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Delight Community Revival set for Aug. 3-7

DELIGHT -- The Delight Community Fellowship will be hosting their annual revival at the Delight school cafeteria starting at 7 p.m. each night. Monday, Aug. 3 and run through Friday, Aug. 7.

The theme for the revival is “Stories That Jesus Told” A look at the parables in Luke’s gospel

Each night a different pastor will bring the message.

SCHEDULE OF SPEAKERS

- Monday, August 3-- “The parable of the Lost Sheep” Bro. Vernon Wheeler, Antoine Baptist Church
- Tuesday, August 4 -- “The parable of the Persistent Widow” Bro. Wayne Roden, First Assembly of God
- Wednesday, August 5 -- “The Parable of the Shrewd Manager” Bro. Jim Henderson, Delight Methodist Church
- Thursday, August 6 -- “The parable of the Lost Son” Bro. Charles May, First Nazrene, Prescott
- Friday, August 7 -- “The Rich Man and Lazarus” Bro. David Lamb, Bethsaida Church, Amity

The public is invited to attend the events.

Football fundraiser ongoing, seeks support

The 2026 Rattler Football Fundraiser is underway, and fans can use the QR code (below) to make a donation.

“We thank you and appreciate your support,” said athletic director Jay Turley.



Cheer to host Pack the Pit cheer camp Aug. 10

MURFREESBORO -- The Murfreesboro cheerleaders will host a “Pack The Pit” mini cheer camp on Monday, Aug 10 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

The event will be held in the Murfreesboro High School Activity Room and is open to students in K-6 grade. The cost is \$25 per student to attend and will include a camp t-shirt.

Attendees will learn the cheer squads’ pep rally cheers and the basics of cheerleading in a “fun and interactive session” with the Murfreesboro cheerleaders.

Students may be registered online at forms.gle/79gxx5WQAxLFvpSy7.

For more information, e-mail melissajones@rattlers.org or melissacornish@rattlers.org.

MHS football program to be digital in 2026

MURFREESBORO -- The Murfreesboro cheer program has announced that the school will go digital with the 2026 Football Programs.

The program will feature the MJHS and MHS football teams, cheerleaders, and band.

“This is a great way to show your support for a specific Rattler or your business/organization,” said cheer coach Melissa Jones.

This year’s program will feature:

- Full-color digital format
- Easy access with a QR code and shareable link
- Free for all fans, families, alumni, and community supporters to view and share

For businesses or families that would like to purchase an ad, fill out the Google form at <https://forms.gle/JrCsRMnBGDpnahQy5> or contact Jones, Melissa Cornish or Hannah Taylor.

“We appreciate your support of our student-athletes and can’t wait for another exciting football season! Go Rattlers!” said Jones.



BACK-TO-SCHOOL FAIR ... Junior Miss Pike County Carsyn Ballard (above left) was one of a whole host of volunteers to help make the 2026 Pike County Health Coalition’s Back-to-School Fair a success. The event, held on July 26 at the Pike County Fairgrounds, aided approximately 230 school age children who received school supplies, clothing, groceries, educational resources, and other services to help them start the new school year.



Submitted photos

School taking sealed bids on land

Accepted through August 17, see school website for maps

MURFREESBORO -- The South Pike County School Board heard that the district will accepted sealed bids on three properties -- two parcels in Bowen and one in Brocktown.

After a bank appraisal, fair market value on the Bowen parcels is \$4,000 and \$3,000 for the land in Brocktown.

Those values will set the minimum bid levels.

The district will accept sealed bids through August 17 at 3 p.m. and select winning bidders at next month’s school board meeting.

Interested participants can see much more about the properties, including maps, on the school’s website at www.rattlers.org/article/3040056.

Superintendent Tanya Wilcher said that with school rapidly approaching -- teacher orientation set for August 6 and Open House on August 13 from 3-7 p.m. -- that 63 kindergarten students were enrolled for the 2026-2027 school year.

With state law stating that a maximum of 20 students can be in a kindergarten class, or 22 with an extra aide, Wilcher said it was likely the district would get a few more students as school began, therefore it made more sense to hire another teacher.

As such, the board held a special meeting on July 26 and voted to hire Jennifer Watson as the district’s third kindergarten teacher.

Wilcher told the board that a water leak in the student’s parking section necessitated digging up part of the location to patch the leak.

She added it was on the city’s side of things, so the repair costs would be borne by them.

The board approved a transfer of a student to the Arkadelphia School District, after it was requested by family. Wilcher said she told the family that if things didn’t work out, he could simply return to MHS as it is his home district.

The board was apprised of handbook changes for the upcoming year. In high school, parental notification of unexcused absences will no longer be by letter, but by in writing via electronic means. Additionally, as a closed campus, students may leave campus if signed out by a parent/guardian or themselves if the are both a senior and over 18 years old. All forms of nicotine and CBD products have been added to the banned products list. The school will switch to Latin rankings for graduates such as summa cum laude. In dress code, changes include that shorts must be no more than five inches from the top of the knee [up from four inches last year] and yoga pants/leggings are acceptable if covering front and back. Semester test exemptions will be more strict, with no more than five missed classes with a “A” grade and no more than three missed classes with a “B” grade. This year only clear/translucent water bottles will be allowed for used by students on campus.

