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COUNTY BURN BAN LIFTED

RESIDENTS NOW ALLOWED TO BURN AFTER WEEKEND RAINS

Last chance to enter bass tourney this week

PIKE COUNTY -- The 22nd annual Pike County Fair bass tournament has announced the details for the 2026 installment.

Set for Saturday, April 11 at SWAHA Lodge on Lake Greeson the tournament will begin at "safe light" and will continue until the weigh-in at 3 p.m.

Registration for the tournament can be conducted at <https://forms.gle/tacREmt8eFbm-vJGn6>. The link can also be accessed via the Pike County Fair and Rodeo page on Facebook.

Takeoff numbers will be based on paid registration order. Registrants must register by April 1 to receive a tournament hat, but registrations will still be taken up to the start of the tournament.

A five bass limit will be held for the tournament, with a \$100 entry fee per boat.

Guaranteed prize money has been set for places 1-5 (\$1,000 to \$100) and a prize will be handed out for the big bass (\$500) of the tournament.

For questions regarding the tournament or a link to the registration page, please email pike-countyfairandrodeo@gmail.com.

Best burger contest runs through April

Contest seeks nominations

LITTLE ROCK -- The Arkansas Beef Council today announced the return of the Arkansas's Best Burger Contest, a statewide effort to identify and recognize restaurants that exemplify quality in the preparation of 100% beef burgers. The contest reinforces the Council's commitment to promoting high-quality beef, supporting Arkansas cattle producers, and engaging consumers in celebrating the state's beef industry.

Arkansas is one of the nation's leading cattle-producing states, with thousands of family farms contributing to the state's agricultural economy. Beef cattle are raised in all 75 counties, making the industry a cornerstone of rural communities. Cattle and calves consistently rank among Arkansas's top agricultural commodities, generating more than \$824 million in cash receipts each year.

Beginning today, Arkansans can nominate their favorite burger at arkansasbeef.org. Fans may submit one nomination per day per email address through April 30, 2026, at 11:59 p.m., giving burger lovers across the state the chance to rally behind their go-to local spots.

"We're thrilled to bring back Arkansas's Best Burger Contest and shine a light on the restaurants that take pride in serving high-quality, 100% Arkansas beef," said Caleb Plyler, a beef producer in Hempstead County and Chairman of the Arkansas Beef Council. "This contest isn't just about great burgers, it's about celebrating the farmers and ranchers who raise our cattle, the restaurants that elevate beef on their menus, and the communities that support them. Arkansas knows good beef, and we can't wait to see which burger rises to the top."

To qualify, nominated burgers must be made from 100% beef and appear on the restaurant's regular or special menu during the contest period. Restaurants with multiple locations will have nominations counted individually for each site. Regional finalists will be selected, and the burger receiving the most nominations statewide will be crowned the winner in May.

Past champions include the Big Daddy Burger from Johnson's Country Cookin' in Melbourne and the Caveman Burger from Bailey's Family Restaurant in Cave City.

The Arkansas Beef Council is a producer-funded entity dedicated to strengthening the state's beef industry through promotion, education, and research. The Council is governed by a seven-member board appointed by the Governor, representing cattle producers and livestock markets across the state.



Staff photo

NOT TOO CHICKEN TO SHOW ... Codie McAlister (above left), Pike County Extension Agent, held a chicken showmanship class for local students over spring break. Pictured with McAlister is Mazie Neal, Ollie Neal and Joslynn Smith along with Henrietta the chicken, who begrudgingly provided hands on experience for the students.

Another pair sentenced in jailhouse smuggling ring

MURFREESBORO -- Two more of the nine Pike County inmates charged in 2025 after marijuana was allegedly smuggled into and smoked in the jail following a day of trash detail were sentenced Monday.

Michael Griffith, 39, of Glenwood, and Jakob Reppo, 39, also of Glenwood, pleaded guilty to the charge of furnishing, possessing or using prohibited articles-delivering a prohibited article.

Both men were sentenced to nine years in the Arkansas Department of Corrections (ADC) with three years suspended and credited with time served on the county level.

According to affidavits filed on the cases, the Pike County jail inmate trash crew was on detail on Nov. 22, 2025 when a girlfriend of one of the inmates approached the crew and was

"hugged up" to the boyfriend with some of the other inmates around her vehicle. The inmates were dispersed from the vehicle and later transported back to the detention center and their assigned pods.

The following day, the inmates were monitored in their pods and appeared to be in possession of marijuana, which was being separated and passed around. Some of the inmates were observed smoking the weed inside the jail.

A review of surveillance video "clearly shows Reppo" in possession of the substance, dividing it, rolling multiple joints, distributing portions to the other inmates and passing contraband under pod doors to inmates.

Inmate Swanger admitted that he brought the substance into the jail after finding it on the

ground during work detail and concealing it in his mouth upon re-entry to the jail.

OTHER SENTENCES

Sandra Kay Jarvis, 69, of Amity, pleaded guilty to delivery of a controlled substance (hydrocodone and Adderall) and was sentenced to 10 years probation, fined \$2,500 and 120 days in Arkansas Community Corrections.

Michael T. Cates, 37, of Kirby, pleaded guilty to theft of property and was sentenced to five years probation.

William Young, 54, of Glenwood, pleaded guilty to amended charges of theft of property and breaking or entering and was sentenced to four years in the ADC with two years suspended. Young was also credited with time served on the county level.



Submitted photo/SPCSD

BASKETBALL POST-SEASON AWRADS ... Murfreesboro High School has announced their 2025-2026 basketball all-conference basketball members that include (L to R) Kale Burns, Kooper Caldwell, Mashaylia Morris, and Jarrin Burgess.

Rattler track season progresses toward conference meets

As the track season comes into the final stretch, Murfreesboro track coach Chuck Lowery said the team was beginning to "hitting our stride."

"Junior high is especially coming along and competing well," he said. "We are getting a lot of PRs (personal records) right now."

He said while the junior high had yet to win any meets, they have attended "loaded" meets with a lot of talent.

