

The

Murfreesboro Diamond

Wednesday, February 4, 2026
Issue 31 • 1 Section • 6 Pages

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Basketball reschedule
dates announced for MHS

MURFREESBORO -- In the wake of the recent winter storm that caused postponements in the MHS basketball schedule, the remaining games have been announced by Murfreesboro High School.

WEDNESDAY, FEB. 4
Home versus Mountain Pine -- junior boys, senior girls, senior boys, starting at 5:30 p.m.

THURSDAY, FEB. 5
At Dierks -- junior girls, senior girls, senior boys, starting at 5:30 p.m.

FEBRUARY 9, 11 & 12
Junior District Tournament

TUESDAY, FEB. 10
Home versus Cutter Morning Star -- senior girls, senior boys, starting at 5:30 p.m.

FRIDAY, FEB. 13
Home versus Kirby, Senior Night, senior girls, senior boys starting at 5:30 p.m.

Early election hours announced for primary

MURFREESBORO -- Election time is fast approaching in Pike County.

The 2026 Preferential Primary will be held on Tuesday, March 3, with early voting beginning on Tuesday, Feb. 17.

Early voting may be conducted at the Pike County Clerk's Office in Murfreesboro or at the Bainum Library in Glenwood.

On election day, the four vote centers will be open across Pike County in Murfreesboro, Glenwood, Delight and Kirby. Registered county voters may participate at the vote center of their choice.

In the event of a runoff election, early voting would begin on Tuesday, March 24, with the runoff election day set for Tuesday, March 31.

New to the process this year is a semi-closed primary by the state Republican party. This means that those that have declared themselves as Democrats on their Pike County voter registration form cannot choose a Republican ballot, which will hold several key county races.

However, the less than 100 Pike County registered Democrats may, according to County Clerk Randee Edwards, change their party registration to "optional" at her office prior to the election or at any of the Pike County voting centers on election day. This would allow for voting in the Republican primary. That status may be changed back after the primary elections should a voter desire.

Additionally, the only way a voter can participate in a runoff election is limited to their previous choice of Republican or Democratic tickets.

There will be several contested races on the ballots, including three challengers for Pike County Judge Eddie Howard's position.

Howard will face Robert Shelby, Wade Stewart and Keith Couch on the Republican ticket.

Current Pike County Sheriff/Collector Travis Hill will face off against Murfreesboro Police Chief Randy Lamb on the Republican ticket.

The Republican ticket will also feature three Justice of the Peace races.

Roger Floyd and Payton Eckert will each seek the Justice of the Peace District One seat vacated by Lamb.

Incumbent Kip Holbrook and Ron Parker will vie for the District Six seat, while incumbent Richard Mohlenhoff and Robert Irvin will seek the District Seven position.

Unopposed candidates filed for county offices on the Republican ballot included:

County Clerk -- Randee Edwards
County Circuit Clerk -- Sabrina Williams
County Treasurer -- Loletia Rather
County Assessor -- Staci Stewart
Mountain Constable -- Chance Reid
Justice of the Peace Dist. 2 -- Robbie Crocker
Justice of the Peace Dist. 3 -- Seth Henry Kirkham
Justice of the Peace Dist. 4 -- Billy Hill
Justice of the Peace Dist. 8 -- John Plyler

Unopposed candidates filing for county offices on the Democratic ballot included:

Missouri Constable -- Ricky Branch
Justice of the Peace Dist. 4 -- Leotis Snowden
Justice of the Peace Dist. 5 -- Jerry Fendley
Justice of the Peace Dist. 9 -- Paul Baker

On the school board side of things, both South Pike County and Centerpoint School Districts will see contested races.

Incumbent Alyssa Duggan will face off against Carrie Tidwell for the Zone Seven seat for South Pike County.

For Zone Four in the Centerpoint School District, incumbent Larry Harvey will face challenger Pake Sutton.

Unopposed registrants for school board positions include:

South Pike County School Zone 5 -- Robert Silva
Kirby School Zone 1 -- Blake Harmon
Kirby School At Large -- Trent Ott
Centerpoint School Zone 3 -- LeeAllen Sutton
Centerpoint School At Large -- Kerry Horn

For any further election questions, please contact the Pike County Clerk's office at (870) 285-2743.

Sample ballots for Pike County residents may be viewed on voterview.com after they are uploaded to the Secretary of State's website on February 13.

For a complete list of candidates, including statewide candidates, please see the notice of election advertisement on page 6 of today's Murfreesboro Diamond.

Chances now available
on processed hog

MURFREESBORO -- Murfreesboro 4-H student Carsyn Ballard will be utilizing a unique idea to help fund her 2026 show animals.

Ballard will be selling chances on her hog, which will be processed on March 9 at Centerpoint School in the manner desired by the winner.

Tickets for the raffle are \$10 each and only 150 tickets will be sold. The drawing will be held after the tickets are completely sold.

To purchase tickets, contact either Cory Ballard at (870) 285-5618 or Shannon Ballard at (870) 200-2419.

Poultry houses, farm structures bear brunt of winter storm

'The people with vehicles that can get out and drive, they're being good neighbors and mounting rescues'

BY RYAN MCGEENEY
University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture

LITTLE ROCK — With as much as 12 inches of snow and 2 inches of sleet reported in areas across Arkansas, the winter storm that covered much of the country over the weekend has taken an especially high toll on poultry houses and other farm structures across the state.

Although it will likely be some time before the extent of damaged poultry houses and impacted flocks is known, multiple county agents with the Cooperative Extension Service have reported dozens of collapsed structures in their respective counties.

