

NEA'S

PREMIERE

MAGAZINE

NOVEMBER 2025

VETERANS

SERVING VETERANS

KIDS PLAY
THANKS GIVING BACK
SPECIAL SECTION: 20 UNDER 25

A PUBLICATION OF MOR MEDIA, INCORPORATED

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ON THE COVER -

C.H. Overbay and Gil Fowler are passionate about making a difference in the lives of veterans in Northeast Arkansas and beyond. Both veterans themselves, they continue to serve in their retirement as advocates for their fellow veterans.

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Cover Photo by Karan Summitt



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From Us to You

Here we are, heading into the holiday season. Ready or not!

November brings thoughts of family, friends and food. With the season of Thanksgiving should also come thoughts of "Thanks" and "Giving." Those of us who have been given much should be thankful and give to others.

There are lots of ways to give. It certainly does not have to be money. You can volunteer your time at community events or non-profit organizations or mentor young people in your church or neighborhood. Most people I talk to about volunteering say they get more than they give every time they commit to helping.

If you have thought about an organization you think you are a good fit to help with, now is the time to make the call and ask how to get involved. You will be thankful you did.



Dina Mason

Dina Mason
General Manager & Publisher
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Because October is such an event-filled month, it makes our November magazine such a joy to put together. We have a wonderful time attending as many of the events as we can and sharing photos with our readers. Of course, we can't get to everything, but it is not hard to see by thumbing through this month's edition how many fabulous events were put on in Northeast Arkansas in the past month.

We also begin to look toward the holidays with Thanksgiving bringing us together with family and friends and December giving us another event-packed month with Christmas celebrations.

Amidst all of this flurry of activity, we also have the opportunity to recognize a very important group in our society — our veterans.

Many schools and organizations are planning events to honor local veterans, and I have had the pleasure of attending many of these programs. While the musical performances or speeches or skits are always moving, the thing that always brings a tear to my eye is when the veterans stand as each branch's official song is played in the Armed Forces Medley.



We were also proud to be able to shine a light on some outstanding veterans who continue to dedicate their time in retirement to helping other veterans. Read about C.H. Overbay and Gil Fowler in this month's Premiere. They are just another example of the people making the Good News Happen in Northeast Arkansas.

Gretchen Hunt

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Content Manager & Graphic Designer
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CORRECTION:

Drew Copeland was incorrectly identified as Drew Vance in the October edition of Premiere. Jonesboro Overhead Door employees and their family members, including Drew, continued their Halloween tradition this year with Drewster's Dragon and plan to add a Christmas display this year, as well.



DJA HOSTS ANNUAL EVENT

The Downtown Jonesboro Alliance hosted its annual Fall Fest on Saturday, October 11th, at Union Street Park in Downtown Jonesboro.

The event included vendors, live entertainment and activities for children. For information on other upcoming events, visit downtownjonesboro.com.



PHOTOS BY DINA MASON



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That Famous Chocolate Pie

BY KATIE COLLINS

We're just going to jump right into it. This is the pie from the movie *The Help*. While I did use the good vanilla, I did NOT add Minny's other special ingredient. If you know, you know. If you don't know, go ahead and watch the movie over the holiday weekend!

This recipe was so quick and easy to make, and it was quite

possibly the best chocolate pie I've ever had. If you're good at making your own pie crust, that would be great for this pie. If not, no worries, the packaged kind works just fine.

This pie disappears pretty quickly, so you might want to make more than one, especially if you're serving a houseful this season.



Chocolate Pie

Ingredients:

- 1 refrigerated or frozen pie crust
- 1 ½ cups granulated sugar
- 3 tablespoons unsweetened cocoa powder
- 4 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted
- 2 large eggs, beaten
- ¾ cup evaporated milk
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- Whipped cream for serving

Directions:

Preheat oven to 350. Place your pie crust in a 9-inch pie plate and crimp the edges. If using a frozen crust, place it in its baking pan on a sheet pan. Prick the crust all over with a fork. Bake for 15 minutes or until dry but not browned.

In a medium bowl, whisk the sugar, cocoa, butter, eggs, evaporated milk, vanilla and salt until smooth. Pour into pie shell and bake for 30-40 minutes, until the filling is set around the edges, but a bit jiggly in the center. Let cool completely, then cut and serve with whipped cream.

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Celebrating 100 years

COLLINS MARKS MILESTONE WITH MOVIE



In celebration of its 100th anniversary, the Historic Collins Theatre in Downtown Paragould hosted the launch of its new Collins Theatre Cinema on Saturday, October 18th.

As part of the celebration, admission for the evening was 25 cents, in recognition of 1925 pricing, though many made additional donations to support the local community theater.

The first movie shown, in what is expected to become a monthly feature, was *A River Within*, produced by Paragould Native Zac Heath and filmed in Greene County.

Other upcoming showings include the original *Miracle on 34th Street* in November and *Home Alone* in December.





Two Counties. One Purpose

LOCAL PHILANTHROPY AT WORK IN NEA

In Northeast Arkansas, generosity grows close to home. In both Greene and Craighead counties, you'll find local leaders, donors and passionate volunteers working side by side to make their communities stronger through Arkansas Community Foundation.

Each county has its own affiliate -- Arkansas Community Foundation of Greene County, led by Kerri Watson, and Craighead County Community Foundation, led by Melissa Ayers, -- and each has its own board of directors, funds and community priorities. Together, they represent the heart of place-based philanthropy: Neighbors helping neighbors through smart, data-informed and lasting charitable giving.

The Greene County affiliate was established in 1999 and today manages more than \$8.2 million in assets. Since its founding, it has distributed over \$7.3 million in grants to support local nonprofits, schools, and civic projects that strengthen the county's quality of life.

Known for its strong emphasis on education, Greene County awarded more than \$120,000 in scholarships to 87 graduating seniors in 2025. These were funded by 35 endowed scholarship funds established by families who believe education opens doors for all students.

But beyond scholarships, the affiliate manages a variety of funds. For example, the Greene County's Giving Tree Endowment, the M.F. Block Family Endowment, and the Evangeline and J.C. Cothren Endowment provide flexible resources that respond to evolving community needs.

Recent grants have advanced early literacy through the Greene County Library, supported senior safety programs at the Paragould Fire Department, and helped local nonprofits expand services to vulnerable residents.

"While we're proud of the impact of our scholarships," said Watson, "we do so much more than that. Our broader mission is to help families, individuals, and organizations use the power of endowment to create lasting change."

Just south of Greene County, Craighead County Community Foundation brings the same commitment to smart philanthropy, rooted in deep listening and responsive leadership.

Founded in 2001, the Craighead affiliate has grown to manage \$14.6 million in assets and has distributed more than \$4.2 million in grants and scholarships since its inception. Under Executive Director Melissa Ayers and a dedicated local board, the affiliate uses community data to identify needs, guide priorities, and ensure that grant dollars go where

Our donors trust us to match their passions with real needs, and that's what we do best.

— Kerri Watson



"Our mission is to help families, individuals, and organizations use the power of endowment to create lasting change."

**- Kerri Watson
Executive Director
Greene County**

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they can make the greatest impact. Recent years have centered on two focus areas identified through Aspire Arkansas data: early literacy and food security.

Between 2024 and 2025, the affiliate awarded grants to 19 different nonprofits in those areas, including Jonesboro and Riverside Public Schools, and Arkansas Imagination Library among dozens of others. Hunger-focused grants supported organizations such as Arkansas Hunters Feeding the Hungry, Provision 88 Food Ministry, and local hospital systems addressing nutrition and access to healthy food.