"Every one we go to there are 17-25 teams there, but we've had some real good times and performances."

Junior high has two meets left prior to the season ending district meet.

"We are about to figure out who our best are and where to put them to maximize out points for district. The girls are doing great and the boys have really surprised me -- they have a lot of potential."

He said the MJHS squads both featured "good numbers" in terms of participants.

"I have so many kids that when we go to most track meets, you can only enter two per event and I have four I could enter. That's a good problem to have -- but the trouble is getting them into an event where they can compete."

He said that each team can enter up to four athletes each in individual events at the district meet.

"It's still a good problem to have when you have too many," he said, as opposed to the alternative. "We have numbers on most of the schools, we'll just have to have good performances at district."

Asked about retaining those athletes through to the senior high squads, Lowery said simply "we are trying."

He said that other options made track retention harder after the kids move into the ninth grade.

Lowery said his experience as a track coach recently at Prescott with their premium program showed the two schools had comparable numbers at the junior high level.

"That's the key -- getting them out, trying to get them interested, and keep them locked in. That's what we are trying to do."

Lowery illustrates the "major upgrades" recently completed to the school's track practice facilities, commending school Superintendent Tanya Wilcher and Athletic Director Jay Turley for their support in the venture.

"That's had been a major help," he admitted, also acknowledging school Maintenance Supervisor Troy Stone for his efforts as well.

Upgrades included new runways for the pole vault/long jump/triple jump, a new shot put ring and moving the high jump pits.

"We wanted to give them a place to feel proud to practice at ... our long jump pit was in terrible shape -- and you were jumping into a fence and the bushes. It just wasn't anything they wanted to do. For shot put, they were throwing into the trees ... it wasn't really enough area. We brought it all more into an open area. I kinda made it all in one area -- I have an assistant [Jordan Shanks], but she's not here with me all the time. Now I can be on one end of the practice field and watch and observe, talk across the field and kinda put my hands on everybody without having to go from one end of the field to the other. I'm getting older, so it will save me a few steps," he quipped.

He said the student athletes have really enjoyed the upgrades, and "it will make a major difference as we go forward."

Lowery also added that the school district was looking into a grant through the Arkansas Highway Department for the track facilities that would not only provide a good running surface for the racing teens, but also a walking track for the public.

"We have looked into how much funding it would take to just put down a blacktop surface [over the existing track] ... we got some bids, one of which was around \$50,000 that was 12-foot wide and two-and-a-half inches thick. So one way or another, I think something is doable. Ultimately, I don't care, as long as we have a surface that is clean. I've filled holes in our gravel one to where it doesn't hold water as bad as it did, but it can still be muddy. It's like the new runways -- they're concrete and clean and not just a piece of rubber thrown on the ground."

He said next year he hopes to implement improvements to the high jump pit.

"I'm just so thankful for what we got done this year -- and there is still plans to add buildings (to be erected by the school's agri department) so we can store all of our equipment."

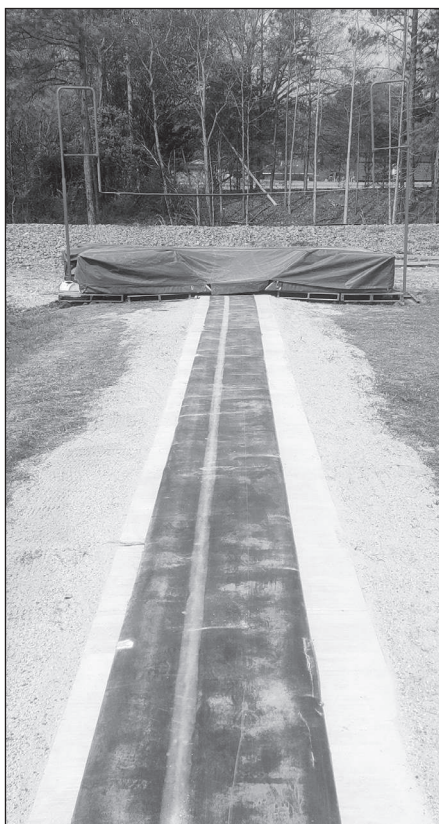
"There's been a big push [for improvements] -- I'm a big track guy and ran in college. I know it's hard to fund these things, but I don't mind putting in the time and effort into it. The kids needed it. I'm a former graduate of MHS, and we used to have a big track program, and I remember that. We are just trying to build the program back up."

He said track -- which can benefit athletes in any other school



Submitted photos

TRACKING THE PROGRESS ... (above) The Murfreesboro Lady Rattler track team poses for a picture after an event in March, while (below) the practice area at the school has been augmented with new runways for the pole vault/long jump/triple jump, a new shot put ring and moving the high jump pits.



sport -- was unlike many of the other school sports that are more team based.

"Track is individual -- you can't blame anybody. If you get outran, well, it's your fault. You can't say 'the quarterback didn't throw the ball to the right spot.' Track doesn't allow for that argument. We have kids that like to compete, so its gotten better -- everybody wants to win, but sometimes the trying to win is just as much fun."

Lowery said the MHS Lady Rattlers have been "competing well" and have a meet win earlier this season at Caddo Hills and the top four at a couple others.

He said the senior girls squad, which came into the season with high expectations, started the season with a bout of injuries and illnesses that still have lingering effects this far into the season.

"We have three top performers that were injured as the season started and they haven't ran [in a meet] yet. Two of them will run for the first time this week, and they were all-state performers [last year] so I'm hopeful it will raise our level up when we get them back at full strength. They are major pieces to our puzzle. We've performed well at some meets without them, so we are hoping that when we can get the back to full strength by the district meet on April 30. We've only got a couple of weeks to get them in shape."

He said the outlook was still to make a push for the district title -- much like last year -- and then see what noise the team could make at state.

"We are looking for big things. When I got the job everyone said we'd win state this year. There is a lot high expectations in and of that group that everybody has, but with the injuries it's hard to meet those expectations without your gun being fully loaded. We are hoping to get them all back and make a big push at district and get a bunch of them qualified [for state]."

