



YOUTH
CONCERTO
WINNERS

NEA'S
PREMIERE

MAGAZINE

April 2023

DELTA SYMPHONY
YOUNG ARTIST COMPETITION

NBA HALFTIME WEDDING

KIDS PLAY IN NEA

A PUBLICATION OF MOR MEDIA, INCORPORATED

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ON THE COVER:

Violinist, Basil Alter, and Pianist, Xinyue Yang, winners of the Delta Symphony Orchestra's Young Artist Competition.

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Cover Photo by Karoline Risker

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From the Publisher



The DEADLINE IS APRIL 15TH

Premiere Magazine is accepting nominations for Northeast Arkansas Community movers and shakers!

The 2023 30 under 40 nominations should be those you see making our communities a better place to live, work and play.

Email graphics@mormediainc.com or go to neapremiere.com for a nomination form. Deadline is April 15th.

April brings the “renewal” as our surroundings start greening up and blooming all the colors of spring.

With all the changes around us we start to think of how fortunate we are to enjoy this season and all the positive happenings around us.

If you have not volunteered lately this is a great time to look around and see where you can impact your community through volunteer service. Some of us may take volunteering to another level but any act of kindness -- even returning someone’s trash can after a wind storm -- does not go unnoticed. Just ask Jensen Wright, the 11-year-old who asked his mom to drive him around after seeing the trashcans strewn across his neighborhood.

Premiere has worked hard to brand itself “the good news and the people making it happen” and I had five messages from people who saw or heard about this act of kindness!

We are proud to bring you Jensen’s story and those of many other Volunteer-Spirited members of NEA in this edition of Premiere.

I always love to showcase young people and the cover story was an opportunity a year in the making. The Delta Symphony Orchestra holds the Young Artist Concert each year and we finally got the timing right to get the cover story of these talented musicians.

Thank you all for your continued support of Premiere. WE LOVE bringing you NEA GOOD NEWS

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Volunteering to Serve Community

ZAHYRA MATA RODRIGUEZ



An 18-year-old Jonesboro resident is giving back to the Hispanic community after moving to the United States two years ago. Zahyra Mata Rodriguez, a senior at Nettleton High School, spends time with administrative volunteering, such as organizing documents, sending emails, and making calls promoting the services offered by the Hispanic Center. “My favorite part is the community events that I get to participate in, like going to fairs in different counties,” she said. “I have had the opportunity to travel to different counties and participate in different mental health events, Covid vaccination campaigns, among other events that help the personal and professional growth of the Hispanic community.”

Rodriguez said when she arrived in the country two years ago, she knew nothing about Jonesboro. Her family’s landlord suggested the Hispanic Center, and Rodriguez’s first approach was to ask for an orientation regarding Covid vaccines. “There I met a lot of hard-working and kind women who really accompanied my transition process to this country,” she said. “They offered me English tutoring, signed me up for two groups that focus on the professional growth of young Hispanics.”

As Rodriguez became more involved, she realized she wanted to give back to the non-profit. The volunteering began with a few hours a week and increased to working community events. She eventually lost the fear of speaking up and suggesting changes, as well as looking for different solutions to problems. “What makes me feel most proud is that I managed to function in two different languages,” she added. “I realize the impact that bilingual people have in this country and how we are part of that much needed inclusion.”



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For Rodriguez, there are no words that describe how rewarding it is to help. She loves interacting with people and said sharing different experiences and stories makes the Hispanic community more united. "It fills my heart to witness this," she said. "I love to see how Hispanic people who are not fluent in English, when they come to the Hispanic center, it is as if they were at home; greeting, talking with the workers. That lets me know that the center is a safe place for many people, because they know that here they will find help for whatever they need."

Assisting others in the same situation as Rodriguez, specifically teenagers in the process of emigrating, makes her feel better because she would have liked to listen and talk to someone going through the same thing, "beyond a 'you're going to get used to being far away.'"



In addition to her work with the Hispanic Center, Rodriguez also volunteers at the Center's after school program. "Seeing all those kids so cheerful, energetic like no other, reminds me of my childhood in Mexico when you were surrounded by your friends and everything was fun," she said. "I always try to listen to them, to know what they have to say, to hug them, to give them words of encouragement and I always bother them not to lose their Spanish. They are the future of this country and they have the tools to accomplish huge things in their little hands. I love being a part of what I know will become something huge."



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HEALTH MATTERS! APRIL IS FOR GETTING ACTIVE

BY KARAN SUMMITT

There will be some rain and a cold snap or two, but sunnier, warmer weather and extended daylight hours are on their way. If being outside is a big factor for you in getting more physical activity, your time has come!

It's been said you can't out-exercise a bad diet. The inverse is also true -- no amount of healthy eating will replace the benefits of moderate and consistent physical activity. Let's face it folks, nothing substitutes for a healthy diet and exercise.

I prefer physical activity over the more common term of exercise. For many of us, mention the word exercise and thoughts of daily trips to a fitness center and a no-pain-no-gain mentality lead to instant dread. We get tired just thinking about it.

The simple goal is to get moving and increase time and intensity at a pace that works for you. Muscle and bone injuries can lead to setbacks and loss of momentum. Here are some ways to get started safely and some ideas for keeping up the good intentions.

Don't bypass the preparations. Invest in well-fitting athletic shoes and good cushioned socks. Make sure the toe box leaves plenty of room in the front of the shoe and the heel is snug enough not to slide up and down. Lightweight layers of clothing that stretch and don't trap perspiration will keep you comfortable whatever your personal intensity. Be sure to warm up stiff muscles with some basic stretches and start out with the goal of increasing your pace. A great investment for improving outcomes is a personal device to track time and distance.

People generally beg off physical activity for two primary reasons — they don't enjoy it and they don't have enough time. Combining movement with something you do enjoy can be a big motivator. Good

headphones for listening to music or a podcast is a must for many folks. Finding a friend who wants to join you is a win-win for both companionship and built-in accountability. For others, the activity itself, like a favorite sport or hobby, is the inspiration.

If time is the barrier, start out with small bouts of 10-15 minutes several times throughout the day. Most of us can find bits and pieces of time by getting up a little earlier, at lunch, after dinner or on weekends. Another strategy is longer bouts with rest days in between. The key is to make it work for you.

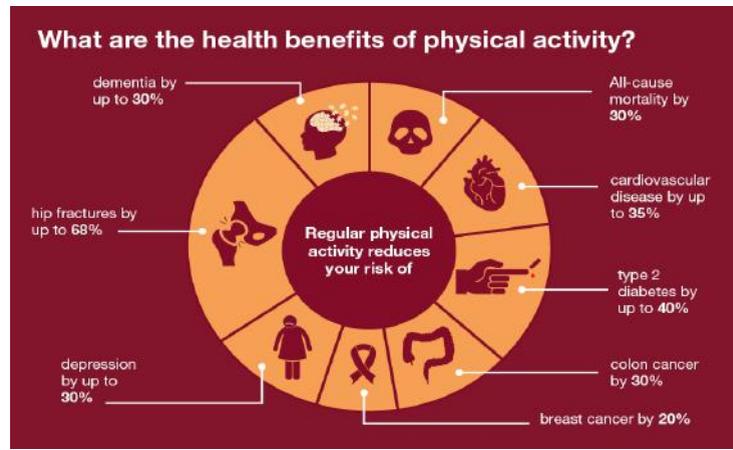
We live in an area abundantly blessed with safe, outdoor locations for physical activities such as walking, hiking, running and bicycling. Many city parks are surrounded by paved tracks. Our local and state parks have hiking trails designed for all levels of ability and several have bike trails. A few of my favorite options include the repurposed railroad bed trail that connects Hoxie with Williams Baptist, the new Eight-mile Creek trail in Paragould and the network of paths and trails connecting neighborhoods in Jonesboro. Many local cemeteries provide good surfaces, some marked with mileage routes.

For year-round consistency, fitness centers in our area come with a wide range of options at prices for every budget. Many senior adult



KARAN SUMMITT

Retired Health Educator
25 years educating people of all ages on the benefits of a healthy lifestyle. She teaches and writes with a passion for sharing simple, doable strategies that make better health possible for almost everyone.



supplemental and advantage insurance plans pay membership fees at partner facilities. These facilities often hold classes especially designed for the challenges of aging.

The current culture does not provide built-in opportunities for movement. We do our work on computers, we stay connected through cell phones and social media and we get where we need to go in vehicles. We sit far more than is healthy for a body created to move, and this sedentary lifestyle is costing us a hefty price in quality and longevity of life, as well as in increased healthcare costs.

That leaves us with one more component needed for increasing activity levels. That ingredient is intentionality. It won't happen because you took time to read this article or because you thought it was a good idea. It will take a detailed plan, accountability and

commitment. If you know you need to move more grab a friend, a pet or gather a group of like-minded people willing to be challenged. Pick a day, zero in on a method and lace up those sneakers. Then get going and refuse to let everyday challenges derail your commitment.

The language is a little stilted, but the sentiment below is as true today as it was 400 years ago when first penned by Edward Stanley, the 14th Earl of Derby. April is for moving, folks!

Those who think they have not time for bodily exercise will sooner or later have to find time for illness.

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Delta Symphony Orchestra

BY KAROLINE RISKER

YOUNG ARTIST COMPETITION



Violin winner Basil Alter

Each year, young performers come from across the United States to compete in the prestigious Young Artist Competition in Jonesboro, the winners taking a cash prize and a performance as a guest artist with the Delta Symphony Orchestra. This was the 32nd competition for artists up to the age of 26 to compete in piano, strings, woodwinds, brass/percussion, and voice categories in the event that took place on March 11.

The competition yielded two grand prize winners who will play their prepared pieces with the orchestra: Basil Alter, violin, who played "Introduction and Rondo Capriccioso" by composer Camille Saint-Saens, and Xinyue Yang, piano, who played "Piano Concerto No. 3, Movement 1," by composer Sergei Rachmaninoff, a piece that has the reputation of being one of the most technically challenging piano concertos in the standard classical repertoire. The pieces are played entirely by memory.

Anamaria Tarkington, 16, was also a winner, taking the prize of the Neale King Bartee Young Artist Award for Outstanding High School Student. Anamaria played "Rhapsody in Blue" composed by George Gershwin during her performance.

To enter the competition, musicians must perform one movement of a concerto or concerto-type composition; vocal entrants must sing two songs from opera, oratorio, or art song repertoire.

"I am 23, and I started playing violin when I was three," said Basil Alter, one of the grand prize winners. "My mother is a violinist, and she taught my sister and me how to play. My father is a clarinetist. As far as I can remember I always wanted to pursue a career in music. I played many different instruments growing up, but I always gravitated back to violin. I think it was the most



Piano winner Xinyue Yang

challenging and that made every step of improvement feel so much more powerful. The hardest thing about playing the violin is that your mind has to focus on many things all at the same time, musically and artistically, but also technically and physically.