At Murfreesboro Elementary School, handbook changes state that students picked up before school ends must be done prior to 3:05 p.m., to avoid adding even more chaos to bus/car lines.

Students will be allowed two excused absences per semester with written excuse by parent or doctor’s excuse -- but in turn that excuse or parent note must be turned into the principal’s office within three days.

Toys not permitted on campus this year include Needoh, fidget spinners/toys, stress balls or squishies as well as a ban on pillows and blankets.

Any MES student that receives in-school suspension or full suspension will no longer qualify for an incentive trip. They may still spend their points in the school store. Also, any student with four or more unexcused absences will be ineligible for the trip, per the principal’s discretion.

“We need the kids at school ... and they don’t get there by driving themselves,” MES Principal James Riley quipped.

Levels of attendance and achievement on the Atlas K-3 test will be required for promotion to the first and third grades by students.

The board approved a bid proposal from EBI in the amount of \$3,316 for supplement student accident coverage.

The board also approved \$381,793.74 moved to the building fund for the upcoming school year.

The next scheduled meeting of the board was conflicted by the football scrimmage in Prescott on August 18, so the next board meeting is set for Thursday, August 20 at 6 p.m.

Mablevale man charged after attempting to seduce undercover cop

MURFREESBORO -- A 54-year-old Mablevale man has been charged in Pike County with internet stalking of a child after he allegedly took the bait of an undercover social media account operated by the Pike County Sheriff’s Department.

Jeremy Alan Kirk was charged July 25 with internet stalking and electronic facilitation of a child sexual abuse. He pleaded not guilty to the charges Monday in Pike County Circuit Court and an Oct. 5 pretrial date was set. Kirk is currently in county custody and no bond amount has been set.

According to case information, Kirk messaged the undercover account, which portrays a 14-year-old girl, at the start of July. He initiated the conversation as though he already to knew the minor and asked questions about why they hadn’t spoke in such a long time, inquired about cheerleading and whether she had obtained her driver’s license. He offered to help study for the driver’s license test and stated he would be “a good boyfriend.”

When the decoy advised Kirk she was 14

years old, he continued the communications and offered \$100 to \$300 to reveal part of her body and then reportedly sent three photographs of his genitals that he claimed was his.

Communications got “increasing graphic and sexual” and a meeting was arranged for Kirk to meet the decoy. Kirk was taken into custody without incident after arriving at the meeting place.

STOLEN TRUCK RESULTS IN CHARGE

A Milwaukee, Wis., driver was arrested July 11 and charged July 24 with theft by receiving involving a vehicle stolen out of his home state.

Kyrim Lomar Hodges, 36, pleaded not guilty to the charge Monday and an Aug. 3 pretrial date was set. Hodges is currently in county custody and no bond amount is listed.

Hodges was arrested by the Arkansas State Police on Highway 84 during a traffic stop for possible fictitious tags. Hodges acknowledged that he had put the fictitious tags on his Mercedes-Benz and was unable to provide any documentation.

A check revealed the vehicle had been stolen from Milwaukee. Hodges said he bought the car at an auction for \$3,500. He is also charged with misdemeanor fictitious tags and no liability insurance.

Also on July 24, Adam Levi Trager, 38, of Waldron, was charged with possession of methamphetamine following a traffic stop on Highway 8 near Glenwood. The stop was conducted for the driver not wearing his seat belt. Trager was a passenger in the vehicle and was also unbuckled.

The driver, Anthony Erke, had a search waiver on file and a subsequent search found a glass smoking pipe with suspected meth residue, 3.30 grams of the drug and a small amount of marijuana. Erke and Trager were both arrested after neither would claim ownership of the meth. Erke is also expected to be charged in the case but as of Tuesday morning no charge had been filed.

Trager failed to show up for his court date Monday in Pike County and a failure to appear warrant was issued for his arrest.

Pike County Health Coalition hosts successful Back To School Fair

GLENWOOD -- The Pike County Health Coalition is proud to announce the success of this year's Back-to-School Fair, held on July 26 at the Pike County Fairgrounds. Thanks to the incredible support of our community, approximately 233 children received school supplies, clothing, groceries, educational resources, and other services to help them start the new school year prepared and confident.

This event would not have been possible without the generosity of our sponsors, volunteers, community partners, and organizations that came together with one common goal, to support the children and families of Pike County.

We would like to extend our sincere gratitude to the following organizations for their generous monetary donations and support:

- Diamond Bank
- First State Bank
- Bank of Delight
- Southern Bancorp, Inc. (including the use of their smoker)
- Olen and Carmen Hendrix Foundation
- Pike County Fair Board (for the use of the Pike County Fairgrounds)

We also appreciate those who helped make our Touch-a-Truck experience a favorite attraction for the children:

- Antoine Fire Department for bringing a fire truck
- Pike County Sheriff's Office for providing police vehicles
- Pike County Judge Eddie Howard for providing county equipment

A special thank you goes to Harbor House for donating the bouncy house, which provided hours of fun for the children.

