tsp. vanilla extract  
2 Tbsp. ground cinnamon, for rolling

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THURSDAY, AUGUST 21

Breakfast: French toast sticks or cereal, fruit, juice, milk  
Lunch: Chicken tenders, mashed potatoes, peas & carrots, whole grain roll, peaches, milk  
7-12 line 2 option- Beef fingers

FRIDAY, AUGUST 22

Breakfast: Blueberry muffin or cereal, fruit, juice, milk  
Lunch: Spaghetti w/ meat sauce, salad, green beans, garlic breadsticks, mixed fruit, milk  
7-12 line 2 option- Popcorn chicken

MONDAY, AUGUST 25

Breakfast: Super donut or cereal, fruit, juice, milk  
Lunch: Chicken sandwich, potato smiles, lettuce, tomato, 7-12 onion & pickle slices, pears, milk

7-12 line 2 option - Cheeseburger

TUESDAY, AUGUST 26

Breakfast: Chicken biscuit or cereal, fruit, juice, milk  
Lunch: Taco salad w/ cheese, refried beans, lettuce, tomato, salsa, pineapple, milk  
7-12 line 2 option- Chicken fajitas

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 27

Breakfast: Mini pancakes or cereal, fruit, juice, milk  
Lunch: Salisbury steak, mashed potatoes, black eyed peas, cornbread muffin, peaches, milk  
7-12 line 2 option - Chicken nuggets

\*Due to food item shortages menus are subject to change without notice. Any changes to the menu will be posted on the website at [www.rattlers.org](http://www.rattlers.org)

MURFREESBORO SENIOR ADULT CENTER LUNCH MENU

MONDAY, AUGUST 25

Chicken pot pie, green beans, salad, dinner roll, peach cobbler

TUESDAY, AUGUST 26

Ham & beans, baked sweet potato, turnip greens, cornbread, fruit


WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 27

Cabbage casserole, black eyed peas, yellow squash, cornbread, cookie

Lunch served at 11:30 a.m. For more information (870) 285-2312. Open Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday at 8 a.m. Carry out is now available for \$6.00

‘Dear Preacher’

By Buddy Ray, Murfreesboro Church of Christ



THE HEARING OF FAITH  
O foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you that you should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ was clearly portrayed among you as crucified? This only I want to learn from you: Did you receive the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? Galatians 3:1-2

There is a way of hearing the gospel that will lead you to the Lord. There is a way of listening that will lead you away from the truth. Everyone has some concept of what the Bible teaches. Our own understanding of the Holy Scriptures is based upon what we perceive to be the truth about our soul's salvation. The hearing that will save is the heart listening to God's will, no

you sinners; and purify your hearts you double-minded. James 4:7,8

Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord and He will lift you up. James 4:10

Therefore, to him that knows to do good, and does not do it, to him it is sin. James 4:17

Paul and James insist by inspiration that the hearing of faith involves paying clear attention to God's revealed will and being faithfully obedient to it. To do less is sin. To do more is also rebellious. If you are a child of God, continue to grow in God's grace and truth. If you are not a child of God, be born again of water and the Spirit. Repent and be baptized for the remission of your sins and God will cleanse you and add you to His Church. (Acts 2:38-47).

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matter how it agrees or disagrees with our own convictions. The hearing of faith is completely in agreement with what God commands us to do to be saved. We are to obey God rather than men. (Acts 5:29)

Therefore, submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. Draw near to God and he will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands

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Facts About The BIBLE

BY JOHN LEHTI

This is a dramatized version of facts taken from the Book of Genesis intending to show some of the customs of these ancient and traditional times.

ABRAM IN EGYPT

THE LAND TO WHICH ABRAM HAS COME IS STRICKEN WITH SEVERE FAMINE, SO NOW HE TURNS SOUTHWARD IN THE DIRECTION OF EGYPT...

...AND SO HE TRAVELS RESOLUTELY TO THE SOUTH....

...FOR HE HAS BEEN TOLD THAT THERE IS PLENTY OF FOOD FOR BOTH MAN AND BEAST IN THE LAND OF THE PHAROAHS....