"I'd lived in Memphis for a while, but right now, I'm taking a year off from studies at the Manhattan School of Music in New York. In the future, I'd like to explore how music can be a vehicle for creating a more peaceful and sensitive world."

Of the composer of the piece he chose: "I first played the Saint-Saens on a recital about two years ago, after hearing it almost all my life. Saint-Saens was a masterful composer who had an incredible sense of 'violin-istic' tendencies but the piece is always destined to feel a little outside of the fingers. It is a piece that always feels, both technically and musically, more difficult than it sounds, but it can't present that way. Musically, it has to feel very 'French,' similar to the way one would approach works by Debussy or Ravel. That delicate nuance and beauty is juxtaposed against virtuosity and fire, creating an exhilarating and capricious work that only Saint-Saens can accomplish with ease.

"Even though I've played this piece a lot, great music like this never wears out its welcome. I'm truly honored to be joining Maestro Bartee

and the Delta Symphony to present this piece.”

Basil is originally from South Carolina and now lives in Memphis. He has performed in Italy, was accepted into the Rudi E. Scheidt School of Music at age 16, was the violinist of the Contemporary Chamber Players, and is the concertmaster of Sinfonietta Memphis.

The other grand prize winner, Xinyue Yang, 25, played with Dr. Lauren Schack Clark, ASU professor of piano. Dr. Clark played the part of the “orchestra” on the piano as Xinyue played the piano part so that judges could get a feel of what the piece would be like played as a whole.

Xinyue decided to play the piano at the age of 6 after her father took her to a music store and she sat in front of the piano and insisted that her father buy her one to play. As a child, she was more interested in music for fun. “Probably since I entered a conservatory of music, I gradually understood that what I want to do is pursue music seriously. This is because when you go to the school, you will find that everyone works very hard, you will learn a lot about music-related things, and you will hear a lot of unforgettable concerts. After those influences, all of those things affect me in my daily life.”

Xinyue practices around four hours a day. It took her almost six months to master the piece she played for the competition. She chose it because, “I feel close to Rachmaninoff’s music and this year is the 150th anniversary of his birth.” Even though she does get tired of the piece after spending so much time with it, Xinyue said she is still moved by it every time she plays it.

It takes about 15 minutes to play the piece all the way through. “It’s always hard to memorize so much music,” she said. “For me, it’s not only your brain that needs to memorize the score, but also your muscles need to memorize everything that you want to do. I think I always enjoy the music first instead of just memorizing it.”

Xinyue, who is from China, says the hardest things about playing the piano are the aesthetics of music and technical problems. Xinyue is excited to have the chance to work with talented artists when she plays her piece with the Delta Symphony Orchestra. “Playing piano is a wonderful fate for me,” she said. She wants to be a great pianist and share her music and thoughts with people.

Xinyue is a DMA (Doctor of Musical Arts) student studying at the Eastman School of Music in New York. In addition to winning the Young Artist Competition, she has also won the first prize of the Weatherford College International piano competition (2022), the first prize of New York and Eastern division MTNA young artist competition (2021-2022), the first prize of the 4th Spanish Ciguenza international piano competition (2013) and Second prize at Allegro Vivo music festival.

The concert is an opportunity to see these young musicians near the beginning of their careers. Past winners include Tara Mueller, who is now assistant principal second violin of the Alabama Symphony Orchestra, and William Overcash, violin, who obtained bachelor and masters degrees at Oberlin College and Rice University, and performs with Ensemble Modern and other ensembles in Europe, as well as with chamber music groups.

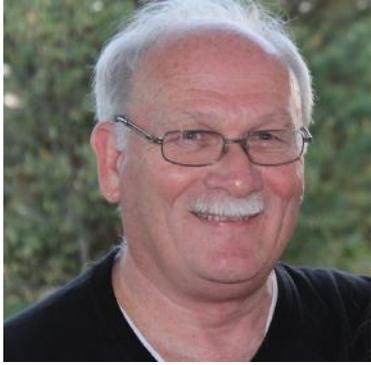


Dr. Neale Bartee announcing the grand prize winners.



Anamaria Tarkington with her piano teacher Lauren Schack Clark, ASU professor.

GET RICH WITH RICHARD BRUMMETT



While working on one of the stories for this edition I got to converse with Kelly Cooper Stewart, the point guard on the first elementary school girls basketball team I coached.

During March Madness my mind naturally replayed many of the

events from my past in the sport, both as a player and volunteer coach. There weren't many player highlights but I smiled thinking about the years I spent as Paragould's elementary girls' coach.

I was drafted into service when my older daughter Kelly was in the fifth grade. I dropped her off at the old Paragould Middle School gym -- forever the PMS gym to us -- and upon picking her up after that first practice learned the coach had already quit. Apparently this woman who had volunteered assumed there would be eight or ten girls to deal with, but there were 26 and the program organizers didn't want anyone cut from the team. So the words brought home to me were, "If we don't find another coach, we don't get to have a team. Dad, will you?" And that started 13 years of mostly fun times.

We had a good team with a winning record but it didn't take long

for me to realize my friends who were coaching at places like Marmaduke, Oak Grove, Stanford and Delaplaine were only playing their best five or six girls for the entire game. I was working in more than two dozen, promising each girl she would see playing time in every game. Fortunately, I had six or seven really talented players who could carry the rest and help us win, even under our restrictions. But more than winning games, I remember so many funny instances that I will carry with me forever.

The best shooter on that first team was a tall, lanky girl named Kim Phelps. She could knock down some long outside shots and only after we won our biggest game of the year when we beat Marmaduke in the old Lafe gym during her sixth-grade season did I learn Kim had played the entire game with her report card in her shoe. She had made an F in math and knew if her parents found out before the game they would not let her play. So she hid it inside her shoe, helped us win the game, and took her punishment later. That's dedication; and ingenuity.

The year before, my daughter Kelly had the ball in her possession as the clock began to wind down toward zero. Instead of making any type of move to the basket she just kept the ball until the buzzer sounded. When she came over to the huddle I asked her, "Don't you ever look at the clock?"

She did then. She glanced up at it, then turned back to me and said, "Hardly ever." Now she says it was because at that point of her first

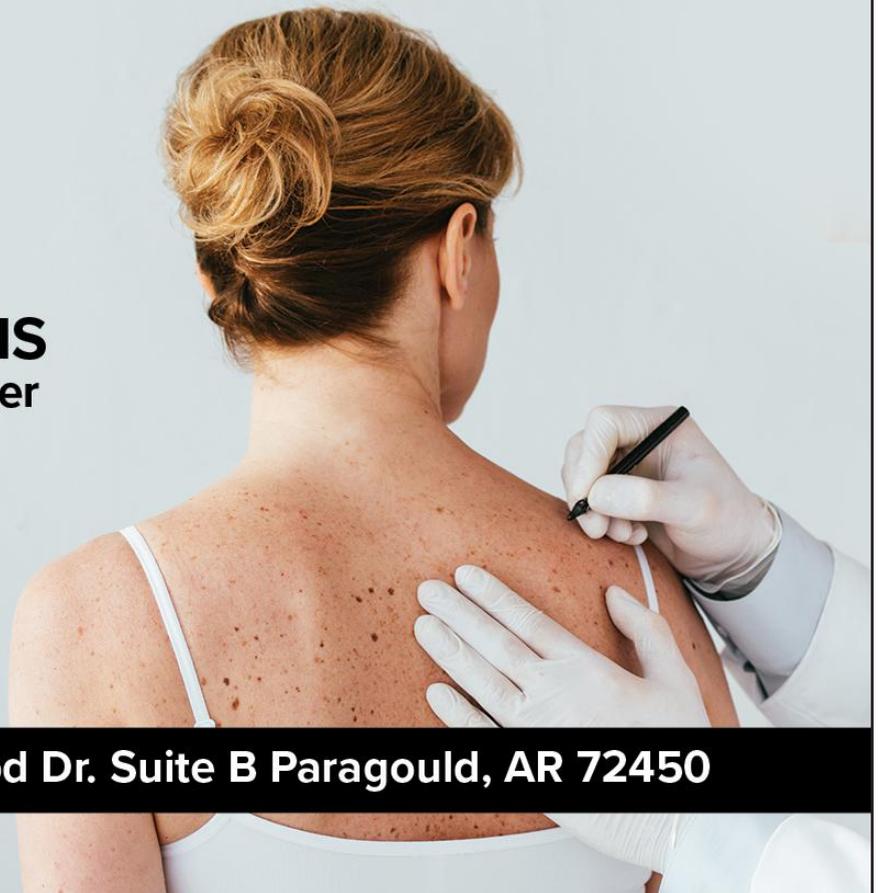
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year we had not yet addressed clock management.

Years down the line we decided to trim our roster to no more than 15, which made coaching a lot easier, and most years we were really competitive. We had a couple of undefeated teams and most of the time our win totals were in the 20s and our losses only 2 or 3. But one year I had a class that was basically void of basketball players; we could hardly manage to run drills at practice because I couldn't find three girls who could dribble, pass and catch. So most weeks I let them play the first half as a unit -- and many days at halftime our score was "0" -- then I would mix in some talented fifth graders who would often save the day, or at least make the game respectable. Sometimes I would even let my younger daughter Lindsay, who was only a third-grader, run in and she could score points, which should have signaled to some of the older girls that basketball might not be in the future. And it wasn't; I think only one girl from that class ever stepped foot on the court as a high school player.

That fifth-grade team with Leslie Branch and Barbara Ann Wheeler as the top scorers had a lot of talent, but couldn't run a play to save its life. We would practice plays and I would call out one during a game and the look I got in return was sort of like mine at the front of the room in Geometry class, standing in front of the blackboard with a piece of chalk in my hand and having absolutely no idea what to do from there. I would finally tell the girls to forget about running plays, to just go steal the ball and score and they would rack points faster than you could count. Great coaching, I say.

In a game at Marmaduke that year we were obviously not going to win so I picked four players and Lindsay to go in and finish the last couple of minutes. I said to Lindsay, "You girls check in and just tell everybody to come out," so when the timekeeper buzzed her group onto the court, this stick-thin miniature player strode onto the floor, pointed her right thumb backwards over her shoulder and yelled at the top of her lungs, "EVERYBODY OUT!" At least she followed the coach's orders.

I stayed with the program through Lindsay's sixth grade season and still remember giving a pregame talk to get the team all fired up and having Brooke Shelby suddenly say, "Oh, crap! I've got my shorts on backward!" And on another occasion hearing Karla Edgar's voice say from a bathroom stall, "Hey, I'm stuck in here." She had listened to the entire second half plan from the stall, too timid to bother me with the fact that she couldn't get the door open. And Lindsey Birmingham helped me come full circle when she dribbled the ball nonchalantly as the crowd counted down, "Three ... two ... one" and the buzzer sounded.