The senior high Rattlers are comprised of about 15 athletes, with a few they share with the Rattlers baseball squad, forcing them to miss some tournaments in their dual duties.

"Alex Parker has largely been the point-getter for the senior boys the last couple years, and he was injured at the end of football season. It's has take him a while to be back -- he's not 100%, but he's back in the groove and better. We had some boys that weren't sure about running that have picked up it, so we may have a chance to qualify [for state] a few boys in track."

He said that Macy Gills and Shaylia Morris have already qualified for the 400 meter dash and Morris in the high jump. The 4x100 meter relay team has also qualified already this season.

"This week we are trying to focus on the 4x200 race ... we've been going like a week at a time trying to get one qualified."

He said the team have faced some big competition this season.

"We've been at some high powered meets and they have really had to push themselves. They have done really well -- I'm not positive, but I don't think Macy has been beaten this year in

TRACK Continued on Page 5

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More commonly known as: 315 JOHNSON ST, MURFREESBORO, AR 71958

On January 25, 2006, THE ESTATE OF KELLY BLAIR JR and MARGARET BLAIR executed a Mortgage in favor of First National Bank, as Beneficiary, which was recorded January 30, 2006, in Book M266, at Page 446 as Instrument No. in the real estate records of Pike County, Arkansas. Default has occurred in the payment of said indebtedness, and is now wholly due. The loan is now in default. Tenants of the property may claim an interest in the real property herein. The terms of the call are certified funds paid at the conclusion of the sale or wiring of funds within twenty-four hours of the sale. All transfer taxes will be the responsibility of the purchaser. The party initiating this action is Select Portfolio Servicing, Inc., 3217 S. Decker Lake Drive, Salt Lake City, UT 84119, 800-258-8602. Date: February 10, 2026. Chase Taskerud Managing Attorney, Arkansas Marinosci Law Group, P.C. as Attorney in Fact for Towd Point Mortgage Trust 2019-4, U.S. Bank National Association, as indenture Trustee. **LEGAL PRECEDENT IS NOT CLEAR AS TO WHETHER THE SENDING OF THIS LETTER MAKES US A DEBT COLLECTOR. TO THE EXTENT IT DOES, PLEASE BE ADVISED THAT THIS IS AN ATTEMPT TO COLLECT A DEBT, AND ANY INFORMATION OBTAINED WILL BE USED FOR THAT PURPOSE. HOWEVER, IF YOU ARE IN BANKRUPTCY OR HAVE BEEN DISCHARGED IN BANKRUPTCY, THIS LETTER IS FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES ONLY AND IS NOT INTENDED AS AN ATTEMPT TO COLLECT A DEBT OR AS AN ACT TO COLLECT, ASSESS, OR RECOVER ALL OR ANY PORTION OF THE DEBT FROM YOU PERSONALLY. IF YOU ARE CURRENTLY IN THE MILITARY SERVICE OR HAVE BEEN IN THE MILITARY SERVICE WITHIN THE PAST YEAR, AND YOU ENTERED THE SERVICE AFTER SIGNING THE PROMISSORY NOTE AND DEED OF TRUST, PLEASE NOTIFY THIS FIRM IMMEDIATELY AS YOU MAY BE ENTITLED TO RELIEF UNDER THE SERVICEMEMBERS CIVIL RELIEF ACT. WHEN CONTACTING THIS FIRM ABOUT YOUR MILITARY SERVICE, YOU MUST PROVIDE THIS FIRM WITH EVIDENCE OF YOUR MILITARY STATUS. IF YOU DO NOT PROVIDE SUCH EVIDENCE, WE WILL ASSUME THAT YOU ARE NOT ENTITLED TO PROTECTION UNDER THIS ACT. 24-01864**

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Rattlers lose first game of season to Spring Hill

MURFREESBORO -- The Murfreesboro Rattlers bid at perfection has come to a halt as the baseball season progresses in 2026.

The Rattlers opened play on Tuesday, March 31 with a 19-2 win at Horatio.

Murfreesboro jumped out to a 5-0 lead after one inning and 14-2 after two innings of play.

Asher Howard and Isaac Kuykendall both hit home runs in the game en route to their four RBIs each for the Rattlers.

Howard and Cale Humphrey (stolen base) would each come in to score four times for MHS.

Carter Gilmer had a double, two runs scored and three RBIs.

Hunter Cox and Kale Burns each had a double and two RBIs each.

Colton Tidwell added two runs and two RBIs.

Kuykendall started the game on the mound for the Rattlers, allowing a hit, two walks and two unearned runs to go along with five strikeouts in two innings of work.

Cox would pitch an inning, striking out the side.

C.D. Morrow would drive in three runs for the Rattlers, while Kuykendall, Gilmer and Tidwell each drove in a pair.

Gilmer and Kuykendall each had a double for the team's only extra base hits.

Howard scored twice and stole a base.

Gilmer pitched all five innings for the Rattlers, allowing three hits and a walk to go along with five strikeouts.

SPRING HILL

On Monday the Rattlers dropped their contest at Spring Hill 1-0. Game stats were not available by press time. See next week's paper for details.

The Rattlers, now 14-1, will host Camden Fairview this Thursday and will travel to Caddo Hills for a contest with the Indians on Friday.

SOFTBALL

The Murfreesboro Lady Rattlers notched a pair of home victories last week, defeating Mineral Springs and 7-5 and Mountain Pine 17-3 to move to 2-7 on the season.

After traveling to Spring Hill Monday, the Lady Rattlers will have hosted the Bismarck Lions on Tuesday. The team will conclude their week with a game on Friday at Caddo Hills.

Obituaries

Joe Thomas Wright, 70, Nathan

Joe Thomas Wright, 70, of Nathan, Arkansas went home to be with our Lord on April 1, 2026.

Joe was born in Weed, California on May 12, 1955, the fifth son of the late Clell and Lois (Tiny) Wright. He accepted JESUS as his savior as a teenager at the Church of Christ in Nathan, Arkansas and was an alumni of Murfreesboro High School.

