Murfreesboro Diamond

USPC 103-230

Serving South Pike County, Arkansas Since 1975

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Quorum Court passes 2026 budget

MURFEESBORO -- The Pike County Quorum Court passed the 2026 budget in their December meeting.

The measure, which was discussed heavily in November, includes a raise in part-time employees to \$18 an hour to allow the county to compete with other employers for needed

Regular employees will see their "raise" go toward their healthcare premium increases that will jump from \$550 to \$750 per month.

For the five county employees that currently do not take the insurance option, they will receive a monthly stipend of \$400.

"It's a reward ... and those employees [that

don't take the insurance] deserve some benefit. We also need to have it in the [employee] handbook," said Justice of the Peace Paul Baker.

The court thanked County Clerk Randee Edwards for her efforts in securing new insurance, noting that it was "a lot of work."

Anyone that would like to review the 2026 budget in its entirety is invited to do so at the PIke County Clerk's office in Murfreesboro.

Sheriff Travis Hill questioned the passed handbook for 2026 that mandates tighter controls on clocking-in procedures. He said simply that his force was "on call all the time" and time clock rules won't work for his department.

would be made for his office.

2026 QUORUM COURT MEETING DATES Tuesday, January 20 • 6 p.m.

Tuesday, February 17 • 6 p.m.

Monday, March 16 • 7 p.m.

Monday, April 20 • 7 p.m.

Monday, May 18 • 7 p.m. Monday, June 15 • 7 p.m.

Monday, July 20 • 7 p.m. Monday, August 17 • 7 p.m.

Monday, September 21 • 7 p.m.

Monday, October 19 • 7 p.m.

Monday, November 16 • 6 p.m.

The court assured him that concessions Monday, December 21 • 6 p.m.

Crater to host First Day Hike

MURFREESBORO -- The Crater of Diamonds State Park will present a "First Day Hike" on the park's Prospector Trail this Thursday, Jan. 1.

Participants will meet in the parking lot in front of the visitor center prior to 10 a.m. The admission for the event is free. Guests are asked to gather in the parking lot outside the visitor center to be led to the trailhead by a park interpreter.

"What better way to start the new year than with a hike at Crater of Diamonds State Park! This year's guided First Day Hike will take place on the Prospector Trail located in the southwest corner of the diamond search area," said the Crater's website. "Start this year off on the right foot and join us for a #FirstĎayHike!"

The guided hike will take participants around the 1.2 mile gravel path, where their will discover history and geology like diamond miners of the past.

Although the trail is located adjacent to the search area, there will be no diamond searching allowed on January 1 and participants are asked to stay with the group during the hike.

Restrooms will be available before and after the hike, all other park facilities will be closed on January 1 and reopen at 8 a.m. on January 2. For more information, call the park at (870) 285-3113.

program is statewide and Arkansas State Parks encourages Arkansans to start the new year on the right foot with First Day Hikes on Thursday, Jan. 1, welcoming the year outdoors on trails across the state.

First Day Hikes is a nationwide initiative led by America's State Parks that invites visitors to celebrate the new year with time spent outside, focusing on healthy habits, lifelong memories and year-round recreation. The annual event coincides with the start of America's semiquincentennial celebration, marking 250 years of shared history, landscapes and public lands.

"Visiting an Arkansas state park is a great way to get outside, enjoy nature and welcome the new year with family and friends," said Shea Lewis, secretary of the Arkansas Department of Parks, Heritage and Tourism. "With America 250 beginning in 2026, First Day Hikes are a fitting way to start the year by celebrating our shared history and the public lands that connect us, while exploring the beautiful trails that show why Arkansas is called The Natural

Visitors to Arkansas State Parks can participate by joining a ranger-led hike on Jan. 1 or by completing a self-guided hike during "First Weekend," which runs from Dec. 27 through Jan. 4. Arkansas State Parks offers hikes of varying lengths, difficulty levels and settings, making it easy for visitors to take part.

Participants can receive a free Arkansas State Parks First Day Hikes sticker in one of two ways, by attending a guided hike on Jan. 1 and receiving the sticker at the park, or by completing a self-guided hike and logging miles at ArkansasStateParks.com/FirstDayHikes. If weather conditions make hiking on Jan. 1 difficult, participants will still have the opportunity to log miles throughout the weekend.

"First Day Hikes are a simple but powerful way to connect people to Arkansas' state parks," said Kelly Farrell, chief of interpretation and program services for the Division of Arkansas State Parks. "Whether it's a short walk or a longer hike, every participant can find a personally meaningful way to celebrate healthy living, outdoor recreation and the special places our parks protect."

Arkansas State Parks is proud to continue participating in this event and inviting visitors to experience the natural, cultural and recreational value of Arkansas' public lands.

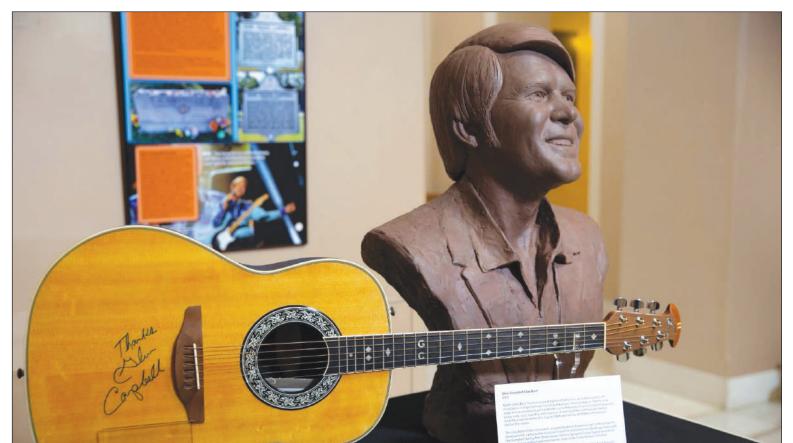
A list of guided First Day Hikes at Arkansas State Parks, along with tips on planning your hike, accessibility information and details on how to share photos and videos, can be found at ArkansasStateParks.com/FirstDayHikes.