"Lindsey," I asked, "do you not ever look at the clock?" And so she did, and then said, "Not really."

Good times.



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Lessons LEARNED IN Motherhood

BY CAITLIN LAFARLETTE

Toddlers make wonderful therapists. If you really want to get to the root of things, just have a conversation with my two-and-a-half-year-old. She will have you

You get the picture. I typically end up talking in circles with small explanations like this. But sometimes Eva really, really pushes me to dig deep into my mind and figure out the real “why.”

Why am I so frustrated at bedtime? Why do I need to take a break during the day to just breathe?

I never wanted to be the mom who answered “why” with “because I said so.” When Eva first entered this stage I eagerly answered to the best of my ability. Over time, it started to get old. But I never stopped giving real answers. Eventually it helped me get to the bottom of my feelings and expectations, which was not something I expected. Even though Eva has taught me time and time again to view life from a different point of view, I was still a little shocked when I realized I was basically a patient on the couch with a mini-me sitting at a desk taking notes.

Some days I don’t have good enough answers to the whys. She just isn’t at the point where she can comprehend certain things. But when I try to break it down in a way she can understand, I almost always end up understanding more about myself and the logic behind my decisions. I love her curiosity and yearning to know the world around her, and it makes me look at things and question “why?” too. And if I truly can’t find an answer to something, we search and learn together.

questioning every tiny detail about your life and actions.

What’s her method? “Why?”

Every single comment or explanation that escapes my mouth is immediately broken down even more by that one simple word. Why?

If Eva gets too close to the stove while I’m cooking, I tell her to step back. She asks why and I explain I don’t want her to get hurt. Why? Because that would make Mommy very sad. Why?

Because Mommy loves you so much. Why? Because you are my baby and I want to keep you safe. Why? Because ...

Wedding Announcement



Sarah Beth Deweese and Will Mangrum

Sarah Beth Deweese and Will Mangrum of Fort Smith are happy to announce their engagement and approaching wedding.

The bride's parents are Beth and the late Tom Deweese of Hendersonville, Tennessee, and the groom's parents are Tim and Lanie Mangrum of Paragould.

The wedding will be in Nashville, Tennessee, on April 29, 2023.

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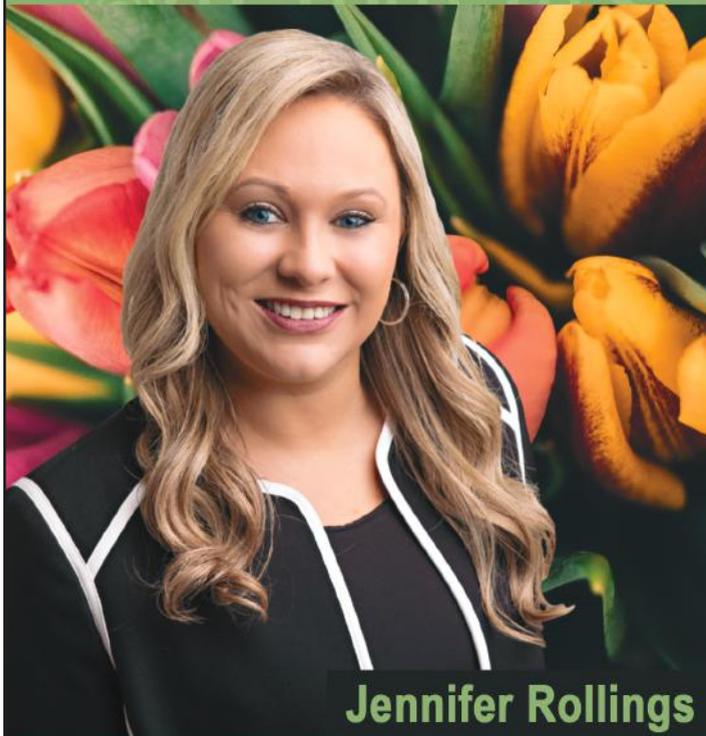


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PREMIERE
MAGAZINE

Kids Play

in NEA



BEING A GOOD NEIGHBOR
JENSEN WRIGHT

April 2023

Parent-Child INTERACTION THERAPY



established through scientific research. Positive changes in the children's behaviors have been seen in home, at school/childcare settings, and in public places. These positive changes have even been seen in the siblings of children participating in PCIT. Parents/caregivers consistently report higher levels of satisfaction in their relationships with their child and lower levels of parenting stress after competing PCIT.

Goals of PCIT

- Improve your relationship with your child
- Improve your child's minding and listening skills
- Increase your child's ability to manage anger and frustration
- Increase your child's appropriate social skills
- Improve your child's attention skills
- Build your child's self-esteem

Parent-Child Interaction Therapy (PCIT) is a short-term, specialized behavior management program designed for young children experiencing behavioral and/or emotional difficulties and their families. PCIT works with the caregiver and the child together to improve overall behavior and to reduce parenting stress.

Challenging children often have difficulty at home, in childcare/ school settings, and in public places. Parents/caregivers of challenging children report multiple problems in the functioning of their families, in the completion of such simple activities such as going to the grocery store or eating in a restaurant. Stress levels are high for parents of challenging children and the parent/caregiver relationship is often tense.

Unfortunately, children rarely outgrow difficult behaviors. As the child matures, difficult, challenging behavior is more likely to interfere with a child's ability to learn and develop appropriate social skills. The overall effectiveness of PCIT has been well



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Is PCIT right for your family?

PCIT is designed for young children between the ages of 2 and 10 years. It is for children with a history of abuse and neglect. PCIT has a proven track record in successfully helping children:

- with oppositional / defiant behavior
- with aggressive behaviors
- with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (AD/HD)
- experiencing adjustment problems
- impacted by caregiver / family substance abuse
- impacted by child abuse / neglect
- in foster care placement
- recently adopted or
- reunified with biological parent(s)

PCIT requires a 12-to-14 week commitment by the caregiver / parent, with one session per week conducted at the clinic (50 minutes) and 5-10 minutes of daily "homework." For parents who are in the process of reunification, your child must be living with you in order for PCIT treatment to begin.

For more information contact Arisa Health at 870-239-2244 or log on to arisahealth.org.

Is PCIT right for your family?

- PCIT is designed for young children between the ages of 2 and 7 years.
- For children with a history of abuse and neglect, PCIT has been expanded to include children as old as 9-10 years of age.
- PCIT has a *proven track record* in successfully helping children:
 - * with oppositional/defiant behavior
 - * with aggressive behaviors
 - * with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (AD/HD)
 - * experiencing adjustment problems
 - * impacted by caregiver/family substance abuse
 - * **impacted by child abuse/neglect**
 - * **in foster care placement**
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- For parents who are in the process of reunification, your child must be living with you in order for PCIT treatment to begin.

When it is time to let others help...

Parent - Child Interactive Therapy at Arisa Health



Parent-Child Therapy (PCIT) is a short-term, specialized behavior management program designed for young children experiencing behavioral and or emotional difficulties and their families. PCIT works with caregivers and the child together to improve overall behavior and to reduce parenting stress.



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877.201.0510 or Paragould 870.239.2244

Volunteering to be Neighborly

JENSEN WRIGHT

BY CAITLIN LAFARLETTE



either. He said animals are very important to him and he wants to help them in some way in the future. "I also want to help kids in foster care because my sister and I were once in foster care," he said. "My sister has autism and I try my best to explain to people about it and will always be there for her."

Laura, Jensen's mother, said she was proud and emotional when her son helped clean up the neighborhood, but not surprised because he always helps people. "He always holds the door open for people, picks things up for people at the store and things like that," she said. Jensen's father Erik said he has always given his son the advice that "the measure of a man is what you do when nobody is watching." "He naturally has a kind heart, which is something of a rarity in today's world," Erik added.



When strong winds blow through Northeast Arkansas, trash cans and recycling bins usually get tossed around and end up far from their homes. But a Paragould boy took it upon himself to help his neighbors after a storm and returned their bins. "I think they would have other things to do," Jensen Wright said. "They are trying to make money for their kids and be successful. That day it was really windy and rainy so I thought I could do it for them so they wouldn't fall or get their clothes wet or whatever."

The 11-year-old said "it felt good" to help his neighbors in such a simple way. "It felt like the natural thing to do, or what any other person should do," he said.

This small act of kindness isn't the end of the road for Jensen,



Jensen's parents said their son always puts others first, with his sister being the perfect example. Erik said even though Jensen is younger than she, he always provides Lexie with small tokens of love, like candy. "He would go without to ensure she had something first," Erik said. "He even gave away some of his birthday presents to another child because, again, I think it all goes back to his early years where he literally had nothing. Now, he has everything and instinctively he wants to pay it forward."

When it comes to cultivating that sense of kindness in Jensen, Erik said he and his wife have tried to teach him right from wrong, and what is expected from a young person. "But, if you consider his background as an adopted child from extreme trauma, I firmly believe he knows the concept of right and wrong," Erik said, "and more simply, how to treat others."

Challenging Behavior

WHERE THE LABEL STOPS, THE INTERVENTION BEGINS

Your neurodivergent, autistic child has started to engage in challenging behavior such as tantrums, hitting, kicking, self-injury, breaking items, or refusing to comply with your requests. Grandparents, aunts, uncles, and even your neighbors have shared “why” they believe the challenging-behavior occurs. You think, “Great! More labels! More explanations! But, what do I do?”

You’re correct. The label does not necessarily tell us the “why” or the “what to do.” We first must understand the “why.” The “why” is called the “function” in behavioral terms.

To identify the function we need to conduct a full medical records review, observe the challenging behavior when it occurs, and conduct an in-depth functional assessment. The information gleaned from this process will give us the why. After we identify the function, we are better prepared to teach your child how to communicate their wants, needs, and experiences to others.

Based on your child’s skill set, we select a specific communication behavior to teach them how to more appropriately, effectively, and safely communicate. It is important that this new, safer behavior achieves the same function as the challenging behavior. Our goal is for the new behavior to replace the challenging behavior by meeting the exact same needs the challenging behavior met.

Throughout the process, we will continue to collect data on the challenging behavior and the new, safer behavior. This will allow us to ensure we are not missing any of your child’s needs. And, if we find the challenging behavior returns, we can start new supports quickly.

This process of supporting your child falls within the scientific framework of Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA).



Rocky Haynes, PhD, BCBA-D
Clinical Director

Dr. Rocky Haynes at Palma Academy of Learning has over 15 years of experience in the field of ABA. He looks forward to meeting your family.

A vibrant classroom setting with a colorful patterned rug, wooden furniture, and various toys. A cartoon mouse mascot wearing glasses is in the foreground. A sign in the background reads: "Our mission at Palma Academy of Learning is to support our clients and their families using evidence-based, high-quality applied behavior analysis services." The Palma Academy logo is also visible.