WIDESPREAD COLLAPSES

Kimberly Rowe, Hempstead County agriculture agent for the University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture, said "several pullet houses have collapsed around the McCaskill area."

"The grower said these were older structures and birds were being relocated to other houses on his farm," Rowe said. "Regionally, the count for downed poultry houses, primarily broiler

houses, is estimated to be in the 30s and continuing to rise.

"The brunt of the devastation is being taken by our poultry producers," she said, although other producers are certainly feeling the impact.

"One high tunnel in the county has been reported as a total loss," Rowe said. "All others have survived without any known damage. The cattle producers I've talked to were able to prepare well and are reporting minimal to no losses. A barn that housed a couple of our 4-H'ers' show goat stock collapsed, but thankfully, the animals were not injured."

"Damages to the strawberry crop are unknown at this time with ice still fully encapsulating the row covers," she said. "One local honey producer I talked to will assess his beehives once we warm up and they're able to be fed. Overall, it seems we fared better than some of our neighboring counties, but more will be known after we thaw."

Even as the worst of the storm passed, damage continued to mount throughout the week. Just after noon on Wednesday, the historic Barry's Grocery & Market in Hope, an older brick structure with a flat roof, suffered a partial

collapse. According to local media, the store was empty at the time, and no injuries were reported.

Bobby Powell, Yell County extension staff chair, said about 70 poultry houses throughout the Arkansas River Valley have collapsed. Many of those houses, he said, were older structures that were no longer insured against collapse.

"A lot of those farmers are just stuck," Powell said. "They're not going to get any insurance money for those — it's going to be tough. Many producers will have to rebuild and go into major debt to keep their farms going."

"A lot of old chicken houses were being used for hay and equipment storage," he said. "One guy I talked to, his barn collapsed with all his hay and tractor inside, and he had no way of feeding his cows. And this is a time when you need to get hay out. So he was relying on neighbors to come and feed hay and stuff."

Powell said that while the 5 to 6 inches of

Register for Feb. 21
homesteading conference

NASHVILLE -- Howard and Pike County Extension will present the 2026 Southwest Arkansas Homesteading Conference on Saturday, Feb. 21.

The event will be held at the University of Arkansas Cossatot campus, located at 1558 US Hwy. 371 in Nashville.

Registration for the event will start at 8:30 a.m., with the program running from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

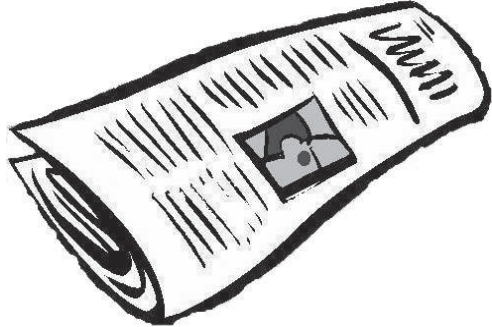
There is a \$30 registration fee to attend the conference. A meal will be included for those that register by Feb. 15.

Participants may register for the event by visiting https://uada.formstack.com/forms/southwest_homesteading.

Topics at the event will include: composting, high tunnel/greenhouse management, dutch oven cooking, pie crusts, foraging for edible food, water bath canning, pressure canning and sourdough. More topics will be added before the event.

Additionally, this year's event will include a kid's camp for ages 5 years old and up. Cost for each child will be \$25 and is the perfect addition to parents/guardians attending the conference.

Kid's camp activities will include freezer jam, candles and mini barn quilts. They will be served pizza for lunch and snacks.

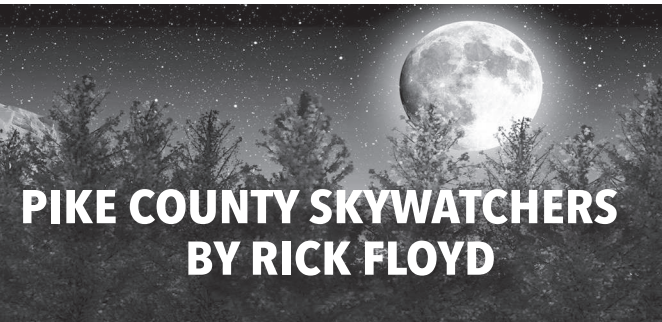


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News to the Diamond!
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Call (870) 285-2723 For More Information



BUSINESS INTERRUPTION ... Connections Coffee on the Pike County Courthouse square was closed last Friday after the weight of ice forced the awning above the store to collapse. Store owners noted on social media that they were grateful that no one was injured in the accident.

Submitted photo



Mission to orbit moon set for early next week

Even the wasted-light glow from a city or town can’t obscure the bright and well-known stars that make the constellation Orion. It is now very prominent as it rises from the eastern horizon each night. Orion, the hunter, is followed by a constellation of stars called Canis Major. Canis is from Latin meaning dog, and the brightest star in this constellation is Sirius which, in fact, is the brightest star in our sky. It is the dawn rising of Sirius in late July that signals the arrival of the “dog days”.

This constellation duo is made up of very interesting features and interesting stars. Within Orion’s form is the well-known nebula that is even visible as a hazy spot through binoculars as it gives birth to new stars. Near it is the also famous Horse Head Nebula. The stars Betelgeuse, a red giant, and Rigel, a blue giant, represent an arm and a leg respectively. It was recently thought that Betelgeuse was about to go supernova at any moment, but scientists have now backed away from that prediction. It will explode someday however.

