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Zoning Commission to host public meeting, will consider variance

MURFREESBORO -- The Murfreesboro Planning and Zoning Commission will host a public meeting on Tuesday, September 19 at 6:30 p.m. at Murfreesboro City Hall.

The meeting will be held to gather public comment before the board considers a variance in regards to properties at 31, 33 and 35 Courthouse Square which is owned by DeWayne Gray.

Gray, who along with wife Fancy are the owners of both Southern Specialties and Hawkins Variety Store, is asking for the variance to allow him to turn half the space of the above referenced properties into short-term rental spaces to help afford the needed renovations to the buildings.

Under his plan, the front half of the buildings would remain as a single retail space under one roof, which he would utilize.

The back of the building would prospectively feature access to three rental spaces, including parking, a deck and a landscaped courtyard.

Gray said at the meeting the work would "enhance the property" and would be an "overall improvement for the building" while maintaining the historic look. He also feels his options are limited outside this proposal, as lower rent for businesses had led him to renters that often don't/can't pay, and charging a higher rent will simply leave the businesses unoccupied.

The current zoning ordinance says that mixed use is allowed in the central business district, but with any residential units being in upstairs lofts. The ordinance defines allowable uses of central business structures on the ground floor to be retail, office, commercial or entertainment.

Pair of men charged with internet stalking, kiddie porn

MURFREESBORO -- Two men, including a 72-year-old, have been charged in Pike County with internet stalking of a child and computer child pornography.

Charged are Gary Eugene Johnson, 72, and Ricky McKamie, 48, who both have Nashville addresses listed in court documents. They were both charged Sept. 7 and both pled not guilty to the charges Friday.

Both men were arrested and charged as a result of an undercover social media account in which an investigator portrays a teen female. Johnson and McKamie both allegedly followed up on their attempts to have sexual relations with a child by traveling to an undisclosed location to meet the child portrayed online.

Johnson was found to have two cell phones and a loaded firearm in his possession when he was arrested on Aug. 25.

McKamie balked on his first attempt at physical contact and was a no-show but on Aug. 17 he arrived as planned and was arrested.

Also on Sept. 7, charges were filed against William G. Pate Jr., 57, of Glenwood. He is charged with felony possession of a controlled substance. He was arrested Sept. 1 during a traffic stop when deputies reportedly found 4.41 grams of methamphetamine. Pate pled not guilty to the charge Friday.

Sentenced
During Pike County Circuit Court proceedings held Friday, Sept. 8, Zachary Cogburn, 35, of Norman pled "true" to violating the terms of his probation and was sentenced to three years in the Arkansas Department of Corrections.

Cristie Pitchford, 38, of Glenwood pled "true" violating the terms of her probation and was sentenced to three years in the Arkansas Department of Corrections.



Staff Photos

JUNIOR RATTLERS HANDLE HORATIO ... The Murfreesboro Junior Rattlers defeated the Horatio Lions by a 38-8 score at home on Thursday, September 7 to move their record to 1-1 on the season. Pictured (above left) is #4 Isaac Kuykendall driving a Lion ballcarrier to the ground, while (above right) ballcarrier Aden Stinson looks to avoid a Horatio defender in the open field.

Seven-year-old finds 2.95 carat diamond

MURFREESBORO, Ark. -- Seven-year-old Aspen Brown, of Paragould, visited Crater of Diamonds State Park in Murfreesboro on Sept. 1 and left with a 2.95-carat golden brown diamond. Brown's find is the second-largest registered by a park guest this year, topped only by a 3.29-carat brown diamond discovered in March.

Brown's diamond is the first large diamond registered since the completion of an excavation project at the park last month.

"A contracted company dug a 150-yard trench in August to help manage erosion on the north side of the search area," said Caleb Howell, park superintendent. "Several tons of unsearched diamond-bearing material were exposed and it's very possible that this diamond and others were uncovered as a result."

Brown was visiting the park with her dad and grandmother to celebrate her birthday. They made their way to the north side of the park's 37.5-acre diamond search area, a plowed field atop the eroded surface of an ancient, diamond-bearing volcano. According to Aspen's dad, Luther Brown, "She got hot and wanted to sit down for a minute, so she walked over to some big rocks by the fence line. Next thing I know, she was running to me, saying 'Dad! Dad! I found one!'"

Brown picked up a gem about the size of a green pea from a pathway along the northeast side of the search area. On their way out of the park, the family stopped at the Diamond Discovery Center to have their finds identified. There, the park staff confirmed that Aspen's gem was a diamond.

"Aspen's diamond has a golden-brown color and a sparkling luster. It is a complete crystal, with no broken facets and a small crevice on one side, created when the diamond was formed," said Waymon Cox, assistant park superintendent. "It's certainly one of the most beautiful diamonds I've seen in recent years."

Many of Crater of Diamonds State Park's visitors choose to name the diamonds they find at the park. Luther Brown says that he thinks the Aspen Diamond is the perfect name. "There was no skill required for her to find it. She was just in the right place at the right time."

The Aspen Diamond was found close to where another large diamond, the 3.72-carat



Submitted photo/CODSP

THE ASPEN DIAMOND

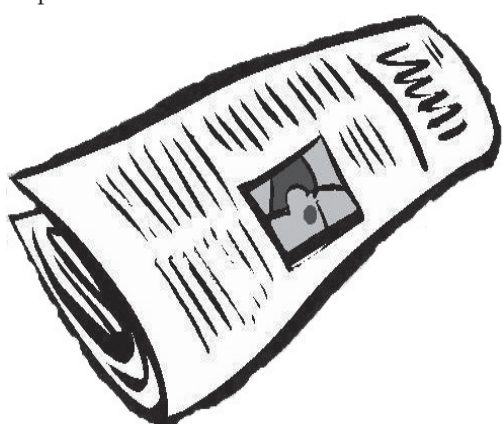
Caro Avenger, was discovered in 2019. As of press time, 563 diamonds have been registered at Crater of Diamonds State Park in 2023, totaling more than 89 carats. An average of one to two diamonds are found by park visitors each day.

In total, over 75,000 diamonds have been unearthed at the Crater of Diamonds since the first diamonds were discovered by John Huddleston, a farmer who owned the land long before it became a state park in 1972. The largest diamond ever discovered in the United States

was unearthed in 1924 during an early mining operation on the land that later became the state park.

CRATER OF DIAMONDS STATE PARK

Located on Arkansas Highway 301 in Murfreesboro, Arkansas, Crater of Diamonds State Park is one of the only places in the world where the public can search for real diamonds in their original volcanic source. The park is open from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily (except New Year's Day, Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve afternoon and Christmas Day).



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County sets, quickly removes burn ban last week

MURFREESBORO -- After setting countywide burn ban on Tuesday, September 5, Pike County has now declared sufficient rainfall has fallen to lift the ban after storms rolled through the area Friday, Sept. 8.

The original official emergency document, signed by Pike County Judge Eddie Howard on Sept. 5, stated that fire hazards due to the lack of sufficient rainfall, along with the prospect of rapidly drying conditions in the foreseeable future, makes the necessity to ban all outdoor burning in Pike County's non-municipal areas.

The proclamation further stated that "an emergency exists in Pike County and the hazard potential to life and property is such that a ban against outdoor burning is hereby declared until such time as this County Order is lifted."

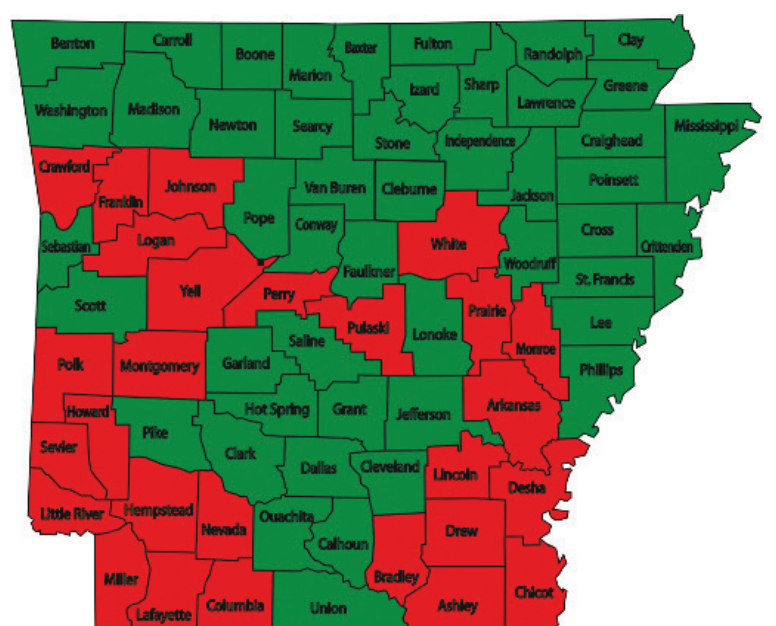
A burn ban may only be declared and lifted by County Judge Howard, per Arkansas Code (A.C.A.) 12-75-108.

