

The Murfreesboro Diamond

Wednesday, February 11, 2026
Issue 32 • 1 Section • 6 Pages

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Senior night for MHS Rattler basketball squads this Friday

MURFREESBORO -- This Friday, February 13, the Murfreesboro High School Rattlers and Lady Rattlers will hold senior night versus Kirby. The pair of games will begin starting at 5:30 p.m. at the MHS gymnasium.

County ham radio group announces March classes

PIKE COUNTY -- The Pike County Ham Radio Club is hosting license classes and tests this spring. The group is planning to offer entry level Technician classes, but upgrade classes are available for those interested.

The club will hold a three night class in Glenwood on March 3, and 5-6 from 6-9 p.m. at the conference room in the Glenwood Police Department at 210 N. 2nd St in Glenwood.

They will also hold classes at the Murfreesboro Community Room at 210 2nd Avenue in Murfreesboro on March 6-7 from 9 a.m.-4 p.m., on March 13 from 9 a.m.-4 p.m. and March 14 from 10:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m. For those seeking and evening option, they will also hold classes in Murfreesboro on March 6, 7, 13 and 14 from 6-9 p.m.

All license level tests will be available on March 21 from 10 a.m.-noon at the Kirby School Cafeteria.

Anyone interested in classes or testing should contact one of the following:

Mark Reed, (903) 701-5954, mark.reed.ii@gmail.com

Will Henderson, (870) 925-0168, redhender-son@hotmail.com

Pat Chaloner, (870) 285-5023, n5wcl1991@gmail.com

County Judge announces town hall meeting Thursday

MURFREESBORO -- Pike County Judge Eddie Howard has announced a town hall meeting to be held on Thursday, Feb. 12.

The meeting will take place in the courtroom on the second floor of the Pike County Courthouse starting at 6:30 p.m.

Howard will discuss the 2026 budget and will be taking questions.

All Pike County residents are invited to attend the meeting.

Radio club to hold monthly meeting Saturday in M'boro

MURFREESBORO -- The Pike County Ham Radio Club will meet on Saturday Feb. 14, starting at 9 a.m. at Teri's Place in Murfreesboro.

Anyone interested in learning more about the topic is invited to attend.

Meet The Candidates set for February 16 in Kirby

KIRBY -- The Pike County Republican Committee will hold a 'Meet The Candidates' event on Monday, February 16.

The event will be held at the Kirby High School cafeteria starting at 6:30 p.m.

Candidates will include those running for county judge, sheriff and justice of the peace.

The public is invited to attend.

Submit Your Local News to the Diamond!
mdiamond@windstream.net

Call (870) 285-2723 For More Information



Submitted photos

WINTER DAMAGE ... As the totals of damages due to the recent storm come in, Pike County Office of Emergency Management coordinator Lee Vincent and Pike County Judge Eddie Howard are both cautiously optimistic that Pike County will meet the thresholds for disaster relief from the federal government. Pictured (above) is the Pike County Fairgrounds in Glenwood, while (left) some of the damage at Swaha Landing on Lake Greeson. Damage was also sustained on a number of outbuildings and chicken houses across the county.

Initiative group hopes second time is the charm

Makes case that alcohol sales could be one of first steps to revitalizing county

MURFREESBORO -- The effort to present an alcohol sales referendum to voters of Pike County is gearing up in the hope that the second time is the charm.

The same effort presented the issue to voters in 2022, where the measure was defeated by six votes, 1,858-1,852.

According to information provided by the group, they will need to collect a minimum of 2,291 valid petitions (38%) of the 6,028 registered voters in Pike County in order to make the ballot for the 2026 general election this November.

Due to some petitions being thrown out in the confirmation process by the Pike County Clerk, the group hopes to collect perhaps an additional 1,000 petitions than what is actually needed.

After successfully getting on the ballot in 2022 right at the deadline, the effort hopes to get local groups in each of Pike County's communities to aid in petition collection process.

Anyone with interest in helping the effort is asked to contact Lisa Harvill at (870) 557-1860. Harvill said one of the major obstacles toward the effort will be the loss of volunteers from the 2022 campaign.

Petitions are currently being crafted by a lawyer.