The three bright stars that make Orion’s belt are often called the “Three Kings” or “Three Sisters”. The center star is a supergiant (as are the others) called Alnilam, the brightest of the three. To its left is Alnitak, an Arab word referring to a belt, is actually a system of three stars. Mintaka at the other end has five other stars in orbit around it. It has been theorized that the builders of the pyramids of Giza in Egypt aligned those structures to match the configuration of Orion’s belt stars.

The Dogon people of Mali in Africa claim to have ancient knowledge of a star, Sirius B, that orbits Sirius. According to their lore, said to be passed down for centuries, visitors from the sky told them that they were from this star, and gave them details about it such as its orbital period around Sirius. Naturally, ancient alien astronaut theorists, as seen on television, see this as proof that Earth was visited in the past by aliens, because the companion star to Sirius is not visible to the naked eye, and was only discovered by modern science in the mid 1800’s. Other details about the star (orbital period etc.) that the Dogon claim to know were not discovered until the early 20th Century. The compelling evidence, however, is not without skepticism. A French archaeologist and astronomy enthusiast living with the Dogon in the 1930’s is suspected of providing the Dogon elders with information about Sirius B which they then incorporated into folklore.

Watch for the launch of NASA’s Artemis II with a crew of four on February 8th. They will fly on a 10-day mission to orbit the Moon and then return to Earth. Alternate launch days are available if there is a cancellation (Feb. 9,11 and some in March and April).



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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.

UAMS

HOUSE CALL



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

Q: What is an aortic dissection?

A: An aortic dissection is a tear in the inner layer of the aorta, the main artery that delivers blood throughout the body. Blood can cause the inner and middle layers of the aorta to separate, and blood can burst through the aorta’s outer walls. It is a rare but life-threatening condition that requires immediate treatment.

Weakening of the aortic walls can lead to an aortic dissection. A Type A aortic dissection occurs in the upper aorta closest to the heart and is the most dangerous type. A Type B aortic dissection begins in the lower aorta and can reach into the abdomen. Men between the ages of 60 and 80 are most at risk. Those with high blood pressure and those who use tobacco products are also at risk.

Symptoms of an aortic dissection include severe pain in the chest or upper back, shortness of breath, fainting or dizziness, heavy sweating and weakness or paralysis on one side of the body.

Type A aortic dissections often require immediate surgery. Type B aortic dissections may require surgery if blood flow to vital organs is interrupted. Contact your health care provider or seek treatment at an emergency room if you have symptoms.

Man charged with failure to disclose social media account

MURFREESBORO -- A Murfreesboro man has been charged in Pike County with failing to meet requirements of being a sex offender.

Timothy Tigue, 53, who is a Level 3 sex offender residing on John Ashley Road, was charged Jan. 23 with failure to comply with registration and reporting requirements - refusal to cooperate with assessment process.

According to case information, Pike County’s investigator and sex offender coordinator, Jason McDonald, found Tigue to

be out of compliance due to him not reporting an active Snap-Chat account maintained in his name.

Tigue is considered “at high risk to reoffend” and is currently free on bond from a previous arrest for failure to register, according to case information.

On Jan. 30 in Pike County, Jamie L. Adil, 26, of Hope, was charged with felony nonsupport for allegedly being arrears with child support in the amount of \$28,458 over a seven-year time-frame.

‘Not So Newlywed’ contest to be held Friday

MURFREESBORO -- Pike County 4-H will present their popular “Not So Newlywed Game” fundraiser on Friday, Feb. 6.

The event will be held at the Murfreesboro Senior Center be-

ginning at 6 p.m.

The meal will consist of a taco bar and dessert.

Tickets to the event are \$10 individually or a table of six for \$60. They may be purchased at the door the night of the event or in advance at the Pike County Extension Service office at 100 Court Street in Murfreesboro.

The event will also feature a silent auction and door prizes.

The four couples participating in the event will be Marty and Mistie Arivett, Matthew and Toni Humphry, Bubba and Jenny James and Blake and Ashly Simmons.

Entertainment for the event will feature Jaycee Heaston, Hadee Wilson and Keeli Partee.

For more information, please contact the Extension office at (870) 285-2161.

Obituaries

James Dennis Sharp, 79, Murfreesboro

James Dennis Sharp, age 79, passed away peacefully on January 18, 2026, at his home in Murfreesboro, Arkansas. Born on May 3, 1946, in Knoxville, Tennessee, James was a beloved husband, father, and friend.

Son of Walter Hayes Sharp and Wanda Belle Hedrick Sharp, James spent his early years in Tennessee before completing his high school education at Woodrow Wilson High School in Long Beach, California. He pursued some college studies at Cal State in Long Beach, and proudly served his country as a member of the Army National Guard.

James dedicated much of his working life to his craft as a pipe fitter with Union 469 in Phoenix, demonstrating skill and commitment in his trade. He was an active member of

the Tinnors Motorcycle Club in Scottsdale, Arizona, where he shared his passion for motorcycles and camaraderie.

After spending many years together, On May 18, 2023, James remarried Eileen Sharp in Murfreesboro, a union that brought their children and family much joy and companionship.

James is survived by his loving wife Eileen; his children Kristopher Sharp, Joey Sharp, Justin (Sarah) Sharp, J.D. Sharp, Jr., April Sharp (Curtis) Parks, Jimmy (Jolene) Sharp, Nicole (Pranoop) D’Souza, 14 grandchildren and 2 great grandchildren. He was cared for in his final days by his loving wife Eileen.