Our mission at Palma Academy of Learning is to support our clients and their families using evidence-based, high-quality applied behavior analysis services.

Palma Academy

8 Southpointe Drive, Paragould, AR 72450 | 870-565-9776
info@palmaacademy.com | palmaacademy.com

10 Years CARING FOR CHILDREN

Arkids Pediatric Day Centers would like to thank the community of Greene County for welcoming us 10 years ago! It has been a privilege to serve you and your families. We look forward to continuing our amazing working relationship with you.

Arkids Pediatric Day Centers would also like to thank the physicians and referral sources for allowing us to continue to develop our greatest natural resources.

“Thank you to Arkids for providing much needed services to the children in our community. Certainly no task is more important than helping young children become successful through quality early childhood education and therapies to attain skill sets. The earlier this preparation starts the better. Congratulations on your 10th anniversary of excellent care!” -- Vern Ann Shotts, M.D., Pediatrician Child and Adolescent Medical Clinic

Arkids Pediatric Day Centers prides itself on developing positive, lasting relationships with its employees. This has led to long-term employees and multiple internal promotions. Arkids is thankful to have two employees who have been with the company since it first opened in Greene County 10 years ago.

Jamie Winn started at the first Arkids Center, Paragould South. She has worked in many roles, her current as Patient Care Coordinator of the Jonesboro Center.

Crystal Gathright has been at the Paragould South Center since it

opened. She, too, has worked in many roles, her current as Patient Care Coordinator.

What has kept you at Arkids Pediatric Day Centers for 10 years?
“Excitement! No two days are ever the same here, it is definitely never boring! Being able to play a small role that positively impacts the lives of so many families and children is what keeps me motivated each day.”-- Jamie

“I came to Arkids in 2013 looking for a new career opportunity. Over the years I have gotten to witness and play a small role in the development and progress of many little ones in our community. While working at Arkids I have had the opportunity to see things such as a child taking his first steps, I have heard a child say, ‘Good morning’ for the first time in front of their guardian, and I have seen the tears of joy on a parent’s face when she realized her daughter had a best friend. Arkids has been a place where not only have I gotten to watch so many children grow and meet their goals, but I have also grown both my knowledge and skillset in the numerous positions I’ve held here. I appreciate that our company has always made it a point to offer all open positions in-house first, providing the staff with an opportunity to grow professionally and climb the ladder if they aspire to do so.” -- Crystal

What is a favorite memory?
“Celebrating the achievement of developmental milestones by the kiddos at our centers. When a child that has been unable to walk is able to go from being wheelchair bound to being able to walk



Drive-Thru Breakfast

Saturday, April 15th
8:30 AM-10:00 AM
Free Public Event!
6263 Hwy 49 South
Paragould, AR 72450



CELEBRATING
10 YEARS
IN GREENE COUNTY

COMMUNITY PICNIC

Saturday, April 15th
12:30 PM-3:00 PM

Free Public Event!

528 Hwy 49 North
Paragould, AR 72450



unassisted is very memorable. Seeing older children that are now in public school that are excelling and knowing how far they have come." -- Jamie

"One of my favorite memories at Arkids was when we had our Fall Festival at the park. It was heartwarming to see our students, their families, and the community come together to enjoy a day of fun activities, food, and fellowship. While every day may not be easy, every day is making a difference." -- Crystal

A special thank you goes out to our families. Thank you so much for allowing us to be a part of your child's life. We are so grateful to each and every one of you!

Kind words from Sydney Dye about her experience with her child, Austin, attending Arkids:

What is your favorite thing about Arkids?
"How happy he is when he comes every day. He is happy to see everyone, running in every morning ready to go. Everyone is happy to see him."

How has your experience been with Arkids?
"I love how everyone communicates with me. The nurse and the ladies at the front desk are always very helpful and welcoming. Everyone is approachable. His teachers speak with me daily about what he works on in class and I always get his papers and like to see his work. The therapists have also been very helpful in giving suggestions and offering extra support. Austin is signing more and his ability to communicate with me has grown so much in his time at Arkids."

What do you want to tell other parents about Arkids?
"I would recommend y'all to anyone, but especially parents who have concerns about their child's development. I have seen so much progress in his time there that I know you all will get him where he needs to be. Thank you for helping us."

Financial Future FOR YOUR CHILD

BY SARAH TIPTON

As a parent, a solid financial foundation for your child is very important. You want to teach your children important financial lessons like budgeting, saving, and spending. You set up a savings account in their name, and you're setting money aside for college in a 529 plan. What else can you do to help give your child financial stability?

Juvenile life insurance is another tool you should consider. The idea of juvenile life insurance can be confusing for some. Why would you insure the life of a perfectly healthy child? I've talked to moms who don't want to even think about the possibility of a death benefit. But let's change how you think of this life insurance policy. Juvenile life insurance does indeed insure against the loss of a child, but thankfully this occurrence is extremely rare.

Instead, juvenile life insurance is more about helping build a strong financial foundation. Your child will have coverage for life and the policy can build cash value. Approximately 25% of children under the age of 18 are uninsurable for life insurance by the time they reach 18. Uninsurability comes from diagnoses like asthma, diabetes, or cancer. By solidifying a policy now, your child will have a low-cost life insurance policy and earn benefits from growing cash value later in life.

My favorite policy for juveniles right now is the Farmers Index Universal Life policy. This policy can have a minimal investment, as little as \$300 a year, and has the potential to earn a large cash value. This can be used as a down payment for a home, investment in a new business, or possibly even tax-free withdrawals during retirement.

As an insurance agent, I want to protect your family like I protect mine. Creating a solid and stable financial future is part of that protection. This is the exact policy I have for my child and have created for my nieces and nephews. Please, talk with me this week about your child's life insurance policy. Mapping out a financial future for your children is something I am passionate about.

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ACH Jonesboro

RESPIRATORY CARE



patients across fifteen specialties, offering full-time services for cardiology, audiology, and pulmonary needs. Growth plans for the clinic include additional full-time specialists. The ACH Jonesboro Clinic also has full-time technicians for administering ultrasounds, electroencephalograms (EEGs), echocardiograms, electrocardiograms (EKGs), and Holter monitors.

Tami Carter, R.EEG T., and team leader at the ACH Jonesboro Clinic, has been with the clinic since it opened in 2012. “We are excited to add to our full-time staff,” Carter said. “It means our pulmonary patients will not have to make the four-hour round trip to Little Rock. Our families will receive the same compassionate and high standard of care they expect from an Arkansas Children’s Hospital facility.”

For children in Northeast Arkansas with respiratory issues like asthma, Arkansas Children’s Hospital (ACH) Jonesboro Clinic has added a new full-time medical provider. Katie Stickler, A.P.R.N. and pulmonary specialist, is a familiar face at the clinic. Before joining the Jonesboro team full-time in April, Stickler traveled to the clinic monthly to provide in-person care. The transition to full-time care reflects Arkansas Children’s commitment to meeting the needs of kids in the region.

Stickler said, “Our main focuses will be asthma, childhood cough and wheezing, and bronchopulmonary dysplasia (BPD). We will be able to do spirometry and other pulmonary function tests to monitor these conditions and will have access to respiratory therapists to offer ongoing education and management of those conditions.”

The ACH Jonesboro Clinic recently celebrated its 10th year serving kids in Northeast Arkansas. Over the past decade, the number of available pediatric specialties has increased. The clinic now serves

In 2022, U.S. News and World Report ranked Arkansas Children’s Hospital (ACH) in Little Rock among the top 50 children’s hospitals in the nation for seven programs: cancer, cardiology/heart surgery, diabetes/endocrinology, nephrology, neurology/neurosurgery, pulmonology/lung surgery and urology. The pulmonology program at ACH ranked in the top 25.

Increasing access to care for the children of Arkansas is called the “60-mile commitment” in the network of Arkansas Children’s hospitals and clinics around the state. The goal is for every child in the state to have a connection point to Arkansas Children’s within 60 miles of its home through a combination of hospitals, clinics, and telemedicine services.

To learn more about the specialty services offered at the ACH Jonesboro Clinic, visit archildrens.org/NEAkids or call 870-606-2010.

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Nostalgic Experience

LOCALLY MADE

Going to the mall as a kid was exciting. Countless toy stores, candy shops and gaming areas provided plenty of entertainment. That same experience can be found today at The Toy Store Gifts and More in Jonesboro.

Owner Kevin Lloyd has been in business for two years and carries a wide stock of learning toys, fidget toys, and even a selection of baby items. The main showcase, however, is the stuffed animal building station. Kids can choose from a wide selection of turtles, cats, unicorns, birds, and bears, fill them with stuffing and even pick out clothing for their new furry friend.

The other shelves in the store are filled with goodies for all ages. "I have everything from Paw Patrol to Disney stuff," Lloyd said. "We just try to carry a good mixture."

In addition to toys ranging from traditional (wooden blocks, puzzles) to trendy (sensory objects like Pop Its), The Toy Store also hosts a collection of arcade games found by Lloyd's wife Charla, who also brought in the playhouses tiny guests can enjoy while shopping. An outdoor play area is located on the side of the building, and merry-go-rounds and other quarter rides line the store entrance. "We try to make it an experience," Lloyd said.



Arkansas Children's Hospital | Jonesboro Clinic

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Basketball

WORKOUT SKILLS



Girls in the Paragould school system got an early taste of what junior high basketball will look like when they went through an afternoon of drills on the Oak Grove campus in early March.

Kelly Stewart, 7th grade head coach, brought sixth-graders into the gym for a series of ballhandling, passing and shooting exercises to give them an opportunity to learn the fundamental skills before tryouts for the 7th grade team were held. "We work on basic fundamentals,"

she said, "dribbling with eyes up, passing and good shooting form. We also work on being a good teammate by encouraging each other, helping each other learn a skill and holding each other accountable."

Kelly said the goals of the workouts were to teach:

1. Commitment to the team
2. Communicate with each other in a clear, positive way
3. Control -- control our attitudes and control of our skills
4. Concentration -- stay focused on a task
5. Confidence -- building confidence in ourselves and each other

As with any group of kids hoping to make a team, skill levels varied. Some already possess adequate skills while some needed polishing; some were obviously there intent on becoming a Lady Ram in the future and some may have been there strictly for the social aspect, but all were giving it their best through each activity.

"All of the above is to encourage and help guide these young ladies to becoming the best basketball player and teammate they can possibly become," Kelly said.



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RECIPE RABBIT HOLES

BY KATIE COLLINS

I find myself going down recipe rabbit holes quite often, looking for something different and unique to try for my monthly recipe. For some reason, when searching for ideas for April, I kept coming back to peanut butter, and I found endless recipes for traditional peanut butter pie, you know the one that's no-bake, mixed with cream cheese and frozen whipped topping.