The lifted order no longer prohibits "all outside burning, including but not limited to trash, brush, grass and leaves."

As a note to residents in the future for burn bans, violations of the order will be handled in the Pike County District Court, with citations issued by either the Pike County Sheriff's office or the Arkansas Forestry Commission. Setting or causing a fire to any forest, brush or other flammable material will be a violation of the order and considered a Class A misdemeanor, per A.C.A. 5-38-310.

During a burn ban, outdoor burning can be allowed under spe-

BAN Continued on Page 2



Submitted Photo

BURN BANS IN EFFECT ... The above map shows counties in red with ongoing burn bans in the state as of 11 a.m. on Tuesday.



Staff Photos

BUSINESS APPRECIATION DAY ... The Crater of Diamonds State Park recently held a "Business Partner Appreciation" event for local businesses. The event was designed to, after the end of the major tourism season in Murfreeseboro for 2023, "show thanks for [businesses'] hard work, hospitality and continued support of Crater of Diamonds State Park." The event, which was held in the Diamond Discovery Classroom, featured a light brunch, the April 2024 Solar Eclipse plan, park update and a virtual tour of the facilities for those in attendance.

Search area project completed at Crater of Diamonds state park

BY SARAH REAP

Interpreter, Crater of Diamonds State Park

MURFREESBORO -- Greetings from Crater of Diamonds State Park! Whether it's the park bulldozer plowing fresh dirt or an excavator overturning several feet of soil, it is always exciting to see heavy machinery at work in the park's diamond search area.

In recent weeks, the search area has undergone a major excavation project managed by Bobby Walker, of Walker Sand & Gravel, in Lockesburg. According to Park Superintendent Caleb Howell, "Walker Sand & Gravel has completed several heavy equipment projects for the park in the past, and we are happy to have them back once again."

The primary goal of this year's project was to help manage erosion of the diamond search area by making the field's central pathway the high point between all north and south drainages. To accomplish this task, Walker and his crew dug a 150-yard trench north from the central path. Approximately 3,000 cubic yards of dirt and gravel were relocated to the south side of the trail to help reduce a steep slope, improving guest safety and accessibility. A large culvert that ran under the central pathway was also removed.

Large projects like this tend to draw a lot of attention and excitement. In addition to maintaining the park's most valuable resource, they can also increase the chances of finding diamonds. Assistant Park Superintendent Waymon Cox explains, "Most park guests search for diamonds near the surface. The equipment used in these projects exposes unsearched diamond-bearing material from deeper underground, so there is a great opportunity for more people to find diamonds!"

Walker Sand & Gravel was founded by Royce Walker and is now operated by his son Bobby. According to Walker, "The equipment used in this project included a John Deere 850J dozer, a John Deere 333G compact track loader, and a Case International 9380 tractor with a Humdinger scraper."

Since 2005 Crater of Diamonds State Park has completed several trenching projects in different parts of the diamond search area. The latest project was completed in mid-August. The

search area remained open throughout the project, but guests were encouraged to stay safe and keep clear of the heavy machinery.

Crater of Diamonds State Park staff welcomes you to come explore the exciting changes that have been made to the search area during your next diamond adventure!

Search area last plowed: August 27, 2023
Most recent significant rain: September 12, 2023
Recent diamond finds (100 points = 1 carat):

August 29 – Jeffrey Peek, Lonoke, AR, 10 pt. yellow; Scott Kreykes, Dierks, AR, 1 pt. white

September 1 – Aspen Brown, Paragould, AR, 2.95 ct. brown

September 3 – Laura Breazeale, Flowood, MS, 6 pt. white; Charlyne Schatzl, Sullivan, MO, 3 pt. white; Scott Kreykes, Dierks, AR, 1 pt. white

September 9 – David Anderson, Murfreeseboro, AR 4 pt. white; Joshua Fox, Murfreeseboro, AR, 29 pt. brown; Alan Fox, Murfreeseboro, AR, 7 pt. white; Michael Fox, Murfreeseboro, AR, 2 pt. white.

Crater has hosted over 4.6 million people since opening as state park in 1972

MURFREESBORO -- At the Crater of Diamonds local business appreciation event on Thursday, August 24, the first since the covid-19 pandemic, a report offered to those in attendance revealed that the park in 2022 easily had their highest number of diamonds found since 2009.

Some 758 diamonds were found last year with a paid visitation of 162,886 people. Of those 758 diamonds, 17 were over one carat, 509 were classified as "white," 141 classified as "brown" and 108 as "yellow." The diamonds had a combined weight of 117.91 carats.

From the most recent massive find year of 2007, the statistics include (diamonds found, total carat weight, over 1 carat, paid visitation):

2007 – 1,024, 252.73, 44, 171,581
2008 – 946, 192.60, 27, 136,533
2009 – 918, 182.97, 29, 123,208
2010 – 601, 131.11, 23, 119,050
2011 – 560, 149.77, 30, 106,524

2012 – 530, 95.38, 13, 100,954
2013 – 455, 96.70, 17, 115,523
2014 – 585, 121.02, 17, 144,445
2015 – 467, 99.23, 12, 168,330
2016 – 501, 96.60, 17, 161,388
2017 – 445, 103.33, 15, 182,301
2018 – 405, 77.12, 8, 124,615
2019 – 491, 99.14, 18, 138,921
2020 – 353, 81.91, 17, 129,697
2021 – 354, 62.92, 8, 201,709
2022 – 758, 117.91, 17, 162,886

In their more than half-a-century of existence as a state park (since 1972), the park reports that in total 35,250 diamonds have been located, weighing 7,031.73 carats in total with 1,046 diamonds over one carat having been located. Over that span, there has been a paid visitation total of 4,663,347 people.

The biggest number of diamonds found in a year was 1994, when 1,421 diamonds were discovered. The largest year for carat weight finds was 1983, when 312.57

carats left the park. That same year and 2007 saw the largest number of over one carat diamonds found with 44 each. 2021 was easily the largest attended year at the crater, with 201,709 paid admissions. Conversely, the Crater had only one year – 1978 – with more than 100,000 attendees in its first 35 years of existence. Since that point, every single of the past 16 years has been over 100,000 in paid attendance.

The park's 37-acre field, which is open 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. seven days-a-week, except for Thanksgiving, Christmas eve, Christmas and New Year's day, charges \$13 admission for adults, \$6 for children 6-12 years of age and free for children 5 years old and younger.

Most self-powered equipment is eligible for use at the mine, including some for rent at the Crater itself (including screens, buckets, and shovels), but motor and battery powered mining equipment is not allowed.

BAN Continued from Page 1

cial circumstances, should the fire chief of that district be assured that all necessary and proper precautions are in place and that the burning poses no hazard to life and/or property. No outdoor burning shall be permitted without a written permit by the fire chief of the district where the fire will take place.

As of deadline on Tuesday, most counties surrounding Pike -- Nevada, Hempstead, Howard, Polk and Montgomery -- still have ongoing burn bans. Only bordering Clark county has lifted the ban prior to the rainfall on Tuesday.