Arrangements are entrusted to Tri-State Cremation and Funeral Services.

LETTER TO EDITOR POLICY

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

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

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Hidden clues in the dirt -- the critical role of soil testing

BY CODIE MCALISTER
Pike County Extension Agent- Agriculture

PIKE COUNTY -- As the surrounding area thaws out from the recent winter events, many folks are more than ready to trade cold mornings for the upcoming warm days in the future.

Before spring fever takes over completely, this last stretch of winter offers the perfect opportunity to check on your soil and make amendments to it. A simple soil test can help improve your forage for cattle, your garden, or your yard.

Soil may look nothing more than the ground beneath our feet. However, it quietly determines the success or struggle of every garden, yard, pasture, or field. The University of Arkansas Division of Agriculture Cooperative Extension service offers soil testing at no cost for Arkansas residents.

The growth and health of plants not only depend on an abundance of the most common nutrients but also preventing certain minerals from dropping below a threshold. Soil testing enables produc-

ers or homeowners to spot a nutrient problem before it becomes very expensive to correct.

The soil tests the pH of the soil, availability of minerals, and provides fertilize recommendations specifically for the intended crop, whether it's turfgrass, a garden, hay field, or flowerbed.

If interested, you can take your own soil samples and bring them to the Extension office or you can contact the office, and I would be happy to come out and take samples for you, free of charge.

If taking your own samples, make sure to bring a sandwich size bag full of soil that was taken from 15-20 different spots in the sample area and taken in a zig-zag pattern. The samples need to have be from soil 4-6 inches to get a more accurate reading of the soil the plant's roots will be taking nutrients from.

Don't guess when it comes to fertilizing your crops, get a soil test to help prevent over or under fertilizing your plants. Whether it's a big hay field, cow pasture, garden or yard, plant nutrition is important for the growing season.

As the Agriculture Extension Agent, I look forward to visiting with producers and landowners. I make farm/land visits free of charge to help troubleshoot or plan ahead. You can call the Pike County Extension Office at (870) 285-2161 to set up an appointment at your convenience.

Want to learn more but do not have reason for a visit yet? There are several upcoming events being hosted by the Pike County Extension Office coming up soon!

UPCOMING EVENTS:
Southwest Arkansas Homesteading Conference: February 21, 2026 at UA Cossatot Nashville Campus, \$30 to register, register by Feb. 15 for guaranteed meal using this site: https://uada.formstack.com/forms/southwest_homesteading
Murfreesboro Pesticide Private Applicator Trainings: February 24, 2026, 6:00 PM, Pike County Extension Office
Glenwood Pesticide Private Applicator Training: March 11, 2026, 10:00 AM, Bainum Library
Flowers & Houseplants Workshop-Glenwood: March 17, 2026, 6:00 PM, Bainum Library
Flowers & Houseplants Workshop-Murfreesboro: April 6, 2026, 6:00 PM, Pike County Extension Office
Beef and Forage Meeting: April 14, 2026, 6:00 PM, McGrew Livestock Auction, Glenwood
Gardening 101 Workshop-Glenwood: April 21, 2026, 6:00 PM, Bainum Library

For more information about soil testing or the events above contact the Pike County Extension Office at (870) 285-2161. Visit our website at www.uaex.uada.edu for more information.

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Submitted photo/PCUAEAX

FREE TESTING ... The Pike County Extension Service offers free soil testing for all residents who want to know more about the dirt they are planting in. For more details, call Codie McAlister at (870) 285-2161.

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SOUTH PIKE COUNTY SCHOOL MENU

THURSDAY, FEBYUARY 5 Breakfast: Chocolate muffin, or cereal, fruit, juice, milk Lunch: Chicken nuggets, mashed potatoes, green beans, 7-12 whole grain roll, strawberries, milk Line 2- 7-12 Salisbury steak FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 6 Breakfast: Sausage biscuit, cereal, fruit, juice, milk Lunch: Ham & cheese croissant, potato smiles, seasoned broccoli, applesauce, milk Line 2- 7-12 Spicy chicken sandwich, lettuce, tomato MONDAY, FEBRUARY 9 Breakfast: Mini chocolate chip french toast, or cereal, fruit, juice, milk Lunch: BBQ chicken breast, mashed potatoes, sweet peas, whole grain roll, peaches, milk	Line 2- 7-12 Chicken fried steak, w/ white gravy TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 10 Breakfast: Morning sausage roll, or cereal, fruit, juice, milk Lunch: Taco soup w/ cheese, corn chips, celery sticks w/ ranch, mixed fruit, milk Line 2- 7-12 Chicken & cheese crisquito, cheese sauce, pinto beans WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 11 Breakfast: Mini blueberry loaf w/ yogurt, or cereal, fruit, juice, milk Lunch: Cheeseburger, sidewinder fries, lettuce, tomato, 7-12 pickles & onion slices, apple-sauce, milk Line 2- 7-12 Chicken sandwich <i>*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</i>
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Obituaries

A.W. ‘Rootbeer’ Martin, 86, Delight

A.W. “Rootbeer” Martin, age 86, of Delight passed away Monday, February 2, 2026. He was born October 30, 1939 in Little Rock, Arkansas to the late Arthur William Martin, Sr. and Katie Elizabeth (Porter) Martin. A.W. was a member of Murfreesboro First Baptist Church. He was also served on the Delight Fire Department for 20 years as an Assistant Fire Chief and Training Officer. A.W. was preceded in death by his parents. Survivors include his wife of 60 years, Jolyene (Hembey) Martin of Delight; aunts, Carol

Martin of Texarkana and Bobbie Martin of Hope; brother-in-law, Ray Hembey Tuskahoma, Oklahoma; and several nephews, great-nephews, cousins, friends, and church family who will miss him dearly. Graveside services will be 2:00 p.m., Monday, February 9, 2026 at Delight Cemetery with Brent Alexander and Brother Damian Rodgers officiating. Arrangements are by Smith Family Funeral Home-Arkadelphia/Ruggles-Wilcox Chapel, www.smithfamilycares.com.