"Our grants committee has worked intentionally to meet nonprofits where they are," Ayers explained. "By focusing our funds where data shows the most need, we're helping organizations become stronger, more efficient and better equipped to serve."

A major turning point came through a transformational estate gift from the late Oscar Melton Jr., whose unrestricted endowment allowed the affiliate to nearly triple its annual grantmaking, from \$50,000 one year to \$150,000 the next. "That gift was a testament to trust," said Ayers. "Mr. Melton believed in our local board's ability to direct those dollars where they could do the most good, and his legacy continues to make a difference every day."

Craighead County Community Foundation is approaching its 25th anniversary in 2026 and the affiliate is preparing for one of the most ambitious milestones in its history through a year of transformational grantmaking. Thanks to the generosity of fundholders and the strength of its endowment base, the affiliate will launch a special round of large-scale grants designed to help

nonprofits elevate their operations, expand capacity, and serve more people than ever before.

"These won't be traditional grants," Ayers noted. "They'll be bigger, strategic investments meant to take organizations to the next level — to help them reach more people and deliver more impact."

Both Greene and Craighead County affiliates are powered by the same idea: Philanthropy should be local, accessible and enduring. Through Arkansas Community Foundation's statewide network, each affiliate offers professional guidance, back-office support, and data analysis that allow donors to give with confidence and clarity.

Philanthropy isn't just for the wealthy, it's for anyone who wants to make their community better.

— Melissa Ayers

An endowment at the Community Foundation becomes a permanent source of good. The earnings support community needs every year, forever. Whether a donor starts a scholarship, supports early literacy, or funds emergency response initiatives, each gift contributes to a cycle of lasting generosity.

As Ayers puts it, "Philanthropy isn't just for the wealthy, it's for anyone who wants to make their community better."

Watson agrees. "Our donors trust us to match their passions with real needs, and that's what we do best. We're not just giving away money, we're building a foundation for the future."

Greene and Craighead counties may operate independently, but together they embody the mission of Arkansas Community Foundation: To engage people, connect resources, and inspire smart giving that strengthens every corner of the state.

"We're helping organizations become stronger, more efficient and better equipped to serve!"

Join the effort!



- Melissa Ayers
Executive Director
Craighead County



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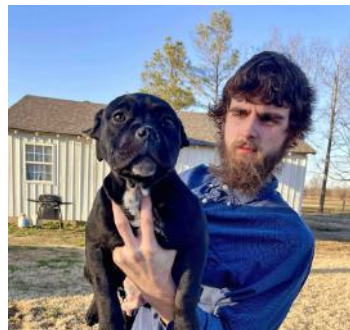
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PET *of the* MONTH

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BY JORDYN LOVETT

Here are Sosa and Polly! Sosa is an XL American Bully who is 11 months old and officially registered with the ABKC. Her favorite snacks are peanut butter filled bones and yummy beef. Sosa's silly habit is making air bubbles into her water bowl with her nose when she's done drinking. Polly is a 7-month-old mixed breed baby. She has an extra toe on each of her front feet, making her a polydactyl cat — hence the name, Polly! Her favorite snacks are tuna flavored liquid treat sticks, and her silly habit is using Sosa's head as an airplane runway strip to jump up onto things. Raised together, both of these girls are the sweetest and cuddliest of babies, who love playing with each other and their other kitty siblings.



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Get Rich

WITH RICHARD BRUMMETT



For a self-professed homebody, I certainly have found myself in the midst of some large groups lately. I've been to a couple of reunions, a fish fry, a funeral home visitation for a family member and even tacked on a couple of speaking engagements to boot.

At each juncture the conversation eventually turned to sports because most of my friends and acquaintances see me in that arena, either as a player, coach or writer. In fact, back in my newspaper days when some of the women in the office would seem stunned by my lack of knowledge in husband-wife, daddy-daughter or guy-gal relationships, I would respond by saying, "Basically, I'm a ballplayer."

I even considered having that on my headstone at one time: Here Lies Richard, Basically A Ballplayer.

That's why so many of the stories friends and I share center around some athletic event. My dad was also a ballplayer and entertained so many people for so long with his tales, adding humor at just the right spots to keep the audience engaged.

I remember, not so fondly, when he and I once went to town for our Saturday haircuts at Neal Jordan's barber shop. Our routine also included visiting the hardware store, the shoe shop and the coffee shop, stopping intermittently to talk with folks he knew as we worked our way up and down the sidewalks.

One day we came upon a guy I had never seen, and it was obvious he and Dad went way back. They shared some quick family updates and a tale or two before this man – aware of Dad's athletic background – said, "Well, Scottie, is your boy a ballplayer too?"

Without hesitation, Dad said, "Gosh, yes. He was the leading scorer for his team in the first basketball game he ever played."

The guy seemed impressed while I became very interested in just where Dad was taking this story. When I was in the fifth grade and played Little League basketball on Saturday mornings, I was on the worst team in the league. I don't say that carelessly; the facts back me up.

While my schoolmates and pals like Gary Biggs and Bruce Dickey and Mickey Higgins were on teams that included good sixth-graders – Eugene Maxwell, Chris Paul, Bobby Harris for example – our team had exactly no sixth-graders who would ever play a minute of high school varsity basketball. We entered the last game of the season as the only team in the league without a victory at 0-9, but God smiled on us that day and let us win one.

So Dad, in order to back up his statement about how good I was, opened his billfold and pulled out a newspaper clipping that

recapped the action from the morning I took the court for the first time. The item wrapped up the opening game of the day, then said of the second game, "City Light & Water defeated the Rotary Club 19-1." It listed all the scorers for the winners and then ended with, "For Rotary, Richard Brummett made a free throw."

By the time the fellow read that far, he knew he'd been had. He looked up, not certain what to say, and then he and Dad both broke out in loud and hearty laughter. I failed to see the humor; the whole thing was true, even Dad's statement about my being the leading scorer, but it was an unfortunate truth in my mind. I was mad at Dad for about two weeks after that, but he encouraged me to try and find the humor in almost any situation, even when my team kept getting pounded in the old Paragould Junior High gym.

I knew he was right – that we should learn to laugh off momentary setbacks – but I looked at any game I was playing, in any sport, as a life or death situation. Losing, to me, was the absolute worst thing that could happen to a guy anywhere on the planet. A tie was slightly better, but not much.

When I was in my first season of Little League baseball for the Earl Kirk team, we were locked up in a back-and-forth contest with Wonder State. Our good family friend, Raymond Meadows, was serving as the home plate umpire that night and when the game went into extra innings, he huddled up with the head coach of each team and then the three of them walked hand-in-hand from the plate to the pitcher's mound and declared the game a tie.

What the heck? What if some big league scouts were there to watch me? I knew if we could stay tied long enough for me to come to the plate I was going to drive in the winning run and be the hero for a day, and get my name in the newspaper. But that didn't matter ... I knew my moment was coming and these dumb old grownups had to go and ruin everything and make us go home tied. I was mad at Raymond for about two weeks after that, but forgave him when he stopped by the house and took me for a ride on his motor scooter.

The stories are much funnier today than they were for a 9-year-old kid who wanted to win all the time, but maybe learning to laugh in the face of misfortune is a sort of victory in itself. I know I've had plenty of practice.