Murfreeseboro Diamond

Your Hometown Newspaper since 1975

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

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

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

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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:
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Murfreeseboro, AR 71958

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

**SUBMISSION DEADLINE
FRIDAYS AT 3:00 P.M.**

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 Murfreeseboro 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, Murfreeseboro, AR 71958 or e-mail to mdiamond.editor@windstream.net

ITEM OF THE WEEK

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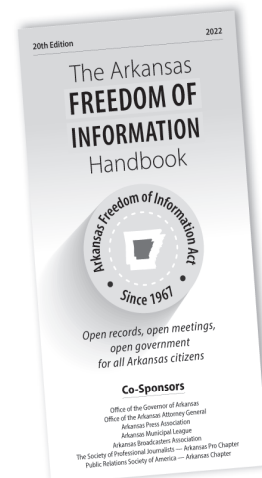
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OCTOBER 16, 2023

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WILL BE CLOSED OCT. 9 FOR COLUMBUS DAY HOLIDAY

WE WILL BE OPEN MONDAY, OCTOBER 16

8:00 A.M. - 6:00 P.M.

This publication was paid for by Pike County, office of the Tax Collector. The amount paid for this publication is \$ 50.00.

PIKE COUNTY DISTRICT COURT DOCKET

September 5, 2023
BF=Bond Forfeited

PIKE COUNTY

Amix, Dakota Lee, 30, Kingston, Okla., \$185 BF, speeding
Beggs, Joyce M., 40, Broken Bow, Okla., guilty of failure to register tags/expired, fined \$125
Black, Marshall Ellis, 22, Norman, \$125 BF, failure to stop or yield
Bradshaw, Ashley Michelle, 32, Kirby, \$125 BF, failure to register tags/expired
Brewer, Aaron Corbin, 19, Huntington, \$135 BF, speeding
Brooks, Justin Loyd, 37, Glenwood, guilty of driving with suspended license, fined \$325
Bulfone, Whitney, 34, Glenwood, \$315 BF, no proof of liability insurance; \$125 BF, careless or prohibited driving
Bush, James C., 30, Glenwood, guilty of contempt (failure to pay), \$690 owed; guilty of failure to appear, fined \$205; guilty of possession of controlled substance, fined \$1,050 and license suspended for six months; guilty of possession of drug paraphernalia, fined \$575; guilty of failure to appear, find \$245
Cannon, Teresa Renee, 37, Hot Springs, \$125 BF, speeding
Carey, Edward Joe, 43, Bismarck, \$45 BF, no seat belt
Christ, Lakesha Ann, 39, Glenwood, guilty of no driver's license, fined \$125; guilty of no proof of liability insurance, fined \$315
Cogburn, Eric W., 35, Amity, guilty of driving with suspended license, fined \$325; guilty of motorcycle-riding without head gear-under 21; guilty of no motorcycle endorsement on license, fined \$125; guilty of no proof of liability insurance, fined \$315
Cogburn, Zachery L., 35, Norman, guilty of driving with suspended license, fined \$325
Davis, Robert Morgan, 17, Volonia, guilty of speeding, fined \$125
Dodson, Marsha Renae, 55, Hot Springs Village, guilty of failure to register tags/expired, fined \$125; guilty of driving with suspended license, fined \$325; guilty of no proof of liability insurance, fined \$315; guilty of driving with suspended license, fined \$325; guilty of refusing to submit to chemical test, fined \$125; guilty of disorderly conduct, fined \$220
Dudley, Tomy Lee, 49, Fort Smith, \$125 BF, failure to register tags/expired
Emmett, Eric Lynn, 33, Glenwood, guilty of failure to register tags/expired, fined \$125; guilty of no proof of liability insurance, fined \$315
Fahrney, Mariah Lyn, 25, Langley, guilty of failure to register tags/expired, fined \$125; guilty of driving with suspended license, fined \$325
Fant, Jayden Lee, 26, Bonnerdale, \$125 BF, speeding
Fant, Jerry Wayne, 37, Hot Springs, guilty of driving with suspended license, fined \$325; guilty of contempt (failure to pay), \$1,125 owed
Fetterhoff, Kelsey Renae, 19, Hot Springs, \$260 BF, minor in possession of alcohol
Gaston, Carter Stihl, 18, Benton, \$260 BF, minor in possession of alcohol; \$220 BF, public intoxication

Gonzalez, Luis, 35, Lockesburg, \$175 BF, speeding
Graves, Beau, 37, Glenwood, guilty of contempt (failure to pay), \$490 owed; guilty of driving with suspended license, fined \$325; guilty of no proof of liability insurance, fined \$315; guilty of failure to appear, fined \$205
Harmon, Jaythan Tyler, 19, Oden, guilty of no proof liability insurance; guilty of no seat belt
Harris, Mindi Anne, 43, Delight, \$125 BF, speeding
Heifner, Joshua Aaron, 42, Mena, \$45 BF, no seat belt
Howard, Stephanie Nicole, 30, Murfreesboro, \$125 BF, failure to register tags/expired
Jacobs, Aerik Anthony, 24, Hot Springs, guilty of failure to register tags/expired, fined \$125; guilty of no proof of liability insurance, fined \$315
Kievett, Deanna Lynn, 40, Amity, \$205 BF, contempt (failure to pay)
Kimery, Gregory Scott, 44, Hot Springs, \$155 BF, speeding
Lambert, Michael Gene, 35, Hot Springs, \$185 BF, speeding
Lee, Dennis Steven, 65, Kirby, \$135 BF, speeding
Lester, John L., 61, Caddo Gap, guilty of driving with suspended license, fined \$325
Martinez, Efigenia, 47, Nashville, \$125 BF, no driver's license; \$125 BF, speeding
McMellon, Tre Roderick, 19, Mena, \$45 BF, no seat belt
Medrano, Guadalupe, 38, Las Cruces, N.M., guilty of contempt (failure to pay), \$2,270 owed
Merchant, Selina Rena, 48, Lockesburg, guilty of speeding, fined \$135
Moore, Matthew T., 36, Norman, guilty of failure to register tags/expired, fined \$125; guilty of no proof of liability insurance, fined \$315; guilty of possessing instrument of crime, fined \$450
Morales, Nicolas O., 17, Amity, guilty of failure to register tags/expired, fined \$125; guilty of no proof of liability insurance, fined \$125
O'Neal, Curtis Jay, 23, Kirby, guilty of obstructing governmental operations, fined \$230; guilty of possessing instrument of crime, fined \$450
Parks, Audra Jean, 44, Amity, \$45 BF, no seat belt
Petzel, Jamie E., 61, Hot Springs, guilty of driving with suspended license, fined \$325; guilty of fictitious tags, fined \$125; guilty of expired vehicle license/tags, fined \$125; guilty of failure to appear, fined \$205
Pinkerton, Alisha D., 30, Murfreesboro, guilty of driving with suspended license, fined \$325
Raines, Miranda Gail, 45, Sherwood, \$185 BF, speeding
Revier, Desiree Mae, 20, Hot Springs, \$260 BF, minor in possession of alcohol
Rickman, Jerrick A., 41, Crossett, \$125 BF, failure to stop or yield
Schilling, Charles Henry, 41, Lafayette, La., \$125 BF, speeding
Shuffit, Brendon Scott, 20, Nashville, guilty of possession of controlled substance, fined \$1,075 and license suspended for six months
Sigman, James Scott, 29, Hot Springs, guilty of driving with suspended license, fined \$325
Smith, Jack Dennis, 39, Murfreesboro, guilty of failure to present insurance, fined \$70
Spears, Chloe Lynn, 20, Murfreesboro, guilty of no proof of liability insurance, fined \$315
Stangler, Heather Gail, 44, Delight, guilty of contempt (failure to pay), \$480 owed
Stewart, Stacey J., 47, Murfreesboro, \$135 BF, speeding
Thomas, Austin Delane, 27, Kirby, \$125BF, speeding
Turner, Kasyn Grace, 19, Dierks, \$135 BF, speeding
VanDevender, Robert Lee, 41, Murfreesboro, guilty of driving with suspended license, fined \$325; guilty of no proof of liability insurance, fined \$315; guilty of littering-highway or road
Wakeman, Cody Ray, 29, Hot Springs, \$315 BF, no proof of liability insurance; \$135 BF, speeding; \$205 BF, failure to appear
Webb, Heidi M., 20, Prescott, guilty of no proof of liability insurance, fined \$125
Webb, Rhonda L., 41, Murfreesboro, guilty of contempt (failure to pay), \$650 owed, committed to jail-suspended conditions
Weeks, Dwight Cardell, 28, Amity, guilty of expired vehicle license/tags, fined \$125; guilty of no proof of liability insurance, fined \$315; guilty of failure to appear, fined \$205
Whisenhunt, Leon, 58, Amity, \$135 BF, speeding