We are also grateful to the many organizations that participated by providing educational information, activities, and goodie bags for families:

- First Baptist Church – Murfreesboro
- First Baptist Church – Delight
- Delight Church of Christ
- Tri-Lakes CASA
- Ouachita Children & Family Services
- Harbor House
- Pike County 4-H
- Kids Dental



SHANNON BALLARD • 4-H PROGRAM ASSISTANT
UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS, DIVISION OF AGRICULTURE PIKE COUNTY
PHONE (870) 285-2161 • E-MAIL SBALLARD@UADA.EDU

- Sport Clips Haircuts
- United Methodist Church
- The CALL of Pike & Montgomery Counties
- Glenwood Family Clinic
- Percy & Donna Malone Child Safety Center
- Liberty Hill Baptist Church
- Wolf Creek Sand & Gravel
- AFMC
- Imagination Library



- Glenwood Head Start
- First Step of Glenwood
- Dr. Rhodes – Murfreesboro Dental
- Home Circle Counseling LLC

The Pike County Health Coalition would also like to recognize the many volunteers who worked behind the scenes collecting donations, organizing supplies, setting up, serving families, and cleaning up after the event. Your dedication and servant hearts made this event possible.

The success of this year's Back-to-School Fair demonstrates what can be accomplished when a community comes together to support its children. We are grateful to everyone who donated, volunteered, participated, or attended. Your generosity helped ensure that hundreds of Pike County children are beginning the school year with the tools they need to succeed.

We look forward to continuing this tradition and serving even more families in the years to come. Thank you, Pike County, for making a difference in the lives of our children and families.



PUBLIC NOTICE

Draw For Ballot Positions

The Pike County Election Commission will meet Friday, August 7th, at 1:00 p.m. to draw for ballot positions for the November 3rd, 2026 General Election. This meeting will be held in the Pike County Clerk's Office at 112 N. Washington, Suite A in Murfreesboro. All candidates are invited to attend.

This publication was paid for by the Pike County Clerk's office. The amount paid for this publication is \$27.00

(p.c.c. 55w., 4)

Murfreesboro Diamond

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- John Robert Schirmer, Publisher
- P.J. Tracy IV, Editor
- Christy Coccarelli, Office Manager/Photographer

Published by Nashville Leader Inc.,
418 North Main Street
Nashville, AR 71852

Periodical Class postage paid at Murfreesboro, AR

The *Murfreesboro Diamond* (USPC 103-230) is published every Wednesday.
Subscription Rates: \$45 per year in area: Pike, Howard, Hempstead, Clark, Nevada & Montgomery counties; \$57 per year elsewhere.
\$35 for 6-months in area; \$45 for 6-months elsewhere.
College Subscriptions- \$30 for 9-months.

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

Telephone: 870-285-2723

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

Please Send Change of Address Information to:
Murfreesboro Diamond
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Any erroneous statement published in the newspaper will be gladly and promptly corrected if called to the attention of the management.

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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

Harmful conditions proclaimed for Lake Hamilton

NORTH LITTLE ROCK -- The Arkansas Department of Energy and Environment’s (E&E) Division of Environmental Quality (DEQ) has issued a Harmful Algal Bloom Advisory for Lake Hamilton based on a bloom observed in Starlite Bay near Hot Springs, which is in Garland County.

The public is advised to avoid contact with the lake in the affected area. Cyanobacteria (organisms that make up a harmful algal bloom) have been visually confirmed and supported by preliminary testing. Harmful algal blooms may produce toxic substances that could result in headaches, weakness, shortness

of breath, muscle spasms, and gastrointestinal illnesses.

Be especially cautious of exposure in children, pets, and livestock. Wash animals off with clean tap water if exposure occurs and avoid letting them ingest toxins when cleaning their coats. DEQ is monitoring the water quality and will lift the advisory when the bloom dissipates.

If you suspect a harmful algal bloom, avoid contact with the water and report it. Contact DEQ at ee.habs@arkansas.gov or call 501.682.0744. More information can be found on DEQ’s website: <https://www.adeq.state.ar.us/water/planning/hab/>.

Tips for parents of teenagers starting high school

BY REBEKAH HALL
University of Arkansas Division of Agriculture

LITTLE ROCK — For families with teenagers starting high school this fall, the transition to new social pressures and academic responsibilities can feel intimidating for both parents and children.

Brittney Schrick, extension associate professor and family life specialist for the University of Arkansas Division of Agriculture, said parents should keep in mind that a desire for increased independence is a natural developmental milestone.

“Transitioning to high school brings an expectation of more independence,” Schrick said. “Depending on the school, they may be three or four years younger than the oldest students in the building. This can be intimidating and bring with it a lot of pressure to seem older or more confident than a younger student may actually feel.”

Schrack said parents should prepare to be intentional and ask their high school students a lot of questions.

“Especially if kids are transitioning to a much larger environment, they will experience changes and growing pains,” Schrick said. “Even kids who are outgoing or socially fearless can experience anxiety and difficulty adjusting to a new environment.

“Parents can tell when their kids are acting differently or seem stressed,” she said. “It’s okay to be annoying in asking follow-up questions but try to let your kids handle their own relationships, conflicts and teacher interactions as much as possible.”

It’s also important for parents to avoid comparing their own high school days with the experiences of their children, Schrick said.

“It is common for parents to relive their own high school experiences and project their fears or expectations onto their kids,” Schrick said. “But most parents of high school age kids didn’t go to high school with social media or smartphones. They had a computer lab and textbooks they took home instead of eBooks and Blackboard.