Richard Brummett is a journalist with more than 50 years of newspaper and magazine experience. He enjoys writing to help people bring their stories to life, and hopes through his monthly Get Rich column to help put a smile on readers' faces.

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Susan Shaw

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A Day In The Life

BY KATIE ROE

A DRIVE-IN MOVIE



Going to a drive-in movie is something that has been on my bucket list since I can remember. If you were to ask me why ... well, I wouldn't have a great answer other than it's something from the past and so unique, but I was excited to check it off the list with a trip to Stone Drive-In at Mountain View.

Now, I do suggest not booking it after work on a Friday night when the first showing starts at 7. Leaving Paragould it takes about 2 hours and 15 minutes ... it probably could have been a shorter drive but when you add a racecar driver husband plus a wife with a sensitivity to car sickness, the outcome isn't quite as romantic as the night started out.

We arrived, alive, late (if you know me this is a given) and somehow no signs of car sickness. My husband, being the planner he is, already had our tickets on his phone! Oh, and might I add, for a Twister/Twisters double feature; yup, that's right, two movies back to back and another two-ish hour drive home ... which was done by me but that's not important!

We were met by an empty ticket booth when we first arrived because if you remember we were late. While we were asking each other, "What do we do?" "Should we wait?" "Do you think someone will see us?" a guy comes running through the parked vehicles to meet us. While he got us checked in he asked if this is our first time, to which I was beyond excited to answer, "YES!!" He laughed and said, "OK, well you are going to want to tune in to 90.3 to hear the movie inside your car."

We got parked and I was beyond excited at this point, and Daniel, the hubby, said, "You wanna sit on the hood?" I'm not even sure words came out, just a squeak or maybe a squawk and I threw the door open, grabbed the blankets and pillows, and climbed my happy butt up on that hood.



We watched the first Twister ... the OG and then we hit up the concession stand for popcorn, obviously, along with a cheeseburger for me, a chili cheese dog for Daniel, a Klondike bar for me, and a soda to share. The popcorn was most definitely like movie theatre popcorn because it was drenched in butter. We may have been



super hungry but the food, which was just regular concession food, was delicious to us ... our 6-year-old would say 5 stars.



We tried stretching out on the ground for the second movie because in your 30s your bones don't quite agree with lounging on the hood of your car. Definitely bring chairs or a thick blanket next time because we got stuck by cockleburs! Minus Daniel's old man bones hurting, this was a perfect night. The weather was great! No mosquitoes, cool enough for a sweatshirt and/or blanket and no wind.

Our view was great and we were able to hear everything just fine sitting outside of the vehicle. We will definitely be going back, but I would suggest to plan on staying the night unless you don't mind the drive ... oh, and shoot for a Saturday unless you're off on Fridays or could leave quite a bit earlier. 10 out of 10 for the experience, at least on my part (lol). 10 out of 10 on the eats. 10 out of 10 on great memories made.



I am Katie Roe, a media consultant at MOR Media and bonus mom to 3 rambunctious boys... Knox, Keller, and Kruz (the tiny tornado). I married their dad, Daniel Roe, in downtown Paragould in the fall of 2024. Daniel and I are constantly trying to find new adventures. Whether we are tackling a football game, slinging dirt out at the races, or cruising on Lake Norfolk we are making memories for a lifetime.

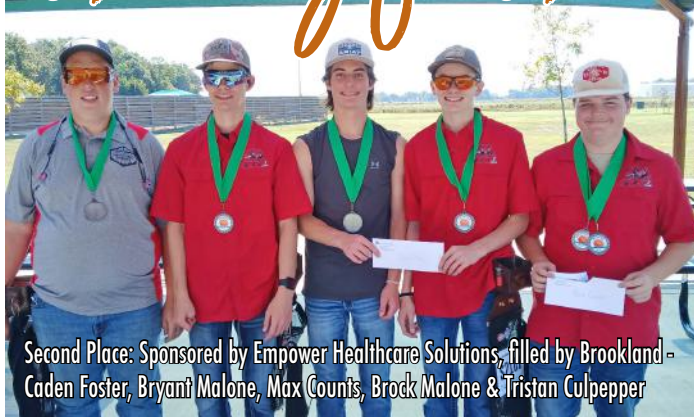


First Place in the Aiming For Arisa Trap Shoot: Sponsored and filled by Signature Bank - Garrett Hensley, Issac Hensley, Rhet Baxley, Dalton Price & Clay Smith (photos not identified in order)

Aiming for Arisa



Best Individual Score: Max Counts



Second Place: Sponsored by Empower Healthcare Solutions, filled by Brookland - Caden Foster, Bryant Malone, Max Counts, Brock Malone & Tristan Culpepper



PHOTOS BY KATIE ROE

Third Place: Sponsored by Signature Bank, filled by Jonesboro Trap Team Blue - Kylie Garrison, Ryan Pitts, Parker Bray, Dutch Cox & Foxx Thompson

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Diamond of the Season

A SYMPHONY AFFAIR

It was an enchanted evening as attendees gathered for music, elegance and fine dining when the Delta Symphony Orchestra hosted its annual gala on Saturday, September 27th, at The Station in Downtown Paragould.

The event was held in preparation for the

symphony's upcoming 2024-25 season, which includes Enchanted by the Sounds of Christmas, Rising Stars Showcase and America 250: A Musical Journey. The DSO is also joining with The Link Theatre for a special production of The Secret Garden. For more information, visit deltasymphonyorchestra.org.



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Two different paths

A Shared Passion for Helping Veterans

BY KARAN SUMMITT

Their paths to military service come from different places, but these paths have done more than cross; for Gil Fowler and C.H. Overbay, they merged into a shared passion for helping veterans.

Gil was born into a family where enlistment in the military was as natural as farm boys growing up to be farmers. His dad and uncles served in WW2, his father continuing to remain active in the reserves after the war was over. Gil remembers “we were patriotic as a family and wanted to serve our country.”

After graduating from high school, he joined the ROTC program at Arkansas State University and was commissioned into a field artillery unit, remaining active in Mississippi and Illinois as he pursued his undergraduate, graduate and doctoral degrees. He eventually came back to ASU, working 43 years as a journalism instructor and Director of Graduate Studies. During much of this time Fowler continued in the Army Reserve, retiring with 28 years of service that culminated in advancement to lieutenant colonel.

Upon retirement, Gil began to work with the Employee Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR) organization, a program that recognizes and supports employers in the area with soldier-friendly policies that enhance the service member’s ability to maintain civilian employment and remain active in the reserves. Gil is also involved in the Military Officer’s Association of America (MOAA). The organization is open to all branches of the military and is composed of servicemen who have retired with an officer’s ranking. MOAA provides common times for the officers to come together, share experiences and receive updates on matters of interest to veterans.

C.H. can trace his family military service to the Revolutionary War. His dad served in the U.S. Army Air Defense during the Korean War, then returned home and pursued a law degree. In 1975, the last year of the Vietnam War draft, C.H. drew 87 as his draft number. Unwilling to take chances, he decided to be proactive and join the Arkansas



Army National Guard, serving as he finished his college studies and eventually receiving a commission as second lieutenant.

After college graduation and a ten-year span working in agriculture, March 1986 brought the opportunity for Overbay to return to full-time active duty. During the following 14 years of enlistment in the Arkansas Active Guard / Reserve, C.H. served in a variety of roles that included induction officer, recruiting and retention manager, deputy director of personnel, state quality control and post engineer. He retired from full-time military service in March 2000.