A number of people asked to sign a petition in the 2022 effort felt like they were deceived into participating, so the effort wishes to make it very transparent that the signing of a petition is only for the purposes of getting the issue to the ballot. Signing a petition in no way reflects a "vote" for or against the issue.

The petition will include exactly what will appear on the ballot -- including "for" and "against" boxes. But these are only for informational purposes on the petition, and not counted or required for a valid petition toward the 2,291 total.

"We want people to know what they are

signing, so there is absolutely no confusion," said Harvill.

Should an unregistered citizen wish to fill out a petition, they must first register to vote at the Pike County Clerk's office in Murfreesboro. A voter registration form may be downloaded from www.sos.arkansas.gov/uploads/elections/ArkansasVoterRegistrationApplication.pdf and mailed to the County Clerk at P.O. Box 218, Murfreesboro, AR 71958.

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

The group said the experience in getting the effort to the ballot four years ago was invaluable toward the process this time around.

For those that would like to aid the effort, but have not the time to do so, monetary donations toward the effort are being accepted at First State Bank in Murfreesboro into the group's account.

Since the 2022 election, a pair of restaurants in the county have opted for the private club option in order to sell alcohol to customers on site. Additionally, the State of Arkansas began allowing alcohol sales at state parks in dry counties, including the Crater of Diamonds State Park in 2025.

The group also feels there are a number of benefits across Pike County from the additional revenue derived from alcohol sales -- including but not limited to -- better infrastructure, city/county services, greater security against economic downturns, support of local businesses, less dependence on grant funds that may or may not exist in the future and attraction of a larger tourist base.

The group also hammered home the fact that Pike County is losing population and the trend is expected to continue in the future. An effort to regain a grocery store for Murfreesboro found many businessmen unwilling to invest in the area before the saga was finally solved

locally earlier this year.

Based on a comprehensive economic development strategy along with the University of Little Rock's Institute for Economic Advancement, the Pike County Economic Development Commission has stated that Pike County, like much of rural America, is facing the challenge of demographic change while trying to maintain a diverse economic foundation. According to numbers provided by the group, the county had a population of 10,066 in 2021, a 10.8% decline from the 2010 census. Furthermore, the decline is suggested to continue, with projections of 9,661 population by 2027. The group has stated that Pike County stands at a crossroads -- the 4% predicted population decline through 2027 will start to affect services, infrastructure and economic vitality. Meanwhile, the aging population will likely increase demands for healthcare services while potentially reducing the available workforce.

Individual communities across the county and the Pike County Economic Development Commission have been looking to find ways to stem the tide from regression via a number of studies and plans. The group seeking to legalize liquor sales in the county feels that the revenue from that effort can be one of the first hurdles toward stabilizing the area's economy.

As tourism is Murfreesboro's largest financial boon, the availability to have a nightlife could help attract and retain more tourists in the area.

Regionally, the effort is gaining momentum. Howard County is currently attempting to get a referendum on the 2026 ballot, while Hempstead County tried in 2022. Clark County passed their referendum in 2010.

A report from a local television station (KATV, Little Rock) stated that sales tax revenue decreased in Clark County from 2009-2010 by over \$28,000, but after the county went wet in 2011 the sales tax increased over \$123,000.

Howard County man sentenced to ADC for internet stalking

MURFREESBORO -- A Howard County man was sentenced Monday in Pike County Circuit Court for internet stalking of a child.

Dustin Curry, 42, pleaded guilty to the charge and was sentenced to 17 years in the Arkansas Department of Corrections (ADC) with seven years suspended. Curry will be required to register as a sex offender following his release.

An investigation involving Curry started in October 2025 when he contacted the Pike County Sheriff's Department's undercover account that portrays to be a 14-year-old female.

Curry eventually made arrangements to

meet the female and was immediately arrested by the sheriff's department and the Murfreesboro Police Department. He admitted to bringing marijuana to the meeting, along with two open bottles of whiskey and a bedsheet.

When arrested, Curry told officers he "knew he messed up" and asked, "can I just plead guilty now and get this over with?"

Also Monday in Pike County court, Charles Harold Christ, 63, of Glenwood, pleaded guilty to deliver of a controlled substance. He was sentenced to 15 years in the ADC with seven years suspended.