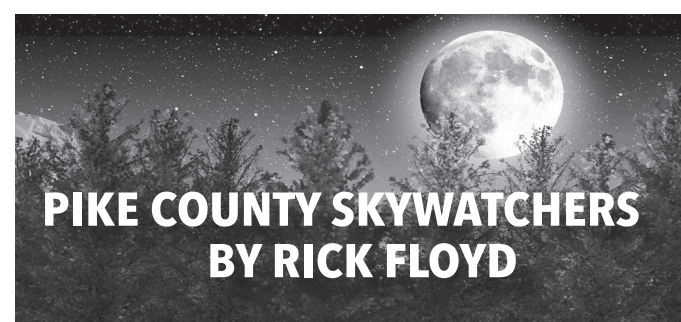
Joe married his wife Janie in 1988. They have two children, Laura Buchanan, husband Scotty, of Wake Village, Texas and the late Kyle Thomas Wright. Joe is survived by one brother, Ted Wright, of Highland, Arkansas and proceeded

in death by five brothers, Dave, Dennis, Timothy, Jim and Phillip Wright. Joe has six grandchildren: He is blessed with a host of nieces, nephews and great grandchildren.

He is loved beyond measure and will be greatly missed until we rejoice together with our Lord.

A graveside service was held 11:00 a.m., Monday, April 6, at Academy Cemetery, with Bro. Damian Rogers officiating, under the direction of Latimer Funeral Home in Nashville.

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



PIKE COUNTY SKYWATCHERS BY RICK FLOYD

Moon bases and mining in future for humanity?

Three American astronauts and one Canadian astronaut are on the way to circle the Moon, then return to splashdown in the Pacific Ocean. The spectacular launch of Artemis II on April 1st sent the four in their Orion spacecraft to low Earth orbit, and the next day they executed the trans-lunar insertion (TLI), a phrase from the Apollo era meaning they came around Earth, pointed the craft toward the Moon and fired their booster rockets getting up to a speed of more than 24,000 miles per hour. After 50 years, it was good to once again hear "go for TLI". The only major glitch so far is an on-going problem with the toilet.

Artemis I, was the first step in this program, sending an uninhabited capsule to loop the Moon a couple of times then successfully return to Earth. Artemis II will also orbit the Moon and return. It is basically what could be called a shake-down cruise and the next step before Artemis III and IV, both of which will have astronauts landing on the lunar surface.

Once the International Space Station is decommissioned at the end of this decade NASA will not replace it with another, but continue with the goal of making a base on the Moon. Such a move will logically allow more detailed scientific study of the Moon, and also be another step to going to Mars. It is not discussed much, but the U.S., China and others are also keenly interested in the potential mining rewards the Moon might offer.

As the astronauts make orbit on April 6th or so it is likely we will have a broadcast reminiscent of the one from Apollo 8 which was in lunar orbit the Christmas of 1968 with astronauts Borman, Lovell and Anders reading from the book of Genesis. Apollo 8 was the first crewed spacecraft to leave Earth's gravitational sphere, and the first to reach the Moon. Like Artemis II, its mission was to orbit only.

One hour before sunrise on April 13 and 14 the Moon will be a waning crescent, hanging low on the eastern horizon. When the Moon is waning or waxing in narrow crescent mode most often the darkened part is visible as if there is a glow coming from it. This is called earthshine, and is actually light reflected from shiny Earth onto the Moon.

Recently discovered comet, C2026 A1, was hoped to be a spectacle in the night sky this month, but it now appears likely that it will fragment and not survive its loop around the Sun.

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UAMS HOUSE CALL

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

Q: How is Parkinson's disease diagnosed?

A: Parkinson's disease is a progressive condition of the nervous system that affects movement. Brain cells that make dopamine, a chemical that helps control movement, slowly begin to die and reduce the amount of dopamine produced. The Parkinson's Foundation estimates 1.1 million people in the U.S. are living with the disease.

The causes of Parkinson's disease are unknown. The likelihood of developing the condition increases as people get older — many diagnosed are around age 70. The condition rarely occurs in those younger than 50. Having a first-degree relative (parent or sibling) with Parkinson's disease increases the risk of development. The condition affects men more than women.

Parkinson's disease develops slowly, so symptoms may be mild initially and will vary from person to person. Slowed movement, changes in posture or walking (a stooped stance or shuffling steps), muscle stiffness, tremors, or a softer or quieter voice are some symptoms of the condition.

There is no cure for Parkinson's disease, but its symptoms can be managed. No single test can specifically determine whether a person has Parkinson's disease, but blood work or an MRI can aid in ruling out other conditions. See your health care provider if you experience symptoms.