CITY OF MURFREESBORO
Austin, John Leon, 55, Ellsnore, Mo., \$45 BF, no seat belt
Avery, Megan Susanne, 19, Prescott, \$145 BF, failure to dim lights; \$145 BF, careless prohibited driving
Brock, IzekC., 22, Murfreesboro, guilty of failure to appear, fined \$265
Casey, Misty Dawn, 44, Fort Smith, guilty of contempt (failure to pay), \$680 owed; guilty of failure to appear, fined \$225
Crawford, Karra N., 31, Murfreesboro, guilty of violation of city ordinance 260-dogs, fined \$165
Fugitt, David, 44, Murfreesboro, \$345 BF, driving with suspended license; \$45 BF, no seat belt
Little, Parker Benjamin, 30, Murfreesboro, guilty of public intoxication, fined \$240; guilty of discharging firearm in city limits,

DOCKET Continued on Page 5

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Obituaries

Andrew Dee (Drew) Easterling, 63



Andrew Dee Easterling (Drew) 63, of Murfreesboro, AR, passed away to Our Saviors' arms on Saturday, August 26, 2023 in a Texarkana hospital. He was born July 25, 1960 in Dallas, Texas, to Alvin and Mickey (Pate) Easterling.

Mr. Easterling was raised in the United Methodist Church of Hope. His hobbies/interests included riding and training Quarter horses, was an avid sportsman and a very accomplished golfer. Mr. Easterling loved playing golf with the Southwest Senior Golfers Association and played tournaments with his son, Pate. He instilled his love of horses and mules, along with sharing his knowledge of horse training with his daughter Kadie. He was an avid Arkansas Razorback fan and loved to watch the Oklahoma State Cowboys with his wife Shawn. Drew was a creative and

innovative contractor, building beautiful custom homes, apartments, and college buildings throughout Arkansas. He and his younger brother, Davin, were both accomplished outdoorsmen and skilled marksmen. Drew spent his earlier years in the woods and farmlands off Buck Hill Rd in Hope. Drew lived life to its fullest, always smiling, joking, and laughing with friends and family. He is preceded in death by his brother, Davin Pate Easterling.

Survivors include his parents, Alvin and Mickey Easterling of Hope, wife, de Shawn Easterling of Murfreesboro, one son and daughter-in-law, Pate and Haley Easterling of Texarkana, Texas, one daughter, Kadie Easterling and her fiancé, Steven Cowley of Ashdown, two step-daughters, Samantha and Lydia Penturf, both of Austin, Texas, three grandchildren, Rylie Rae Fyock, Alvae Hays Easterling, Charli Cranor and several very special Uncles and Aunts, nieces and cousins and many great friends. Also included, his constant companions and beloved dogs, Gus, Emma, Gypsie, and Molly.

A memorial service will be planned at a later date. In lieu of flowers, consider the American Red Cross or an Animal Welfare/Rescue Organization of your choice for donations.

James E. Petty, 50, Delight

James E. Petty, age 50, of Delight, Arkansas passed away on Tuesday, September 5, 2023 at his home in Delight. He was born March 6, 1973 in Newport, Arkansas the son of the late James Lee Petty and Shirley Faye Whitten Petty.

In addition to his parents he was preceded in death by his grandparents Edward Whitten, Faydra Whitten, Charles Petty, and Lois Petty. Survivors include his daughter Sierra Petty of Hope; two grandchildren Skye and Tynlee both of Hope; one sister Kimberley

Cowart and husband Marc of Kirby; three nephews J.C. Doss and wife Jamie, Sidney Doss, and Conner McDaniel; two great nephews Johnny Doss and J.L. Doss, as well as a number of aunts, uncles, cousins, and friends.

Graveside services were held on Monday, September 11, at Bowen Cemetery, under the direction of Latimer Funeral Home in Murfreesboro

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

James Frank Dinger, 65, Murfreesboro

Mr. James Frank Dinger, Jr., age 65, a resident of Murfreesboro, Arkansas, died Thursday, August 31, 2023 at his home.

He was born April 21, 1958 in De Queen, Arkansas. Mr. Dinger was a U.S. Navy Veteran who enjoyed hunting, fishing and loved his family.

Mr. Dinger was preceded in death by his father, James Frank Dinger, Sr.

He is survived by his wife Jo Ann Dinger of Murfreesboro; mother, Betty Goss Dinger; five sons and daughter-in-

law, Kenneth Melson, Cristo and Misty Childers, Thomas Dinger, Chris Dinger and Will Dinger; two daughters, Laquita Childers and Sara Beth; his two brothers and sister-in-law, Gary and Carrie Dinger and Ken Dinger; two sisters and brothers-in-law, Dena and Chad Burnett, Tammy and Roddy Smith; eleven grandchildren, one great grandchild and a number of nieces, nephews and a host of friends.

Cremation arrangements by Wilkerson Funeral Home.

View local obituaries from the local area by visiting swarkansasnews.com

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

I'm constantly worrying never going outside always lacking energy sleeping all day unable to focus feeling sad and stuck
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Local college relocates classroom

MURFREESBORO -- The Cossatot Adult Education (CAE) is proud to announce that the GED classroom in Murfreesboro has moved to Murfreesboro First United Methodist Church Educational Building on Second Avenue.

The move to this new site will still offer the same classes and opportunities for students in need of a GED, computer training, or prep for application of jobs.

The Arkansas Adult Education will sponsor Open House on Thursday, September 21, 11 a.m.-1 p.m.. CAE invites all those interested

to stop by the classroom, where instruction on how to achieve a GED, get WAGE certified, and improve your resume will be provided.

Sarnia Minton and Alma Barnes, both adult education certified instructors, will be available to answer questions and talk about these opportunities. Students can come during the weekly hours of Monday and Tuesday, 11 a.m.-5:30 p.m., and Thursday, 11 a.m.-4 p.m. Wednesday classroom time is not available. If you have questions please call the classroom number, (870) 285-2026 or (870) 285-1598.

Experts warn fall foliage may not be spectacular

HOPE -- Thanks to a recent string of dry days with highs in the 100s, Arkansas' fall foliage display may fizzle this year.

"It's going to be a pretty bad fall across the state," said Vic Ford, a forester who is head of agriculture and natural resources for the Cooperative Extension Service. "A lot of trees are already turning brown."

"There's a lot of drought stress going around," he said. When drought hits, one of the tree's survival mechanisms is to cut sap flow to its leaves, preventing moisture from evaporating from the leaves, which leads to browning and early leaf fall.

"Leaf color change of the type we like to see in fall is driven by day length and temperature," Ford said. "The shorter day encourages the green chlorophyll to break down, revealing the yellows and reds. Cooler temperatures allow the non-green colors in the leaf to develop more fully."

The Drought Center map for Arkansas showed areas of abnormal dryness in eastern Arkansas along the Missouri border, some patches in southwest Arkansas, but a broad swath of dryness north of the Arkansas River extending from the Mississippi River as far west as Faulkner and Pulaski counties.

The dryness was also prompting counties to impose burn bans across the state as the wildfire danger increased across most of the state.

"In areas where there might be more mois-

ture, you may get some color, such as on northern slopes," he said.

If the dry spell is upended, the chances for color might improve slightly.

"Any moisture in the next couple of weeks could produce color in places that are marginal," Ford said.

Speaking from Hope, he said that "elms are just turning totally brown and the privet has wilted completely."

LA NIÑA GIVES WAY TO EL NIÑO

While cooler temperatures were in the forecast, the National Weather Service at Little Rock is not expecting abundant rain.

"Looking ahead, La Niña has faded, with a transition to a moderate to strong El Niño in the coming months," the weather service said. "As we head through the remainder of summer/early fall long-term data is showing largely below normal precipitation across Arkansas."