...AND, SURE ENOUGH, ON REACHING THE OUTSKIRTS OF THE COUNTRY OF THE Nile, HE CAN SEE THE EVIDENCE OF ABUNDANT FOOD ALL AROUND....

...BUT NOW HE BEGINS TO THINK WITH CAUTION....

FOR HE HAS HEARD THAT THE RULERS OF THIS LAND ARE ALL-POWERFUL! THEY CAN BE GRACIOUS HOSTS OR, IF IT SUITS THEIR PURPOSE, THEY CAN BE CRUEL AND VICIOUS TO ALL THOSE LIVING IN THEIR COUNTRY!

Next Week IN CASE OF TROUBLE!

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- FOOTBALL**  
\* -- *Theme Related Clue*

**ACROSS**  
1. \*The Coaches \_\_\_\_ or The AP Top 25 \_\_\_\_  
5. \*Super Bowl halftime performer Kendrick Lamar’s genre  
8. 1/168th of a week  
12. Purse to match a gown  
13. Karl of politics  
14. Model builder’s wood choice  
15. \*YDS, TD or INT  
16. Black like certain tree  
17. \*Last season’s NFL MVP  
18. \*Worth 6 points  
20. Way, way off  
21. Owl cries  
22. Come and \_\_\_\_ it  
23. Ape  
26. Stucco or aluminum on a house wall, pl.  
30. “Wheel of Fortune” request  
31. Bette Green’s “Summer of my \_\_\_\_ Sol-dier”  
34. Stag, not doe  
35. Like an uncomfortable mattress  
37. European Economic Community  
38. \*NFL Hall of Famer Greene or comedian Hart  
39. Seed coat  
40. Cylindrical flower cluster  
42. Stir or fuss  
43. City in Illinois  
45. #10 Down’s counterpart  
47. Small dog’s bark  
48. Adams of “Summer Of ‘69” fame  
50. \*Point value of a safety in football, pl.  
52. \*Worth 3 points in football (2 words)  
56. Behind a stern  
57. Raise the roof  
58. Classroom parasites  
59. Bloopers  
60. Actor and singer Kristofferson  
61. Some are slippery  
62. Scraps
63. Ballpark fig.  
64. Dark loaves

**DOWN**  
1. Bothersome one  
2. \*Pro and College Football Hall of Famer Graham  
3. Molokai party  
4. Leechee, alt. sp.  
5. R2-D2, e.g.  
6. Declares to be true  
7. \*College, home to football’s Nittany Lions  
8. \*Football intermission  
9. Paella pot  
10. Addict  
11. \*What the NFL’s Jim Brown famously did  
13. Fixed up  
14. Bleated  
19. Hoagie, alt. sp.  
22. Bathtub hooch  
23. Green side  
24. Accustom  
25. Imitate  
26. \*Quarterback’s downfall  
27. The N of U.S.N.A.  
28. Move smoothly  
29. Mister in Madrid  
32. \_\_\_\_-view mirror  
33. What Harry and Sally did  
36. \*Pre-championship games  
38. Work the dough  
40. High tea vessel  
41. Bucolics  
44. Gustatory sensation  
46. Hook, line and sinker person  
48. Coffin holders  
49. Rekindled  
50. Type of ski lift  
51. Drift like aroma  
52. Type of fish net  
53. Like acne-prone skin  
54. Climber’s destination  
55. It’s more, to some  
56. Don McLean: “A long, long time \_\_\_\_.”

CROSSWORD

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# Chinese national arrested for trafficking women to Hot Springs massage parlors

LITTLE ROCK – Attorney General Tim Griffin issued the following statement announcing the arrest of Zengguang “Gary” Liu in connection to human trafficking operations in Hot Springs:

“Earlier this week, following a lengthy investigation by my Special Investigations Division, Zengguang Liu was taken into custody by the U.S. Marshals Service and the Oklahoma City Police Department, and agents from my office served warrants on him in Oklahoma City. Liu is a naturalized U.S. citizen from China, and he owns and operates multiple illicit massage businesses in Hot Springs.

“On July 28, agents from my office raided three illicit massage businesses in Hot Springs: AI Massage, Magic Massage, and Diamond Massage. These raids were part of our ongoing ‘Operation Obscured Vision,’ which began in January. Three female victims, all Chinese nationals, were provided services following these most recent raids. Information gathered during the raids indicated that Liu was the owner of all three businesses and likely owned other such establishments elsewhere in the country.