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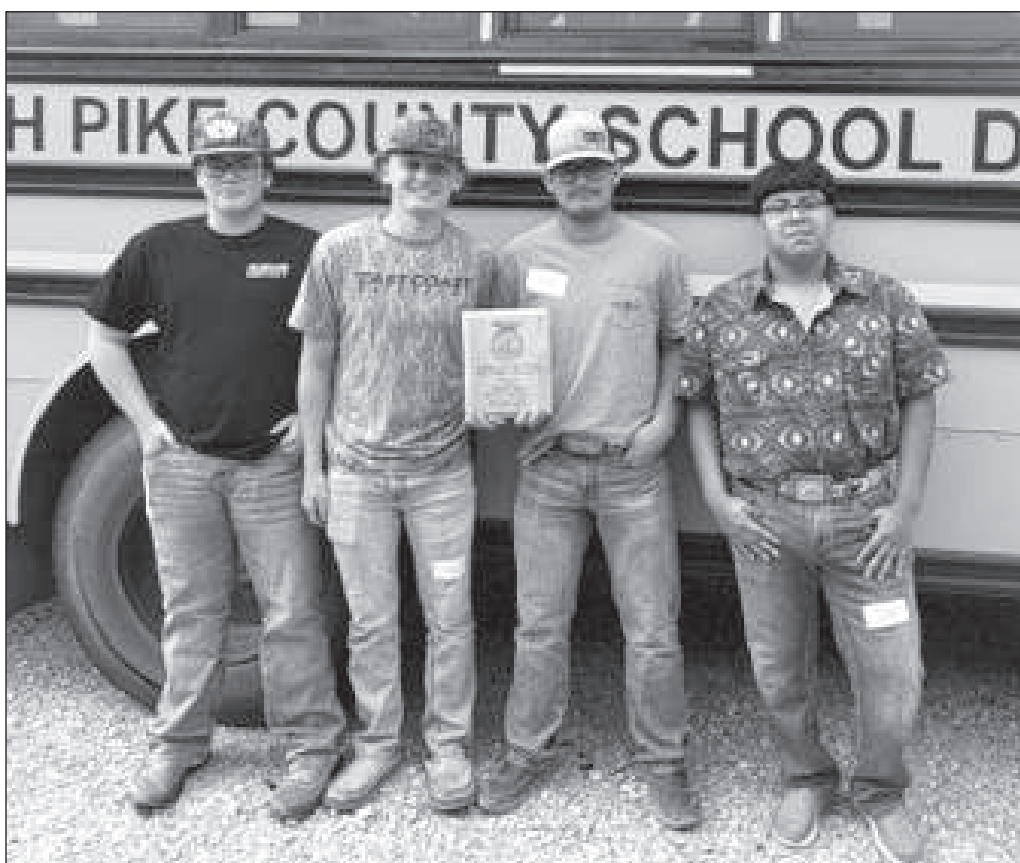
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Submitted photos/SPCSD

FFA AWARDS ... The Murfreesboro High School FFA electricity team placed second at the 2026 district competition. Members include (above, L to R) Colton Jackson, Aden Stinson, Lawson Benight, and Daniel Martinez. The MHS FFA mechanics team tied for second and lost in the tiebreaker to end third at the district competition. Members include (below) Garrett Lamb, Riley Benight, Hunter Cooley, and Isaac Smith.



MURFREESBORO SENIOR ADULT CENTER LUNCH MENU

MONDAY, APRIL 13

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TUESDAY, APRIL 14

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'Dear Preacher'

By Buddy Ray, Murfreesboro Church of Christ

RESIST THE DEVIL AND HE WILL FLEE FROM YOU!

Regardless of all the things going on around us in today's world, the greatest battle we face each day is Satan. Each day we must deal with the fact that Satan wants us to be lost and that he is constantly trying to pull us away from God and the things we enjoy in Christ Jesus. We know from the book of Job that Satan roams around on the earth each day.

Peter tells us that our adversary, the devil, walks about as a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour.

The apostle John in 1 John 2 tells us the three ways that Satan tempts us: Lust of the



flesh; Lust of the eye; the pride of life. We, as Christians, must recognize these characteristics of the devil and know that we can withstand them and daily fight to overcome the things he does.

James tells us to submit to God and resist the devil. When we resist the devil, he

will flee from us. In Ephesians 6, the apostle Paul tells us to put on the whole armor of God so that we can fight the wiles of the devil. We must daily resist and fight the devil. Let us draw encouragement from 1 Corinthians 10:13 as we wage our daily battle.

No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it.

I pray that each of you will daily submit to God and serve him faithfully. Have a great week!

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Lawsuit questions assistance stipulations

BY MARY HIGHTOWER
University of Arkansas System
Division of Agriculture

FAYETTEVILLE -- The U.S. Department of Agriculture is being sued over waivers that exclude purchases of candy, soda and other items from the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, also known as SNAP.

USDA has the authority to determine what foods are eligible under SNAP, which provides food benefits to low-income families to supplement their grocery budget. States are authorized to determine who's eligible.

The waivers, which have been granted to 22 states by USDA since 2025, grant states the authority to change the SNAP eligibility of certain foods. Proponents say the waivers will support healthy food choices by SNAP recipients.

"States that want to administer the program differently can do so with a waiver," said Emily Stone, staff attorney for the National Agricultural Law Center. "States that requested the food restriction did so through a demonstration project waiver."

The head of USDA may grant waivers to states to conduct experimental or pilot projects on a trial basis to increase the efficiency of SNAP.

The only permissible demonstration projects are ones that:

- Improve program administration
- Increase the self-sufficiency of SNAP recipients
- Test innovation welfare reform strategies, or
- Allow greater conformity with the rules of certain other programs.

The suit, filed by five SNAP recipients earlier this month in the U.S. District Court of the District of Columbia, targets waivers in Colorado, Iowa, Nebraska, Tennessee and West Virginia.

The plaintiffs claim that the waivers create a "patchwork of state-by-state food prohibition regimes" that "deprive SNAP recipients and their families of the food they need to maintain their health and employment, and in some cases, to survive."

The plaintiffs ask the court — among other things — to postpone the dates in which the Colorado, Iowa, Nebraska, Tennessee and West Virginia waivers go into effect and prevent application or enforcement of any waiver that has already gone into effect or has yet to go into effect.

"If the waivers are permanently halted, then the status quo will remain and SNAP participants will be permitted to use their benefits on candy, soda, energy drinks and any other foods the waivers sought to restrict," Stone said. "If the court agrees to simply postpone the effective date or merely pause waiver enforcement for the duration of litigation, it will further delay required compliance for SNAP authorized retailers."

MORE STATES GRANTED WAIVERS

In March, USDA granted food restriction waivers to four more states.

"USDA recently approved SNAP food restriction waivers in Kansas, Nevada, Wyoming and Ohio, allowing the states to restrict purchases of items such as candy and soda," Stone said.

"These four join 18 other states — including Arkansas — that have received SNAP waivers from USDA since the start of 2025.

"It is important to note that these restrictions only apply to foods that SNAP participants purchase with their SNAP benefits," Stone said. "They are free to purchase candy, soda or other restricted foods with their own money."

Ohio plans to begin implementation in October. Kansas and Wyoming will implement in February 2027, and Nevada will do the same in February 2028.