"In addition to a lack of thunderstorms, there could be extreme heat at times," the weather service said. "Given the scenario, and if there is no rain by way of a tropical system, drought is a growing concern in the short term. We will continue monitoring the situation."

To learn about extension programs in Arkansas, contact your local Cooperative Extension Service agent at (870) 285-2161 or visit www.uaex.uada.edu. Follow us on Twitter and Instagram at @AR_Extension.



Staff Photos/John Balch

READY TO TRACK ... Over the course of four years and over 100 recoveries – about a 54% success rate – Tim Allen and his dog Zoey are ready for the upcoming hunting season to help local hunters track lost and missing deer. Allen said that not all deer die after being shot, so simply cannot be located, and many of the wounded animals have been later seen on game cameras. He reminds hunters -- for best results -- as they track a blood trail and run out of direction to make the call at that point and not to muddy up the scene with scents by milling around. "The less roaming and looking is easier on the dog, look until you just don't have anything else to look for," Allen said. He can be reached at (903) 306-9855 and asks that you initially text to help him get in contact should he be in an area with low signal. Allen and Zoey work for tips, so it's based on what the hunter can afford in the given situation. "It's good to be a resource and be able to help people in and around Murfreesboro and Pike County," Allen said of his motivation toward offering the service.

Pecan orders now being taken for holidays

MURFREESBORO -- The Pike County Conservation District is now taking orders on pecans.

The pecans are this year's crop and will only come in one-pound bags. Orders must be paid for when placed.

A variety of fudges are also available.

To place order, stop by the Conservation office at 131 N. Kelley Street in Murfreesboro, phone (870) 285-2424.

The deadline to place orders is Oct. 26 with orders to arrive in mid November.

SOUTH PIKE COUNTY SCHOOL MENU

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 21

Breakfast: Sausage biscuit package, fruit, juice, milk

Lunch: Chicken nuggets, mashed potatoes, green beans, 7-12 whole grain roll, applesauce, milk

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 22

Breakfast: Pacake on stick or cereal, fruit, juice, milk

Lunch: Cheese pizza, baby carrots w/ ranch, seasoned broccoli, peaches, milk

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 25

Breakfast: Glazed donuts or cereal, juice, fruit, milk

Lunch: Cheeseburger, fries, lettuce, tomato,

7-12 pickles & sliced onion, pears, milk

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 26

Breakfast: Scrambled eggs & biscuit or cereal, juice, fruit, milk

Lunch: Chicken chili cheese crispito, chili beans, salsa, mixed fruit, milk

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 27

Breakfast: Cereal bar w/yogurt or cereal, juice, fruit, milk

Lunch: Chicken tenders & waffles, seasoned corn, baked beans, pineapple, milk

**Due to food item shortages menus are subject to change without notice. Any changes to the menu will be posted on the website at www.rattlers.org*

MURFREESBORO CADC SENIOR LUNCH MENU

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 18

Sliced ham, American fried potatoes, turnip greens, cornbread, fresh fruit, cookie

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 19

Glazed meatloaf, mashed potatoes, mixed vegetables, whole wheat roll, pineapple upside down cake

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 20

BBQ chicken, corn on cob, potato salad, whole wheat roll, bread pudding w/ lemon sauce

Lunch served at 11:30 a.m. For more information (870) 285-2312 Open Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday at 8 a.m. Transportation available

'Dear Preacher'

By Buddy Ray, Murfreesboro Church of Christ

JOURNEY TO HEAVEN

Two of my favorite old gospel songs are "Walking Alone at Eve" and "Paradise Valley". I love these songs because they draw our thoughts away from earthly troubles to visions of Heaven, and I fondly remember my dad leading these in Murfreesboro.

As I close my eyes and think of the words to these songs about Heaven, a peace and calm comes over me and it makes everything else unimportant when compared to Heaven. As we press toward Heaven, let us meditate on other great songs such as "Heaven Holds All to Me", "How Beautiful Heaven Must Be", and "When We All Get to Heaven". These words encourage us on the day to day



journey of this life and its struggles.

The Bible gives descriptions of how great our Heavenly home will be: John 14:2 – In My Father's House are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.

II Corinthians 5:1 – For we know that if our earthly house, this tent, is destroyed, we have

a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

Revelation 21:4 – And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away.

Scripture assures us that God shall dwell with us, that we shall be His people and He shall be our God.

Let us encourage and uplift one another through scripture and song as we continue our journey to Heaven.

I pray that each of you may have a blessed week and strive daily to be Heaven bound.

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- Facebook services on Sunday at 10:45 a.m. & 5 p.m.

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Facts About The BIBLE BY JOHN LEHTI

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HOW JESUS' FEET WERE REALLY WASHED!

YEARS AGO A YOUNG BIBLE STUDENT FOUND WHAT HE BELIEVED TO BE AN ERROR IN ONE OF THE STORIES TOLD IN LUKE! HOW COULD IT BE HE ASKED HIS INSTRUCTOR, FOR THE WOMAN TO WASH JESUS' FEET WHEN JESUS WAS ALREADY SITTING DOWN TO EAT AND THE WOMAN STANDING UP BEHIND HIM? (LUKE 7:38) WHEN IT WAS EXPLAINED TO HIM THAT IN THOSE DAYS PEOPLE DID NOT SIT AT THE TABLE AS WE DO TODAY, BUT INSTEAD LAY DOWN IN COUCHES WITH THE HEAD TO THE TABLE AND THE FEET STRETCHED OUT BEHIND THEM, IT BECAME APPARENT THAT THERE WAS NO ERROR IN THE STORY BUT JUST IN THE YOUNG STUDENT'S UNDERSTANDING THE WAYS OF THESE ANCIENT PEOPLE! LOTS OF THINGS TOLD ABOUT IN THE BIBLE SEEM ODD OR UNTRUE TO US...

...TODAY, BUT WHEN WE STUDY ABOUT THEM WITH QUALIFIED TEACHERS WHO KNOW THEIR SUBJECTS, THEN WHAT SEEMED SO CONFUSING AND SO CONTRARY, SUDDENLY BECOMES VERY UNDERSTANDABLE AND COMPREHENSIBLE!

37 SAVE THIS FOR YOUR SUNDAY SCHOOL SCRAPBOOK

Murfreesboro church of Christ

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Sun. eve. 6 p.m. • Wed. Bible Study 7 p.m.
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OCEAN DWELLERS
*- Theme Related Clue

- ACROSS
1. Kind of wrap
6. Pose a question
9. Be sore
13. Ottoman title
14. Ornamental pond-dweller
15. Florida Key, e.g.
16. Mr. T and friends
17. Knot-tying vow (2 words)
18. Milan's La ___
19. *Walrus' cousin (2 words)
21. *Crustacean "on the barbie"
23. Finish line
24. Creole vegetable
25. He had
28. Gives a helping hand
30. Tranquil
35. Frosts, as in cake
37. Bear, in Latin
39. All the words in a language
40. "By ____, I think she's got it!"
41. Silver to Lone Ranger
43. Chows down
44. Mark Twain to Samuel Langhorne Clemens
46. Toupee spot
47. Pestilence pest
48. Singer Eilish
50. Rub the wrong way
52. Yoda: "Do or do not. There is no ___"
53. *A type of whale or the color of many dolphins
55. Overnight lodging
57. *Inspiration for a certain pineapple dweller
60. *Inspiration for Marvel's Doc Ock
64. South American juice flavor
65. Bearded antelope
67. All thumbs
68. Pineda of Journey
69. Stomach pain-causing acronym
70. Hundred, in Italian
71. Hammer part

- DOWN
72. Not stood
73. Bar, legally
7. Grass "carpet"
8. Newsstand, e.g.
9. Fungal spore sacs
10. *Edible bivalve
11. S.O.S.
12. Pilot's estimate, acr.
15. Netanyahu's country
20. Abomination
22. 9 to 5, e.g.
24. Bone burial spot
25. Muslim woman's headscarf
26. Cause for food recall
27. a.k.a. Lucifer
29. Between stop and roll
31. *Coral polyps' structure
32. Raise one's rank
33. Potassium nitrate
34. Student's request for ChatGPT?
36. *#19 Across' earless cousin
38. Hostile to
42. Opposite of ecbatit
45. Smoke, sometimes
49. Energy unit
51. Attract
54. Front of cuirass
56. Religiously unaffiliated, pl.
57. Confident answer
58. Glazier's unit
59. Baker's baker
60. Give a boot
61. Closely confined
62. Plotting
63. "___! In the Name of Love"
64. Year off in school
66. Giannis' league

CROSSWORD grid with numbers 1-73 indicating starting positions for clues.