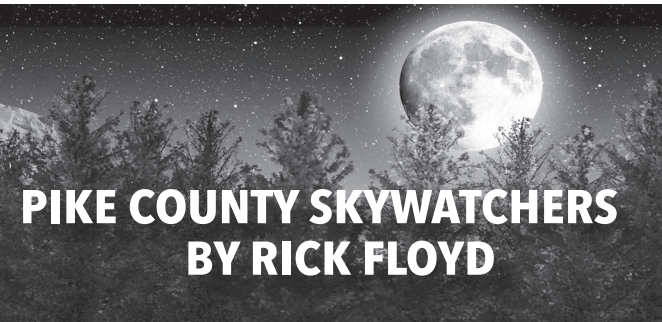
Curtis Jay O'Neal, 25, of Kirby, pleaded guilty to possession of controlled substance and was sentenced to four years of probation.

Lacie Scantling, 26, of Caddo Gap, pleaded "true" to violating the terms of probation and had her probation extended for five years, sentenced to 120 days in the county jail and 90 days in "transition housing."

Also Monday, Mary Phillips and Timothy Phillips, the Murfreesboro couple charged with endangering the welfare of a minor, both pleaded innocent to the charge and an April 6 pretrial date was set.

BY REBEKAH HALL
University of Arkansas System
Division of Agriculture

A promotional advertisement for LeafFilter gutter service. The top half features a large, bold graphic with the text "15% OFF + 10%" in white on a dark background. Below this, the text "LeafFilter" is written in a large, black, serif font, followed by "Discount For Seniors + Military" in a smaller, black, sans-serif font. The bottom half of the ad has a light gray background with the text "We install year-round!" in a black, serif font. Below this, it says "Get a FREE full gutter inspection and estimate:" in a black, sans-serif font, followed by the phone number "1-855-977-9614" in a large, bold, black, sans-serif font, and "Promo: 285" in a black, sans-serif font. At the very bottom, there is a small, italicized disclaimer in a black, sans-serif font.



Moon mission postponed after testing issues


NASA's plan was to do a final test of all rocket systems, then on February 8th launch Artemis II with a crew of four on a 10-day mission to orbit the Moon. The test however revealed problems and now the launch has been postponed until sometime in March.

Artemis I was launched in November of 2022 carrying the Orion spacecraft (without a crew) into space with the mission of orbiting the Moon for several days at only 80 miles above it's surface. The test of rocket, called the Space Launch System (SLS), and the Orion spacecraft went well. NASA has been criticized after this latest Artemis II scrub because Artemis I went through the same problems as they are having now, and many feel those problems should have already been solved.

Once Artemis II has completed its mission, and the one woman and three men are back on Earth, Artemis III and IV will follow, each taking astronauts back for lunar landings. More on this in March, hopefully.

I was recently asked, since the Moon has been moving away from Earth for millions of years why hasn't it flown away by now. It is estimated that the Moon, formed about 4 ½ billion years ago, and has been gradually moving farther from Earth for about 2 ½ billion years. It is easy to conclude that it was once closer to Earth and much larger in the sky. We are, interestingly, living in the time when the Moon is at just the right distance from us to exactly visually match the size of the Sun. This means we have total solar eclipses. Laser measuring confirms that the Moon moves away at about 1 ½ inches per year, so this means a time will come when the Moon is far enough away to appear smaller and no longer cover the Sun completely during an eclipse.

The reason the Moon moves away from Earth is because of a complex interaction of gravity between the two bodies and the tidal forces on Earth. The Moon will not reach a point of flying away, but in about 50 billion years the two bodies will be in tidal lock meaning the Moon will always be in the same place in the sky. According to calculations however the Sun will have gone through changes that will have made Earth uninhabited by then. Enjoy your lucky time on Earth with our perfectly placed Moon.



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UAMS

HOUSE CALL



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

Q: What is keratoconus?

A: Keratoconus is an eye disorder in which the cornea, the clear and dome-shaped outer lens of the eye, gets thinner and bulges outward into a cone shape. A cone-shaped cornea can cause blurry or distorted vision as well as make the eyes more sensitive to glare and light.

The exact cause of keratoconus is unknown. You may have a greater chance of developing the condition if a family member is affected. Keratoconus often occurs during teenage years, but it may not present itself until around age 30. It is less common in people over the age of 40. Conditions such as hay fever may also lead to keratoconus, as excessively rubbing the eyes can break down corneal tissue.