“It has always been difficult to relate to teens, but the gap is now very wide,” she said. “Asking questions with a goal of learning instead of correcting is always a good place to start.”

NEW SCHOOL JITTERS

For many students, high school takes place on a new campus. Schrick said families starting at a new school, big or small, should take the time to walk through their child’s schedule before school starts.

“Most schools will allow students to walk their schedule on the day they pick it up,” Schrick said. “For kids with anxiety, this type of low-stakes activity can make all the difference when starting the year. If they can walk the halls when they aren’t in a

hurry or when the halls are not full of students, the student can build confidence in their ability to navigate and make the first few days easier on everyone.”

If a schedule walk-through is not an option, use a campus map or other tool to “help your student mentally walk through their schedule and rehearse for the first day,” Schrick said.

The transition to high school can also bring new, more rigorous academic responsibilities. Schrick said helping students balance this new workload with social and extracurricular activities is tricky.

“Parents want their kids to learn to manage their own time and build the skills needed to make it through high school and beyond,” Schrick said. “However, the increase in schoolwork, social expectations and extracurricular activities can sometimes overwhelm teens and parents alike.”

Setting expectations early in the year that homework is done before social activities can help set the tone for the year, Schrick said.

“Avoid overscheduling your kids,” Schrick added. “This can set them up for failure by making it nearly impossible to meet overwhelming expectations.”

NAVIGATING NEW SOCIAL PRESSURES

Schrack said social pressures can increase in high school as independence increases and the potential negative outcomes of risky behavior become more life-altering.

STUDENTS Continued on Page 5

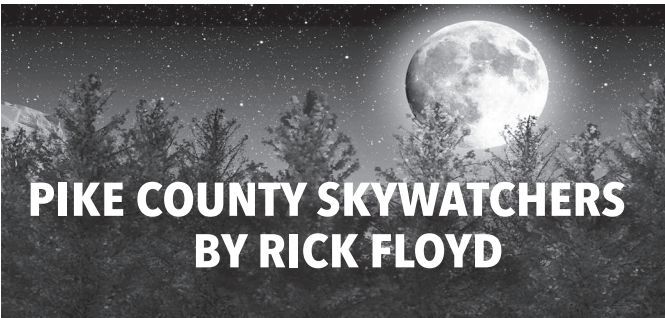
Community fish fry/barbecue to be held at Mauney Street church

MURFREESBORO -- A community-wide fish fry and barbecue will be held on Saturday, Aug. 1 in Murfreesboro.

The event will be held at the Mauney Street church of Christ, located at 606 Mauney Street in Murfreesboro.

The public is invited to the free event, especially children as the event will serve as a pre-back to school event.

Door prizes will be awarded to some attendees.



Senate considers time

Congress has time on its hands. Once again they have decided the time has come to address the issue of daylight saving time and its annual replacement of standard time.

The House of Representatives just passed the Sunshine Protection Act (H.P. 139) that would eliminate the “falling back” and “springing forward” that we do every year. Daylight Saving Time would become the standard. It is now up to the Senate to take it into consideration.

The changing of the clock twice a year does not add or subtract an hour to the day. The Earth never slowed down or sped up to accommodate our manipulations. It still takes about 24 hours for our planet to make one rotation. What issues the senators will debate are the questions of how long mornings will be in darkness during winter months, or of how much daylight we want in evenings among others. Time will tell how this goes.

Marking the passage of time has long been a human pursuit. Across the globe there are relics of ancient time pieces. Megalithic structures like Stonehenge in England and the Bighorn Medicine Wheel in Wyoming as well as numerous temple pyramids and mounds bear testament to how important time was to our ancestors. The clock, in our modern scientific oriented times, is now the emblem of our culture, and the old more organic and personal relationship the ancients had with nature and the cosmos has been somewhat pushed aside. Time however is still a mystery.

John Muir (1838-1914) was an American naturalist, author and scientist. He wrote a short piece about the passage of time and how it is related to Earth’s movement in the “heavens” and it is a good way to think about time.

*The grand show is eternal:
It is always sunrise somewhere;
the dew is never all dried at once
a shower is forever falling
vapor is ever rising.*

*Eternal sunrise, eternal sunset;
eternal dawn and gloaming
on sea and continents and islands
each in its turn, as the
round Earth rolls.*

Watch for the full moon rising on July 29, and the almost full one on the 28th. July’s moon is called the Buck Moon because male deer are growing new horns this time of year. Also, many of a certain generation remember watching the rise of a full moon on July 29, 1969, just nine days after Armstrong and Aldrin had walked on it after landing at Tranquility Base on July 20th. That full moon told of a new era for humankind.

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Obituaries

Johnny Wayne Lockeby, 71, Delight

Johnny Wayne Lockeby, age 71 of Delight, Arkansas, passed away on Thursday, July 23, 2026 in Nashville. He was born on January 8, 1955 in Murfreesboro. He was the son of the late Ernest Pipkins and Betty Jo Pipkins.

Mr. Lockeby was an avid hunter. He also enjoyed looking for artifacts, such as arrowheads and was a collector of guns.

In addition to his father, he was preceded in death by a sister, Pamela Ann walker, a nephew, Brandon Lee Pipkins and his grandparents, Roy and Zea Lockeby.