‘Dear Preacher’

By Buddy Ray, Murfreesboro Church of Christ

CROSSING JORDAN
Joshua 4:1-11

The Jordan River has a long history with God's people. It is the boundary that the Israelites had to cross to get into the promised land. Crossing the Jordan was so significant in God's dealings with His people that He had it memorialized with an altar of twelve stones built by His people in the dry riverbed. God had just held the waters of the great river which was out of its banks and covered a large land area back so the children of Israel could pass through on dry land. When the feet of the priests who were carrying the Ark of the Covenant touched the edge of the Jordan River the water parted leaving a path of ground completely dry. The opening was wide enough that all the nation of



Israel could pass through it. When all the children of Israel were safely on the other side twelve large stones were used to build a memorial to the crossing and to the twelve tribes of Israel. In the days and years to come when the children of the people asked what these twelve stones meant they would be told of the great miracles God had performed bringing his people to this land that flowed with milk

and honey. He had done all of this to show His great love and mercy for a sinful and rebellious nation. They did not deserve his love and devotion. God, however, showed compassion and patience with those He wanted to bless. Calvary stands as the last great testimony of God's love, mercy and grace toward us. We do not deserve forgiveness. We never would be worthy of the death of His Son. We look at the cross and are reminded how far God was willing to go to save us from our sins. What does that cross mean? “For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.” John 3:16.

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Hwy 27 N. Murfreesboro

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- Wed. Bible study & Prayer Meeting 6 p.m.
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This is a dramatized version of facts taken from the Book of II Kings intending to show some of the customs of these ancient and traditional times.

The Shunammite's Son

HAVING FAINTED FROM BEING OUT IN THE HOT SUN WITHOUT A HEAD COVERING, THE SHUNAMMITE'S YOUNG SON IS CARRIED HOME BY A WORRIED FATHER, NOW...

...AS THEY NEAR THE HOUSE, A SERVANT HURRIES ON AHEAD...

YOUR SON HAS FALLEN ILL!

...THE FATHER GIVES THE LAD INTO HIS MOTHER'S CARE...

...AND THERE, ON HIS MOTHER'S LAP, HE DIES...

HEARTBROKEN, THE WOMAN NOW PLACES HIM ON THE BED OF ELISHA IN THE ROOM THAT WAS BUILT FOR THE PROPHET.

Next Week
A MOTHER'S PLEA!

SAVE THIS FOR YOUR SUNDAY SCHOOL SCRAPBOOK

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Sun. eve. 6 p.m. • Wed. Bible Study 7 p.m.
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Bro. Buddy Ray

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mdiamond@windstream.net

U.S. PRESIDENTS
* -- Theme Related Clue

- ACROSS
- 1. Action word
 - 5. Sierra Nevada, e.g.
 - 8. Do like Lindsey Vonn
 - 11. Sheltered, nautically speaking
 - 12. a.k.a. Daminozide
 - 13. a.k.a. tangelos
 - 15. Ladder crosspiece
 - 16. Rigatoni relative
 - 17. Earth tremor
 - 18. *Buchanan's or Lincoln's birth place (2 words)
 - 20. Odds' partners
 - 21. Completely dedicated (2 words)
 - 22. Street in France
 - 23. *The Era of Good Feelings president
 - 26. Ground red peppers spice
 - 30. Paleozoic or Victorian, e.g.
 - 31. Talking pet
 - 34. Flock's affirmation
 - 35. Phonograph media
 - 37. It doesn't mix with water
 - 38. Key, in Spanish
 - 39. Letter before kappa
 - 40. Conjured
 - 42. Bathtub hooch
 - 43. "You don't bring me flowers ____"
 - 45. Silvery-white, in heraldry
 - 47. The night before
 - 48. Add something extra (2 words)
 - 50. Eye rakishly
 - 52. *Millard's last name
 - 55. Unwelcome software message
 - 56. Double reed woodwind
 - 57. Actress Sorvino
 - 59. Carell on "The Office"
 - 60. Falling out
 - 61. Grand in scale
 - 62. *Buchanan who ran for president in 1992 and 1996
 - 63. Dental school alternative to MCAT