Symptoms of keratoconus include sudden clouding or

worsening of vision in one or both eyes, frequent changes in eyeglass prescriptions, double vision out of one eye and seeing halos around bright lights.

Keratoconus in its early stages can often be treated with contact lenses or eyeglasses. As the condition progresses, surgery to repair or replace the cornea may be required. Contact your health care provider if you have symptoms and need to develop a treatment plan.

County Democrats to hold convention March 16

MURFREESBORO -- The Democratic Party of Pike County will hold its convention Monday, March 16, at 5 p.m. at Telingas Mexican Restaurant in Murfreesboro.

During the meeting, Pike County Democrats will elect delegates to the state convention June 13.

The county convention also will elect representatives to the state committee, which will meet several times in 2026-2028.

Any Pike County Democrat may attend and vote at the county convention.

PIKE COUNTY PUBLIC RECORD

DOMESTIC RELATIONS

DR-26-1 -- Denise Love, vs. Cody Love, divorce, Jan. 2

DR-26-2 -- Richard Calley, vs. Megan Goodwin, divorce, Jan. 9

DR-26-3 -- Dana Taylor vs. Brian Mitchell, order of protection, Jan. 13

DR-26-4 -- Kaitlin Kosters, vs. Zackary Kosters, divorce, Jan. 14

DR-26-5 -- Audry Buck, vs. Daniel Buck, divorce, Jan. 14

DR-26-6 -- OCSE, vs. Samantha Smith, support/OCSE, Jan. 16

DR-26-7 -- Mary Cook, vs. Jamie Cook, divorce, Jan. 16

DR-26-8 -- Charles Hignight, vs. Terri Hignight, divorce, Jan. 23

DR-26-9 -- Carmina Cortes Morelos, vs. Edgar Cesar Alonso, paternity, Feb. 6

CIVIL

CV-26-1 -- Cavalry SPV I, vs. Rebecca White, contract/other, Jan. 2

CV-26-2 -- Velocity Investments, vs. Wilma Powers, debt collection, Jan. 6

CV-26-3 --Velocity Investments, vs. Jacob Warren, debt collection, Jan. 11

CV-26-4 -- Capital One, vs. Jana Snowden, debt collection, Jan. 13

CV-26-5 -- LVNV Funding, vs. Jeannie Jones, debt collection, Jan. 14

CV-26-6 -- Ernest Quinney ET AL, real property/other, Jan. 14

CV-26-7 -- Portfolio Recovery Associates LLC., vs. Jimmy Johnson, debt collection, Jan.15

CV-26-8 -- Credit Acceptance Corp., vs. Michael Glover, contract/other, Jan. 21

CV-26-9 -- CKS Prime Investments LLC., vs. Kelly Christopher, debt collection, Jan. 26

CV-26-10 -- Credit Acceptance Corp., vs. Rachael Virto, contract/other, Jan. 28

CV-26-11 -- LVNV Funding, vs. Megan Davidson, debt collection, Jan. 30

CV-26-12 -- Kino Financial Co. LLC., vs. Maria Eatmon, debt collection, Feb. 3

CV-26-13 -- LVNV Funding LLC., vs. Jeremy Gadbury, debt collection, Feb. 5

MARRIAGE LICENSES

Corey Lynn Rutherford, 26, Murfreesboro; Jocelynn Raeleigh Zeigler, 20, Murfreesboro, Jan. 15

Coy Lane Carpenter, 30, Glenwood; Calli Jane Busby, 29, Glenwood, Jan. 15

Clifton Ray Pate, 54, Amity; Sherry Ann Mcarthur, 57, Amity, Jan. 30

Benjamin Daniel Britt, 31, Amity; Bethany Brooke Porter, 29, Amity, Feb. 5

Gordon Charles Morrow, Jr., 36, Nashville; Audrey Alexandra Murphy, 36, Nashville, Feb. 6

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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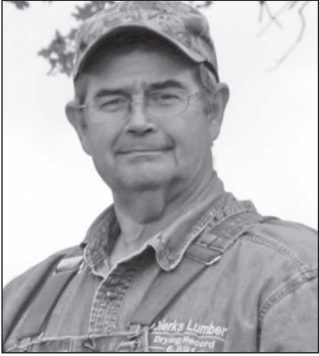
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Obituaries

Fred Raymond Hughes, 69, Murfreesboro



Fred Raymond Hughes, age 69, of Murfreesboro, passed away on Wednesday, January 28, 2026, in the arms of his loving wife after a lengthy illness. While words can never fully ease the pain and grief of this loss, those who loved Fred take comfort in the life he lived and the legacy he leaves behind.