Participants are encouraged to share their experiences on social media using #ARState-Parks and #FirstDayHikes.





4-H LEADING THE PLEDGE ... At the Pike County Quorum Court in November (above right) Pike County 4-H member Abigail Henderson leads the Pledge of Allegiance to open the meeting with Pike County Sheriff Travis Hill and Pike County Judge Eddie Howard. In December (above right) Adeline Haney volunteered for a turn.





Submitted photos/ Arkansas State

CAMPBELL HONORED

... The Delight family of country music legend Glen Campbell (right) recently visited the Glen Campbell exhibit now on display in the Arkansas State Capitol. Pictured is (from left) Cambell's nephew, Steve Campbell with wife LaDonna, sisters Sandy and Barbara, and niece Angie. The special exhibit runs through January 2026.

Pike County Extension kicks off new year with community classes

By the time February arrives, many New Year's resolutions are already a distant memory. For some people they last a few weeks; for others—myself included—two days is a strong year. That reality raises an important question: maybe the problem isn't us. Maybe it's the way we think about resolutions.

Instead of setting goals that feel like chores, what if we made our New Year's resolutions something we actually look forward to? With the help of Pike County Extension, local residents have several opportunities to turn resolutions into enjoyable experiences filled with creativity, friendship, and learning.

For those looking to tap into their creative side, quilting may be the perfect resolution. "Sew It's Monday," held every Monday from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Glenwood Library, offers a welcoming space to work on quilting projects. Participants work on individual projects but the group atmosphere, shared creativity, and friendships often feel like "creative therapy" to those in at-

Fitness resolutions also get a fun twist with exercise sessions set to take place every Tuesday and Thursday, starting with strength training at 9 a.m., followed by chair yoga at 10:30 a.m. For those interested in learning more, informational meetings will be held January 6 and January 8 from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. in the Bynum Library Community Room. With good music and good friends, staying active becomes something to enjoy rather

For anyone focused on healthier eating in the new year, Pike County Extension will host a monthly cooking class called "Cooking for a Change." This class is designed for those seeking meaningful change on multiple levels. Participants will learn how choosing real, unprocessed foods can support better health, particularly through low-glycemic and gluten-free cooking. The class also focuses on financial wellness by helping families save money by eating out less often. Just as importantly, "Cooking for a Change" encourages stronger family connections by bringing loved ones together in the kitchen and around the dining table.

The first "Cooking for a Change" class will be held Wednesday, January 28, at 9 a.m., with an evening option scheduled for Thursday, January 30, at 6 p.m. Both classes will take place at the Pike County Extension Office in Murfreesboro.

Looking for a one-day resolution that could spark a lifelong interest? The 2nd Annual Southwest Arkansas Homesteading Conference will be held February 21 at the Cossatot Community College campus in Nashville, Arkansas. Hosted in partnership with Pike County Extension and Howard County Extension, the conference will offer a wide variety of classes—from mulching and sourdough bread baking to water-bath and pressure canning, Dutch oven cooking, foraging and more. Extension Agents and Specialists from across southwest Arkansas will bring research-based information to you and be happy to answer your questions. While adults attend classes, 4-H agents from Pike and Howard counties will provide fun and educational activities for children.

Financial planning is another area where many people set resolutions, and Pike County Extension will also offer an Es-

Delight to again kick off

DELIGHT -- A New Year's eve fireworks show will be con-

The event, now in its third year, will take place at the softball

Organizers asks that attendees bring a lawn chair to "enjoy

The sponsors of the event include Stella Jones -- Delight Pole

ducted on Wednesday, Dec. 31 by the Delight Volunteer Fire

new year with a bang

fields adjacent to the Delight School. The fireworks will begin at 6 p.m.

an evening of fireworks with family and friends."

Yard, Bank of Delight and Howard Building and Supply.



PIKE COUNTY EXTENSION

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

tate Planning Class to help families prepare for the future. On January 26 Lisa Shoalmire of Ross and Shoalmire will present on 'Special Needs Trust." This class will provide valuable information for families caring for loved ones with special needs and those wanting to better understand long-term planning options. It's an important topic and one that Lisa Shoalmire is passionate about teaching others. We hope to see you there.

This year, instead of resolutions that fade fast, consider choosing ones that bring joy, connection, and learning. When resolutions are fun, they just might last a little longer than two days. For more information on any of these programs, contact the Pike County Extension Office at 870-285-2161. You can also follow "Pike County FCS" on Facebook for updates, class schedules,

Last week's recipe was Black-eyed Peas for good luck. Well, it must be your lucky week because this week's recipe is ALSO Black-eyed Peas! Enjoy!

RECIPE OF THE WEEK: BLACK-EYED PEA DIP

- Two 15-ounce cans black-eyed peas, drained
- One 15-ounce can whole kernel corn, drained
- One 10-ounce can Ro-Tel Tomatoes or any spicy canned tomatoes, chopped
 - 1 cup chopped red bell pepper
 - 1 cup chopped green bell pepper • ¼ cup chopped fresh jalapeno pepper
 - ½ cup chopped yellow onion

 - One 4-ounce jar chopped pimientos, drained

Dressing Ingredients:

- ½ cup red wine vinegar
- 1 tablespoon balsamic vinegar • 1 teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon pepper1 tablespoon Dijon mustard
- ¼ teaspoon sugar
- Pinch of dried oregano
- ½ cup olive oil
- ½ cup vegetable oil
- Corn chips for serving

In a large bowl combine the black-eyed peas, corn, tomatoes, red, green and jalapeno peppers, onion and pimentos.