“Thanks to the outstanding assistance of the U.S. Marshals Service, the Oklahoma City Police Department, and Oklahoma Attorney General Gentner Drummond, we were able to track Liu and take him into custody. He is facing charges in Garland County of trafficking of persons, an A Felony, and unauthorized use of another person’s property to facilitate certain crimes, a B Felony.

“In addition to gathering information that led us to the owner of the establishments, we seized about \$16,000 in cash, including currency from China and four other foreign countries. We also obtained valuable information about how these establishments work and how the victims, who are forced to work as sex slaves, are being lured and transported to the United States. One victim explained that she responded to a social media video in China promising work in America. She reported that she spent her entire life savings to fly to Turkey, where she was given a visa and

put on a cruise ship bound for Mexico. Once in Mexico, she told our investigators, she walked across the border into the United States as part of a caravan of migrants and then claimed asylum after being detained by U.S. Border Patrol. She was recruited for illicit massage work by a friend in southern California and eventually was sent to Hot Springs.

“Another victim gave an almost identical story, and the third said she responded to an ad on a website in China and was sent to Los Angeles, where she also claimed asylum. She worked first in Los Angeles and Seattle before being brought to Hot Springs.

“As part of our operation in Hot Springs on July 28, two customers at separate massage businesses were detained, questioned, and released.

“The pattern here is clear, and it matches the intelligence and reports we have heard from federal partners and law enforcement agencies across the country. Criminals based in China have gained a firm business foothold in the United States with illicit massage businesses. They recruit vulnerable women from China with promises of making better money in America than they can at home, and once the victims are lured here, they’re trapped and forced to work as prostitutes.

“Law enforcement agencies across the country are dealing with this issue to varying degrees, but here in Arkansas, I am committed to rooting out this repulsive practice and holding these criminals accountable.

“I am grateful for and tremendously proud of the tireless work of my investigators. I am also immensely grateful to Michelle

Lawrence, Prosecuting Attorney for the Eighteenth Judicial District East; the Hot Springs Police Department; Arkansas State Police; Homeland Security Investigations, U.S. Department of Homeland Security; the Little Rock Police Department; the U.S. Marshals Service; the Oklahoma City Police Department; the Oklahoma Office of the Attorney General; and Into the Light, a victim-services organization.”

**BACKGROUND ON OPERATION OBSCURED VISION**

Operation Obscured Vision launched on January 23, 2025, with coordinated raids on illicit massage businesses in Harrison, Hot Springs, Jonesboro, Little Rock, Rogers, and Russellville. Subsequent raids have been executed in Hot Springs on May 22 and July 28. A total of 13 illicit massage businesses have been served with search warrants, and to date there have been seven arrests with two active warrants still outstanding. Six of the arrested individuals are Chinese nationals, three of whom are naturalized U.S. citizens.

Arrest warrants have been issued and are outstanding for Junfang Li, 53, a Chinese national, and Yuanbo Xi, 53, a Chinese national. It is believed that both Li and Xi have fled the country.

Twenty-three victims have been identified, with 22 accepting services. All of the victims have been Chinese nationals.

More than \$107,000 in cash has been seized in the raids, most of which is American dollars, but currency from China, Turkey, Thailand, Mexico, the United Arab Emirates, and Serbia has also been seized.

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PIKE COUNTY – Central Arkansas Development Council (CADC) will distribute USDA Commodities County Wednesday, Aug. 20, and Thursday, Aug. 21. Distribution will begin at 8:30 am.

In Pike County, commodities will be distributed at the following locations:

- Glenwood Senior Activity Center, 229 Betty St., Glenwood

Murfreesboro Senior Activity Center, 120 East Court, Suite A, Murfreesboro

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Week of August 18, 2025

5



# Spring bumper hay crop followed by dry late summer in Arkansas

**BY MARY HIGHTOWER**  
*U of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture*

LITTLE ROCK — Arkansas is expected to harvest more hay over more acres this year than last, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

In its August Crop Production report, the National Agricultural Statistics Service said it expected Arkansas to harvest 1.26 million acres of non-alfalfa hay in 2025, up from 1.23 million acres in 2024. The estimated yield for 2025 was 3.024 million tons up from 2.583 million tons last year.