Retirement is a relative term for Overbay. From 2000-2019 he accepted positions with the Marked Tree School District, followed by Trumann High School as Senior Army Instructor. In 2019 he was appointed Craighead County Director of Veterans Services and held that position until 2021. His current position as Craighead County Commander of the American Legion and State Vice President of the Military Officers Association includes an appointment to the National Legislative Council for the American Legion. Overbay represents the 1st Congressional District in Arkansas and meets with his assigned Congressional contact, currently Representative Rick Crawford, on a quarterly basis to talk about veteran needs and pro-active legislation.

When Gil and C.H. retired from active military service, they started



working together in several military and civic organizations. Over the last five years they and their wives have become close friends, the spouses joining them to work tirelessly on behalf of military veterans and their families. The two men concentrate their efforts with non-profit organizations.

Currently there are 58,000 veterans in the 1st Congressional District and 209,000 veterans in Arkansas. The needs of veterans and their families are varied, but timely, effective healthcare that includes both physical and mental treatment is a top priority. For instance, over 22 United States veterans commit suicide each day. Laws have been passed at the national level to help these veterans, but developing processes at the local level for getting interventions and effective care to the veterans is an ongoing challenge.

Ideally, addressing these needs requires the different veteran benefit organizations to work closely together. At the current time in Arkansas there is not a "central clearinghouse" where veterans can go for information on their particular need and then be directed to the organization best suited to meet that need.

Continued ➡

REMEMBERING RICH: RICHARD CARVELL

Northeast Arkansas lost one of its most passionate and caring veteran citizens when Richard Carvell died peacefully in his home on September 8, 2025. A graduate of Brinkley High School in 1962 and Arkansas State University 1966, Richard temporarily suspended his education to serve as an Air Force Captain in Vietnam before returning to earn a master's degree in 1971. Career plans brought Richard back to a 37-year tenure at ASU as professor of radio-television studies, station manager for KASU and Department Chair of Radio-TV in the College of Communications.



During that time Richard also served on a variety of community organizations. These included the Jonesboro Community Thanksgiving Meal, annual Veterans Day Parade, American Legion Boys State Commission, Nettleton District School Board, United Cerebral Palsy Telethon and the Disabled American Veterans. Carvell's heart for volunteerism was wide and far-reaching.

For over ten years Carvell joined his wife, Sue, in featuring pets from the Northeast Arkansas Humane Society on KAIT8's Midday show. Diana Davis, host of the Midday show, remembered that during every visit, which always fell on a Friday, Richard would remind listeners to wear red clothing. The color red was short for "Remember Everyone Deployed."

Carvell earned a Bronze star for his Vietnam service and in 2011 was inducted into the Arkansas Military Veterans Hall of Fame. His impact on students, veterans and the needs of the surrounding community leave a legacy that will be long remembered. Anyone wishing to honor Carvell's memory may send donations to the Carvell Family Scholarship Fund at Arkansas State University.



November 2025 Premiere | 19



Fowler and Overbay are strong proponents of a plan for these individual organizations to form a coalition. In Fowler's words, "We need to work together to develop a more cohesive plan for making sure veterans get the benefits they deserve. It's not important who gets the credit. What is important is caring for these veterans who have served our country." Progress has been slow, but both men are encouraged by Governor Sarah Huckabee-Sanders' move to add a staff appointee who will represent the interests of Arkansas veterans.

Both men are enthusiastic about Our Community Salutes (OCS), a national organization with a presence in Arkansas. OCS recognizes all high school seniors who make a commitment to any branch of military service immediately upon graduation. Each spring at a special gathering hosted by community sponsors, the graduates receive a commemorative coin and a copy of the constitution. The gathering is open to family members who witness the recruit repeat their oath of enlistment. Among all states, Arkansas is near the top in participation with the OCS initiative.

After only a few minutes of listening to Gil and C.H., their passion for helping veterans speaks for itself. The men have long resumes that include a broad variety of commitments to national and local veteran organizations, each one willing to serve in leadership roles. I asked them to tell me what drives this passion to help veterans.

Gil responded with the words, "All these veterans and their families have given so much on our behalf — and many of them were harmed in the giving. They deserve the right to receive assistance and all the benefits available for their service."

C.H. added, "They stepped up and signed a blank check to give whatever was asked -- even their own lives -- so we could enjoy the freedoms we take for granted every day."

Despite their official military retirement, Fowler and Overbay have unofficially continued their careers by serving the veterans of Northeast Arkansas. The work can be difficult and frustrating at times as they try to navigate through the resources veterans need for their particular circumstances, but their own military experiences have trained them in tackling challenging situations.

It is clear that veterans in Northeast Arkansas have two strong advocates in their corner: Gil Fowler and C.H. Overbay are passionate about making a difference for veterans.

RESOURCES:

American Legion Pickett Post 21
623 West Parker Road
Jonesboro, AR
870-336-0567

Arkansas Department of Veteran Affairs
501 Woodlane Street, Suite 401N
Little Rock, AR 72201
501-683-2382
adva.public@arkansas.gov

Beck Center for Veterans Arkansas State University
1921 Aggie Road, Room 111
870-972-2624

Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve
Dr. Gil Fowler, Area Chair
870-351-7811

Military Officers Association of America
Northeast Arkansas Chapter
PO Box 718 Jonesboro, AR, 72403
870-318-7298

Our Community Salutes, Northeast AR Chapter
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703-727-4966

We Are the 22, Veteran Suicide Crisis Hotline
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Maddie
STYLIST

Maddie is a devoted wife, proud mother, and dog mom to three. She is the owner of Images By Maddie, LLC, a professional photography business, and is also a licensed aesthetician. Maddie is excited to join the talented team at Rouge and looks forward to contributing her skills and creativity to this new chapter.

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Survivors led the way with their Survivor Walk, followed by the Pink Warrior Run/Walk on Saturday, October 10th, at St. Bernards Health and Wellness.

The annual event, which also included a spirit competition for teams, a survivors' tent with gifts for survivors and more, raises both awareness and financial support for breast health services across Northeast Arkansas.



PHOTOS BY GRETCHEN HUNT



For MOR(e) photos from this event, check the Premiere Magazine Facebook page!



Advice From PREMIERE Experts

How effective is ketamine in treating depression?

According to a growing body of research, ketamine can be effective for 60-80% of individuals who have not had success with traditional antidepressants. It has also been shown to be a remarkably fast-acting antidepressant with some people experiencing relief within an hour of treatment and effects lasting up to 12 days. After the induction phase of six treatments, effects may last several weeks to several months.

One reason ketamine is thought to be so effective is that it works on a totally different system in the brain, which involves the neurotransmitter, glutamate. Traditional



Carrie Tate

antidepressants target serotonin and norepinephrine.

Just like traditional treatments, ketamine is not a cure and it works best with a comprehensive treatment plan that includes psychotherapy, such as cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT).

What's the best way to organize my small business finances?

Great question — and one we hear all the time. The truth is, staying on top of your income and expenses doesn't have to be overwhelming. The most efficient way to keep things organized is to start with solid accounting software like QuickBooks, Xero, or Wave. These tools automate a lot of the heavy lifting, from tracking transactions to generating reports.

One of the smartest moves you can make is to separate your business and personal finances — open a dedicated business bank account and credit card to keep things clean. From there, categorize your expenses consistently (think: office supplies, travel, advertising), reconcile your accounts monthly, and set up a simple budget to guide your spending.



*Chastity Mott
& Anita Soltero*

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Do you recommend all-inclusive resorts?