Latimer Funeral Home in Nashville

is offering personalized ornaments to families who have lost loved ones during this past year.

Stop by this Christmas season, and take an ornament from our Remembrance Tree, which is located in our foyer.

Each ornament was hand made by our staff and has been personalized with your loved one's name, date of birth and date of death.

Latimer Funeral Home

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Murfreesboro Diamond

Your Hometown Newspaper since 1975

Located in the County Seat of Pike County • Murfreesboro, Arkansas Home of the Crater of Diamonds State Park Little Missouri River • Lake Greeson

John Robert Schirmer, Publisher

• P.J. Tracy IV, Editor

• Christy Coccarelli, Office Manager/Photographer

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

Telephone: 870-285-2723

Business Hours: Monday, Tuesday & Thursday 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Wednesday 9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. • Friday 9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.

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

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

SUBMISSION DEADLINE FRIDAYS AT 3:00 P.M.

PUBLIC NOTICE

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF PIKE COUNTY, **ARKANSAS CIVIL DIVISION**

RICKY MCCAULEY

PLAINTIFF

Case No. 55CV-25-120

ANY UNKNOWN PERSON

CLAIMING AN INTEREST IN THE PROPERTY AT ISSUE

DEFENDANT

NOTICE OF QUIET TITLE ACTION

Notice is hereby given that a Petition has been filed in the office of the Circuit Clerk of Pike County, Arkansas to quiet and confirm title in and to the following described property in Pike County, Arkansas:

Pike County Parcel 640-00054-000

Lots one (1) and Two (2) in Block Twenty-two (22) in O.M. LeFevers Development, according to plat thereof recorded in Deed Record Book 82 at page 642 of the Deed Records of Pike County, Arkansas, same being part of and located in the Northwest Quarter of the Northeast Quarter (NW1/4 NE1/4) of Section Thirteen (13), in Township Six (6) South, in Range Twenty-seven (27) West.

This conveyance is made and accepted subject to all restrictions, reservations, covenants, conditions, rights-ofway, and easements now of record, if any, in Pike County, Arkansas, affecting the above-described property.

Any person claiming any title or interest of any kind to such property is hereby notified to appear herein on or before January 15, 2026, to assert his title or interest in such property and to demonstrate why title to this property should not be quieted and confirmed in RICKY MCCAULEY, Plaintiff herein.

WITNESS my hand and seal of the Court on this 15 day of December 2025.

Sabrina Williams, Pike County Circuit Clerk

(d.b. 252w., 25,26,27,28)

in a glass jar with a tight-fitting lid combine the dressing ingredients and shake until the ingredients are blended.

Add the dressing to the pea mixture and stir gently but thoroughly. Cover and refrigerate until serving time. Allowed to come to room temperature before serving. Stir well serve with corn chips.

SMATLL ADS DO WORK

YOU JUST READ ONEH PUBLIC NOTICE

PROPOSED BUDGET OF EXPENDITURES WITH TAX LEVY FOR FISCAL YEAR **BEGINNING JULY 1, 2027 TO AND INCLUDING** JUNE 30, 2028

The Board of Directors of South Pike County School District of Pike County, Arkansas, in compliance with the requirements of Amendments No. 40 and No. 74 to the Constitution of the State of Arkansas and of Ark. Code Ann. § 6-13-622, has prepared, approved and hereby makes public the proposed budget of expenditures, together with the tax rate, as

1. Salary Fund Expenditures \$5,019,664

2. Instructional Expense 2,406,167

3. Maintenance & Operation Expense 2,201,767 4. Dedicated Maintenance and Operation Expenditures 0

293,495

5. Pupil Transportation Expense 523,184 6. Other Operating Expense 738,353 7. Non-Bonded Debt Payment

8. Bonded Debt Payment

To provide for the foregoing proposed budget of expenditures, the Board of Directors proposes a total school tax rate (state and local) of 41.00 mills on the dollar of the assessed value of taxable property located in this School District. The proposed tax includes the uniform rate of tax of 25.00 mills (the "Statewide Uniform Rate") to be collected on all taxable property in the State and remitted to the State Treasurer pursuant to Amendment No. 74 to the Arkansas Constitution to be used solely for maintenance and operation of schools in the State. As provided in Amendment No. 74, the Statewide Uniform Rate replaces a portion of the existing rate of tax levied by this School District and available for maintenance and operation of schools in this District. The total proposed school tax levy of 41.00 mills includes 31.50 mills specifically voted for general maintenance and operation and 9.50 mills voted for debt service previously voted as a continuing levy pledged for the retirement of existing bonded indebtedness. The surplus revenues produced each year by the debt service millage may be used by the District for other school purposes.

The total proposed school tax levy of 41.00 mills represents the same rate presently being collected.