Consumer Cellular advertisement featuring a \$25 offer, promo code GZ590, and contact number 888-804-0913.

DOCKET Continued from Page 3

fined \$140
Lopresti, Nicole Louise, 46, Hellertown, Pa., \$288 BF, theft of services; \$185 BF, failure to obey lawful order
Massingill, Robert Blake, 28, Murfreesboro, guilty of contempt (failure to pay), \$640 owed
Pounds, Kayla Marie, 30, Murfreesboro, guilty of failure to appear, fined \$265
Richter, Joseph D., 36, Big Springs, Texas, guilty of possession of controlled substance, fined \$1,070 and license suspended for six months
Ridling, Tara Danielle, 25, Delight, \$145 BF, failure to register tags/expired
Rodriguez, Adan Antonio, 68, Kirby, \$145 BF, speeding
Rymer, Joey Wyman, 39, Murfreesboro, guilty of driving with suspended license, fined \$345
Sanders, Nicholas Taylor, 23, Little Rock, \$145 BF, speeding
Stone, Troy Dillon, 24, Nashville, \$145 BF, failure to register tags/expired
Townsend, Mary Evins, 68, Maud, Texas, \$145 BF, speeding
VanDevender, Robert Lee, 41, Murfreesboro, \$345 BF, driving with suspended license
Viola, Joseph S., 40, Murfreesboro, \$65 BF, no seat belt
Arkansas Game & Fish Commission
Beck, Lacci L., 34, Longview, Texas, \$220 BF, glass container on river
Cook, Aaron, 29, Beebe, \$220 BF, insufficient

PFD
Cruz, Jesus Morales, 30, Hot Springs, \$220 BF, glass container on river; \$220 BF, insufficient PFD
Estes, Rebecca G., 24, El Dorado, \$220 BF, no litter container/ loose litter
Garcia, Jose, 41, Murfreesboro, \$220 BF, regulations of personal watercraft
Hollis, Zachery N., 21, Camden, \$220 BF, glass container on river
Jenkins, David L., 35, Texarkana, \$220 BF, insufficient PFD
McCoy, Quinton Perry, 21, Maumelle, \$220 BF, glass container on river
McDonald, Andrew Braden, 23, Little Rock, \$220 BF, insufficient PFD
Norman, Samuel H., 52, Mena, \$220 BF, hazardous operations of personal watercraft; \$205 BF, failure to appear
Rhodes, Camerson, 21, Haughton, La., \$320 BF, fishing without license
Saffell, Thomas R., 52m, Baton Rouge, La., \$220 BF, skiing after hours of darkness; \$205 BF, failure to appear
Soto, Juan C., 38, Hot Springs, \$220 BF, insufficient PFD
Spurlin, Nicholas, 32, Hampton, \$220 BF, no litter container/ loose litter
Vise, James J., 44, Sibley, La., \$220 BF, glass container on river
Weatherspoon, Dominique, 39, Texarkana, Texas, \$220 BF, glass container on river

PIKE COUNTY PUBLIC RECORD

DOMESTIC RELATIONS
DR-23-45 -- OCSE, vs. Ashley Markham, support/OCSE, July 31
DR-23-46 -- Nicole Berry, vs. Brian Berry, order of protection, Aug. 2
DR-23-47 -- Kelcie Harrison, vs. Ryan Horn, order of protection, Aug. 7
DR-23-48 -- Carlos Duarte-Sequeira, vs. Nanci Del Carmen Caria, divorce, Aug. 10
DR-23-49 -- Lisa Marie Clay, vs. Brandon Watts, order of protection, Aug. 15
DR-23-50 -- Hope Marrisona Campbell, vs. Cole Weldon Whitaker, divorce, Aug. 15
DR-23-51 -- Justin Lynch, vs. Kayleigh Chambers, order of protection, Aug. 23
DR-23-52 -- Ben Francis, vs. Vanessa Francis, order of protection, Aug. 28
DR-23-53 -- Bobby J. Lloyd, vs. Jessica Norwood, divorce, Sept. 1
DR-23-54 -- Brandy Buck, vs. Dean Brzeski, divorce, Sept. 1
DR-23-55 -- Wilma Barnette, v. s. Christopher Pry, order of protection, Sept. 7
DR-23-56 --OCSE, vs. Keith Perkins, support/OCSE, Sept. 8
DR-23-57 -- Kelcie Harrison,

vs. Ryan Horn, divorce, Sept. 8
DR-23-58 -- Samuel Snowden, vs. Derenzo Preston, order of protection, Sept. 11
CIVIL
CV-23-50 -- Bank of America NA., vs. John Redar, contract/ other, Aug. 3
CV-23-51 -- Shaun Hill, vs. Raymond Peeples, Jr., ETAL, automobile tort, Aug. 4
CV-23-52 -- Arkajun Inc., vs. Tracie Trospher, landlord/ tenant unlawful detain, Aug. 9
CV-23-53 -- Discover Bank, vs. Jesus D. Zacarias, debt collection, Aug. 9
CV-23-54 -- Discover Bank, vs. Tammie L. Summers, debt collection, Aug. 10
CV-23-55 -- Credit Acceptance Corp., vs. Bruce Welch, contract/ other, Aug. 10
CV-23-56 -- Levi Holder, civil/ other, Aug. 11
CV-23-57 -- Velocity Investments LLC., vs. Lindi Alexander, debt collection, Aug. 21
CV-23-58 -- UHG I LLC., vs. Jason Bowen, contract/ other, Aug. 21
CV-23-59 -- Crown Asset Management, vs. Gerald Coggburn, ETAL, debt collection, Aug. 25
CV-23-60 -- American Express NB., vs. Howard Slater, contract/ other, Aug. 28
CV-23-61 -- Discover Bank, vs. Patricia R. Fite, debt collection, Sept. 1
CV-23-62 -- Credit Acceptance, vs. Sue Flowers, contract/ other, Sept. 5
CV-23-63 -- Absolute Resolutions Investments, vs. Regina Risner, contract/ other, Sept. 6
MARRIAGE LICENSE
Matthew Edward Turner, 20, Kirby; Lauren Elizabeth Carver, 18, Lockesburg, Aug. 4
Robert E. Mitchell, 22, Murfreesboro; Jessica M. Parker, 22, Murfreesboro, Aug. 23
Cameron Douglas Rand, 36, Walker, MI.; Sarah Michelle Dreaver, 31, Walker, MI., Aug. 31

STATEWIDE CLASSIFIEDS

STATEWIDE CLASSIFIEDS advertisement with contact info for Neil McConnell and various classified listings including cars, services, and real estate.

CONTACT US AT THE DIAMOND
(870) 285-2723
mdiaind@windstream.net

JACK AND JANICE LEE AUCTION advertisement for Saturday Sept. 23-9am, featuring a home and various items for sale.

MILLWOOD CORPORATION BUYER OF TIMBER & TIMBERLAND advertisement with contact information for Matt Tollett, Jason Porter, and Johnny Porter.

FAGAN ROOFING advertisement offering all types of roofing with quality work and free estimates.

NEWSWORTHY ITEMS? advertisement with contact info (870) 285-2723.

Classifieds advertisement for MINI STORAGE in Murfreesboro.

SMALL ADS DO WORK advertisement with contact info 870-285-2723.

A 13x13 crossword puzzle grid with words filled in, including SHAWL, ASK, ACHE, PASHA, KOI, ISLET, ATEAM, IDO, SCALA, SEALION, SHRIMP, END, OKRA, HED, AIDS, SERENE, ICES, URSA, LEXIS, JOVE, MOUNT, EATS, ALIAS, PATE, FLEA, BILLIE, RILE, TRY, GRAY, INN, SPONGE, OCTOPUS, GUAVA, GNU, INEPT, ARNEL, IBS, CENTO, PEEN, SAT, ESTOP.