- 64. Tiresias in "Oedipus Rex," e.g.
- DOWN
- 1. Variable, abbr.
 - 2. Twelfth month of Jewish civil year
 - 3. *Attorney General under Bill Clinton
 - 4. Panhandler
 - 5. "My wife can vouch for me", e.g.
 - 6. Ancient Romans' language
 - 7. Julia Roberts' Academy Award-winning role
 - 8. Went down slippery slope
 - 9. Gene Simmons' rock band
 - 10. Belief or philosophy
 - 12. Popular flowering shrub
 - 13. Deplete (2 words)
 - 14. *Eisenhower or Grant, pre-presidency
 - 19. Horse hoof sounds
 - 22. One in Dean Martin's pack?
 - 23. Means of mass communication
 - 24. Belted starman
 - 25. Highly unpleasant
 - 26. *Between Tyler and Taylor
 - 27. Visual representation
 - 28. Macaulay Culkin's famous character
 - 29. Beside, archaic
 - 32. *Karl ____, "The Architect" of George W. Bush's campaigns
 - 33. Grande or Bravo, e.g.
 - 36. *Nickname for Kennedy's presidency
 - 38. Read-only memory device
 - 40. Before, old-fashioned
 - 41. Aerie baby
 - 44. Blatant
 - 46. Mythological garden guardians
 - 48. Fibula's partner
 - 49. Marriott hotel brand
 - 50. "Blackfish" (2013) subject
 - 51. Small cave
 - 52. *Model T namesake or U.S. President
 - 53. Ready for picking
 - 54. Lake north of Cleveland
 - 55. Clairvoyance
 - 58. Acronym, abbr.

CROSSWORD

1	2	3	4			5	6	7				8	9	10
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62							63					64		

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Staff photo

HONORING THE ICE WARRIORS ... In honor of their recent efforts to get the county moving again, Pike County Extension served lunch to the Pike County road crew, Pike County Judge Eddie Howard and Pike County Emergency Management Coordinator Lee Vincent on Monday. Pike County 4-H'ers helped make soups, chili and desserts for the occasion. "Thank you to this crew who literally works in every crisis," said 4-H Program Assistant Shannon Ballard. Pike County road crew members include (not in picture order) Michael Henderson, Paul Baxter, Cody Funderburk, Will Gwynne, Wrangler Rickman, Shane Ford, Jeremy Hill, Brent Teel, Daniel Neal, Cash Lowery, Ryan Roberts, Jeffrey Morris, Zayne Bruce, Dakota Harvey, Ricky Buck, Jakob Allmon and TJ Patterson.

Duck survey of state shows lessened numbers, but biologists state the number may be unreflective

STATE CAPITOL WEEK IN REVIEW

State Senator Steve Crowell

LITTLE ROCK -- Arkansas Game and Fish Commission (AGFC) Wildlife Management Division staff reported on the

2026 midwinter survey. The survey includes the Mississippi Alluvial Valley (the Delta), Arkansas River Valley, and southwest Arkansas. The midwinter survey is usually when biologists see peak waterfowl numbers, and found overall numbers were down from last year.

The most recent data, released January 21, 2026, found dramatic changes in the waterfowl population since the previous report only 2 weeks prior. The January survey estimated 574,940 ducks in Arkansas, with 351,900 of those being mallards. The December survey found 1,030,824 ducks in the state.

A total decrease in ducks of approximately 455,884 and a decrease of approximately 143,835 mallards. Staff noted that the deficit in numbers was possibly skewed from the December count. According to the AGFC waterfowl coordinator, "We have less confidence in our December estimate because it may have been biased high due to dry conditions with large amounts of birds around limited water sources." Making it more difficult to estimate is that each state has varying survey methods. Overall, most states are seeing fewer birds during peak migration this season. Also, a decrease in duck numbers is expected due to drought on the Canadian prairie, where ducks hatch on the PotHole Region.

Biologists are back in the sky this week (as long as the weather holds up) for the annual late January survey, the last of three AGFC waterfowl surveys for the season. Arkansas continues to face extremely dry conditions this winter with little rainfall. Many regions of Arkansas faced their second-to-third driest December on record, dating back to 1893, and there has been little precipitation in January. To see the latest survey and maps of duck distribution around the state, visit www.agfc.com.

36TH ANNUAL BIG BUCK CLASSIC

The Arkansas Game and Fish Foundation's (AGFF) 36th Annual Big Buck Classic will take place February 6-8 at the Arkansas State Fairgrounds. The children's area provides hands-on for the next generation of hunters and anglers. There is an indoor trout pond where children can catch live rainbow trout, an inflatable BB gun range, and a hover ball archery shoot. There will be expert instruction provided by Bowfishers of Arkansas and the Arkansas Bowhunters Association.

It is a great environment for newcomers to learn about our state's traditions. In addition to the kid's zone, state biologists will be on hand to promote conservation programs, and attend-

ees can learn about the new Deer Management Assistance Program, where deer clubs can get professional guidance on managing deer herds and improving the wildlife habitat.

There is no charge to participate in the AGFF Kids Zone, but admission to the show is \$15 for adults and \$5 for kids 5 to 12 years old. Admission for children under 5 is free.

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Week of February 1, 2026

Four States Ag Expo offers latest research, best practices for area growers

BY REBEKAH HALL
*University of Arkansas
System Division of Agriculture*

TEXARKANA -- On Feb. 12, the Four States Agricultural Expo returns to Texarkana, Arkansas, offering area producers and growers the latest research-based information and best practices for livestock and forages, integrated pest management, home horticulture and more.

The expo will take place at the Four States Fair and Rodeo, 3700 E. 50th St. in Texarkana. The event is free to attend and open to the public, with registration beginning at 7:30 a.m. Concurrent programs run 8:30 a.m.-3:15 p.m. Lunch will also be provided at no cost.

The event is a joint project between the University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture and Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service. Jennifer Caraway, Miller County extension staff chair for the Division of Agriculture, said specialists from the two institutions collaborate to “deliver high-quality, research-based information to producers across Arkansas, Texas, Louisiana and Oklahoma.”