It's usually quite tasty, but it wasn't what I was looking for. Then I turned a corner and discovered something I never knew existed – a BAKED peanut butter pie. I don't think I've ever heard of such a thing, let alone tried one. I wasn't sure what to expect.

The end result was an extremely peanut buttery pie with a texture reminiscent of pumpkin pie – custardy and comforting. If you're a die hard fan of peanut butter, you're going to want to try this one. And if you're looking for something different for your Easter dessert, give all your little bunnies a treat with this Baked Peanut Butter Pie.

Baked Peanut Butter Pie

Serves 8

Directions:

Preheat oven to 350

Prepare your pie crust. If using homemade or refrigerated, place it in a pie pan, then trim and crimp the edges like you normally would for a single crust pie. If using frozen, make sure you buy the one that says it's for a 9-inch pie, and just remove from the packaging and place on a baking sheet.

Separate the eggs, putting the whites in a medium bowl and the yolks in a large bowl.

Beat the egg whites with a mixer until stiff peaks form; set aside.

Beat the egg yolks and brown sugar until mixture is combined and thickened; add peanut butter and corn syrup and beat to combine, then gradually beat in the evaporated milk and vanilla.

Fold in the egg whites until no more white is showing and pour into the pie crust.

Bake for 30-35 minutes or until the filling is set.

Cool for at least 15 minutes. Pie can be served warm if you like or can be cooled completely. Great topping ideas include hot fudge and whipped cream. Refrigerate leftovers

Ingredients:

- Refrigerated, frozen or homemade pie crust for a 9-inch pie
- 2 large eggs
- ½ cup firmly packed light brown sugar
- ¾ cup creamy peanut butter
- ¼ cup dark corn syrup
- 5 ounces evaporated milk
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract

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BEST SERVICE

JONESBORO JUNIOR AUXILIARY CHARITY BALL



JA Circus Soiree was a fantastic event for the Jonesboro Junior Auxiliary! This annual Charity Ball is a fundraiser benefiting the children of Craighead County.

JA members volunteer countless hours of service and dedication into making life better for the children in our community.

For more pictures from the event go to the Jonesboro Junior Auxiliary Facebook page.





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A photograph of two women standing side-by-side, leaning against a dark corrugated metal wall. They are both wearing matching green scrubs and smiling at the camera. The woman on the left is wearing black shoes, and the woman on the right is wearing blue sneakers.



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EASTER BUFFET -- DO'S & DON'TS

Whether staying with the traditional menu, or trying other delights -- going through the Easter buffet line should be an enjoyable experience.

There are horror stories, however, of some buffet diners. You may have encountered them in the past and shaken your head in disbelief. It may have been the diner cutting in line, sneezing on the food or putting partially eaten food back on the buffet table.

Here are some quick tips to help you navigate through the buffet line. It's all about being considerate of others, and others being considerate of you.

Don't cut in line.

Do wash your hands or use a hand sanitizer prior to going through the buffet line.

Many restaurants will be offering their wonderful Easter Buffet to area diners.

Don't use your hands to pick up food. Use the serving spoon, knife or fork to transfer the food from the buffet to your plate.

Do use the serving utensils that are provided for each item on the buffet. Use each serving piece for the food that it is intended. The slotted spoon in the green beans doesn't drain well after it has been used to serve a helping of mashed potatoes.

Don't eat while going through the buffet line. Eating while going through the line is an easy way to spread germs. The food may be delicious, but wait until you are through the line before you start to eat.

Do keep the line moving. Do keep conversation short while going through the buffet line. Be cordial to your fellow diners, but don't spend time catching up on family history, thereby slowing the line.

Don't sneeze on the food. Sneezing, coughing or blowing your nose while going through the line can contaminate the food.

Do keep your sleeves from dragging through the food on the buffet.

NEA's Only Cat Lounge



Come play and relax with the cats. All cats are for adoption through Ozzie's Legacy.

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Saturday
10AM to 4PM





Don't put food back on the buffet once you have put it on your plate. Putting food back on the buffet, after you have touched it is unsanitary.

Do use a clean plate when you go back for a second helping. Leave your used plate on the table and pick up a clean plate at the buffet.

Don't take a dirty or used plate back to the buffet.

Do tip your waiter or waitress. Although you are going through the buffet line, the waiter or waitress is picking up your dirty dishes and cleaning your table.

Quote of the day:

Food brings people together on many different levels. It's nourishment of the soul and body.

Giada De Laurentiis

Linda Lou Moore is a certified etiquette consultant. She offers business professionalism and dining seminars for adults, and etiquette and dining programs for children and teens. Contact via Post Office Box 726, Paragould 72451 or at manners@paragould.net.

SUPPORT *Upcoming* COMMUNITY EVENTS

AR ALZHEIMER'S ASSOCIATION



The Arkansas Alzheimer's Association is sponsoring a fundraising event at Craighead Forest on Saturday, June 24, 2023. A two-mile run/walk race, titled NEA H2GO, is the first such event in Northeast Arkansas. Races are planned for children, individual adults and team entries.

The primary mission of Arkansas Alzheimer's is to assist caregivers of those diagnosed with Alzheimer's and other forms of dementia. All proceeds from the event will be spent in Arkansas on a variety of activities, such as caregiver relief, educational workshops, grants and toll-free telephone support. The association also provides a lending library of videos and print material to give caregivers confidence in meeting the needs of their loved ones.

"Through the Decades" was chosen as the theme for NEA H2GO. Runners are encouraged to register as a team and compete for a Spirit Award, given to the group winning honors as the best-dressed decade. Other awards include overall male/female winners and age category winners.

The entry fee is \$10 for children and \$25 for adults. A Kids Fun Run is scheduled at 8:30 a.m. with all children registered receiving medals and treat bags. The adult race will kick off at 9 a.m. Entry fees for adults include a t-shirt and goody bag.



Vendors are welcome to contact Race Director Jane Svetz at Jtrunner1958@gmail.com for more information about setting up a table.

To register for the race, go to www.Runsignup.com/Race/AR/Jonesboro/NEAH2GO. Runners meet at Craighead Forest Pavilion #1 on race day.



Easter Cake Options

SOMETHING Sweet

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THE IMPORTANCE OF DENTAL HEALTH IN PETS

WITH DR. KRISTIN SULLIVAN



Dental disease is one of the most common diseases that veterinarians diagnose. It is something I see in almost every patient over 2 years of age at varying degrees. Dental disease is also one of the most overlooked problems. The main complaint from pet owners of the family pet is “their breath is just awful!” When I take a look in their mouth, they may have a range

from plaque at the gumline, calculus, gingivitis (inflammation of the gums), recession of the gumline sometimes exposing the tooth root, tooth root abscess, oral tumors, tooth mobility, gingival ulcerations, and sometimes even foreign bodies. I’m going to discuss some of these things, what to watch for, and how you can best prevent dental disease in your pet.

Gingivitis and minimal plaque and calculus deposit is the first stage in dental disease. This is termed as inflammation of the gumline. This is typically easily treated with only scaling of the teeth including under the gumline and polishing the teeth. The second stage of dental disease is Early Periodontitis. This stage represents those that have less than 25% attachment loss. Treatment for this includes scaling, polishing, irrigation, +/- the use of antimicrobials if there are periodontal pockets. Periodontal pockets occur if there is space between the tooth and the gumline. Stage 3 dental disease affects those that have 25-50% bone attachment loss. These patients typically have heavy plaque and calculus, deepened periodontal pockets, ulcerated gingiva, and sometimes furcation exposure. This stage requires everything from stage 2 and may include possible extractions of severely diseased teeth. Stage 4 is the final stage of Periodontal Disease. Stage 4 includes greater than 50% bone loss, very deep periodontal pockets, bone and gum loss, tooth mobility, and sometimes even tooth root abscesses.

Oral tumors can be benign or malignant and can be found anywhere in the mouth. I have seen tumors that grow from the lip, the back of the mouth near the TMJ, at the back of the throat causing the patient to gag, from on the top of the bottom of the tongue, from the hard palate, but mostly I see them on the gingiva. With oral tumors, I wish it was as easy as just removing it. It’s not! These guys can be very tricky -- it is so important to know what type of growth it is before you attempt removal, otherwise you could just anger a tumor and it can

sometimes grow faster if you cut into it but do not get all of it causing more problems to the patient.

Foreign bodies are another common finding! I once saw a patient and knew that the client had a young child that the patient was around only because there was a tire from a toy tractor wedged completely around the patient’s canine! Luckily, I was able to remove that for the patient without any sedation. There have been other times that the patient had a piece of stick (the most common oral foreign body that I have observed in practice) wedged between the maxillary (upper jaw) molars spanning across the top and stuck between the molars. I normally have to sedate these patients to remove the stick and sometimes require general anesthesia if there is significant oral disease that has occurred. These patients can have clinical signs that range from bad breath to drooling everywhere, unable to close their mouth, or gagging and unable to eat.

One last thing that I see in practice very commonly is called stomatitis. Stomatitis is most often seen in my feline patients and is chronic inflammation of the gingiva and oral mucosa. The first symptom you might notice is foul breath, but this disease is often accompanied with excessive drooling, not wanting to groom themselves, and pain or even inability to eat. While the root cause is unknown, or idiopathic, it appears to be due to an abnormal immune response where their immune system has a severely exaggerated response to the bacteria and plaque on their teeth. Some patients respond well to dental cleaning, scaling, and polishing with good at-home care including brushing their teeth to prevent laydown of further plaque and calculus accumulation. However, some require partial or full mouth extractions. I know -- that seems crazy, but to date this is the best treatment option for cats for successful long-term comfort.

The best way to help prevent any of this from occurring to your pet is with biannual wellness exams. These physical exams performed by your veterinarian include an oral exam. During this oral exam, especially when performed regularly, will allow the doctor to see small problems before they become major problems! Another preventive measure to take care of your pet’s teeth is to brush them; you read that right, brushing their teeth just like you do yours...except not with the same toothpaste! You can’t very well ask your dog or cat to not swallow the toothpaste and then to rinse after! Best to discuss with your local vet the best option for your pet and how to be proactive about preventing dental disease!


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BY ERIK, VICKI, AND AIDEN KNIGHT

I moved from California to Arkansas in 2010. I lost touch with my 4th grade best friend, Lisa, at that point. I was able to locate her again in 2021. She had a female French Mastiff I absolutely fell in love with over Facebook Messenger. One day my friend just sent me a picture of her female and a male. Well, we know what happened then. I told her I would love a boy puppy, but she was clear in California. So, I watched Louie being born on Facebook and she put a little blue collar on him and said, "Sis, he is yours, I'm bringing him to you when he's ready."