Those left to cherish his memory include his mother, Betty Pipkins, his brother, Tony (Donna) Pipkins; a sister, Brenda (Brandon) Ellis;

nieces and nephews including Jeremy Pipkins, Breanna Stevens, Heidi Scott, Kimberly Kilcrease, Amber Nutt, Tyler Ellis, Jessica Irwin, and Sasha Sweeney; numerous great-nieces and great-nephews; as well as a host of other relatives and friends.

The family received friends on Sunday, July 26, 2026 at Latimer Funeral Home in Murfreesboro.

Funeral services were held Monday, July 27, 2026 at the Latimer Funeral Chapel in Murfreesboro. Interment followed in the Delight Cemetery, under the direction of Latimer Funeral Home of Murfreesboro.

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

Robert Eugene ‘Rob’ Faulkner, 59

Robert Eugene “Rob” Faulkner, Jr, age 59 of Murfreesboro, passed away on Thursday, July 23, 2026 in Hot Springs. He was born on September 28, 1966 in Texarkana, Texas.

He is joining his Mom, Mary Ann Parker Moore, his grandparents, C.W. and Dorothy Parker, Uncle Carl Lee Faulkner; one Aunt and Uncle Earl and Dorothy Upton.

He leaves behind two daughters. Christy Boykin and husband Kenneth, Melissa Bush and husband Brad both from Murfreesboro; three sisters Linda Faulkner West and husband Jerry of New Boston, Sheila Mann, of Nashville, Donna Morgan and husband

Jim Boyer also of Nashville; two brothers Joe Faulkner of Michigan, Ricky Faulkner of Cherokee Village; one Aunt Linda Parker Carlile of Texarkana, two uncles Ray and Christy Parker and Dewayne and Deanna Parker of New Boston.

He had seven grandchildren; one great-grandchild, and a number of nieces and nephews, friends and many other who thought a lot of him.

Memorial services will be announced at a later time. Cremation arrangements are under the direction of Latimer Funeral Home of Murfreesboro.

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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.

First Baptist Church

Back to School Splash

Aug. 15 • 5:30-7:30 p.m.

• Ages 4-12 unless accompanied by adult •

dunking booth, bounce house with wading pool,
water balloon fights, hot dogs, drinks

The First Baptist Church is located at 500 S. Washington • Murfreesboro

For more information call Bro. Damian Rogers at 870-331-1826

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6	1	2	4	7	5	8	9	3
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7	5	6	1	3	2	4	8	9
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Hidden danger in the hayfield: nitrate poisoning can turn good feed bad

Pike County is officially in the middle of summer. I have seen hay down all over the county the past few days on my outings. However, over the last week, I have received several calls from hay producers with questions about nitrate poisoning and the risks it may post to their herds.

Nitrate poisoning in cattle is caused by the consumption of an excessive amount of nitrate or nitrite from grazing crops, hay, silage, weeds, drinking water, lubricating oil, fertilizer, etc. All plants contain some nitrate, but excessive amounts are likely to occur in forages which have been grown under conditions of excessive fertilization or stress.

- Susceptible Plants:
- Pearl Millet
 - Johnsongrass
 - Sorghums
 - Sudangrass
 - Sorghum-sudan
 - Corn
 - Weeds (especially pig weed)
- Susceptible Animals:
- Ruminant Animals
 - Cattle, Sheep, Goats
 - Grazing Precautions:

Do not turn hungry cattle onto a pasture. Feed any forage suspected of being high in nitrates in small amounts several times a day rather than feeding it all at once. Dilute toxic forage by mixing it with nontoxic forages and/or energy feeds such as molasses or corn. Adapt cattle slowly to elevated levels or nitrate.

DO LEVELS DECLINE IN STORED FORAGES?

No, nitrates remain in dry hay and in dry standing forage. Levels may decrease by about 50% in silage/haylage during the fermentation process.

CAN I HAVE MY FORAGE TESTED?

Yes, forage can be sent to the state forage lab through the Pike County Extension Office. The forage is tested for nutrients and will show the nitrate levels in the forage.

SYMPTOMS OF NITRATE TOXICITY

The most likely signs of nitrate poisoning are difficult and painful breathing, cyanotic membranes, rapid breathing, muscle tremors, weakness, low tolerance to exercise, incoordination, diarrhea, frequent urination, dark to chocolate colored blood and collapse. Milk production may also be reduced.

Nitrate poisoning may also cause death within one-half hour to four hours after symptoms appear. Symptoms usually appear when methemoglobin reaches 30 to 40 percent and death occurs when it reaches 80 to 90 percent.

For treatment options, contact your veterinarian as soon as symptoms appear and stop feeding the hay or get them off the pasture immediately.

PREVENTION OF NITRATE TOXICITY

Follow recommendations for nitrogen fertilization, and be careful not to exceed 2 tons of poultry litter yearly per acre on pastures, especially on johnsongrass or warm-season annual grasses.

When a crop is grown under conditions that cause nitrate accumulation, delay harvest of the crop until conditions improve to permit nitrate content to drop to a safe level. Consider making silage of drought damaged forage. The ensiling process reduces the nitrate level 40 to 60 percent. If high levels of nitrate have accumulated in plants, raise the cutter bar and leave more



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PIKE COUNTY EXTENSION AGENT

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stem, the portion of the plant with the highest concentration of nitrate, in the field.