In June 2025, USDA Secretary Brooke Rollins, joined by federal Health and Human Services Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr., signed waivers for Arkansas, Idaho and Utah. The Arkansas waiver takes effect July 1 and bars soda, low- and no-calorie soda, fruit and vegetable drinks with less than 50 percent natural juice, candy and other items.

RULE FOR RETAILERS

When announcing USDA's approval of the most recent waivers, Rollins said that she expected a proposed rule requiring retailers who participate in SNAP to carry more whole foods to become final soon.

"The proposed rule requires that SNAP retailers offer seven varieties from four 'staple food' categories, including protein, grains, dairy and fruits or vegetables — a move USDA has stated would increase the ability of SNAP recipients to access healthy foods," Stone said.

However, some SNAP retailers have claimed that the rule would prevent them from participating in the program. Because the rule redefines what counts under certain varieties, some retailers claim compliance will not be feasible. For example, under the current rule, bagels, English muffins, and bread were all considered separate varieties under the "grain" category. However, under the proposed rule, bagels, English muffins and all breads would be classified as one variety. This means a retailer will have to find other grain options to fulfill the proposed rule's seven variety requirement. It is not clear if USDA has established a date to release the final rule.

For more information on state SNAP waivers, view the NALC article at nationalaglawcenter.org/excluding-junk-food-from-snap-benefits.

For more information about the NALC, visit NationalAgLawCenter.org and subscribe to receive NALC communications, including webinar announcements, the Quarterly Newsletter and The Feed.

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 profanities.

Send Letters to P.O. Box 550, Murfreesboro, AR 71958
or e-mail to mdiamond.editor@windstream.net

SOUTH PIKE COUNTY SCHOOL MENU

THURSDAY, APRIL 9

Breakfast: Blueberry loaf w/ yogurt or cereal, fruit, juice, milk

Lunch: Beefy nacho grande, fire roasted corn, lettuce, tomato, salsa, applesauce, milk

7-12 line 2 option- Burrito w/ cheese

FRIDAY, APRIL 10

Breakfast: Sausage croissant or cereal, fruit, juice, milk

Lunch: Chicken nuggets, mashed potatoes, green beans, whole grain roll, mixed fruit, milk

7-12 line 2 option- Beef fingers

MONDAY, APRIL 13

Breakfast: French toast sticks or cereal, fruit, juice, milk

Lunch: Pepperoni pizza, seasoned corn, steamed broccoli, pineapple, milk

7-12 line 2 option- Big daddy pepperoni pizza or French bread pizza w/ sauce

za or French bread pizza w/ sauce

TUESDAY, APRIL 14

Breakfast: Pancake on a stick or cereal, fruit, juice, milk

Lunch: French toast sticks w/ syrup, sausage patty, 7-12 cheese stick, hashbrowns, cucumbers & baby tomatoes w/ ranch, sidekick slush, milk

7-12 line 2 option- No line 2

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 15

Breakfast: Breakfast pizza or cereal, fruit, juice, milk

Lunch: Chicken spaghetti, green beans, savory carrots, garlic breadstick, pears, milk

7-12 line 2 option- pizza sticks w/ sauce

*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

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INSECTS

* -- Theme Related Clue

ACROSS

1. Ira ____ of NPR
6. Mr. Turkey
9. Gives the boot
13. Between octet and decet
14. Ginger one
15. Spherical bacteria
16. Popular ursine meme star
17. Public health org.
18. Mountaineer's tool (2 words)
19. *Fly larva
21. *World's noisiest insect
23. Comic book shriek
24. Like some excuses
25. Food safety org.
28. Man Ray's genre
30. Temporarily, legally speaking (2 words)
35. Like unpleasant awakening
37. 4th down kick
39. Quarter-round molding
40. Computer operating system
41. Metal bar
43. Mine passage
44. Antonym of exhume
46. Expert
47. Strip of wood
48. Throws
50. It will
52. Concurrence word
53. Silo contents
55. Romanian money
57. *Bee's bounty
60. *Boll weevil, e.g.
63. Aquarium scum
64. *Lightning bug trap?
66. Brandish
68. Part of a flower
69. Bonanza find
70. Courtroom excuse
71. Whiskey grain, pl.
72. Coniferous tree

73. #52 Across, pl.

DOWN

1. Econ. measure
2. Good earth
3. Wintour of "Vogue" fame
4. Marsh plant
5. Not impromptu
6. Diplomat's asset
7. Antediluvian
8. Hajj destination
9. Cocaine plant
10. Got an A
11. March Madness org.
12. *Number of legs on an insect
15. Famous Roman orator
20. Giraffe's striped-legged cousin
22. Mischief-maker
24. Opposite of energetic
25. * ____ fly, first living creature sent to space
26. "I don't know," casually
27. #43 Across, pl.
29. * ____ beetle, world's strongest insect
31. *Shape of a ladybug or carpet beetle
32. Not tomorrow, not yesterday
33. Like basketball's final eight
34. *Lepidoptera members, not butterflies
36. Demi Moore and Bruce Willis, e.g.
38. Reason for suit
42. Tutu fabric
45. Duran Duran's 1984 hit, with The
49. "Monkey __, monkey do"
51. Wiggle room
54. "Have a great time!"
56. Useful
57. Performance with acts
58. Lecherous look
59. "Betha Can't Eat Just One" brand
60. Tea or beer
61. Hawaiian flower garlands
62. Major European river
63. Acronym, abbr.
65. "Roses ____ red"
67. Bad-mouth, slangily

CROSSWORD														
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TRACK Continued from Page 1

the 400 [meter dash]."

Former MHS student Mason Phillips has returned to the team as a homeschool student right before spring break, bringing the team a crucial scoring component from last year's team.

Lowery said that Caddo Hills and Spring Hill both had enough athletes to push the Lady Rattler track squad at the district meet.

"They'll try to get in there and ruffle us up a little bit ... I feel strong about the district meet ... but, like winning anything at the state level, it's going to take some luck and some good health."