Fred was born on May 21, 1956, in Branson, Missouri, to Lester and Geraldine Johnson Hughes. Following the death of his father in 1961, Fred moved back to Murfreesboro with his mother, his brother Richard, and his sister Dottie. Murfreesboro would become the place he proudly called home for the rest of his life.

During his high school years, Fred's world revolved around football. A dedicated and hardworking player, he was known for his strength on the line and for proudly wearing jersey number 71. In his senior year, 1974, his commitment and talent were recognized when he was named All-Conference and All-State.

In 1976, Fred began his career at the Murfreesboro Lumber Mill under the guidance of his uncle, John R. Crocker. He took great pride in his work as a millwright, sawyer, and machinist, and he was always eager to share his skills and knowledge with younger generations. Fred retired from Weyerhaeuser in 2019. Throughout his career, he was known as a hardworking family man, a loyal employee and coworker, and a quiet teacher who influenced many lives.

In 1978, Fred met his match and the love of his life, Lisa. The two were married on April 6, 1979, beginning a life together rooted in love, faith, and devotion. They made their home in town, where they were blessed with two sons, Brandon and Corey (Bo).

In the late 1980s, Fred fulfilled a lifelong dream when he took over the Hughes Family

Farm, originally homesteaded by his great-grandfather. Together, Fred and Lisa enjoyed restoring his grandfather's home and building a life rich in family traditions. Over the next three decades, they lovingly watched their two boys grow into strong young men.

After moving to the farm, Fred's love of the land grew into a deep passion for trees and nature. One of his favorite pastimes was planting trees, caring for them, and walking among them. The farm became the heart of their family life, a place where traditions were built and memories were made that will last for generations.

Fred was preceded in death by his parents, Lester Hughes and Geraldine (Johnson) Hughes Womack; his stepfather, Ray Womack; his brother, Richard Hughes; his nephew, Richard Hughes Jr.; and his niece, Ashby Womack.

He is survived by his wife of forty-six years, Lisa Hughes of Murfreesboro; his sons and daughter-in-law, Brandon and Holly Hughes and Corey (Bo) Hughes, all of Murfreesboro; his sisters and brothers-in-law, Dottie and Ronnie Johnson of St. Paul, Minnesota, and Karen and Johnny Wesson of Murfreesboro; his brother and sister-in-law, Kenny and Valerie Womack of Murfreesboro; his sisters-in-law, Cathy Jordan of Nashville, Angie McBay, and Teresa Schooley of Murfreesboro; and numerous nieces, nephews, loving relatives, and friends.

Honorary pallbearers will be Kyle Jackson, Jody Abernathy, Donnie Golden, Dylan Webb, Murry Bailey, Curt Beavert, Mat Myres, and Darwin Nolan.

A Celebration of Life service will be held at a later date.

In lieu of flowers the family would like trees planted in Fred's memory or donations made to A Living tribute shop. alivingtribute.org to help with the planting of trees in the States National Forest.

Though our hero is gone, his legacy of strength, love, and courage will live on in all who knew him. He leaves behind a void that can never be filled, but also a lifetime of memories that will never be lost.

Cremation arrangements are under the direction of Smith Family Funeral Home-Glenwood.

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RATTLERS HOST MOUNTAIN PINE

Wednesday, February 4 • MHS Gymnasium

Last week the Murfreesboro High School basketball squad competed in a number of games to help complete the season following the winter weather delays. The Rattlers fell at Foreman 85-43, lost at home to Caddo Hills 66-54 and Mountain Pine 69-58 and then lost at Dierks to end the week 67-39. The team will finish out a pair of games at home this week to complete their regular season -- Tuesday against Cutter Morning Star and Friday against Kirby, which will also be senior night.