Absolutely — I love them for everything they have to offer. There's truly something for everyone! If you're on the fence about whether an all-inclusive is right for you, here are a few questions I always ask my clients:

Do you love having everything taken care of — meals, drinks, activities and entertainment all rolled into one price?

Do you want to just show up, drop your bags, and start relaxing — no stress?

Do you crave variety — poolside lounging, water sports, spa days, and evening shows all in one place? Do you travel as a couple, family, or group and want options that fit everyone's vibe?



Stephanie Hancock

Do you like knowing the full cost up front (no surprise bills at checkout)?

If you answered "yes" to most of these... an all-inclusive resort might be your perfect match! And the best part — there's an all-inclusive for every budget. From affordable fun to ultra-luxury escapes.

What is referred pain and can chiropractic treatment help?

Referred pain is pain which is perceived by the brain as coming from a site other than its true origin. Everyone has probably experienced this phenomenon at one time or another. One of the simplest examples comes from dentistry, where the pain from one tooth is thought to be coming from a tooth in another part of the mouth.

Referred pain is a fairly common disorder with regard to spinal nerve compression. It has been found, for instance, that a ruptured vertebral disc could produce a pain simulating angina. Spinal curvature resulting in nerve interference has been known to produce appendicitis, gastritis, ulcer, spastic constipation, colitis,



Dr. John Bibb

gallbladder disease, etc.

In cases where these conditions are NOT present, but only seem to be because of referred pain, spinal manipulation may be able to bring relief by eliminating spinal nerve compression.



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Have a Question? Email Us Today at Graphics@mormediainc.com

Should I wait for the interest rate to go down before I buy?

There are 2 camps on this question.

One camp believes that interest rates will fall soon and that is when you should buy. The idea of lower rates is appealing but it could take a long time for them to go down. I believe that the days of 3% are in the past. I also believe that when interest rates are that low the competition increases, bidding wars begin, and prices go up.

The second camp believes that buying now is the best option. There is less



Sandra Helley

competition, and you are more likely to get the house you want. Also, during the time that the other camp is waiting it out - you are building equity. The house will increase in value and you can always refinance when rates do go down.

How does eating sugary sweets affect people with Type 1 and Type 2 diabetes differently?

This is an important question, especially as we approach the holiday season.

For people with Type 1 diabetes, sugary sweets can cause blood sugar spikes that need to be managed with insulin injections due to little to no insulin production.

Those with Type 2 diabetes may still produce insulin, allowing their body to manage spikes more readily with the help of diet, exercise, or medication.

In both cases, moderation and pairing sweets with protein or fiber can help minimize



Kelly Stipe
Diabetes Educator

blood sugar fluctuations.

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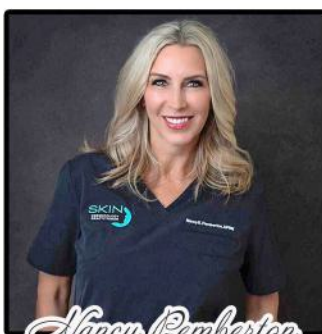
Is winter a good time for a skin check-up?

There is no reason to put off a skin check-up, and November is a great time to give thanks for great skin, while also being proactive about taking care of yourself.

Your skin is your body's largest organ and first line of defense. As we enter the colder, drier months, it's the perfect time to give your skin the attention and care it deserves.

This is also a great time for a full-body screening, as skin is often at its palest in the winter, making new or changing spots easier to spot.

The American Academy of Dermatology designates each November as National Healthy



Nancy Pemberton
APRN, DCNP

Skin Month as a time to pay attention to your skin, learn about skin care, and adopt habits that can lead to a lifetime of healthier skin.

This National Healthy Skin Month, visit our practice for a personalized skin check and regimen to keep your skin healthy and glowing.

Does my small business need to set an annual marketing budget?

YES! Planning a budget and promotions will make your marketing more effective no matter how small your business or budget is.

Look at your business in quarters and have a promotional plan with a projected sales goal and budget at least 10% of gross sales as an advertising budget.

Even if your business is seasonal, you should do small promotions in the quarter that is not seasonal to keep your brand top of mind. Your seasonal



Dina Alason

promotion and budget will be larger as the projected sales are higher, but consistent brand awareness is important.

For help with a plan and budgeting, give MOR MEDIA a call 870.335.5298 or email dina@mormediainc.com



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Health Matters

BY KARAN SUMMITT

IMPACT OF GRATITUDE

Being Thankful can Truly Make a Difference



Each year we close the calendar in November and December with an emphasis on gratitude and giving to others. The Latin word *gratia* encompasses the idea of being grateful and acknowledging the goodness in our lives by sharing with others. It is an emphasis that can propel us into the upcoming year with renewed strength and

hope, especially if our circumstances are not as pleasant as we would want them to be.

According to research, gratitude is strongly and consistently associated with greater happiness. It helps people feel more positive emotions, relish good experiences, improve their health, deal with adversity and build

strong relationships.

Two psychologists, Dr. Robert A. Emmons of the University of California and Dr. Michael E. McCullough of the University of Miami, have looked at the impact of gratitude. In one study, they asked the participants to write a few sentences each week, focusing on particular topics.

One group wrote about things they were grateful for that had occurred during the week. A second group wrote about daily irritations or things that had displeased them. The third wrote about events that had affected them with no emphasis on being positive or negative. After 10 weeks, those who wrote about gratitude were more optimistic and felt better about their lives. Surprisingly, they also exercised more and had fewer visits to physicians than those who focused on sources of aggravation.

Another leading researcher in this field, Dr. Martin E. P. Seligman, a psychologist at the University of Pennsylvania, tested the impact of different interventions on 411 people. When the week's assignment was to write and personally deliver a letter of gratitude to someone who had never been properly thanked for his or her kindness, participants immediately exhibited a huge increase in happiness scores. This impact was greater than that from any other assignment.

Other studies have looked at how gratitude can improve relationships. A study of couples found that individuals who took time to express gratitude for their partner not only felt more positive toward the other person but also felt more comfortable expressing concerns about their relationship.

Why does gratitude have such a powerful impact on our health? With gratitude we appreciate what we have instead of always reaching for something new in hopes it will make us happier. We focus on what is abundant instead of what we lack. With gratitude, half empty cups fill to overflowing.

GRATITUDE CHALLENGE

#1 Send a card to someone	#2 Do a random act of kindness	#3 Thank your mom/woman in your life	#4 Say what you are grateful for about yourself	#5 Bake a treat and give some to others	#6 Try a gratitude meditation	#7 Write about a meal you're grateful for
#8 Write what you're grateful for money can't buy	#9 List 5 things using your 5 senses	#10 Write a review for a company you love	#11 Send a thank you to a person who inspired	#12 Write something you are looking forward to	#13 Share about a gift you received	#14 Thank your dad/man in your life
#15 Write a memory you cherish	#16 Share a goal you achieved	#17 Go one day without complaining	#18 Do something that loves on your body	#19 Find a photo you're grateful for	#20 Tell 3 amazing things that happened	#21 Donate items you don't need
#22 Cook a meal for someone	#23 Thank the author of a book	#24 Stop and savor one meal	#25 Spend time with loved ones	#26 Write about what made you smile	#27 Take a photo of what you're grateful for	#28 Write about your strengths
#29 Call/text someone to appreciate	#30 Start a gratitude journal					

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**"The more you practice
the art of thankfulness,
the more you have to
be thankful for."**

Norman Vincent Peale

Though it may seem awkward at first, the habit of cultivating gratitude grows stronger with practice. When we acknowledge the goodness in our lives and recognize that the source of much of that goodness lies outside ourselves, we connect to something larger.