“Agricultural challenges often extend beyond state lines, and by working together we can address regional issues more effectively, share specialized knowledge and make better use of resources,” Caraway said. “This partnership ensures that producers have access to the most current, science-driven recommendations in key areas of agriculture, helping them make informed decisions that improve productivity, profitability and sustainability.”

Continuing education units, or CEUs, are available for licensed pesticide applicators, “making the event both in-

formative and beneficial for maintaining certifications,” Caraway said.

Arkansas pesticide applicator training will also be available at the expo. The cost is \$65, with \$20 paid to Miller County Cooperative Extension and \$45 paid to the Ar-

kansas State Plant Board for a five-year license.

Caraway said she encourages growers and producers from Arkansas, Texas, Louisiana and Oklahoma to attend the expo, both to gain practical, research-based knowledge and connect with others

in the agricultural community.

“Attendees will hear from specialists across a range of agricultural fields, providing valuable insights they can take directly back to their operations,” Caraway said. “In addition to the educational sessions, the expo offers a

great chance to network with fellow producers and industry professionals who are facing many of the same challenges and opportunities.”

Experts from the Division of Agriculture and Texas A&M AgriLife will present workshops throughout the day.

For more information about the expo, contact the Miller County Extension office at (870) 779-3609.

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

RE-ELECT TRAVIS HILL

For Pike County Sheriff & Collector

The Most Experienced Candidate. Proven Leadership You Can Trust.

Travis Hill is the most experienced candidate for *Pike County Sheriff*, with a proven record of leadership and service to the people of Pike County.

As Sheriff, Travis Hill has:

- **Brought School Resource Officers** into our schools to *help protect* our children
- **Established a K-9 Unit** to strengthen drug enforcement and criminal investigations
- **Modernized deputies’ equipment**, improving officer safety and making law enforcement more efficient in protecting the public.

Moving Pike County Forward

- Establish a **dedicated drug task force** to combat illegal drugs
- Expand **community policing efforts** to strengthen trust and visibility
- Maintain an **open-door policy** - accessible, accountable leadership for all citizens.

(Paid for by the Committee to Elect Travis Hill)



Experienced. Proven. Trusted.

Re-Elect Travis Hill
Pike County Sheriff

NOTICE OF ELECTION

This notice is prepared by the County Election Commission to inform the public that the **2026 PREFERENTIAL PRIMARY** will be held on **MARCH 3, 2026**. The notice also provides the public information regarding this election as required by law:

EARLY VOTING DATES & TIMES:

- M-F, Feb. 17–Feb. 20, 8:00 a.m.- 6:00 p.m.
- Sat., Feb. 21, 10:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.
- M-F, Feb. 23–Feb. 27, 8:00 a.m.- 6:00 p.m.
- Sat., Feb. 28, 10:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.
- Mon., March 2, 8:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m.

Location of Poll, Address, Ballots Assigned to Poll:

- Pike County Clerk’s Office, 112 N Washington, Suite A Murfreesboro, AR, Vote Center/ All Ballots
- Bainum Learning Center, 128 E Broadway, Glenwood, AR, Vote Center/ All Ballots

ELECTION DAY VOTING:

ELECTION DATE: March 3, 2026

HOURS: 7:30 a.m.–7:30 p.m.

Location of Poll, Address, Ballots Assigned to Poll:

- Bainum Learning Center, 128 E Broadway, Glenwood, AR, Vote Center/ All Ballots
- Bethlehem Baptist Center, 2589 Hwy 27 N, Kirby, AR, Vote Center/ All Ballots
- Delight Cafeteria, 623 Webb St, Delight, AR, Vote Center/ All Ballots
- Murfreesboro Municipal Building, 204 E Main, Murfreesboro, AR, Vote Center/ All Ballots

**IN THE EVENT OF A RUNOFF THEN RUNOFF
EARLY VOTING DATES & TIMES:**

- T-F, March 24–March 27, 8:00 a.m.-4:30 p.m.
- Mon, March 30, 8:00 a.m.-4:30 p.m.

RUNOFF ELECTION DATE: Tuesday, March 31, Hours: 7:30 a.m.–7:30 p.m.

(Runoff early voting and election day are the same locations as the primary election)

ABSENTEE VOTING:

To request an absentee ballot, or to see if you are qualified to vote absentee, contact the County Clerk’s office using the information below:

**112 N WASHINGTON, SUITE A, MURFREESBORO, AR
(870) 285-2743
OFFICE HOURS: M-F 8 A.M. TO 4:30 P.M.**

BALLOT CANVASSING AND COUNTING:

All processes listed below will be conducted at the **PIKE COUNTY CLERK’S OFFICE** located at **112 N WASHINGTON, SUITE A, MURFREESBORO, AR**. The dates and times are provided below:

Activity, Date, Time:

- Canvassing and Counting of Absentee Ballots, March 3, 1:00 p.m. to Completion
- Compiling & Publishing Unofficial Election Results, March 3, 7:30 p.m. to Completion
- Counting of Election Day Ballots, March 3, 8:00 p.m. to Completion
- Initial Duplication of Ballots, March 4, 9:00 a.m. to Completion
- Initial Review of Provisional Ballots, March 4, 11 a.m. to Completion
- Provisional Ballot Hearings, March 9, 11:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.
- Final Review and Counting of Provisional Ballots, March 9, 1:00 p.m. to Completion

- Recount (IF NEEDED), March 11, 10:00 a.m. to Completion
- Post Election Audit, March 12, 9:00 a.m. to Completion
- Canvassing and Counting of UOCAVA Absentee Ballots (IF NEEDED), March 13, 1:00 p.m. to Completion
- Certification of the Election, March 13, 1:00 p.m. to Completion

ELECTION OFFICIALS:

Election Officials appointed to conduct early voting, election day voting, and all other required duties will be posted for public viewing in the Pike County Clerk’s Office, on February 9, 2026 and remain posted for not less than 10 days. An objection must be filed with the County Clerk in writing prior to the following deadlines. An objection that an official is a spouse of a county election commissioner, a county party chair, or a spouse of a county party chair must be filed within 7 days of February 9. An objection that an official is married to a candidate or related to a candidate within two degrees of blood relations must be filed within 10 days of February 9.