GIVEN this 11th day of December, 2025.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF SOUTH PIKE COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT OF PIKE COUNTY, ARKANSAS

Robert Silva President of Board Alyssa Duggan Secretary of Board

(s.p.c.s.d., 361w., 26)

PUBLIC NOTICE

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF PIKE COUNTY, ARKANSAS CIVIL DIVISION

JAMES FOLTZ and **RUTH FOLTZ**

PETITIONERS

CASE NO. 55CV-25-122

IN REGARD TO: PARCEL OF LAND SITUATED IN PIKE COUNTY ARKANSAS. TO WIT:

That part of the Northwest Quarter of the Northeast Quarter (NW/4 NE/4), Section Eleven (11), Township Eight (8) South, Range Twenty-six (26) West, lying North of a County Road, described as follows: Beginning at the Northeast (NE) Corner thereof (a rock painted red) and run thence South 16 minutes West 368 feet along the East Boundary line thereof to a point in the Center of said County Road; thence along said Road as follows: South 82 degrees 3 minutes West 558 feet, South 82 degrees 20 minutes West 200 feet and South 80 degrees 40 minutes West 770 feet to a point on West Boundary line thereof; thence North 16 minutes East 618 feet along the West Boundary line to the Northwest (NW) Corner thereof; thence South 87 degrees 44 minutes East 1313.7 feet along the North Boundary line thereof to the Point of Beginning, containing 14.3 acres, more or less.

NOTICE OF QUIET TITLE ACTION

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that there has been filed in the Circuit Court of Pike County, Arkansas, a Petition to Quiet Title to lands in Pike County, Arkansas, as described above.

The Defendants, and any and all person claiming said lands or any interest thereon are hereby warned to appear in this Court within thirty (30) days from the date of first publication of this Notice and answer said Petition and show cause why the title to said lands should not be quieted and confirmed in said Plaintiff or be forever barred from answering or asserting his interest.

WITNESS my hand and seal as Clerk of the Circuit Court of Pike County, Arkansas, this 26th day of December, 2025.

SABRINA WILLIAMS PIKE COUNTY CIRCUIT CLERK (v,m.317w., 26,27,28,29)





CHEERS FOR COMPETITION ... (Far above) Earlier in December, the Murfreesboro High School varsity cheerleaders finished in second place in the 2A Senior Game Day division at Lake Hamilton. (near above) The varsity cheerleaders then competed at the December 20 Arkansas Activities Association State Cheer Championship at Bank OZK Arena in Hot Springs, finishing eighth in the state. "We are so proud of these hardworking girls who balance cheer with involvement in so many activities at Murfreesboro High," said cheer coach Melissa Jones. "Thank you to all our amazing Rattlers fans for the love and support -- we're proud to represent you on game days this season!"

City, County announce New Year's closings

morning of Friday, Jan. 2.

to occur on Friday, Jan 2.

NEED

COVERAGE

FOR 2025?

The sanitation schedule this week for Murfreesboro will see no collection on Thursday, with Thursday and Friday collection

Card of Thanks

The family of Dick Fain would like to

thank everyone for the kindness and sympathy,

flowers and food.

Your support was greatly appreciated by our

family

Eva, Paula, Dorothy & Family

Arkansas
BlueCross BlueShield

Open Enrollment Period

NOVEMBER 1 - JANUARY 15

We can help!

If you need individual or

family health insurance,

call or come by today!

MURFREESBORO -- The Pike County Courthouse and associated offices will close at noon on Wednesday, Dec. 31 and will return to work on Friday, Jan. 2.

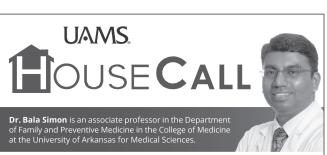
Rural rash collection for the county this week will see no pickup on Thursday. On Friday, Jan. 2, Thursday's normal collection

The City of Murfreesboro offices will hold the same schedule as the county -- closed Wednesday at noon and reopening on the

SUDOKU Call today and receive a FREE SHOWER PACKAGE **PLUS \$1600 OFF** AFE STEP 1-855-576-5653 3 5 6 8 3 8 6 4 3 5 9 5 6 4 5 9 3 4

C StatePoint Media

Fill in the blank squares in the grid, making sure that every row, column and 3-by-3 box includes all digits 1 through 9.



Q: What are some issues that affect the gallbladder? the age of 60, those who

A: The gallbladder is a small, pear-shaped organ just below the liver. Its purpose is to store and release bile produced by the liver. The gallbladder contracts and forces bile through bile ducts into the small intestine to aid in digesting fats.

Gallstones are the most common gallbladder condition. Gallstones are hard pieces of excess material in the gallbladder, and they can vary in size from small specks to as large as a golf ball. If they are large enough, they can block the flow of bile. Gallbladder inflammation

(cholecystitis) and gangrene are other issues that can affect the gallbladder.

Risk factors for gallbladder problems include people over

Email your health questions to housecall@uams.edu.

consume a diet high in cholesterol, those who are overweight, and those with a family history of gallbladder disease. Symptoms of gallbladder problems include bloating, changes in the color of bowel movements or urine, fever, nausea, and pain in the back and

Treatment for gallbladder issues depend upon the cause. Your health care provider may perform an endoscopy to examine the gallbladder for gallstones or other blockages. Removal of the gallbladder is a common treatment option and normally does not have a detrimental effect on lifestyle

generator. lt's a power move. Call 877-319-0598 to schedule your free quote! **GENERAC**

City of Murfreesboro announces sanitation schedules changes for 2026

MURFREESBORO -- The City of Murfreesboro has announced its sanitation schedule for the year of 2026.