Here are a few suggestions for unleashing the power of gratitude:

- Write a thank-you note. Send at least one appreciation letter each month. Reconnect with someone from the past who has blessed your life.
- Keep a gratitude journal. Make it a habit to write down a few small gifts you receive each day.

Gratitude noun

grat-i-tude 'gra-tə- tūd -tyüd

the state of being grateful : thankfulness
readiness to return appreciation and kindness

- Count your blessings. On a regular basis, take time to enumerate your blessings. How high can you count? What new blessing can you add?

• Pray. Use prayer to cultivate gratitude, acknowledging the source of blessings.

• Meditate. Enjoy the present moment without judgment. Focus on the simple things you are grateful for such as the warmth of the sun, a pleasant sound, time with loved ones, etc.

My favorite gratitude quote, penned by Melodie Beattie, says it best: "Gratitude unlocks the fullness of life. It turns what we have into enough and more. It turns denial into acceptance, chaos to order, confusion to clarity. It can turn a meal into a feast, a house into a home, a stranger into a friend. Gratitude makes sense of our past, brings peace for today and creates a vision for tomorrow."

Blessings for a grateful and joyful holiday season.

Karan Summitt is a retired health educator with 25 years experience 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.

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VICKI WHITE

Living Well

BY GRETCHEN HUNT

When Vicki White decided to start a private practice with her daughter, there is no way she could have known how the business would grow and evolve over the years. But, that is the life of an entrepreneur, one of ingenuity and flexibility, characteristics Vicki has in spades.

Originally from Southeast Missouri, Vicki, as well as her daughter, Lauren Hannah, are both licensed social workers. Vicki spent many years working in what could be referred to as the trenches.

"I worked in a shelter for battered women in the Boston area," she said. "I also worked for a program for people that had experienced a significant mental health break so they could not continue in the career that they were in. So, we would do rehab for them vocationally to help them find something they could do that might not be as stressful. My other job there was working with pregnant teens and young mothers."

When she moved back to this area to complete her masters, she went right back to work in community mental health, this time for what was then Mid-South Health Systems.

"I did school-based therapy at Gosnell School and eventually became clinic coordinator at Blytheville," she said. "I did that for several years. That's what I was doing at the time when we decided to open this private practice."

She said she had always wanted to open a private practice, and after serving as clinic coordinator and working on the crisis team, she had reached a point in her career where she was ready to make a change.



"I love community mental health," Vicki said. "It is just a lot of work. You see a lot and you hear a lot. I wouldn't take anything for doing that, but I was ready to move forward into something else."

Her daughter was also at a place in her life that she was looking for a change, so in 2018, they opened Foundation, a Wellness Practice, at 533 W. Washington in Jonesboro.

"My husband and I bought this building and because he is a contractor, he was able to do all the work that we needed to do," Vicki said of the first of two historic homes they now own as part of their business.

"We didn't know what was going to happen, but it soared really fast," she said of the practice. "It's just a season of time where people are focusing more on mental health and people have insurance and so they were coming in and we're very thankful."

She said the staff of therapists has changed some through the years, and a couple of years ago her daughter and her husband, who is also



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a therapist, decided to branch out and open their own practice.

With her therapy practice well established, Vicki found herself looking at what she could add to diversify her business and offer more wellness benefits to the community. That led to the purchase of the house across the street approximately three and a half years ago, and the development of Sana Vita Wellness Spa.

"That was a big project," she said. "During the pandemic we were looking at what could we do that would offer some more wellness opportunities for people. We looked at some other buildings and then that one came on the market and before we were able to approach them it said pending and the next thing we knew the pending was gone and we approached the owner and were able to purchase it. We were really thankful because with the two buildings right across the street from each other; it was just perfect."

Once again her husband, along with her son, was able to do most of the work, but it took around a year to get everything ready. Sana Vita, which means live healthy, opened its doors two years ago in August, but the going has been a little slower for the new addition.

"It's new and people are like, 'What do you have – it's what?'" Vicki said. "So we've had to shift. But now it's going well. The memberships have really taken off. People can kind of connect that to like a gym membership."

Vicki explained that the wellness spa, which features things like a red light therapy bed, a cryotherapy chamber, an infra-red light sauna and an oxygen bar, can now be accessed by purchasing a monthly membership.

"We tried lots of different things with pricing," she said, noting they are currently offering monthly memberships for \$59 a month. "We know what it's worth and we could keep those prices up there, but you're not really offering it to the whole community that way, because there's only going to be a select amount of people that have that amount of money."

They had packages and individual pricing when they first opened, but she said they couldn't sustain that or they would only have a limited number of people as customers. She said that's another reason why they have shifted to offering memberships to keep the cost affordable.

"This way we have people in just about any socio-economic level that can do that in their budget," she said. "And me being a social worker, I really want that. What you get for that is just remarkable. I'm proud that we're able to do that – to offer it to pretty much anyone."

Continued ➡

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As Vicki stood in the wellness spa, she discussed how the two facets of her business intertwine. "Everything we picked over here — we picked it because it's good for your mental health," she said.

The spa is designed for the general public, but Vicki said she does have patients who see the benefits of the treatments available at the wellness spa.

"It's a nice companion, and I love that we can offer that for people," she said. "We don't push it, because that's not our job. When people come here for therapy, they're here for therapy, but it's available if people want it."

She sees 25 to 30 people a week as a therapist. And while currently she does not have the ability to prescribe any of the treatments in the wellness spa to be covered by insurance, she said she is doing research to see if that is a possibility.

"I know people that have done that for massages and have gotten massages covered," she said. She said there are definitely treatments at Sana Vita that could be beneficial for those with PTSD or extreme anxiety.

"There's a lot of research that for depression that red light bed is good," she added. "When you're laying in the red light bed it just feels like you're laying on the beach. It just feels so good. It helps with their pain, but really mentally you just feel really good."

Vicki said she is constantly doing research to figure out what's out there in the wellness industry that people are interested in and that could benefit them.

"We are always open to other ideas" she said. "Ways that we can use the building for other wellness opportunities. Flexibility is important. You've got to be willing to kind of think outside of the box."

In addition to the services provided by Sana Vita, the historic home affords space that allows them to rent out extra rooms to individuals who provide a variety of services from massage therapy, to permanent makeup, to aesthetics to a hair salon. While their services are not included in the membership, Vicki said it works well for all involved to be able to promote themselves and each other by sharing one roof.

"We have a very nice team," she said. "Everyone gets along and that's very important."

She said the biggest challenge to being an entrepreneur is the financial component. "You know when you start a business that you're not going to make money right away. You just want to work toward getting there and you need to move in the right direction and getting all your overhead covered and then that will come."

That means always looking for new ideas, including private spa parties they hold at the wellness spa and soon-to-be-added murder mystery events.

"I have some friends that I'm working with and they are creating a selection of murder mysteries," Vicki said. "They'll be running it, but they'll be using the building. That's going to be fun. I think adults are always looking for things because they don't have a lot of options around here, so that will just be another option — something that people can do — have a murder mystery party."

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She said while operating a business, let alone two, can be challenging, it is also fun.

"My gears are always running," she said. "What can we do this month ... What are we doing next month? You know it's always trying to shift to different things and what can make it better and more opportunities to get people in the door to see what we have."