PRIMARY BALLOT CHOICES:

- Registered Republican voter: will have the option of choosing a Republican ballot, a Democratic ballot, or a Non-Partisan ballot
- Registered Democratic Voter: will have the option of choosing either a Democratic ballot, or a Non-Partisan ballot.
- Registered Optional Voter: will have the option of choosing a Republican ballot, a Democratic ballot, or a Non-Partisan ballot.

REPUBLICAN PRIMARY CANDIDATES:

U.S. Senate
Micah Ashby
Senator Tom Cotton
Jeb Little

U.S. Congress District 04
Congressman Bruce Westerman

Governor
Governor Sarah Huckabee Sanders

Lieutenant Governor
Lieutenant Governor Leslie Rutledge

Attorney General
Attorney General Tim Griffin

Secretary of State
Judge Cathy Hardin Harrison
Bryan Norris
Senator Kim Hammer

State Treasurer
State Treasurer John Thurston

Auditor of State
Auditor of State Dennis Milligan

Commissioner of State Lands
Secretary of State Cole Jester
Christian Olson

State Representative District 89
State Representative Justin Gonzales

Pike County Judge
Eddie Howard-Pike County Judge

Wade Stewart
Keith Couch
Robert Shelby

Pike County Sheriff & Collector
Sheriff Travis Hill
Randy H. Lamb

Pike County Clerk
Randee Edwards

Pike County Circuit Clerk
Sabrina Williams

Pike County Treasurer
Loletia Rather

Pike County Assessor
Staci Stewart

Mountain Township Constable
Chance Reid

Justice of the Peace District 1
Roger D. Floyd
Payton Eckert

Justice of the Peace District 2
Robbie Crocker

Justice of the Peace District 3
Seth Henry Kirkham

Justice of the Peace District 4
Billy Hill

Justice of the Peace District 6
Ron Parker
Kip Holbrook

Justice of the Peace District 7
Robert Mac Irvin
Richard Mohlenhoff

Justice of the Peace District 8
John J. Plyler Jr.

Unopposed Republican Candidates will not be listed separately on the ballot

DEMOCRATIC PRIMARY CANDIDATES:

U.S. Senate
Mayor Ethan N. Dunbar
Hallie Shoffner

U.S. Congress District 04
James “Rus” Russell, III
Steven Layne O’Donnell

Governor
State Senator Fred Love
Supha Xayprasith-Mays

Secretary of State
Kelly Grappe

Missouri Township Constable
Ricky Branch

Justice of the Peace District 4
Leotis Snowden

Justice of the Peace District 5
Jerry Fendley

Justice of the Peace District 9
Paul S. Baker

***Unopposed Democratic Candidates will not be listed*

*separately on the ballot***

NONPARTISAN / JUDICIAL CANDIDATES:

These races will appear on the Republican primary ballots, the Democrat primary ballots, and a separate nonpartisan general election ballot.

State Supreme Court Associate Justice Position 3
John Adams
Arkansas Supreme Court Justice Nick Bronni

State Supreme Court Associate Justice Position 6
Arkansas Supreme Court Justice Cody Hiland

Circuit Judge District 09-West Division 01
Circuit Judge Tom Cooper

Circuit Judge District 09-West Division 02
Circuit Judge Bryan L. Chesshir

Prosecuting Attorney, District 09-West
Clayton Tinkes
Prosecuting Attorney Jana Bradford
City Attorney Erin Hunter

Unopposed Judicial Candidates will not be listed separately on the ballot

ISSUES ON ANNUAL SCHOOL ELECTION BALLOT:

(These issues will appear on all 3 ballots when applicable.) Unopposed School Board Candidates will not appear on a ballot per A.C.A. §7-7-304

Centerpoint School Board of Directors Zone 3
LeeAllen Sutton

Centerpoint School Board of Directors At Large Position
Kerry Horn

Centerpoint School Board of Directors Zone 4
Pake Sutton
Larry A. Harvey

South Pike County School Board of Directors Zone 5
Robert Silva

South Pike County School Board of Directors Zone 7
Alyssa Duggan
Carrie Tidwell

Kirby School Board of Directors Zone 1
Blake Harmon

Kirby School Board of Directors At Large Position
Trent Ott

Dierks School District: 43.0 Mills School Tax
Nashville School District: 31.70 Mills School Tax
Centerpoint School District: 40.9 Mills School Tax
South Pike County School District: 41.0 Mills School Tax
Kirby School District: 41.0 Mills School Tax

VIEWING YOUR BALLOT PRIOR TO VOTING:

Any voter may look up his or her sample ballot on the Secretary of State’s website at: <https://www.voterview.ar-nova.org/voterview>. Ballots will be available no later than 20 days prior to the election. Sample ballots will also be available at the polling site.

This publication was paid for by the Pike County Clerk’s Office, the amount for this publication is \$550.80.

(PCC: 31 & 33, 1224w)