SOUTH PIKE COUNTY SCHOOL MENU

MURFREESBORO SENIOR ADULT CENTER LUNCH MENU

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 11 Country fried steak, gravy, mashed potatoes, okra & tomatoes, roll, fruit	roll, fruit
MONDAY, FEBRUARY 16 Chicken pot pie, garden salad, dinner roll, bread pudding	WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 18 Meatballs & pasta, broccoli, cheesy garlic breadsticks, cookie
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 17 Baked ham, baked potato, brussels sprouts,	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

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 12 Breakfast: Chicken biscuit, or cereal, fruit, juice, milk Lunch: Stuffed crust pepperoni pizza, steamed broccoli, seasoned corn, whole grain cookie, pears, milk Line 2- 7-12 Pizza stick w/ sauce	TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 17 Breakfast: Fruit loop waffles, or cereal, fruit, juice, milk Lunch: Chicken spaghetti, garlic breadsticks, seasoned carrots, steamed broccoli, peaches, milk Line 2- 7-12 Orange chicken w/ fried rice
FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 13 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	WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 18 Breakfast: Sausage biscuit, or cereal, fruit, juice, milk Lunch: BBQ pork sandwich, cole slaw, pinto beans, 7-12 baked chips, pineapple, milk Line 2- 7-12 Meatball sub w/ cheese

**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*

‘Dear Preacher’

By Buddy Ray, Murfreesboro Church of Christ

GOD’S GOODNESS
“Or do you despise the riches of His goodness, forbearance, and longsuffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leads you to repentance?” A Christian who does not appreciate the great patience of Jehovah is in dire danger. The problem with human nature is that we tend to think we are not as weak as those around us. If we are not careful, we attribute sinful things to others. The difficulty with this is that we cannot know why people act and talk as they do. Only God can judge the motivation of the individuals of our acquaintance. On occasion, we will think a family member is angry because of an expression



on the face or in the tone of voice. The truth many times is a result of a family emergency or an upsetting situation. It is evident that we cannot know what is going on in the lives of our peers. God wants us to understand that He has a perfect grasp of what is happening in our heart. God blesses us every day to show how

much He loves us. Satan will tempt us, and we will sin. “If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us.” I John 1:8. He goes further to tell us. “If we say we have not sinned, we make Him a liar and the truth is not in us.” I John 1:10. Paul says God’s goodness is the motivation for us to repent and turn away from sin. God is always ready to forgive us if we will repent with all our heart. The inspired writer tells us, “Glory, honor and peace to everyone who works what is good; to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile. For there is no partiality with God.” Romans 2:10,11.

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...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.
Radio Broadcast B99.5 @ 8:30 a.m.

Bro. Buddy Ray

Attend Church This Sunday!

HAVE AN ITEM YOU'D LIKE TO SEE INCLUDED?

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mdiamond@windstream.net

THE 1990'S

* -- The Related Clue

ACROSS

- 1. *First cloned mammal
- 6. Fuel economy acronym
- 9. Land measure
- 13. Pascal of “The Mandalorian” fame
- 14. Second O in EVOO
- 15. a.k.a. sergeant fish or robalo
- 16. Plant fungus
- 17. *”Titanic” star
- 18. *”The ____ Whisperer” (1998)
- 19. *PepsiCo offering
- 21. *One of the Walsh twins, 90210
- 23. Long reef dweller
- 24. Reach a high
- 25. Color of passion
- 28. Agitate
- 30. Like Matryoshka inside Matryoshka
- 35. Gave the boot
- 37. Arab League member
- 39. One of Florida Keys
- 40. Summer month
- 41. Polished diamond surface
- 43. Safecracker
- 44. Lazybones
- 46. Before “saw” and “conquered”
- 47. Glitch
- 48. Watercraft
- 50. Remains repository
- 52. Like some martinis
- 53. Comfort
- 55. One in a pod
- 57. * ____ bubble
- 60. *The 1990s, a.k.a. post-____ ____ decade
- 64. Biblical patriarch
- 65. Sensitive subject?
- 67. “Bad news travels fast,” e.g.
- 68. ____ ____ shopping cart
- 69. Father’s progeny
- 70. Trojan War epic
- 71. Difficult situation
- 72. Like jalapeno
- 73. So out it’s in