Changes in normal collection are as follows:

• Week of December 28th – Monday – Wednesday, regular pickup, Thursday and Friday, pickup on Friday (2026 New

 Week of January 19th – Monday, pick-up on Tuesday, Tuesday and Wednesday. pick-up on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, regular pick-up (MLK Day)

• Week of February 16th – Monday, pick-up on Tuesday, Tuesday and Wednesday. pick-up on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, regular pick-up (President's Day)

• Week of March 30th – Monday - Thursday, regular pick-

up, Friday, pickup on Thursday (Good Friday)

• Week of May 25th – Monday, pick-up on Tuesday, Tuesday and Wednesday. pick-up on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, regular pick-up (Memorial Day)

• Week of June 15th - Monday - Thursday, regular pickup, Friday, pickup on Thursday (Juneteenth)

• Week of June 29th - Monday - Thursday, regular pickup, Friday, pickup on Thursday (Independence Day)

• Week of September 7th – Monday, pick-up on Tuesday,

Tuesday and Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, regular pick-up (Labor Day) Week of October 12th – Monday, pick-up on Tuesday, Tues-

day and Wednesday, pick-up on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, regular pick-up (Columbus Day) • Week of November 9th – Monday and Tuesday, regular

pick-up, Wednesday and Thursday, pickup on Thursday, Friday, regular pickup (Veteran's Day) • Week of November 23rd – Monday, regular pickup, Tuesday and Wednesday pickup on Tuesday, Thursday and Friday

pickup on Wednesday (Thanksgiving)

• Week of December 21st – Monday, regular pickup, Tuesday and Wednesday pickup on Tuesday, Thursday and Friday pickup on Wednesday (Christmas)

• Week of December 28th – Monday – Thursday, regular pickup, Friday, pickup on Thursday (2027 New Years Day)



Wolf moon and runaway black holes

The Moon starts 2026 off in a big way. January's full moon, rising just after sunset on Saturday the 3rd will be the first of three super moons this year. The other two are in November and December. Some therapeutic howling might be in order as this Wolf Moon rises. The Moon will be almost full on the 2nd and full again on the 4th (and rising a little later).

The universe always has fascinating things going on. The Hubble Space Telescope discovered in 2023 what appeared to be a super-massive black hole breaking away from its home galaxy (M87). Recently the James Webb Telescope confirmed the finding. The runaway black hole is 10 million times more massive than the Sun and moving at an astonishing 2.2 million miles per hour. It is firing up the gases in front of it into a massive fireball and leaving a trail of hot gases 200,000 light years long. Stars are already beginning to form as those gases cool. There is no danger to Earth.

Speaking of escaping, the Moon is very quietly moving away from Earth, and it has been doing so for millions of years. It has only been since astronauts left laser reflection devices on the Moon that scientists can accurately measure the distance between Earth and Moon. The Moon is in no hurry to leave however, pulling away at 1.5 inches per year.

Jupiter looks great above the eastern horizon each evening near the two brightest stars of Gemini, Castor and Pollux.

SMALL ADS DO WORK! YOU JUST READ ONE! CALL TO PLACE YOURS • (870) 285-2723



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Plans to improve Huddleston grave site at Japany ongoing

MURFREESBORO -- In their December meeting, the Pike County Advertising and Tourism Commission discussed plans for an upgraded monument for John Huddleston, the man who found the first diamonds on his farm -- at what is now the Crater of Diamonds State Park -- in 1906

Board chairman Jamie Terrell said he had spoken with Rick Floyd from the Pike County Archives and noted that Huddleston's rock monument at Japany cemetery was deteriorating and featured the wrong dates of his lifes-

Terrell said Floyd would seek a grant through the Arkansas Preservation Society to aid in the efforts, but was also interested in a state histori-

It was generally agreed -- though not yet put to a vote -- that the commission would aid the Archives in their endeavor when the time

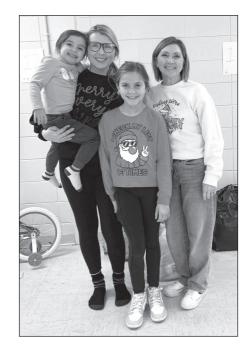
Terrell noted that it was a spot that tourists visit and was proper to make it as presentable as possible. "it's a tourism thing," he said.

The discussion was tabled until further information is presented.

The group also approved a 4.5% raise for secretary/treasurer Jane Fugitt, which matches the raises being given by the City of Murfreesboro to its employees in 2026. The motion was a approved unanimously without going into executive session.



BRITTLE STILL AVAILABLE ... Porky the Elf would like to remind residents that the 4-H fundraiser brittle is yummy and still available. Varieties include peanut, pecan, cinnamon pecan, and cashew in both bags and buckets. The treats will again be available when the extension office in Murfreesboro reopens on Monday, Jan. 5. The office still also has Texas Roadhouse rolls and honey butter still available for purchase as well. Call (870) 285-2161 for more information.





KEEPING THE CHRISTMAS SPIRIT ALIVE ... Angel Tree director Angie Strawn (pictured above left with daughter Kelsi Frachiseur and grandchildren Mabrie and Henley) said the Murfreesboro Angel Tree program serviced 44 families and 111 kids in 2025, making Christmas morning better for area children. Pictured (above right) is South Pike County's School Resource Officer Justin Hughes, shopping with students as part of the Pike County Shop With A Cop program.



'Dear Preacher'

By Buddy Ray, Murfreesboro Church of Christ

THE GLORIOUS GOSPEL The New Testament shares with us the gospel of Jesus Christ. To the entire world this gospel is the good news about our Lord and Savior Jesus

In I Timothy 1:11 the apostle Paul refers to this gospel in this way: according to the glorious gospel of the blessed God, with which I have been entrusted.

In order that we may inherit our heavenly home for all of eternity we must obey this glorious gospel of Christ Paul explained this gospel to the Corinthians in I Corinthians 15:1-4. Paul delivered to them that Christ died for our sins according to the scrip-



tures and that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures. He assures them it is the gospel by which they are saved by holding fast to the Word that was preached.

The death, burial and resurrection of Christ is the glorious gospel. We must hear it,

believe it, obey it, stand for it, and SPREAD it in order for us to be pleasing to God.

Romans 1:16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first, and also for the Greek.

We know from II Thessalonians 1:8 that God will take vengeance on those who do not obey the gospel.

It is our responsibility to preach the gospel to all creation to help save their souls.