Have suspected forage tested before harvesting for hay or feeding to cattle. We can help test at the County Extension office.

Dilute toxic forage by mixing it with nontoxic forages and/or energy feeds such as molasses or corn. Use forage nitrate analysis to determine dilution rates. Feed a nutritionally balanced ration. Iodized salt and vitamin A or green feed supplementation lessen the toxicity of nitrates.

Adapt cattle slowly to elevated levels of nitrate. Allow animals to graze only a couple hours per day for a few days on suspected fields. Never turn hungry animals in to a suspected field – allow them to graze other pasture first or feed hay before turn-in. Never exceed maximum recommended levels of nitrate intake.

Feed suspect forage in small amounts several times a day rather than all at one feeding. If forages are high in nitrates, ask your county agent about an analysis of the drinking water. Be aware that forage regrowth and volunteer plants are highly

suspect following nitrogen fertilization and drought. Observe animals closely for signs of toxicity, and call a veterinarian immediately if symptoms are observed.

THE BOTTOM LINE

Drought-stressed crops may appear valuable when forage supplies are tight, but appearance alone does not reveal nitrate content. A simple forage test is inexpensive compared to the value of livestock at risk. As producers face challenging weather conditions and fluctuating forage supplies, vigilance remains the best defense against nitrate poisoning. Remember, when in doubt, test it before you feed it. A few days of caution can prevent a costly loss.

NEW WORLD SCREWORM UPDATE:

The count for cases of New World Screwworm has risen to 42 total cases as of July 27, 2026. 9 of those cases are active and 33 are inactive cases. These cases are still located in Southwest and Western Texas and southeastern New Mexico. Arkansas has not had a positive case. For more information about New World Screwworm, you can visit the USDA website at [screwworm.gov](https://www.screwworm.gov) or by visiting the University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension website at uaex.uada.edu and search for New World Screwworm.

UPCOMING EVENTS & NOTES:

- Raising the Steaks Cattle Exploration Workshop, free for youth ages 5-19. July 31, 2026 at 1:00 PM-3:00 PM, located at the Pike County Extension Office at 100 Court Street, Murfreesboro, AR. Please Register by calling the Pike County Extension Office at 870-285-2161.
 - Help us plan the 2027 Southwest Arkansas Homesteading Conference. You can stop by the office for a survey or fill it out online using the QR Code (below) or this link: <https://forms.cloud.microsoft/r/ABdRGM1jDA>
 - Pike County Fair Livestock Forms Due August 1, if you need your form signed, please drop off before July 31.
- For more information on anything agriculture or natural resource related, please contact the Pike County Extension Office at (870) 285-2161.



Help Pike County Extension plan the 2027 SW Arkansas Homesteading Conference by using the QR code

‘Dear Preacher’

By Buddy Ray, Murfreesboro Church of Christ



IMITATE ME

We are living in a world where many people are living in a manner that pleases them and have turned their backs on God’s teaching, as well as the things He has instructed us to do in order to be pleasing to Him. We are expected to be tolerant to all behavior and to accept the things that man says are “okay”, even if those things go directly against the Word of God!

As we face these daily challenges, it would serve us well to follow the Biblical examples of faithful men and to live before our fellow man as these great men did while they carried the God’s message throughout the world. In 1 Corinthians 11:1, the apostle Paul encourages us to imitate him as he imitates Christ. It should be our daily prayer that each of us can live our lives following the example that Christ left for us. 1 Peter

2:21 tells us that Christ suffered for us, leaving us an example that we should follow in His steps. If we choose to truly imitate Paul, he says that we will also be following the example Christ set for us.

IF I TRULY IMITATE PAUL, WHAT CHARACTERISTICS WOULD I EXHIBIT?

I WOULD NOT BE ASHAMED OR EMBARRASSED TO SHARE CHRIST AND HIS WORD!

Romans 1:16

I WOULD STUDY AND FOLLOW THE SCRIPTURES

1 Timothy 2:15 2 Timothy 3:14-15

I WOULD TEACH OTHERS THE WORD

2 Timothy 2:2

I WOULD BE A GOOD EXAMPLE TO OTHERS

2 Timothy 1:13 Philippians 4:9

I WOULD KNOW IN WHOM I FULLY BELIEVE

2 Timothy 1:12

I WOULD BE CONFIDENT IN GOING TO HEAVEN!

2 Timothy 4:6-8

1 Corinthians 15:10 – But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me was not in vain; but I labored more abundantly than they all, yet not I but the grace of God which was with me.

Let us accept the gift of God’s grace, labor each day, and become the best we can be as we serve our Lord.

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Meal kits a good value -- for some

BY MARY HIGHTOWER
University of Arkansas Division of Agriculture

LITTLE ROCK — We’ve all been there. You want to eat healthier, but cooking dinner after finishing a long, hard day of work sounds impossible. Signing up for a meal kit service suddenly seems like a good solution.

If that sounds familiar, you’re not alone. Meal kits — whether they’re simply heat-and-eat, packaged with already portioned ingredients, or somewhere in between — are big business. According to recently published research, the global meal kit delivery services market was valued at \$20.54 billion in 2022 and was expected to grow at a compound annual rate of 15.3 percent from 2023 to 2030.