Rattlers open season 2-0, face Gurdon this week

BEARDEN – The Murfreesboro Rattlers opened the 2023 football season with a 48-8 win over Bearden on Friday, September 2.

Rattler head coach Brad Chesshir said that his team was able to capitalize on a fast start both offensively and defensively.

While he was pleased, as with any coach after week one, he said there were mistakes made that needed correction as the season moves along and before the week two matchup at Little Rock Episcopal.

"It's not that we won – and that is important – but I'm most pleased with the way we won, simply by taking care of business."

He cautioned about reading too much into the lopsided victory in looking down the road.

"We won the same game a year ago, and then promptly lost four in a row. So, we as a team, has to place an emphasis on responding to the win in the right way and not simply being satisfied with the win. We still have to prove to people that we are a good football team. We did our job this week, and now we have to go and try to beat a good Episcopal team, and then be a step ahead of where we were a year ago. We just have to take care of business and do us."

Offensively, Chesshir said his team was still seeing a big difference in QB Laytan Wilcher this season over last.

"It is expected with his experience and simply growing up," Chesshir said of the sophomore quarterback, who hit Cameron Stevens with a 47-yard touchdown pass on the Rattler's first offensive play to "get the energy and momentum going."

"He's done a tremendous job and is the leader of the offense – gets our guys going ... I'm really proud of his efforts and he is improving every single week."

The team saw eight players run the ball in the win, and Chesshir complimented fullback Brandt Stevens with his play. "It's not an easy position, because as fullback most plays you just get smoked right in the face probably 90 percent of the time ... and then defensively he made five tackles and forced a fumble."

Stevens was named the Farm Bureau player of the game.

Running backs Lathan Compton and Noah Cox each had a pair of touchdowns in the game, with the former being named the offensive player of the game by the coaching staff.

The offensive line "played well" according to Chesshir, with a few busted blocks. "We were good on our take-offs. We got a little lazy in our stances as the game went on, we just have to be more disciplined with our eyes and our rules and simply be more consistent firing off the football, staying on blocks and running our feet."

Chesshir was especially proud of the fact that while his team had a single turnover, the Rattler defense forced four Bear giveaways and special teams collected a pair in the complete team win.

Defensively, the Rattlers received typically excellent game-play from the triumvirate of linebackers Malachi Sanders, B. Stevens and Cox in stopping the run.

"We have got to improve in our zone coverage and drops," Chesshir stated following the win.

Despite his perception of blown coverages and alignment issues, the Rattler defensive secondary came away with a pair of interceptions by Wilcher and Cash Lowery against a Bearden team that doesn't throw often

"The coverage was good, [Laytan] had a good game, covering and pressing their best receiver. Travis Reed was also good at safety – you never have to worry about him, and he always does things the right way and loves to get in on every tackle."

Defensive end Andrew Howard was complimented by the coach for his efforts. "He's just so explosive and so fast ... he's one that's hard to block. Andrew's not that big, 5'11" and 180 lbs., but what makes him so good is his strength – this kid squats 525 pounds. He's so explosive with his lower body and is just so quick. I was extremely pleased with the way he played."

Following the win, Chesshir said his team was far from complete.

"We hope to keep improving to peak at Week 15, and make less mistakes than we are now. However, with all our returning players, it is expected we'd be good by the team, coaches and community – the experience is back and the growth is there. We are a lot better than we were a year ago. We had many less mistakes and mental errors in week one."

Statistically, Compton led the Rattlers in rushing with 94 yards on 12 attempts and a pair of touchdowns. B. Stevens added 90 yards on 10 carries at a TD, while Cox had 78 yards on six carries with a pair of TDs. Tayvion Johnson and Wilcher each had a touchdown rushing as well. The Rattlers racked up 302 yards as a team in the game on the ground.

Wilcher was 3/7 passing in the game for 89 yards and a TD. C. Stevens had the one catch for 47 yards and a TD, while Reed hauled in a reception for 22. Brody Maroon had a catch from his tight end position for 18 yards.

Sanders, Johnson and Howard led the defense with six tackles each, while Johnson, the defensive player of the game, added a forced fumble and fumble recovery. B. Steven and Cox had five tackles each.

C. Stevens was the special teams player of the game with a return for 16 yards and a tackle and a forced fumble on a kickoff.

Compton forced a fumble on defense, while Reed had a pair of fumble recoveries and Kale Burns collected a loose ball in the game.

Wilcher (22 yards) and Lowery (15 yards) each added interceptions and returns in the defensive effort.

Chesshir said the Bearden squad was a "very young, talented team" with a very good group of ninth and tenth graders.

He said the junior high squad that faced off against the junior Rattlers the night before had an enviable group with "size, speed and physicality."

"They're trying to figure it out right now, but there is no doubt in my mind that coach [Brandon] Austin will have them back to playing winning football – the way Bearden used to be -- in just a couple of years."

AT LITTLE ROCK EPSICOPAL

The Rattlers earned a win in week two of the season with a 48-7 victory on the road against Little Rock Episcopal.

Chesshir said he was especially proud of his team's response coming off a big margin win the week previous against Bearden.

"I was very pleased – it's always easy to respond to negative situations, in my opinion, rather than responding to good situations. Coming off that win [against Bearden] it would have been easy for us to have become complacent, be satisfied and think we are pretty good. Going into Little Rock and handling business the way we did ... I can't say enough about the mindset of our kids."

The team again started out fast offensively with a touchdown on the first play of the game from Wilcher to C. Stevens for 65 yards.

"A touchdown on the first play always helps, we had the momentum all the way," said Chesshir.

He said the team had a few busted possessions in the first half, leading to the team's two punts.

"We had a few negative plays and penalties that hurt us and put us behind the chains. Our offense is not built to compete from behind the chains."

Defensively, he said the Rattlers played well, giving up Episcopal's lone score on a trick play in a fourth and five situation.

"They ran a halfback pass and all eleven of us bit on it ... that's something we have to learn from. Knowing the down and distance and being smart and disciplined defense."

Despite a pair of ultimately easy victories on the scoreboard in the first two weeks of the season, Chesshir still sees avenues of improvement for his team.

"While we are pleased, we still have a lot of room for improvement both offensively and defensively. On the offensive line, I want to see us fire off and stay on blocks even more than we did Friday. Defensively, I thought we continued to tackle well, but that's something we have to continue to get better at each week. As a team, we have to continue to eliminate penalties – we had seven penalties for 50 yards. We can argue some of those and say they weren't [penalties] ... but we have to do a better job of eliminating the penalties, because at some point that will cost a football game for us. Penalties just killed us and that's something we have to do a better job of this week as we face a good Gurdon team. We have to continue to grow and improve mentally and physically – keep hitting the weight room, keep conditioning and keep preparing each day to be the best we can be and then go against Gurdon and see what happens."

The head Rattler feels that the defining moment of the game was the first two possessions of the second half after a 26-7 lead at the half – a three-and-out by the MHS defense, followed by a drive for a score that extended the lead.

"My message at halftime was that the first drive with us on defense would be the biggest of the game ... they are searching for something, find some way to score, so we just can't give up the big play."

Chesshir was most impressed with the offensive output in the third quarter when they "just continued to get on 'em."

He would again compliment B. Stevens, who led the team with 148 rushing yards on 16 attempts and was named the offensive player of the week.

"I could say this every week, but as many times as we go to him, the yards after contact is impressive. A lot of those wasn't clean holes, it was tons of yards after contact, and he's running really, really strong right now."

QB Wilcher was 3/5 through the air for 76 yards and a touchdown, and also rushed for times for 30 yards and a score.

"The kid is just getting better every single week, growing into a really, really good quarterback. It's the way he manages the offense, he's just a leader on the football field, his reads are just getting so much better. Defensively, at corner, you don't notice him a lot, and that's a good thing. If you don't notice a secondary guy, that's a good thing. He's where he's supposed to be every single play, and they way he breaks on routes and footballs is very good."

Defensive ends Johnson and Howard lead the team in tackles with seven each, and the latter was named the defensive player of the week.