Have a blessed week and spread the gospel through a daily life devoted to Jesus

Paid Advertisement



SECOND AT COMPETITION ... The Murfreesboro Junior High cheer squad competed at the Southern Spirit Cheer Competition at Lake Hamilton earlier in December, finishing in second place

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

SOUTH PIKE COUNTY SCHOOL MENU

TUESDAY, JANUARY 6

Breakfast: Sausage biscuit or cereal, fruit,

Lunch: Chicken nuggets, mashed potatoes, black eyed peas, 7-12 cornbread muffin, peach-

Line 2-7-12 Chicken fried steak

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 7

Breakfast: French toast sticks or cereal, fruit,

Lunch: Frito chili pie w/cheese, pinto beans, seasoned corn, 7-12 rice krispie treat, pears, milk Line 2-7-12 Hot dog w/chili, cheese

THURSDAY, JANUARY 8

Breakfast: Powered donut or cereal, fruit, juice, milk

Lunch: Cheeseburger, potato smiles, lettuce, tomato, onion & pickle slices, mixed fruit, milk

Line 2-7-12 Spicy chicken sandwich FRIDAY, JANUÁRY 9

Breakfast: Pancake on stick, fruit, juice, milk

MONDAY, JANÛARY 12 Breakfast: Chicken biscuit or cereal, fruit,

Lunch: Crunchy beef tacos, refried beans,

lettuce, tomato, salsa, pineapple, milk

Lunch: Pepperoni pizza, seasoned corn, seasoned broccoli, pears, milk

Line 2-7-12 Big daddy pepperoni pizza or

TUESDAY, JANUARY 13

Line 2-7-12 Crispito

Breakfast: Mini pancakes or cereal, fruit,

Lunch: Beef fingers, mashed potatoes, 7-12 white gravy, sweet peas, whole grain roll,

mixed fruit, milk Line 2-7-12 Chicken tenders

*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

MURFREESBORO SENIOR ADULT CENTER LUNCH MENU

MONDAY, JANUARY 5

Salisbury steak w/gravy, mashed potatoes,

Tuscan vegetables, roll, chunky fruit TUESDAY, JANUARY 6

Vegetable soup, mixed green salad, cornbread, cake

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 7

Catfish fillet, pinto beans, cole slaw, hush puppies, brownie

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

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Wed. Bible study & Prayer Meeting 6 p.m. • Facebook services on Sunday at 10:45 a.m. & 5 p.m.

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Bro. Buddy Ray

Attend Church This Sunday!

OT TIME OF THE RATE OF STE INCLUDED?

and wat mdfamond@windstream.net

ON THE FARM

* -- Theme Related Clue

ACROSS

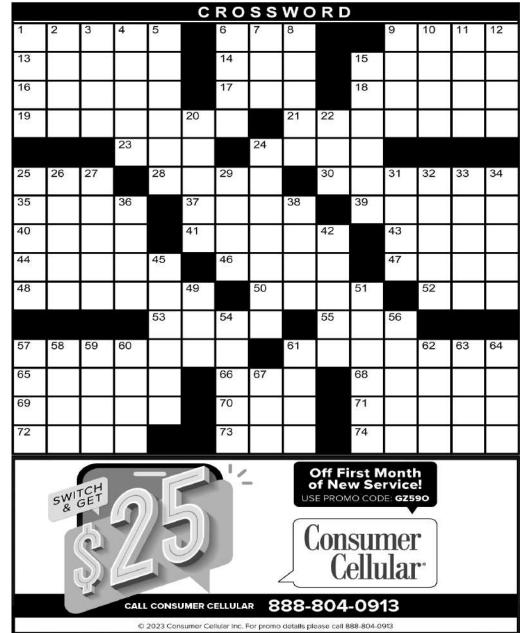
- 1. Laura Ingalls' notebook
- 6. Boozer
- 9. Biblical pronoun
- 13. Sacred text, to some
- 14. "Fat chance!"
- 15. Afrikaners' ancestors
- 16. Cake spread
- 17. Chowed down
- 18. Clear the blackboard
- 19. *Barn chore
- 21. *John Deere, e.g.
- 23. Nirvana's "Come as You __ 24. Spasm of pain
- 25. Broadband access overseer, acr.
- 28. Mark for omission
- 30. Recessed space
- and the Real Girl," movie
- 37. "Shoot!"
- 39. E in baseball box score

- 40. Oil org.
- 41. Intelligent
- 43. A mixture or medley
- 44. Children's respiratory disease
- 46. Foggy view? 47. Politicians, for short
- 48. In a sympathetic manner
- 50. Ski hill ride
- 52. Maiden name indicator 53. Bald eagle's nest
- 55. Repeated Latin dance step
- 57. *a.k.a. harvester 61. *Opposite of pasture
- 65. *Common varieties are yellow, red and white
- 66. Tall tale
- 68. Smooth, in manner
- 69. Audienceís approval
- 70. "____ at ease 71. Stomach sore
- 72. Caribou or moose
- 73. Soldier's bed

74. Harsh

DOWN

- 1. *Separate cream from milk
- 2. Locus, pl.
- 3. Seed coat
- 4. Form of Japanese poetry
- 5. Encircle
- 6. Deep pile carpet
- 7. *Cereal grass
- 8. Sorority letter 9. Cleopatra's necklace
- 10. Thermostat option 11. Guesstimate phrase (2 words)
- 12. Olympic cast-out, e.g.
- 15. Charles Darwin's vessel
- 20. Must-haves
- 22. Ribonucleic acid, acr.
- 24. Fine
- 25. *Group of chickens
- 26. Birthplace of Caprese 27. Oedipus' successor
- 29. *Baby sheep
- _rotation
- 32. Acrylic fiber
- 33. Bridal veil fabric 34. With a jagged margin
- 36. Gulf War missile
- 38. *Pasture-raised chicken's morsel 42. Vanish without this?
- 45. Lamentation
- 49. Japanese capital
- 51. Rh in Rh disease
- 54. Indiana Jones' find, e.g. 56. Not a minor
- 57. For boys and girls 58. Popular fairy-tale beginning
- 59. Stephen King's "The Green_
- 60. *Male pig
- 61. Abe Lincoln's hat material 62. Tatted cloth
- 63. Done
- 64. Seaside bird
- 67. UN labor grp.