The junior high meet is set for April 23, starting at 10:30 a.m. at Caddo Hills Schools. The senior high meet will be held the next week, April 30, beginning at 10:30 a.m., also at Caddo Hills.

Lowery explains the earlier than expected start times are due to complications of no lights at the Caddo Hills facility that complicated issues in the final events last year.

Having won the meet at Caddo earlier this year, Lowery said his squad enjoyed running there.

"It's a good track, a nice setup and a nice facility."

Lowery said that a lot of people don't understand how much effort it takes to pull off a track meet by the host school.

"It's a lot of volunteer work, people on the staff that you have to depend on -- it's tough. People used to volunteer for everything, now it's tough to get volunteers. Last year at Prescott we had like 10 meets including the state meet. It just wears you out. It takes a lot of bodies to run a meet -- it's not as easy as what people think."

For meet results from the 2026 season, please see next week's newspaper.

Delight man charged with theft, threatening

ARKADELPHIA - A Delight man has been charged in Clark County with felony theft of property and terroristic threatening, as well as misdemeanor county of harassment.

Brian Garrett VanCamp, 27, was charged April 1 stemming from an incident in January where he is accused of stealing a four-wheeler from a residence on Highway 26 in Clark County.

After the ATV was reported stolen, Pike County deputies reportedly found it at VanCamp's home on Depot Road in Delight. VanCamp allegedly confessed to the theft.

VanCamp is also accused for threatening the ATV owner after finding out there was a warrant for his arrest involving the theft and then harassing him again at a later date.

HOWARD COUNTY CHARGE

A Murfreesboro man has been charged in Howard County with domestic battery, furnishing, possessing or using prohibited articles (delivering a prohibited article) and criminal use of a weapon.

Christopher Wright, 40, was charged in Howard County on April 1.

According to case information, Wright was arrested on March 12 following an incident at an apartment in Nashville where he allegedly was involved in an altercation with a family member. When he was taken to the county jail for booking, Wright was found to be in possession of "metal knuckles."

Pike County artist to be memorialized in show

HOPE -- Johnce Lyle Parrish (1946–2025) was an artist whose life and work were defined by curiosity, craftsmanship, and an unwavering commitment to creative expression. Knowing he wanted to be an artist by age three, Parrish held his first one-man exhibition at just eleven years old. As an adult, he became known as a "Jack of All Trades," excelling in sign painting, remodeling, and large-scale mural work throughout the region.

Parrish's artistic practice extended beyond functional craftsmanship into the realm of fine art. He earned recognition for his sculptures, pen and ink drawings, watercolor on Yupo, oil paintings, and more. After retiring from carpentry, he dedicated himself fully to his art, teaching classes, serving on arts-related boards, and contributing to cultural organizations including the Arkansas Arts Council, the Elberta Arts Council, the Fine Arts Center of Hot Springs, AmeriCorps VISTA, and the Howard and South Pike County Literacy Council.

His work has been exhibited in galleries, featured in publications such as A Gathering of Artists, and continues to live on in public spaces including the Glenwood Library and the Crater of Diamonds State Park Visitors Center. Since his death in April 2025, Johnce's work has been featured internationally through Bi-

Johnce Lyle Parrish: A JOURNEY THROUGH TIME

A RETROSPECTIVE
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farin Galleries. Johnce painted daily after retirement, driven by an internal need to create. Though the loss of his vision eventually prevented him from continuing to paint on canvas, his artistic vision never faded.

As Parrish once said, "Art requires honesty. This makes me a seeker, so my art is about process, not product." This retrospective honors a life devoted to that philosophy.

April 9 will be open exclusively to SWAAC members. The exhibition opens to the public on April 10 and will remain

on view through the month of April during weekday morning hours.

For more information, please contact the Southwest Arkansas Arts Council at swaac13@gmail.com or visit 200 E Division St Hope, AR.

ABOUT THE SOUTHWEST ARKANSAS ARTS COUNCIL

The Southwest Arkansas Arts Council is a nonprofit organization dedicated to enriching communities through experience, expression, and education in all the arts.

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Extension hosts 'Get Real' event at Kirby

KIRBY -- Kirby High School recently hosted Extension's "Get Real - Here's the Deal" event, bringing together students from both Kirby and Centerpoint High Schools for an engaging, real-world learning experience.

This hands-on simulation featured twelve interactive stations designed to help students step into their future and navigate financial decision-making. Each student was given a unique life scenario — including a career, salary, marital status, number of children, and tax deductions — along with a check register and starting balance.

As they moved through the exhibit, students made choices similar to those adults face every day. From buying a home or car, selecting insurance, opening a credit card, and budgeting for groceries and family needs, to even handling unexpected financial crises, every decision impacted their bottom line.

The event was made possible thanks to community support. Volunteers included representatives from local businesses, banks, insurance agencies, county offices, and extension personnel from Pike, Howard, Sevier, and Montgomery counties. These volunteers guided students through each station, helping them think critically about their options while keeping their financial situation in mind.

"Get Real - Here's the Deal" provided a valuable opportunity for students to build financial awareness, responsibility, and confidence as they prepare for their futures.

"Thank you to everyone who contributed to making this event a success!" said FACS Extension Agent Eva Langley.



Submitted photo/PCUAEX

I CAN'T AFFORD THAT! ... Pike County students participate in the U-A Extension program "Get Real" at Kirby High School recently. The program allows students to deal with real world life scenarios that include family, finances and taxes.