"They do a very good job of anchoring our front on both ends. They are physical, quick and fly around the football. I can't say enough about them."

Cox, who rushed for 43 yards on five attempts and a score, also added a touchdown on a punt return in the game to earn the special teams player of the week.

"It was a line-drive short punt that just happened to come right at him. I was yelling get away, and all of a sudden he catches it and houses it. While he's been really good at linebacker and running the ball, he's been just as good for us on special teams, doing a very good job."

Sanders was second on the team in rushing yards with 52 on seven attempts and a touchdown.

In the victory, the Farm Bureau player of the game was Wilcher. Chesshir said it was the first time he'd been to Little Rock Episcopal, and he thought the facilities were "beautiful."

"I thought their players and coaching staff showed a lot of class – they have a really good group of kids, and they have some good players on the team. I expect them to have a lot of success this year."

VERSUS GURDON FRIDAY

After two weeks on the road to open the season, the Rattlers are set to host Gurdon at home this Friday.

Gurdon is 1-1 on the season following an opening week 40-32 win over Lafayette County and a 30-25 loss to Dierks last week.

"Gurdon will be by far our biggest challenge thus far this season, they will be a better football team than Bearden or Episcopal. Everyone around here knows what Gurdon is about – they always have some pretty big bodies up front and always has a lot of speed."

Chesshir said the "traditionally physical football program" is "coached well by Kyle Jackson and is a disciplined team."

Offensively, Chesshir said the Go-Devils are operating out of a Gun-T offense as opposed to their more traditional attack in the past after hiring a new offensive coordinator before the season, but added they will get into the wishbone offense in short down and distance situations.

Defensively, Gurdon employs an odd-front more than in seasons past, when they were more of a 3-4 scheme.

Chesshir said Go-Devil OL/DL Bradyn King (77), who is listed at 6'2" and 291 pounds on the Gurdon roster, is being recruited by Division I programs, including Arkansas.

"He's kinda their bellcow on both sides of the football, especially defensively he is one that is hard to block, so we will have to do a really good job of blocking and staying on him, because he makes a ton of plays from the nose guard position."

Chesshir said Gurdon "flies around and play extremely hard," and despite their 1-1 record, they are not a team his squad can take lightly.

He is also looking forward to playing in front of the home crowd for the first time this season.

"I know this place out here will be packed, and I look forward to seeing all of our fans and community here at Rattler Stadium."

First Baptist Church to host singer in concert on Sept. 24

MURFREESBORO -- Chuck Crain will appear in concert at the Murfreesboro First Baptist Church on Sunday, September 24 at 6 p.m.

Crain joined the Presley's Country Jubilee Show in Branson, Mo., in 1998. He sings tenor with the Southern Gospel Quartet, back up vocals for some of the other entertainers, and performs many behind the scenes duties.

Crain began singing during his time in the Navy, performing with the Navy's Blue Jacket Choir in San Diego, California. One Sunday morning, while stationed in Jacksonville, Florida, he saw four gentlemen on television standing around a piano singing Southern Gospel music – and he was hooked.

After leaving the Navy in 1974, Crain got a full time job at Winn Dixie, and traveled on the weekends with a part time gospel group.

In 1976, he joined his first full time gospel group, the Mid-South Boys Quartet in Sheridan, Arkansas. That October he met a lovely young lady, Sharon, and she became his wife in December.

Crain and Sharon have been married for 40+ years. The have four children and, as of now, 11 grandchildren.

In 1979, he joined the Blackwood's, taking him all around the world, singing to millions of gospel music fans. Performing on television programs such as the 700 Club, PTL and Jimmy Swagart, just to name a few.

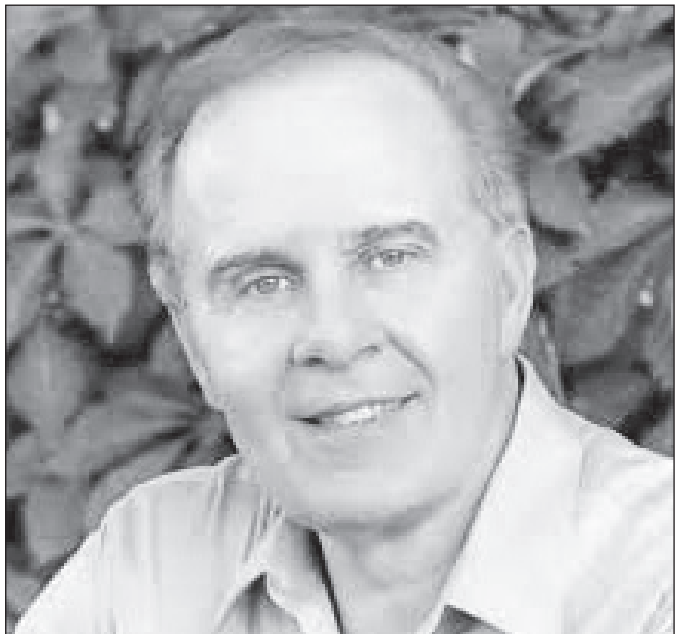
In 1990, the Blackwood's came to Branson, Missouri where Chuck left and formed his own group. The Heartland Quartet. That year they were nominated Horizon Group of the Year.

Two years later, Crain left the group to stay home and work behind the scenes in several theaters, until he got a call from a friend of his asking if he would consider singing backup for Wayne Newton. Three weeks later he found himself on stage with Wayne Newton in Las Vegas, Atlantic City, Branson, and the list goes on.

In December of 1996, Crain talked to Gary and Steve Presley and was asked if he would like to help form a Southern Gospel Quartet for their show. He knew in his heart and his love for gospel music, he had to leave Wayne to do this.

Since February 1997, thousands of fans later, and hardly any miles, Crain has found his calling. Many nights people come and ask him if he still travels and sings. Crain, and sometimes Sharon travel during the off season, and occasionally during the season.

Starting in March of 2010, the Presleys have been on RFD TV with a half hour programs airing at 6:30 p.m.



Submitted photo

CHUCK CRAIN



Fall "Spirits" and the Jack O Lantern Spectacular featuring the Kentucky Bourbon Trail
October 22, 2023 – 4 nights/5 Days – \$995

Through Space and Time: Savannah and the Space Walk
November 4, 2023 – 6 Nights/7 days – \$1395

Deep in the Heart of Christmas featuring the Texas Christmas Capitol – Grapevine and Texas Tenors
December 11, 2023 – 2 nights/3 days – \$465

Belleuve Baptist Singing Christmas Tree Performance
December 9, 2023 – 1 Day – \$165

Three Day-Shreveport Mardi Gras Masquerade
February 2, 2024 – 2 nights/3 days – \$499

Sedona and the Verde Valley
April 19, 2024 – 8 nights/9 days – \$1995

Canadian Rockies Cross Country Adventure: Lake Louise, Jasper National Park, North Cascades National Park & Glacier National Park
August 1, 2024 – 17 nights/18 days – \$4275

Price based on double occupancy per person & includes all transportation, hotels/cruises, many meals, all admissions & all taxes. In-route pick ups available.

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UAMS
HOUSE CALL

Dr. Bala Simon is an associate professor in the Department of Family and Preventive Medicine in the College of Medicine at the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences.

Q: When should men begin screening for prostate cancer?

A: Prostate cancer is a malignant tumor of the prostate, an organ approximately the size of a walnut that tends to increase in size as men age. According to the American Cancer Society, prostate cancer is the second most common cancer in American men (behind skin cancer), and about one out of every eight men will be diagnosed with the disease.

Age is the most common risk factor with prostate cancer, even though all men are at risk. About 80% of prostate cancer cases are found in men older than 65, while less than 1% occurs in men younger than 50. Black men and men with a family history of prostate and other cancers are more likely to be diagnosed.

When to screen for prostate cancer depends upon your age, ethnicity, family history and overall health along with recommendations from your health care provider. Black men and those with a history of cancer in their family may consider beginning screening around age 50.

Prostate cancer generally grows slowly, and symptoms may not present themselves until the disease progresses to an advanced state. Fortunately, the survival rate for prostate cancer is excellent with early diagnosis and treatment.

Email your health questions to housecall@uams.edu.