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Reflecting on major education legislation in 2025

STATE CAPITOL WEEK IN REVIEW

Senator Steve Crowell

LITTLE ROCK – With the year nearing its end, it's worth reflecting on the major pieces of education legislation that were The 95th General Assembly Regular Session kicked off in Jan-

uary and ended the first week of May. The legislature completed the 2025 regular session after approving a balanced budget, increasing public school funding and making higher education The Public School Fund is the largest single expenditure made

by the state every year. State aid to public schools did increase by \$161.5 million starting in the new fiscal year that started in July. It is about \$2.5 billion and will be distributed according to a formula that takes into account student enrollment. The foundation funding increased from \$7,771 to \$8,162 per pupil for the 2025-2026 school year. School districts get additional funding for every student from low-income families and students with special needs.

Act 122, that went into effect at the beginning of the 2025-2026 school year, requires all public school districts to enact policies that restrict cell phone usage by students. It's called the "Bell to Bell, No Cell Act." Its purpose is twofold. First, it removes distractions from the classroom that are hindering students academically. Secondly, the governor and legislators hope it will improve the mental and emotional health of young people who

spend too much time on social media. Sixty-four percent of Arkansas public school students are eligible for free or reduced school meals. ACT 123 provides each student with a breakfast at no cost whether or not they are eligible for free or reduced-price meals. State budget officials esThe program is funded by a special privilege tax on medical marijuana. The bill was co-sponsored by a bipartisan group of twenty-five senators.

When children go hungry their long-term health is negatively affected, and their grades suffer. Hunger affects a child's academic performance and increases their chances of being punished for behavioral problems and missing classes, according to testimony before the Senate Education Committee.

National studies indicate that students who have eaten breakfast perform better on standardized tests. Students improve academically in general, and some studies show that they specifically do better in mathematics.

The governor proposed and the legislature approved significant changes in higher education. The law is called ACCESS, an acronym for acceleration, common sense, cost, eligibility, scholarships and standardization.

The legislature raised the Academic Challenge Scholarships to \$2,000, up from \$1,000 for freshman students. The scholarships are funded with revenue from the state lottery. Since Arkansas voters approved the lottery in 2008 in a statewide election, it has paid for more than 770,000 scholarships. Their value is about \$1.4 billion.

leges to teach skills in demand by industry.

to meet next Monday

Delight Cemetery Association

DELIGHT -- The Delight Cemetery Association will have a meeting on January 5 at 6 p.m. at the Delight school cafeteria. All interested persons are welcome and encouraged to attend.

timate that it will cost the state \$14.7 million for the program.

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Congressman wishes peace to all BY BRUCE WESTERMAN U.S. Representative (AR-04)

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- The holiday season is a special time of year – not only to reflect on the greatest gift we have received through the birth of our Savior, but also the time to reflect on the past year and all we have to be grateful for.

With this year's temperatures, we certainly have no trouble

making this Christmas season warm and inviting. Through holiday festivities and time spent with friends and family, this really is the most wonderful time of the year. My hope is that, as we celebrate Christmas, we will also remember the brave men and women who aren't able to be with

their own loved ones this year. Whether they are overseas or stationed in a different part of the country, our gratitude will

certainly be with them as they serve our nation and protect our

freedom. Merry Christmas to you all – it is the greatest gift to serve the Fourth District of Arkansas in Congress, and it is most certainly not an honor I take lightly. May you all have a very blessed holiday season filled with peace and joy.

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Seniors + Military



Submitted photo/MHS

CONTEST WINNERS ... Murfreesboro High School psychology students solved a series of psychological puzzles on topics studied throughout the semester to figure out who stole the Christmas gifts! First place went to students Chloe and Angeline (above) Another class picked a president, vice president, or first lady to research. Then they created stockings and filled them with things that person did.

Classifieds

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Pike County 4-H thanks the community for a year of support

MURFREESBORO -- Pike County 4-H would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to our community for the continued support shown throughout the year. Our program thrives because of the generosity, encouragement, and involvement of local families, businesses, volunteers, and organizations.

Thanks to this support, Pike County 4-H members have been able to participate in hands-on learning experiences, develop leadership and life skills, give back through community service, and grow in confidence and responsibility. From project work and events to fairs and service activities, each opportunity was made possible by a community that believes in its youth.

We are especially grateful to our volunteers and leaders who dedicate countless hours, as well as to sponsors and supporters who provide resources and encouragement. Every contribution, big or small, helps shape positive experiences for our 4-H members. As we look ahead to the upcoming year, donations are always welcome and help ensure we can continue offering meaningful programs and opportunities for our youth. If you are interested in donating, contact the extension office at (870)

Pike County 4-H is proud to be part of such a caring and supportive community. We look forward to continuing to work together to help young people learn, lead, and serve in the year

"Thank you for investing in Pike County 4-H and the future of our youth," said Shannon Bal- $\,$ lard, Pike County 4-H program assistant.