Well, I hadn't seen her since 2009. Twelve years later here comes my 4th grade BFF pulling up in my driveway with my King Louie in her arms. The rest is just a true love story. He is named after my father, Louie Mendoza, a WWII Navy veteran who is in heaven now. My BFF threw in King, so we have King Louie.

Louie is a big, friendly giant. He loves smelling flowers and playing with butterflies. He makes animal friends wherever he goes. His favorites are cats – he adores them! He loves to play fetch. He drools buckets, so we have to carry a drool rag at all times, and he snores – LOUDLY!

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Greg Morton, Comedian 4/29/23 at 7 pm
Opening Act: Local Comedian, Jeremy Cox

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April 22nd
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April 28th
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A complete listing of all Downtown events can be found under "Events" at downtownparagould.com or facebook.com/oneandonlydowntown/events.



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Ellyn + Reid DALLAS MAVERICKS FANS

More than 20,000 fans packed the Dallas Mavericks stadium in Dallas to see Kyrie Irving's home debut on February 13 and ended up going to a wedding, too.

Reid and Ellyn Malone tied the knot center court at halftime in a ceremony that took seven minutes to perform that even included a first dance played by members of the Dallas Symphony Orchestra. They had two groomsmen, two bridesmaids, and immediate family with them on the court with broadcaster Mark Followill, who happens to be an ordained minister, officiating. Mark Cuban, Mavericks owner, was supposed to do the ceremony, but "he was afraid to mess it up," said Ellyn.

The unusual wedding was the result of the Dallas Mavericks' reaching out to the couple after Reid proposed during a game, also down on the Mavs' court. "They asked us to finish our story," said Reid. Why a Dallas Mavericks game? "Reid is from Irving, Texas, and his family are huge Mavs fans," said Ellyn. "When we met I didn't have a choice." The family's guest room is decorated in Mavs memorabilia and they are season ticket holders. When Ellyn mentioned to Reid how cool it would be to be proposed to in front of hundreds of people, he found the perfect scenario. "I was chosen to play a blindfold game, a hot and cold thing, and was going toward a jersey," said Ellyn. But when she got to the jersey, she found Reid down on one knee. "It was really cool," she said.

The couple actually had a wedding booked for June but when the Mavericks reached out, they couldn't resist. "They reached out to us but I saw it first," said Reid. "Ellen didn't know. I thought, 'She's going to say no.' But she immediately said, 'Does that mean we get to get married twice?'" "I told my parents," said Ellyn. "Of course I'm getting married twice. Hey, same guy."

So, the married couple will do another ceremony in an outdoor wedding in June. They plan to take some of the things from the Mavs' wedding to the next one, including a sign and customized napkins. The couple will bring the wedding colors, blue and green, over as well. But, they are not stressed out about this one. "It ruined us for planning our wedding," said Reid. "Everyone is asking and

I tell everybody to chill out. We know where it is, and that it will happen at sunset, whenever that is."

Following the ceremony, Ellyn and Reid watched the fourth quarter in a section of a club in the lower level where they had a reception for family and friends. "They asked for my Pinterest board," said Ellyn of the Mavericks team who planned the wedding, doing many of the things she had wanted, including cookies, vegetarian options, and a champagne tower. They even found an artist in Austin to get a champagne bottle painted like Ellyn wanted. "I think they had a lot of fun with it," she said. "They went above and beyond. Thank you is not enough. It was so surreal."

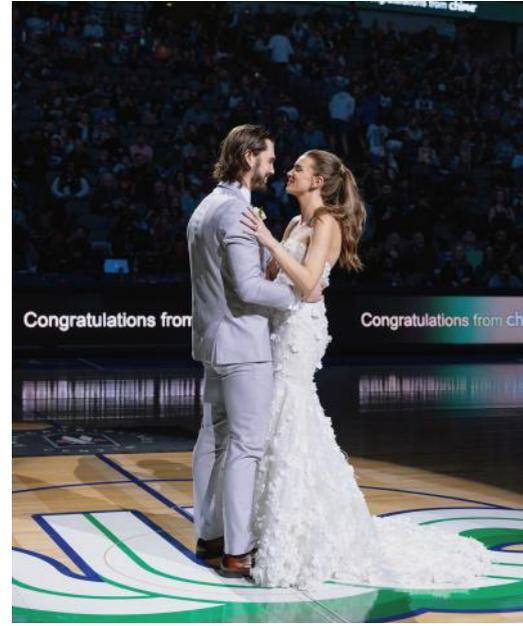
"They thought of everything," said Reid. "We got a \$30,000 wedding for free. They said if you trust us, we'll take care of you." It wasn't just the wedding that was comped, the couple will also get \$7,000 for honeymoon expenses. They plan to take a trip right after their June wedding, if Reid doesn't have a conflict. He has an audition for Big Brother that might put off the honeymoon.

"We have no regrets," said Reid. "Zero. Usually something goes wrong. Nothing did. Everything went perfectly. We had no idea what to expect. They called us up for a walk-through six hours before the game. They took care of everything. They are so used to doing this it was a piece of cake." Ellyn added: "It was literally perfect."

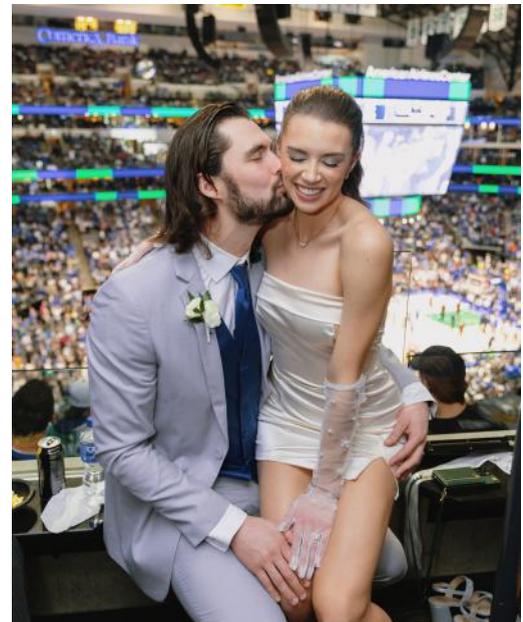
The unusual wedding created other buzz. James Corden ("The Late Late Show" on CBS) did a bit on his opening monologue about it, and there were jokes made on the radio about how the Mavs lost by 3 and how the groom got luckier than Kyrie.

Reid and Ellyn plan to send the Dallas Mavericks organization an invitation to their June wedding.

Ellyn is a Paragould native and a 2013 Paragould High School graduate.



Photography by Shelbie Whitten



Volunteering to Salute Comrades

THE NURSES HONOR GUARD



other nurses fulfilled Buchanan's dream. The Nurses Honor Guard, which now has 19 chapters and counting in the state, recognizes and pays tribute to the men and women who have dedicated their lives to the nursing profession.

Buchanan was the first nurse to receive a tribute from the group in the state. "It was a very emotional tribute and one of the hardest things I have ever done, but it was successful and the start to something bigger than I ever dreamed," Collins said. "We typically pay tribute to these individuals upon their death at their funeral or memorial service with a short, yet beautiful, ceremony," Collins explained. Members arrive in white scrubs and nursing caps, and traditional nursing capes like the original Red Cross nurses wore. Tributes can be personalized but each includes a speech about the life of the nurse, the Nightingale Tribute of presenting a white rose and lighting a nursing lamp of knowledge as a symbol of honor and appreciation, and the reading of the poem, "She Was There" by Duane Jaeger, RN, MSN. The ceremony closes with a final roll call, similar to that of firefighters and police officers, where the nurse's name is called three times along with the ring of a bell or triangle. "Upon the third name call we officially release the nurse of their nursing duties and we extinguish the nurse's lamp before presenting it to the family to keep, along with a white rose," Collins added. "Our ceremony typically takes less than 10-15 minutes and can be tailored in a multitude of ways to make it unique for the nurse we are there to honor.

At the end of 2020, RN Teresa Buchanan of Rose Bud came to her best friend Elsie Collins about bringing the free services of the Nurses Honor Guard to Arkansas. Just a month later, Buchanan passed away due to Covid complications before her dream could be brought to life. But in her honor, Collins selflessly volunteered and put in the work to establish the statewide organization that has since honored 127 Arkansan nurses. In February 2021, Collins and two

The non-profit offers this free service to any nurse, whether LPN, RN, or APRN, upon their passing.

In the beginning stages of building the organization, Collins sent out a call to action on Facebook and ended up connecting with Ashley Ball and Tracy Cates Waymack. Ball was a former nursing instructor for Collins and Buchanan, and Waymack was a coworker of Buchanan's. "Tracy has been at my side ever since Teresa's tribute and she is the chapter leader for White and Lonoke county, and vice president of our state board, and has truly been an amazing and vital asset to myself and this organization," Collins said. As Collins prepared Buchanan's tribute, she also began spreading word through Facebook about the new organization, which aided in establishing many chapters across the state.

"This organization has flourished across the state because of the amazing and selfless chapter leaders and members that dedicate and volunteer their time," Collins said. "Right now we have 18 chapter leaders across the state helping us honor nurses in various parts of Arkansas. I'm truly lucky for these amazing people I have met in the last two years." Collins has relied on these nurses and watched the state chapters grow thanks to



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their tireless efforts. “The biggest thing we struggle with in every chapter is finding active members because, understandably, nurses are the busiest people,” she said. “These ladies have made sure that I have never had to do a tribute by myself, and I have always had help no matter where a tribute might be.” The NEA chapter alone covers 11 counties, and Collins also travels outside the region to ensure a nurse is honored. She has traveled to Missouri at least three times and has always been accompanied by a dedicated member. Collins said she had no idea the Nurses Honor Guard would grow as much as it has. She had tunnel vision in the beginning and was simply determined to see it through for Buchanan.

“Through my own grief I have found a sense of purpose from it that is very hard to describe,” she added. “I’m still very emotional when I talk about how we started and Teresa’s wish, even though I seize every opportunity to tell it, but it has given me the opportunity to tell her story and share her legacy in ways I have never dreamed of.”

Collins has not only been able to honor her friend, but has met an amazing group of people thanks to the Honor Guard and paid tribute to many inspirational nurses, forever changing her. The ceremony that the Honor Guard performs for nurses and their families has also given Collins a feeling unlike anything she has ever experienced. “We are almost always stopped after a service and thanked and showered with appreciation for our tribute, but honestly, we all consider ourselves privileged and thankful to be able to honor that nurse the best way we can and be there for the many family members, friends, and coworkers during a very difficult time,” Collins said. “It’s truly a very fulfilling and humbling feeling.”