DOWN

- 1. Design detail
- 2. M,nchen mister
- 3. Jittery
- 4. Irregularly notched
- 5. *Harry of Privet Drive
- 6. Gangster’s gal
- 7. *”American ____” (1999)
- 8. Geography class prop
- 9. Any minute, arch.
- 10. Cut at birth
- 11. Parks on a bus
- 12. ____ out a living
- 15. Israeli monetary unit
- 20. Remote in manner
- 22. Did a marathon, e.g.
- 24. Mollify
- 25. *Assassinated Gandhi
- 26. Radiate
- 27. Small wooded hollows
- 29. *Apple offering
- 31. Simon does what?
- 32. Influencer’s creation
- 33. Daytime moth
- 34. *Snoop ____ Dogg
- 36. Coloring substances
- 38. Nautilus’ captain
- 42. Allegro or lento
- 45. Repeat an echo
- 49. Pathet ____
- 51. *Fresh Prince’s town
- 54. * ____ Mouth of “All Star” fame
- 56. Discombobulate
- 57. *Jeff Bridges in “The Big Lebowski,” with
- 58. Made in Vegas
- 59. Makes lace
- 60. One-tenth of a dime
- 61. *” ____ Wait... Don’t Tell Me!” on NPR
- 62. Petri dish gel
- 63. Do over
- 64. Fruit spread
- 66. * ____ Goo Dolls of “Name” fame

CROSSWORD

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Homesteading conference to feature a wealth of information, speakers

The Southwest Arkansas Homesteading Conference will return on Saturday, February 21, 2026, offering a full day of hands-on learning, expert instruction, and family-friendly activities for homesteaders of all experience levels.

The conference will be held from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at the University of Arkansas Cossatot Campus in Nashville, Arkansas. Registration opens at 8:30 a.m., and the \$30 registration fee includes a meal.

This year’s conference features a wide variety of practical and educational sessions led by extension agents, university specialists, and community experts. Topics include:



- High Tunnel Greenhouse Management — Tanya Ernst, High Tunnel and Urban Agriculture Educator UADA
 - Water Bath, Steam & Pressure Canning—Janet Cantrell, Sevier County Family and Consumer Sciences (FCS) Agent, and Terrie James, Hempstead FCS Agent and Arkansas Food Preservation Specialist
 - Easy Homemade Pie Crust — Karalee Black, Montgomery County FCS Agent
 - Saving the Family Farm — John K. Ross IV, Attorney and Senior Partner Ross & Shoalmire
 - Beekeeping — James Jones, Local Beekeeper
 - Composting — Cody McAllister, Pike County Agriculture Agent
 - Pond Management — Scott Jones, Small Impoundment Extension Specialist Instructor UAPB
 - Foraging for Edible Foods — Dawson Bailey, Howard County Agriculture Agent
 - Dutch Oven Cooking — Sheila Ballard, Nevada County Family and Consumer Sciences Agent
 - Quilting — Sam Ralph, Hope Quilting Guild
 - Introduction to Sourdough Bread — Theresa Brothers, Local Homemaker & Baker, and Eva Langley, Pike County FCS Agent
- In addition to adult programming, the conference will offer a Kids Camp for children ages 5 and up. The Kids Camp costs \$25 per child and runs throughout the day. Activities include making freezer jam, candles, and mini barn quilts, with pizza for lunch and snacks provided. For more information call Pike County Extension Office at (870) 285-2161.

For those interested in sustainable living, local food systems, and hands-on learning, the Southwest Arkansas Homesteading Conference promises to be a can’t-miss event in 2026.

This week’s recipe is Sourdough Crumpets. What? You don’t have sourdough starter in your fridge? Easy fix! Just come to the Southwest Arkansas Homesteading Conference and learn how! Hope to see you next weekend!

RECIPE OF THE WEEK: CRUMPETS

Perfect for breakfast sandwiches, freezes well.

Ingredients

- One Cup sourdough starter - unfed / discard
- 1 teaspoon sugar
- 1/4 to 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 3/8 teaspoon baking (If sourdough is very sour then increase baking soda by 1/2 teaspoon)

Instructions

- Place the starter in a medium sized bowl. Stir in sugar and salt, then the baking soda. The batter should rise up and bubble a bit, becoming almost billowy.
- Heat your griddle over medium low heat; 300° is perfect. Lightly grease the surface with cooking oil, then melt a pat of butter on top of the oil.
- Lightly grease 4 English muffin rings (1 inch high & 4 inches across) and place on the griddle. Divide the batter evenly among the rings. Cook for about 5 minutes until the tops are set and full of small holes. Carefully flip the crumpets over, remove the rings, and continue to cook for 3 minutes, until they’re

golden on the bottom.