A rainy spring led to a bumper crop in Arkansas, said Jonathan Kubesch, extension forage specialist for the University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture.

“Spring was very wet across Arkansas and a lot of fields were cut later for the cool-season grasses, and earlier for warm-season grasses,” he said.

“Delaying harvest timing increased the amount of hay present when it finally came time to cut,” Kubesch said. “A lot of fields had a lot of quantity, and in some places, quality was higher than expected. We appear to be accumulating hay in spring and not using up that supply in the fall or winter over the past two years.”

However, it’s not all smooth sailing for hay growers as Arkansas was facing increasingly drier conditions though late July and early August.

**DRYING OUT**

Thursday’s U.S. Drought Monitor map showed the mildest drought conditions over 3.76 percent of Arkansas, while 64.79 percent of the state was listed as abnormally dry. Three months ago, none of the state was rated as abnormally dry or in drought.

“We find ourselves in a dry spell in pastures and hayfields,” said Jonathan Kubesch, extension forage specialist for the Division of Agriculture.

“Bermudagrass stem maggot and armyworms are cutting into what’s out there,” he said. “Hay inventory and quality are sufficient this year from earlier cuts. However, pasture condi-

tion has really deteriorated in the last week to 10 days.”

Kubesch said “good, cheap hay and dry weather may lead some folks to feed rather than try to stockpile or plant annuals around Labor Day.

“However, now is the time to be proactive: monitor pasture condition and avoid overgrazing. Leave a 4-inch stubble and keep the stand,” he said. “Rationing remaining pasture will be important if we stay in drought.”

Kubesch also said that now is the time to identify the best areas to feed hay.

“Low fertility areas or weaker pastures can be used as sacrifice lots and then renovated when rain eventually comes,” he said.

**PRUSSIC ACID AND NITRATES**

In addition to affecting forage growth, drought can have a

more dangerous effect as stress prompts some plants to accumulate prussic acid or nitrates, which can be deadly to ruminants such as cattle, goats and sheep.

“Sorghum species such as johnsongrass and sorghum-sudangrass might be suspect for prussic acid or nitrate poisoning,” he said.

To develop an integrated drought plan, see MP530, “Drought Management and Recovery for Livestock Systems”. For more information about prussic acid and nitrates in forage, see FSA2069, “Prussic Acid.” And FSA 3024 “Nitrate Poisoning in Cattle.”

To learn about extension programs in Arkansas, contact the Pike County Cooperative Extension Service at (870) 285-2161 or visit [www.uaex.uada.edu](http://www.uaex.uada.edu).

## \$1.3M grant expands job training for Arkansas farmworkers

LITTLE ROCK -- The U.S. Department of Labor’s Employment and Training Administration (DOL/ETA) has awarded \$1.3 million to the Arkansas Human Development Corporation (AHDC) to provide job training, counseling, and support for low-income seasonal and migrant farmworkers across the state.

Through the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, AHDC will cover the cost of assessment, counseling, training, and supportive services to unemployed or underemployed farm workers. Also available is tuition assistance, including books, supplies, transportation, and stipends, to eligible farm workers, their spouses, and dependents. Training opportunities include those offered through community college programs, truck driving, nursing, welding, and more. In addition to general farm la-

bor, eligibility has been expanded to include some jobs in food processing, fisheries, and forestry.

Founded 52 years ago, AHDC is a private non-profit organization with offices throughout Arkansas. The corporation has a strong track record of partnering with public and private training institutions to help clients secure employment. Most AHDC staff are co-located in Arkansas Workforce Centers, ensuring seamless coordination with employers and service providers.

Services are available statewide from July 1, 2025, through September 30, 2026 and be applied for by calling (800) 482-7641 (ext. 0), emailing [lscott@arhdc.org](mailto:lscott@arhdc.org), or visiting [www.arhdc.org](http://www.arhdc.org).

AHDC is an equal opportunity employer and service provider. Veterans continue to receive priority of service.



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