Collins, an Imboden native, devotes and volunteers every bit of time possible to the Nurses Honor Guard, helping not only the NEA chapter, but the state nonprofit and other chapters as well. Collins said in order to join as a member, a nurse may be active or retired but their license must be in good standing with the Arkansas State Board of Nursing. Members must also provide their own white scrubs and shoes. Other items needed for the tributes are provided by Collins or through donations. Last November, Collins and the Nurses Honor Guard were honored themselves by the Arkansas Nurses Association. That same night, Collins was presented the Daisy Nurse Leadership award.



More information on the nonprofit can be found at www.anhg.info and services can be requested through the Facebook page.

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Volunteering Spirit

AUTUM MAXWELL

BY NATALIE HARRELL



If you've spent any significant amount of time on the campus of Crowley's Ridge College, you're probably familiar with junior marketing major Autum Maxwell. Originally from Forrest City and the starting

second baseman for the Lady Pioneer softball team, Maxwell wears many hats around campus. One of her favorite to wear, though, is her volunteer hat. "Giving joy to other people and just seeing them light up is what keeps me motivated to volunteer. Making others feel good makes me feel good," she said.

Autum's most recent volunteer experience was in March when she led her peers at "Project Reachout," an annual one-day event in which CRC cancels all classes for the day so that members of the student body, faculty, and administration can team up to give back to the Paragould community they have been blessed to call home. Yard work, power washing, painting, and remodeling are a few examples of the type of work done with Project Reachout under the leadership of both Maxwell and Dean of Students Erica Richardson.

"Autum has been such a joy to have on campus. She seeks out ways to help others and I always enjoy talking with her. She's been a great help in the planning stages of our annual Project Reachout event and I'm so glad she's a Pioneer!" Richardson stated.

Autum has been passionate about volunteering for many years prior to calling Paragould her home away from home. While a freshman at Palestine-Wheatley High School, she joined Delta Beta Sigma, a national junior sorority for high school girls composed of seven active chapters across Arkansas, Louisiana, and Tennessee. All members of DBS are encouraged and empowered to become leaders in their communities, and Autum is doing just that. She has always gotten joy out of participating in fundraisers such as 5ks, bake sales, etc., to donate to charities such as Breast Cancer Awareness, The Ronald McDonald House, and Toys for Tots.

As if her plate weren't already full enough from college classes, traveling with her softball team, and volunteering, Autum also works part-time at Sonic to save money for her future. Her plans after graduation are to enroll in the Physical Therapy program at Arkansas State University and become a PT Assistant.

When asked what encouragement she would give to other young volunteers or those even thinking about getting involved, she said, "Think of the bigger picture. Not about what you'll get out of volunteering but what others will get from you. Whether that be something tangible or just advice. We have resources and opportunities that some others may not have. Give when you can, not for recognition or attention, and the giving will come back to you."

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Volunteering

MISSION OUTREACH

BY RICHARD BRUMMETT

When one of the busiest times of the month arrives at Mission Outreach of Northeast Arkansas in Paragould, so does a band of volunteers that makes things flow more smoothly.

“On the first Thursday of each month, which is one of our busiest times,” said Mission Outreach Executive Director Jana Burnett, “they show up and work the food pantry, and make the food boxes and deliver boxes to the cars. Oh, absolutely, they are a Godsend.”

“They” are a group of volunteer workers from The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints in Paragould, people who just want to be helpful and show a loving attitude toward their fellow man.

“They just called and said, ‘We’d like to help out. Is there anything we can do?’ It varies how many come with them; sometimes two or three of their younger elders come and two or three will work the pantry along with some others,” Jana said. “Showing up on one of our busiest days really helps out. We will ‘throw out’ about 150 boxes or more a day, and they take such a load off of us.”

Mission Outreach’s goal is centered on bettering the lives of those in need. They try to provide housing, food, utility assistance, mental health services and opportunities for independence to those who come seeking help.

Jeff Stokes, a preacher and local President of the volunteer church group, said their mission is “to just help out in our community and be good citizens of Paragould. Our church is really big on welfare. The Mission has probably one of the more organized food pantries in the community. They asked us in on the first Thursday of the month and we were happy to be of service. Helping in this way is second nature to us.”

He said his church members pack the food boxes for delivery, with two full-time missionaries participating along with “even a couple of grandmothers who help out every month. We usually have six to eight helping out. We just love it. Everyone comes away with a wonderful feeling.”

“It is not possible to do something nice and not feel good,” said Bruce Johnson, also a church member. “To do the work of Jesus Christ is to be a servant.”

Stokes said sometimes he calls the Mission to see if extra help is needed, especially during the holidays, and often will help newcomers seeking the services offered fill out the proper paperwork. “And sometimes,” he said, “I have to call them and say, ‘I forget ... is this the busy Thursday? Do you need us this week?’ And we will sometime in the near future be bringing twenty-four pallets of food to the Mission, probably after they have their kitchen area renovations done.

“We believe in showing love, in showing the love of Christ, in showing love through service and sharing. We’re just doing what we believe we are supposed to do.”



Mission Outreach is located at 901 E. Lake Street and can be reached by phone at (870) 236-8080.

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints can be found at 2611 Purcell Road. The office number is (501) 355-6780 and Sunday services begin at 10 a.m.

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SUPPORT *Upcoming* COMMUNITY EVENTS
TIM TEBOW AT CRC

Crowley's Ridge College will host the annual "Spirit of America" event on Thursday, April 6, at the Carter Activities Center featuring Tim Tebow.

Tim Tebow is a two-time national champion, Heisman Trophy winner, first-round NFL draft pick, and a former professional baseball player. The five-time New York Times best-selling author, speaker, and football analyst is most passionate about his work with the Tim Tebow Foundation (TTF), whose mission is to bring faith, hope and love to those needing a brighter day in their darkest hour of need. The Tim Tebow Foundation is currently fighting for people who can't fight for themselves in over 70 countries and counting through

four primary ministry focuses with 16 initiatives. Tim is married to Demi-Leigh Tebow, a speaker, influencer, entrepreneur, and Miss Universe 2017. Tim and Demi live in Jacksonville, Florida, with their three dogs, Chunk, Kobe, and Paris.

For ticket information log on to crc.edu/2023-spirit-of-america/ or contact 870.236.6901



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VOLUNTEER NICU CUDDLER

BY KARAN SUMMITT

A Commitment to Cuddling

The lines from an old poem include the following words:

*Cleaning and scrubbing can wait 'til tomorrow,
For babies grow up, we've learned to our sorrow.
So quiet down cobwebs, dust go to sleep.
I'm rocking my baby, and babies don't keep.*



No one knows the truth of these words better than Jill McBride, RN Patient Care Manager for St. Bernards Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU). The fragile infants that come under the care of her NICU team are especially in need of the attentive care and comfort of something as

simple as one-on-one rocking and cuddling. Jill was first introduced to the research behind volunteer cuddlers when she attended a neonatal training program called “Baby Boot Camp.” Tears came to her eyes as she relayed a statistic that cut to the heart of her work with premature infants. Studies have shown that babies with long NICU stays experience higher than average suicide rates over the span of their lifetime. Infants with more skin-to-skin contact have shorter NICU stays. Getting from point A to point B wasn’t rocket science. Jill’s babies in the NICU would benefit from more cuddling than could be given by busy nurses with multiple infants under their care.

Enter St. Bernards NICU Cuddlers. Through the St. Bernards Foundation, volunteers are recruited with one task in mind—Do you enjoy rocking infants? Interested applicants submit to a background check and provide documentation they are up to date on required vaccinations. They attend Cuddler’s Class training sessions that include infection control procedures, education on protecting patient privacy and techniques for consoling infants.

The last skill is invaluable to nursing staff. Some newborns, such as those suffering neonatal withdrawal symptoms from maternal substance abuse, tend to cry more. Holding and cuddling these babies for long periods of time is difficult for nurses responsible for several patients. In these instances, cuddlers are especially needed to help calm the agitated infants.

Newborns can be in the NICU for reasons that range from being born pre-maturely (St. Bernards is able to care for babies with birth weights as small as 1 lb. 10 oz) to babies born as large as 15 pounds. Other newborns may be there because of respiratory distress, feeding

issues or infections. Since its inception with space for six beds in 2012, the St. Bernards NICU has expanded to accommodate 16 patients. Census averages about 12 to 13 infants. The St. Bernards NICU service area includes Northeast Arkansas and much of Southeast Missouri, meaning many families with infants in the unit live miles away from Jonesboro.

While parents are welcome in the NICU at any time except shift changes, they often have other small children in the home that need care. Many want to maximize their maternity leave benefits by going back to work as soon as possible so they can take off and be at home when the baby is dismissed from the hospital. These reasons and others can limit the time they have to be at the hospital while the infant in is the NICU. Cuddlers allow these families to be away from their newborns with an assurance the baby is being loved and held.

A part-time dental hygienist by trade, Renee Harmon has been with the Cuddlers Program since it began in 2018. At the time her son had transitioned to college life, and Renee was proactively looking for something to minimize empty nest feelings when she spotted a Facebook post about Cuddlers. Although she wasn’t knowledgeable about NICUs, the idea of holding and loving on infants appealed to her. Renee bubbled over with enthusiasm as she talked about the program, calling her volunteer time “the sweetest day of my week.” She went on to say that as she rocks, she prays over the babies and their families. “It’s not a job, it’s a blessing to me, knowing I am helping provide a much-needed service for both the hospital and the families. Watching these babies move from enclosed beds to being held to graduating to their home environment is so rewarding.”

When asked about unexpected benefits from the Cuddlers program,



Jill and Renee spoke about the mutual closeness and support between cuddlers and hospital staff. Over time, friendships and camaraderie grow. The physicians, staff and volunteers work together as a cohesive unit, each having respect for their differing roles. Renee mentioned observing the personal attention and care given to each infant and how they work together to share important details about the tiny patients. Jill noted how minor changes can become major issues with neonatal infants, making it a priority for everyone involved to be attentive.

Despite a setback during the COVID-19 crisis, NICU Cuddlers has become a win-win-win for everyone involved. It is obviously good for the babies and their families. It's an immeasurable help to the busy staff. Cuddlers who come to help leave with feelings of having given time to something that has unknown long-range value. Currently, there are about 15-20 cuddlers in the program, working twice each month for two to three hours at a time. Jill dreams of a time when Cuddler volunteers can be available 24 hours a day.

Cuddlers like Renee help meet the needs of those too small to speak for themselves. Jill described NICU patients with the words, "They come into the world with a will to live. These newborns are frail, but very resilient. A team of dedicated caregivers working together gives them the very best odds for overcoming their unique challenges."

Most of these fragile NICU infants eventually thrive and grow as other babies do. In a busy world with competing demands, Cuddler volunteers take the time to help these babies flourish, knowing from experience that "babies grow up," and rocking them today can make a lifelong difference in the years to come.

(If you would like to know more information about how to become a NICU Cuddler volunteer, please contact the St. Bernards Foundation at 870.207.2500 or www.stbernards.info/foundation/volunteer.)