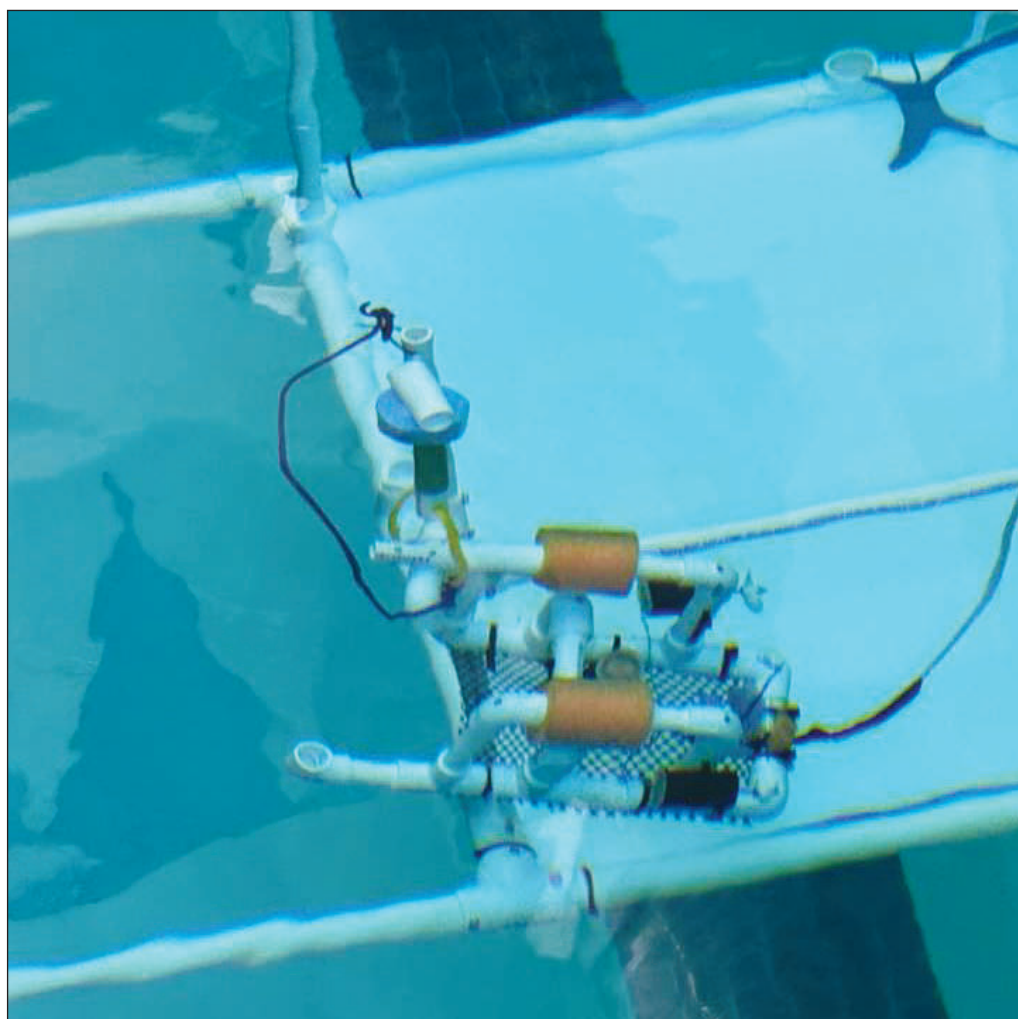
Submitted photo/Cole McKnight

SOFTBALL WINS ... The Murfreesboro Lady Rattlers gained a pair of wins last week in action against Mineral Springs and 7-5 and Mountain Pine 17-3.



Submitted photos/PCUAEX

UNDERWATER SUBMERSIBLE ... The Kirby High School Robotics Team, coached by Teresa Boutwell, competed in the Arkansas 4-H SeaPerch Competition held at the Riverside Park River Center in Benton recently and placed third. SeaPerch is an innovative underwater robotics program that provides students, educators, and parents with the resources to build a remotely operated vehicle. As a STEM initiative, it focuses on building, engineering, and operating underwater robots to teach, among other topics, buoyancy and propeller mechanics.



FCA to host event in Murfreesboro

MURFREESBORO -- The Murfreesboro High School Fellowship of Christian Athletes chapter will be hosting a "Court of Champions -- One Shot" event with representatives from local churches.

The event is set for Saturday, April 25 starting at 6 p.m. at the MHS gymnasium.

"We hope Court of Champions will be a huge success and bring hope and a renewed sense of

faith to our community," said event organizers. Admission is free and open to all. The public is invited to join the FCA chapter for a shot at salvation at our first annual Court of Champions!

For more information, contact Jordan Shanks at (870) 285-2189 ext. 130 or email jordan.shanks@rattlers.org.

Extension to host beef and forage meeting

GLENWOOD -- Pike County Extension will be hosting a Beef and Forage Production meeting along with Montgomery County Extension on Tuesday April 14.

The Production meeting will take place at 6 p.m. at the McGrew Livestock Auction (the Sale Barn) in Glenwood with registration beginning at 5:30 p.m. The address is 56 HWY 70 E, Glenwood.

There will be a free meal provided by the Pike and Montgomery County Farm Bureau.

Topics Include:
• Asian Longhorn Tick: Dr. Kirsten Midkiff,

Assistant Professor-Extension Animal Health/Well-being CES | Animal Science

• Planning the Forage Year: Dr. Jonathan Kubesch, Assistant Professor- Forages CES | Animal Science

• Bahiagrass Demonstration Results: Codie McAlister, Pike County Extension Agent-Agriculture

• New World Screwworm: Gerald Hewitt, Montgomery County Extension Agent-Agriculture

If interested in attending, please RSVP the Pike County Extension Office at (870) 285-2161.

COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

ONGOING -- The public is invited to drop by the Pike County Extension Office and get some Texas Roadhouse Rolls. The rolls have been cut in price to \$4 a dozen and \$2 for container of cinnamon butter. Call the office at (870) 285-2161 for more information.

APRIL 25 -- The Delight Fire Department will hold a fundraising dinner and auction on April 25 at 6 p.m. in the Delight school cafeteria. Smoked chicken dinners will be \$10 a plate. An auction will follow the meal.

APRIL -- The 2026 Winter Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) will end on April 30, 2026. Crisis applications are still being accepted and will continue through April 30, 2026. LIHEAP applications are available in all 19 CADC counties. To find out where to apply or to check local intake schedules, visit www.cadc.com/utility-assistance. If you have any questions, or want to know more about the program, please call 501-326-6229 or visit our website at www.cadc.com/utility-assistance.

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