Filling blessing boxes in Pike County • Working on quilts for donation • Courthouse tour after they decorating Christmas Tree • Tech Changemakers attended the Ouachita District Training and made electrical circuit cards which they will teach to their 4-H group















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This instrument prepared by and to be returned to: Biles Wilson, PLLC, 457 Laurence Drive, Suite 195, Heath, Texas 75032, (214) 662-8456

Borrower: Karen DeAnn White and Cecil Roy White, Jr., wife and husband

Lender: Vanderbilt Mortgage and Finance, Inc.

NOTICE OF DEFAULT AND INTENTION TO SELL. YOU MAY LOSE YOUR PROPERTY IF YOU DO NOT TAKE IMMEDIATE ACTION. IF YOUR PROPERTY IS SOLD YOU WILL REMAIN LIABLE FOR ANY DEFICIENCY AND AN ACTION FOR COLLECTION MAY BE BROUGHT AGAINST YOU. THIS IS A COMMUNICATION FROM A DEBT COLLECTOR AND IS AN ATTEMPT TO COLLECT A DEBT. ANY INFORMATION GIVEN MAY BE USED FOR THAT PURPOSE. NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that on January 13, 2026, at or about 10:00 a.m., the following real property will be sold at the main/front door of the Pike County Courthouse, located at 1 Courthouse Square, Murfreesboro, Arkansas 71958, to the highest

PART OF THE NORTHEAST QUARTER OF THE NORTHEAST QUARTER SECTION TWO (2), TOWNSHIP NINE (9) SOUTH, RANGE TWENTY-SIX (26) WEST, DESCRIBED AS FOLLOWS: BEGINNING AT THE NORTHEAST CORNER OF SAID FORTY-ACRE TRACT; THENCE SOUTH 49 YARDS; THENCE WEST 35 YARDS; THENCE NORTH 49 YARDS; THENCE EAST 35 YARDS TO THE POINT OF BEGINNING, AND CONTAIN-ING 35/100THS OF AN ACRE, MORE OR LESS; AND BEING THE SAME LAND AS THAT CONVEYED AND DESCRIBED IN BOOK D238 AT PAGE 375, LAND RECORDS OF PIKE COUNTY, ARKANSAS. ALSO DESCRIBED AS FOLLOWS:

PART OF THE NORTHEAST OUARTER OF THE NORTHEAST OUARTER OF SECTION

2, T. 9 S., R. 26 W., PIKE COUNTY, ARKANSAS, DESCRIBED AS FOLLOWS: BEGINNING AT THE NORTHEAST CORNER OF SAID NE1/4 OF THE NE1/4 SECTION 2, T. 9 S., R. 26 W., PIKE COUNTY, ARKANSAS; THENCE – SOUTH 49 YARDS; THENCE - WEST 35 YARDS; THENCE - NORTH 49 YARDS THENCE - EAST 35 YARDS TO THE POINT OF BEGINNING; BASIS OF BEARINGS IS DEED CALL BEARING SOUTH ALONG WAST BOUNDARY LINE. THE ABOVE PREVIOUSLY DESCRIBED PROPERTY BEING SUR-VEYED BY RICHARD V. HALL, JR. CONTAINS 0.354 ACRES OF LAND, MORE OR LESS: AND SUBJECT TO SUCH RIGHTS AS MAY BE VESTED IN PUBLIC FOR SWEET HOME ROAD AND ROY ROAD ALONG THE WEST AND SOUTH BOUNDARY LINES OF THE ABOVE DESCRIBED 0.354 ACRE TRACT, AS DEPICTED IN A SURVEY BY RICHARD V. HALL, AR RPLS #820, OF HALL SURVEYING & ENGINEERING, INC., DATED 11/22/10.

Along with a 2006 CMHM Manufactured Home with Serial No.: CLS104802TN, attached

thereto, with the address of 552 Sweet Home Road, Nashville, Arkansas 71852. On, October 1, 2018 a Mortgage was executed by Karen DeAnn White and Cecil Roy White, Jr., wife and husband, to Vanderbilt Mortgage and Finance, Inc., which was recorded on October 15, 2018 (Document #: 20184812), in the real estate records of Pike County, Arkansas. The party initiating foreclosure can be contacted at: Vanderbilt Mortgage and Finance, Inc.,

500 Álcoa Trail, Maryville, Tennessee 37804, Phone (800) 970-7250. Default has occurred in the payment of said indebtedness by the current owner(s) of the property, and the same is now therefore wholly due and owing. Lender intends to sell the

above property to satisfy the obligation; and, Tenants of the property may exist that claim an interest in the real property herein.

The undersigned is the attorney for the Lender and is acting on and with the consent of the Lender who is exercising its power of sale under Ark. Code Ann. § 18-50-115, which implies a power of sale in every mortgage of real property situated in this State that is duty acknowledged and recorded.

The sale is subject to any requirements and conditions set forth in the applicable recorded or unrecorded plat or bill(s) of assurance affecting the above real property; any restrictive covenants, easements, set back lines or encroachments; any unpaid taxes or special assessments; any statutory redemption rights of any governmental entity; any prior liens or encumbrances as well as any priority created by a UCC or fixture filing; and, to any matter that an accurate survey of the property might disclose. This property is being sold "as-is" with no representation as to the condition of any structure(s) thereon.

This foreclosure proceeding includes a manufactured home that is titled as personal property. Ark. Code Ann § 4-9-604 allows the foreclosing party to proceed against both the personal property and the real property in this manner.

The legal description contained herein controls and takes priority over any address used to

the extent the legal description and address conflict.

Dated: November 5, 2025 Biles Wilson, PLLC, 457 Laurence Drive, Suite 195, Heath, Texas 75032, (214) 662-8456. By: Jeremy R. Wilson, ABN 2000108

(p.n.a., 781w., 24,25,26,27)