Parents Taylor Settlemoir and Destiney Madison have first-hand knowledge about the benefits of Cuddlers. Their daughter Jasper was born six weeks early on February 9, 2023.

Like many other parents, both of them work and cannot spend as much time at the NICU as they would like.

Destiney said, "It offers a sense of comfort that there is someone there with Jasper showing her attention. Having Cuddlers helps babies to grow and gives them some of the stimulation they need to be able to come home. We think the Cuddler program is great!"



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GO AHEAD...CALL ME NAMES CATFISHING ARKANSAS

BY CHUCK LONG



CHUCK LONG
Avid Outdoorsman
Retired Outdoor Educator

It's a face only a mother could love. A chucklehead. Ol' Whiskerface. Bottom feeder. Fiddler. Mudcat. These terms may sound derogatory, but they are all terms of endearment that anglers use to identify one of the most sought after fish that swims the freshwaters of America, the catfish.

For as many slang names as there are for the fish itself, there are almost that many ways that fishermen use to pursue the quarry. It might be trotlining, hogging, noodling, dipping, drift-hopping, limb lining or drift fishing ... just a few of the ways anglers hope to add a catfish to the cooler.

Well over 40 million fishermen hit the water across the United States each year, with over 400,000 of those trying the waters of the Natural State. Bass, crappie and trout tend to be the most sought-after fish, but the ranks that pursue catfish are right behind those and gaining ground as catfishing increases in popularity.

The flathead, channel and blue catfish are the best known and most pursued species of catfish, but there are close to twenty different species that inhabit Arkansas, including three species of bullheads and the diminutive madtoms.

At least one of the three major species can be found in most any body of water around the state, but they each have their habitat preferences. Channel catfish are the most common as they will frequent everything from creeks to ditches to rivers and are also the most common species stocked in farm ponds. Blue catfish can be found in many of the same waterways as channels, but they also like the large rivers like the White, Arkansas and Mississippi and can grow to astounding sizes in those bodies of water. Both the channel and blue live an almost scavenger-like lifestyle in their search for food.

Flatheads might frequent some of the same water but their habitat choices and feeding tendencies differ. They like cover and prefer bodies of water with lots of trees, logjams, drifts and rocks and are one of the apex ambush predators of the waterways, preferring live prey. One unique thing about catfish, especially the blue and flathead cats, are the astounding sizes they can attain. The current Arkansas state record blue catfish is just over 116 pounds and came from the

Mississippi River while the flathead record is 80 pounds and came from the Arkansas River. Much larger specimens for both species have been documented with the world record blue catfish checking in at 143 pounds from Virginia and a flathead tipping the scales at 123 pounds taken from a lake in Kansas. There are records of larger fish taken with commercial tackle, with a 138 pound flathead taken from the Arkansas River in a net.

Though these sizes are eye-popping and are a draw to some fishermen, most anglers that pursue catfish are after them because they are easily accessible, readily catchable and provide great table fare.

Catfish are found in most all bodies of water across the state. Channel cat populate almost all flowing streams, creeks, ditches and rivers across the state and most ponds and lakes have some as well. The Arkansas Game and Fish Commission has an extensive catfish production program, stocking over 150,000 fish per year that supplement the catfish populations in many public waterways.

In Northeast Arkansas the Black, St. Francis, Cache and Current rivers provide excellent catfishing. For those that would prefer a lake, waters like Frierson and Charles offer excellent opportunities to fill a stringer. Often overlooked, any of the ditches like Eight Mile, Locust, Mayo and many others that are unnamed can provide excellent fishing, especially in the spring months. A spring rain that raises the water levels and muddies up the water just a bit is a sign to wet a line and try for catfish.

Another great drawing card to the world of catfishing is the simplicity of the tackle. Fishing for eating size fish requires minimal tackle and they will usually fall for a variety of baits. A basic fishing pole rigged with a #4 baitholder hook and a weight that will hold the bait on the bottom is all that is needed. For bait it is hard to beat a worm, either wigglers purchased at the bait shop, or garden worms dug up in the yard. Commercially prepared stink baits are very attractive to a catfish as is liver, minnows, crawdads and a multitude of other stinky potions. Fishing with several types of baits is a good idea as they can be a little finicky early at times.

Due to the availability of the fish and the simplicity of tackle, catfish



are one of the best to pursue with kids. As stated earlier, the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission stocks thousands of catfish each year. Most of these fish go to derbies or ponds dedicated to providing opportunities for young anglers. For a list of derbies or Family and Community Fishing locations check out agfc.com.

A fish dinner is the primary most anglers pursue catfish. Catfish have probably adorned more Southern plates than any other fish. The flesh is firm, cooks with a variety of methods and has a great taste. To ensure the fish remains at a high quality after the catch, get the fish on ice and clean as soon as possible. A sharp knife and a pair of catfish skinners will make for quick work of cleaning the fish. One safety tip is to wear a pair of jersey gloves to protect hands from the sharp fins during the cleaning process. Catfish can be cleaned with an electric fillet knife, but their body shape is not as conducive to this technique as a crappie or bass so it takes a while to master the skill.

Once the fish are cleaned, a little salt and pepper, a roll in yellow cornmeal and about six to eight minutes in oil at 350 degrees gets them ready for the table. Add a few friends, a side of hushpuppies and it's a meal fit for a king.

I am ready to hit the water, cast a line and wait for that telltale dance of the rod tip as a frisky catfish grabs the bait. It's a great way to spend a day on the water with family and friends. I hope to see you out there!



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SUPPORT *Upcoming* COMMUNITY EVENTS

JONESBORO SPRING COMMUNITY FAIR



The Mayor's Youth Advancement Council of Jonesboro will host a Spring Community Fair on Saturday, April 8, at Northside Park, 503 North Bridge Street in Jonesboro from noon until 4 p.m.

This event will be free to the public. There will be vendors, artisans, arts and crafts, live music and performers, food trucks, giant inflatables, games and prizes, community resources, and fun for the entire family.

They will also host a "Leave what you can, take what you need" canned and boxed food and hygiene products table.

For more information, contact Shelly Anderson, MYAC Sponsor, at MYACjonesboro@gmail.com or 870-336-7250.



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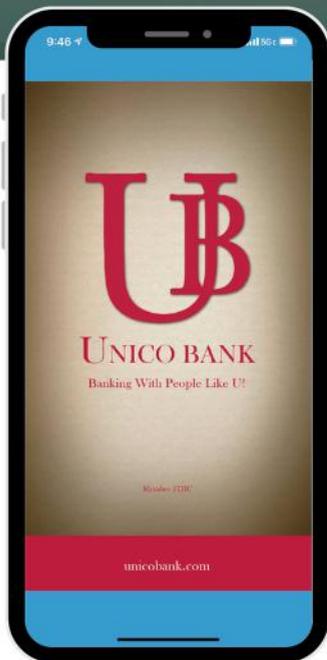
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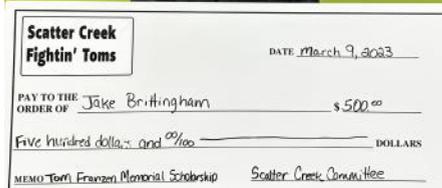
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Happenings

THE TOM FRANZEN MEMORIAL NWTf SCHOLARSHIP FROM THE SCATTER CREEK FIGHTIN' TOMS



The Paragould chapter of the National Wild Turkey Federation awarded Jake Brittingham the first Tom Franzen Memorial Scholarship at the annual Scatter Creek Fightin' Toms Banquet in March.

Tom Franzen was a longtime committee member who always championed youth involvement in the outdoors and supporting local youths' educational opportunities.

Tom's son, Kyle, donated a print by Zeddie Jones from his dad's collection to be auctioned and contributed to the scholarship fund. Tom and Zeddie were personal friends through their association with NWTf.

For more information on joining the local chapter of the National Wild Turkey Federation contact Kyle Franzen at 870.530.2320

GREENE COUNTY TECH HOSTED THE HARLEM WIZARDS



A fun event for all was staged by the Greene County Tech Odyssey of the Mind Teams to raise money for the Odyssey of the Mind teams that will travel to World Competition in May.

Everyone had a blast watching the Harlem Wizards take on the Eagle Dream Team made up of principals, coaches, teachers, superintendents, and even some community celebrities.

This was the third time the Wizards have been to GCT and thanks to the participants and attendees the money raised will go to help the GCT Odyssey of the Mind teams compete in the World Finals this year in Michigan.

CITY YOUTH MINISTRIES ANNUAL ART WITH A HEART GALA



Art with a Heart was a fundraiser for Jonesboro's City Youth Ministries.

Local patrons were invited to the Art Show to purchase works of art created by students and staff of City Youth Ministries.

The event was held at the Wildflower Event Center in March.

City Youth Ministries is a non-profit organization in Downtown Jonesboro dedicated to nurturing children spiritually and academically through after school programming.

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Community Calendar Highlights



Art & Stroll
Downtown Paragould

Join Main Street Paragould for the Annual Art & Stroll event. MSP is going back to the roots of this event and placing local artists in local stores to bring you a wonderful day to view and purchase Art while Strolling Downtown!

Our vendors will be inside Downtown businesses. Enjoy this evening with friends! Saturday, April 15, 3:00-8:00 p.m.



NEA 1K
Community Pavilion
Downtown Paragould

The NEA 1K is not your average road race. A short road race for any level runner - hobby jogger to serious competitors - and a block party for those who'd rather just hang out and drink beer.

Nine heats:

Family Fun, Open, Costume, Dog Run
High School Men, High School Women
Elite Men, Elite Women
and the first (that we know of) Beer K

Join us for a community event celebrating community on April 28th at the new community pavilion in Downtown Paragould.



6th Annual Oasis Arts & Eats Fest:
Downtown Jonesboro

Join us in Downtown Jonesboro for the largest and most established artist festival in Northeast Arkansas. Featuring visual artists and crafters, local food vendors, live music performances, and kid-friendly activities, Oasis Arts & Eats Fest is an event that the whole family can enjoy. The best part? Attending is completely free for everyone! Visit us on Facebook or our website for vendor information and updates: www.oasisfest.org/arts-eats-2023

April 22, 2023 10 a.m.-4 p.m.
Backup weather date April 23, 12-6 p.m.




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Next Month

Farm Fresh Homesteading



May brings exciting Spring gardening, Farmers Markets and a renewal of a wholesome value we look forward to sharing with you!

Jonesboro Premiere Awards



The Jonesboro list of winning Premiere businesses and services in NE Arkansas will publish in May! Don't miss the opportunity to have access to your annual referral source to experience Premiere LOCAL shopping.

REMINDER: Paragould Premiere Awards publish in the July edition!

Special Section



May will feature 30 local leaders under 40 with highlights of their contributions to making NEA a better place.

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