- Can store at room temperature for a few days. Freezes well if wrapped thoroughly.

Valentine’s Day is fast approaching ...

Roses \$88.50 per dozen *many colors to choose from*

- Mixed bouquets starting at \$50
- Bud vases starting at \$22
- Candy bouquets and stuffed animals

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Submitted photo

NEW LIBRARIAN ... The Delight Library is pleased to announce their new librarian, Brandi Rowton. Rowton, a Delight resident, is a member of the Delight City Council and is married to Dalton Rowton, with whom they share four children. Rowton, who has previous experience of working in a library and with youth, said she was “passionate about fostering literacy, supporting community engagement and helping patrons access information and resources effectively.”

Classifieds

MINI STORAGE in Murfreesboro. 870-845-6304. (gs:4-ff)

WANT to trade 13 acres near Nashville for property in Pike County. 870-557-1276 (pd. 32)

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LADY RATTLERS HOST MT. PINE

Wednesday, February 4 • MHS Gymnasium

Last week the Murfreesboro High School Lady Rattlers competed in a number of games to help complete the season following the winter weather delays. The Lady Rattlers defeated Foreman on the road 62-9, lost to Caddo Hill 52-46 and Mountain Pine 58-37 at home and completed the week with a 54-13 loss at Dierks. The team will finish out a pair of games at home this week to complete their regular season -- Tuesday against Cutter Morning Star and Friday against Kirby, which will also be senior night.



RE-ELECT EDDIE HOWARD PIKE COUNTY JUDGE

As most of you know, I am a proud Pike County native. I am happily married to my wife, Anna Carroll Howard, and we are the proud parents of a son, Kane O'Neal, and a daughter-in-law, Emma O'Neal.

My faith is very important to me. I am a

member of the Delight Church of Christ, and I pray for guidance from God daily. I take the duty of being an elected official very seriously. It is important to me to be a judge that all citizens can be proud of.

It has been my honor to serve the citizens of Pike County as your Judge. I am

confident that I have proven my ability to perform the duties of this office, and I have demonstrated a good character with my actions.

It is important to me to support all county endeavors with my time, talents, and personal financial support. I truly love Pike County.

I have an open and honest approach to all concerns of the citizens, and I trust my desire to serve is evident. I have been very transparent, and will always be willing to answer any questions someone has for me.

I have a strong work ethic, and lead with integrity and honesty. I will continue to do so if re-elected as your Pike County Judge.

I humbly ask for your vote, so I can continue to serve you to the best of my ability.

**EARLY VOTING PERIOD STARTS
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 17
ELECTION DAY MARCH 3**

Paid for by Re-Elect Eddie Howard for Pike County Judge Campaign



Land Auction Open Now

15 Acres in McCaskill

****Online Only Auction at toddmorrisauction.com****
Bidding Ends: Tuesday, March 3 at 6:00 p.m.

Auction Location: From Nashville, turn off US Highway 371, travel on Hempstead 29 (blacktop road) for 2.9 miles. Turn left at Hempstead 271 and proceed 0.5 miles on a gravel road to property. **Watch for signs!**

Explore this excellent opportunity to own 15 acres of land in the McCaskill, AR area, offered in two separate tracts. The property boasts excellent privacy and a great location in Hempstead County. This land is ideal for a home site prospect or an excellent hunting opportunity for deer and turkey.

Key features of the property include:

- Approximately 15 total acres, offered in two tracts of approximately 7.13 acres in tract 2 and 8.06 acres in tract 1
- Rural water and electricity available
- Gravel road frontage • Gravel road runs the entire length of the property
- County Road # Hempstead 271 access • 7-year-old planted pine plantation
- Excellent hunting opportunities for deer and turkey • Ideal home site prospects

See our website: toddmorrisauction.com or call **870-845-9200** for more information. Bid with confidence online and don't miss out on this fantastic real estate opportunity in Southwest Arkansas! All property is sold "AS IS, WHERE IS".

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 - Graduate Henderson State University
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