If you’re trying to decide whether to sign up for one of the meal kit services, Lida Araghi, assistant professor and nutrition extension specialist for the University of Arkansas Division of Agriculture, offers some guidance.

“Consumers should begin by identifying what problem they want the service to solve,” Araghi said.

“Meal kits may be helpful for people who lack time for meal planning and grocery shopping, want to cook more often, need new recipe ideas, or frequently rely on takeout,” she said.

“However, someone who already plans meals, shops efficiently and uses leftovers may find less value in a subscription.”

FIVE QUESTIONS TO ASK

Araghi said consumers should ask these five questions before deciding on meal kits.

1. Am I trying to save planning time, shopping time, cooking time, or all three?
2. What is the true cost per serving after shipping, fees, add-ons, and required pantry ingredients?
3. Do the meals fit my nutritional needs and portion expectations?
4. Just because a meal is advertised as a healthy option doesn’t mean it will fit your specific needs, Araghi said. Always check the labels and read the fine print.
5. MEAL KITS Continued on Page 5

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Facts About The BIBLE

BY JOHN LEHTI

BIBLICAL SUBTERFUGE!

WHEN ABRAHAM WENT TO EGYPT TO ESCAPE THE FAMINE IN CANAAN, UNDOUBTEDLY, HE WAS IMPRESSED BY MANY THINGS THAT HE SAW IN THE LAND. THE EGYPTIAN CITIES WERE OF STUPENDOUS ARCHITECTURE AND, WHEREVER THE EYE FELL, ONE COULD SEE THAT EGYPT LACKED FOR NOTHING---YES....



...THEY ARE MUCH WEALTHIER THAN HE, BUT STILL, HE DOES POSSESS A MOST RARE JEWEL....

IF THE EGYPTIANS SEE THEE, THEY MAY KILL ME IN ORDER TO KEEP THEE! SAY, THEN, FOR MY SAKE, THAT THOU ART MY SISTER SO THAT THEY MAY NOT KILL ME!

...SARAI, HIS BEAUTIFUL WIFE! WHAT IF THE EGYPTIANS, ON SEEING HER GREAT BEAUTY, SHOULD KILL HIM IN ORDER TO POSSESS HER! IN ABRAHAM'S MIND, IT IS A DISTINCT POSSIBILITY, AND SO HE HASTENS TO THE TENT OF HIS WIFE TO PLAN WHAT TO DO IN CASE TROUBLE OF THIS SORT SHOULD HAPPEN!

JOHN LEHTI

OF COURSE THE WHOLE PLAN REALLY BACKFIRED RIGHT IN ABRAHAM'S FACE WHEN THE PHARAOH FOUND OUT THAT SARAI WAS ABRAHAM'S WIFE (GEN. 12:19-20) AND ABRAH FOUND OUT THAT HE HAD WORRIED NEEDLESSLY--FOR PHARAOH COMMANDED HIS MEN TO PROTECT ABRAH, AND HIS WIFE, AND ALL THAT HE HAD!

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HISTORY 101

* -- Theme Related Clue

ACROSS

- 1. Charlie “Bird” Parker’s sax
- 5. Mary ____, businesswoman extraordinaire
- 8. Downloadable smartphone purchase
- 11. In ____ of
- 12. Greek salad staple
- 13. Appraisal
- 15. Law school prerequisite, acr.
- 16. “Once ____ a Time in America”
- 17. Dictum, pl.
- 18. * ____ press, Johannes Gutenberg’s invention
- 20. “Sittin’ On the Dock of the Bay” singer
- 21. In need of a muffler
- 22. Make a choice
- 23. *Genghis Khan’s ____ Empire
- 26. Intima, pl.
- 30. Fertility clinic stock
- 31. Tranquil
- 34. Famous Steeler coach, Chuck ____
- 35. Twisted cotton thread
- 37. Key next to spacebar
- 38. Like a gymnast
- 39. Naysayer’s favorite prefix
- 40. Develop, as in story
- 42. ____-AFTRA
- 43. Famous fox of fable
- 45. Like a smell of soil
- 47. *World’s first 24-hour TV news network, acr.
- 48. Molten rock
- 50. Smoke plus fog
- 52. *First Roman emperor
- 55. Part of foot, pl.
- 56. Chowder protein
- 57. Pelvic parts
- 59. Are not
- 60. *Homesteader’s purchase, sing.
- 61. “ ____ the good die young”
- 62. *Pres. during the Cuban Missile Crisis
- 63. It is