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Greene County Community Fund

YOUR ONE-STOP DONATION SPOT

There are so many deserving agencies in Greene County — it can be hard to choose where your donation should go. That's where the Greene County Community Fund comes in.

"When you give to the Greene County Community Fund, your gift makes an impact on many organizations, not just one," Candice Keatts, GCCF executive director, said. "Every dollar donated goes right back into Greene County, supporting programs that strengthen, heal and inspire our community."

In addition to awarding funds to partner agencies, the Community Fund also has a scholarship program for Greene County's local graduating high schoolers.

One-time donations are of course welcome, but consistent giving is the lifeblood for the organization, according to Candice.

"Small donations, given consistently, add up to something powerful," she said. "That's why we're encouraging everyone to consider setting up a recurring donation directly from your paycheck. It's easy. It's automatic. And it makes giving nearly effortless. The beauty of recurring donations is that they allow the Greene County Community Fund to plan ahead, fund programs more effectively, and respond when our neighbors are most in need. You're not just donating, you're becoming a reliable partner in building a stronger and

more caring Greene County."

Candice said the first step is to talk to your HR manager about setting up pre-taxed, recurring donations from your paycheck, noting that even \$1 a pay period adds up.

Another way to support The Greene County Community Fund is by participating in fundraisers, such as the Greene County Junior Business Fair on November 8th from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. at 4410 Fairview Road in Paragould.

"This is an opportunity for our Greene County junior entrepreneurs ages 5-18 to show off their businesses and make money," Candice said. "This pop-up shop is one you won't want to miss, so come ready to shop!"

Individuals can follow the Greene County Community Fund on Facebook to keep up with news, events and support opportunities.

Candice stresses that even a small impact to your wallet can make a big impact on Greene County if enough people participate.

"I encourage everyone to join the 'Just One for Greene' challenge," Candice said. "What can \$1 do? More than you think. Join your neighbors and give 'Just One for Greene.' Together, our \$1 donations add up to real change. You can donate through our website, www.gccfund.org under the donation tab or by scanning the QR code."

AGENCY SPOTLIGHT:

The Greene County Mental Health and Substance Abuse Coalition is one of the many wonderful agencies supported by the Greene County Community Fund. They are a non-profit, community led group of volunteers seeking to make community-level change regarding health and substance abuse in Greene County.

The Coalition serves Greene County as a whole, with a focus on working with youth and families — specifically those at high risk of mental health crisis or substance abuse issues. They are focused on strengthening the lives of individuals and families through a collaborative effort of education, leadership and linking services to those in crisis, through both prevention and also addressing the individual where they are.

"Through The Greene County Community Fund, The Coalition has been able to secure a brick-and-mortar location to aid in planning and development," GCCF Executive Director Candice Keatts said. "We also help provide funding for Red Ribbon Week materials, educational materials, gas card vouchers and many other program necessities. This is something that would not have been possible without the help of our amazing supporters."



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THE ADVENTURES OF

BY VICKI McMILLAN



Hello, friends! Lester, here, and grateful to be with you in November — the time for thankfulness and gratitude, and gathering with family. Let me tell you, this ol' scrappy alum of the Jonesboro Dog Jail has many items on his thankful list.

I am thankful for:

- ✓ Having been adopted from a kill shelter by a caring family, just in the nick of time. More dogs (and cats) are in need of homes now than ever. If you are considering a pet for all the right reasons, please adopt - don't shop.
- ✓ Having food and water in my bowls every day, even if it is not Taco Bell or Sonic. Some of my kind are left outdoors in all kinds of weather, on chains with limited food and water.
- ✓ Having multiple warm beds for rest. I have my day time bed by the TV, my cooking bed in the kitchen, and my watch-dog bed on the deck. Most importantly, I have my Sealy Posturepedic at night.
- ✓ Having family and friends. I know you don't think of doggies as having friends, but we really do. Most of my friends are actually family, but I love them anyway.
- ✓ Having my own personal medical staff at my disposal. My personal physician Dr. Steve Copeland and his assistant Christi are there at a moment's notice if I need them. And for that, we all are grateful!
- ✓ Having a safe, fenced back yard to explore. There is a feral cat that dares to intrude on my territory from time to time, but that's ok. Ol' Lester can take her on, any day of the week.



- ✓ Having the opportunity to travel with my family. Every other year the Egg Bowl (Mississippi State vs. Ole Miss) is played in Starkville on Thanksgiving, and this is a Starkville year. Not to mention all the fun trips we've had and all the fun trips we will have.
- ✓ And finally, having treats given to me for all of my good deeds. The treats are whole, not broken in half. Although lately, I have noted that they are somewhat smaller than they were initially.

As the weather turns chilly and Thanksgiving approaches, let our gratitude be as plentiful as the food that fills our table. Count your blessings and watch SEC football!

Your Pal,
Lester

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The campaign will kick off on November 18th, with a live remote at Something Sweet from 3-5 p.m. The contest will be open for entries through December 7th, and the winner will be announced on December 10th.

No purchase is necessary to enter, but both Jetton Power Solutions and MOR Media, Inc. encourage NEA residents to shop local this holiday season. You never know, visiting a local business might just make you the proud owner of a Generac!



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NOVEMBER 2025

A PUBLICATION OF MOR MEDIA, INCORPORATED

NATALIE LESTER



Natalie Lester of Williford is a student at Arkansas State University in Jonesboro, where she is majoring in Agricultural Studies with a minor in Communications. A graduate of Sloan-Hendrix High School in Imboden, she also owns and operates Squash Blossom Teas, a company specializing in loaded tea packets that she sells locally and ships to customers. She also runs a home bakery with her mother called Crumbs & Co.

Natalie serves as a co-leader of the Lawrence County 4-H Livestock Club and helps with several local county fairs and their livestock shows. She also continues to be involved in Stock Show Stars Inc., which she founded in 2021 as a community service project for FFA. Stock Show Stars is a livestock day camp and show for all children regardless of experience level and ability, especially focused on working with children with special needs. She also is a member of Koinonia Christian Fellowship in Imboden.

Natalie said she finds her greatest joy in coaching and mentoring young showmen. She has also recently begun her own show lamb operation raising registered and commercial show lambs. She also enjoys spending time with family and her boyfriend, Fisher, going to concerts, baking, traveling and shopping (especially for jewelry).

GARRETT HALL



Garrett Hall of Brookland is an Insurance Sales Producer at Virginia Walls State Farm in Paragould. A native of Paragould, he graduated from Paragould High School and attended Mississippi State University for a year, where he studied Broadcast Meteorology.

Garrett serves as sound engineer at Central Baptist Church – Paragould Campus and has also served as the public address announcer for Paragould High School's football and basketball games, something he took a break from this year due to the birth of his son. He is also a football referee for multiple schools across Northeast Arkansas, mainly officiating fourth-, fifth- and sixth-grade games.

His interest in weather has remained, and as a National Weather Service Certified Storm Spotter out of the Memphis and Little Rock NWS offices, he will often storm chase during severe weather events and report back to local media outlets to inform the public.

Other hobbies include spending time with his wife, Savannah, and their son, Grayson, as well as friends, and helping people find solutions to their insurance needs. He also enjoys following Arkansas Razorback sports – which he said is probably where his source of anxiety started at a young age.

RYLIE YAWSON



Rylie Yawson of Brookland is Marketing and Public Relations Manager for the Craighead County Jonesboro Public Library.