64. Fermented rice brew

DOWN

- 1. Pledge of Allegiance ending
- 2. Talk like Daffy
- 3. Eye drop
- 4. Day trip
- 5. Flat-topped military caps
- 6. Lack of muscle tension
- 7. Opposite of yin
- 8. Mushroom spore sacs
- 9. Benatar and Morita, e.g.
- 10. Money in Myanmar
- 12. Pointless
- 13. Take as one’s own
- 14. * ____ Bull, Lakota’s famous leader
- 19. Gallows’ rope
- 22. *World War ____, 1914-18
- 23. Wisdom tooth, e.g.
- 24. Sheep-like
- 25. Highly unpleasant
- 26. “He’s Just Not That ____ You”
- 27. Damp
- 28. Islam’s Supreme Being
- 29. Lament for the dead
- 32. Writer Ayn
- 33. Rudolph’s friend Hermey, e.g.
- 36. *One of Mount Rushmore presidents
- 38. *First President in the White House
- 40. Cremation ashes container
- 41. Peanut or pea, e.g.
- 44. Emotional turmoil
- 46. 2:1 and 3:1, e.g.
- 48. Defraud
- 49. Petri dish jellies
- 50. Feudal lord’s servant
- 51. Humble and docile
- 52. Frozen bowl berry
- 53. Arm bone
- 54. *The ____ Road, ancient East-West trade route
- 55. Pilgrimage to Mecca
- 58. Pirate’s “yes”

CROSSWORD

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STUDENTS Continued from Page 3

“High school-aged kids’ brains are not fully developed, but they often look like adults,” Schrick said. “This mismatch can sometimes trick teens and their parents into thinking that they are fully capable of making and understanding adult decisions. “Especially for kids who are academically successful, show responsibility and independence by holding a steady job, or contribute to family income or sibling care, the expectations of acting like an adult while still having a teen brain can lead to unexpected difficulties,” she said. Make sure that children know what you expect of them, even if they roll their eyes and say they already know, Schrick said. “It doesn’t hurt them to hear again that you expect them to avoid drinking and drugs, not to smoke or vape, or not to have sex,” Schrick said. “It is important that they hear you say that you think their grades are important, that they should ask you before getting in a car with a new driver, that they can ask their teachers questions, that they can get in trouble with the police if they send nude photos.” Schrick said parents sometimes assume that their kids aren’t listening because they seem distracted or annoyed. “However, they’re listening, and they’re watching, and they’re making decisions based on a lot of different factors, including what they think the adults in their lives would do, or what those adults would prefer the kid do,” Schrick said. ‘BUT EVERYBODY IS DOING IT!’ A sense of belonging is a basic human need, and one that can feel especially powerful during the high school years, Schrick said. But helping children build confidence to stand up for their beliefs or desires — at the risk of being left out — is critical. “Some ways parents can foster this type of confidence is to avoid forcing kids to do things that they aren’t comfortable doing unless they are absolutely necessary,” Schrick said. “For example, letting them wear what they want to, even if you think it is awful, letting them eat until they are full rather than forcing them to clean their plate, letting them refuse to hug someone they don’t want to hug or letting them choose activities for their own enjoyment instead of appeasing an adult.” These examples and many others help kids build up knowledge of their own minds and preferences and “pay attention

to their inner feelings that help them know when something doesn’t feel good to them,” Schrick said. “If kids only learn to avoid certain situations so they won’t get in trouble with an adult, they are more likely to be sneaky or take risks when they are sure they won’t be caught,” she said. Building this kind of self-trust also helps children learn that not “everyone” is, in fact, doing “it,” Schrick said, whatever “it” is. “Their brains will have a hard time grasping that, especially when social media and personal interactions can sometimes increase the feeling that they are the odd one out,” Schrick said. “But building confidence in a teen’s ability to participate in a

MEAL KITS Continued from Page 4

4. Will I realistically prepare and eat the meals before the ingredients spoil? While meal kits can simplify the planning and shopping process, consumers still need to be realistic about the time needed to prepare the food. Araghi said that if you struggle to find time to cook meals now, it is important to consider how you will make the most of a meal kit. 5. Does the convenience justify the additional cost? It all comes down to weighing the convenience of meal kits — including the time they might save and the simplicity of specialized kits for different dietary goals — vs. your budget, Araghi said. CAN MEAL KITS HELP ME ACHIEVE DIETARY GOALS? In addition to convenience, meal kits can offer menus to help consumers achieve dietary goals. “Many services offer vegetarian, high-protein, calorie-conscious, carbohydrate-conscious, or other specialized choices,” Araghi said. “However, these terms are often marketing categories and may not be standardized. Consumers should review the Nutrition Facts label, ingredients list, portion size, and several weeks of menus rather than relying only on the plan’s name.” Araghi also said that those with food allergies, celiac disease, diabetes, kidney disease, hypertension, or other medical dietary needs should also examine allergen and cross-contact information carefully and consult a registered dietitian nutritionist or healthcare provider when appropriate. Meal kits may also support weight-management or other nutrition goals when the portions and nutrient content match the individual’s needs. “However, a meal labeled ‘high protein,’ ‘low carb,’ or ‘low sugar’ is not an automatically balanced meal,” Araghi said. For a balanced diet, “consumers should consider calories, sodium, saturated fat, fiber, vegetables, and whole grains,” she said. DO KITS CONTAIN ULTRA PROCESSED FOODS? Meal kits are not automatically nutritious, Araghi said.

group but say, ‘No, thanks,’ is a tool that will serve them well throughout life.” Schrick suggested parents reach out to their children’s schools for additional resources or personnel, such as guidance counselors, available for students and families. Families with older children who have navigated this territory before can also be helpful, she said. Visit the Personal & Family Well-Being page on the Cooperative Extension Service website for more family life resources. To learn about extension programs in Arkansas, contact the Pike Cooperative Extension Service at (870) 285-2161 or visit uaex.uada.edu.

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