A native of Bentonville, she is a graduate of Russellville High School and attended Arkansas State University where she earned her Bachelor of Science in Strategic Communications and Master's in Public Administration.

Rylie teaches oral communications as an adjunct instructor at Arkansas State University and is a member of the American Advertising Federation of Northeast Arkansas. She is a member of the Jonesboro Regional Chamber of Commerce Community Benefits Organization Committee and is active in the Jonesboro Young Professionals Network. She is also a member of the CRDC 100 Families Craighead County Alliance and the NEA Humanities and Resource Team.

In her free time, she enjoys reading, with a love for romance, period pieces and books that help her grow in her faith. She also likes to spend time with her family, walk outside and listen to podcasts. She said she loves learning about new topics and growing in both her personal and professional leadership skills.



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OLIVIA MCPHERSON



Olivia McPherson of Jonesboro is an intensive care nurse at St. Bernards Medical Center in Jonesboro.

A native of Paragould, she is a Crowley's Ridge Academy graduate and earned her Bachelor's of Science in Nursing from Arkansas State University.

Her community involvement began at a young age through the Greene County 4-H program, in which she participated in a variety of events both locally and nationally. She said while 4-H started as a way to show her horses more competitively, it allowed her to serve the community in various ways, which became some of her favorite memories. While studying nursing, she was able to serve the community by treating their health, through clinicals, community flu shot clinics, and other health-related events.

Olivia said her favorite hobby is spending time with her husband and their families. She also enjoys spending time outdoors, including reading on her back patio with her dogs, taking care of her impulse-buy plants and spending time on the back of a horse, which will always be her happy place.

JONATHAN SCHAUFLE



Jonathan Schaufler of Jonesboro is a registered nurse in the ICU at NEA Baptist in Jonesboro.

A native of Salem, he graduated from Salem High School and earned his Bachelors of Science in Nursing from Arkansas State University.

He is currently serving as president of the Arkansas Nursing Students Association, but will move to a consultant role with that organization soon. He is also a member of both the Arkansas and American Nurses Association and the Arkansas Nurses Association state workforce advocacy team, as well the American Nurses Association Advocacy Institute 2025 cohort.

As one can tell from his community involvement, he also dedicates a lot of his personal time to advocating for the nursing industry. He said he is passionate about making changes for the nursing workforce and making nursing better for both patients and fellow nurses.

Jonathan is also a yoga enthusiast and currently teaches at Nirvana Hot Yoga in Downtown Jonesboro. In his free time, he enjoys reading and going to concerts.

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DESTINY HILLIS

Destiny Hillis of Jonesboro is a legal assistant/paralegal at Gardner Milner, PLLC in Jonesboro.

A native of Black Rock, she is a graduate of Walnut Ridge High School.

Destiny earned her Bachelor's Degree in Business Administration from Arkansas State University in Jonesboro.

Her community involvement includes membership in the Junior Auxiliary of Jonesboro.

In her free time, she enjoys spending time outdoors with her husband and their two kids, reading and sewing.



PAYTON LAUBACH

Payton Laubach of Paragould is a salesperson with Image Realty in Paragould.

A graduate of Greene County Tech High School, he is a member of Image's Team Cansellit.

Payton said Paragould is a great city and he hopes to become more involved in helping where he can in the coming months and years as he strives to become a valuable asset to the community.

In his spare time, he enjoys playing golf.

He said most of his free time is currently spent trying to navigate raising a nine-month-old daughter.



EMILY ATWOOD

Emily Atwood is branch manager of RiverBank in Paragould.

A native of Marmaduke, she currently resides in Paragould.

A graduate of Marmaduke High School, she earned a degree in Finance from Arkansas State University in Jonesboro.

Emily's community involvement includes being selected as a Leadership Paragould Class XXIX participant and being involved with the Paragould Regional Chamber of Commerce.

In her spare time, she enjoys reading and cooking.



25
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ELIZABETH TATE



Elizabeth Tate of Jonesboro wears many hats as what she refers to as a stay-at-home business mom. A native of Palestine, she graduated from Calvary Christian High School and earned her Bachelor of Science in Nursing from Arkansas State University, where she is currently completing her Master of Science in Nursing with a concentration as an Adult-Gerontology Acute Care Nurse Practitioner (AG-ACNP) with plans to graduate in December.

She and her husband, James, own and operate Jet Custom Hauling, a car-hauling business that they've grown from the ground up. Elizabeth handles much of the behind-the-scenes management while also being home full-time with their soon-to-be one-year-old daughter, Londyn.

She is a member of the Junior Auxiliary of Jonesboro, where she serves as the Corporate Fundraising Chair, helping build and maintain relationships with local businesses and sponsors.

In her free time, she love going on walks with her daughter and their dog, Titan, and spending time outdoors as a family. She also runs The Boujee Blonde Boutique & Salon in Lake City — something that started as a creative outlet and has turned into a passion project.

LAMAR BROWN



Lamar "Lamarvelous" Brown of Jonesboro is a REALTOR® with Century 21 Portfolio in Jonesboro, as well as founder of HW Lamarvelous LLC and partner in PWC All-In-One Property Services LLC.

A native of Earle, he is also employed with Jonesboro Public Schools as a bus driver and with Rusken Packaging as a truck driver and forklift operator. A graduate of Valley View High School, he has earned multiple professional licenses and certifications, including his REALTOR® License, HVAC Certification, Class A CDL (Manual Transmission) and Forklift Operator License.

Lamar is passionate about inspiring and motivating young people to chase their goals early, speaking at local youth events, sharing about his journey from a teenage entrepreneur to a REALTOR®. He said his goal is to show young people that with discipline, faith and consistency, they can create real opportunities for themselves right here in Northeast Arkansas.

His hobbies include creating content around entrepreneurship and personal growth, designing logos and visuals for brands, and brainstorming new business ideas. He also enjoys spending time outdoors working on property projects, learning about real estate and investing, and encouraging others.

KATIE HEAD



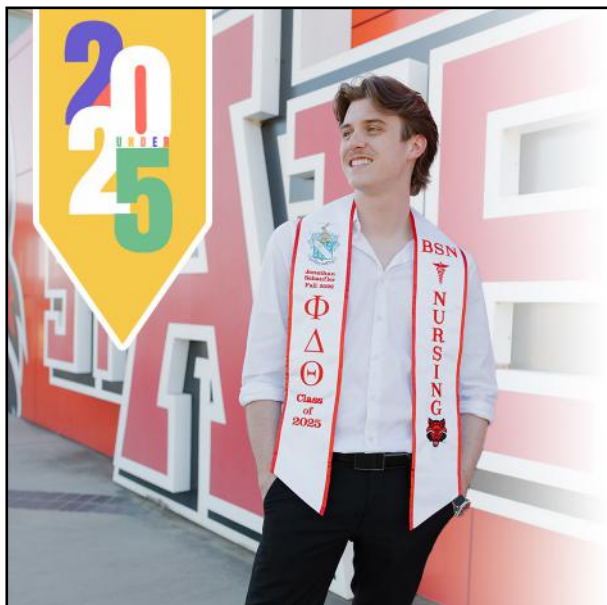
Katie Head of Jonesboro is a medical student in the Class of 2028 at the New York Institute of Technology College of Osteopathic Medicine at Arkansas State University.

A native of Paragould, she graduated from Greene County Tech before earning her Bachelor of Science in Interdisciplinary Studies from A-State.

Katie serves as the Second Year Head of Rockin' Readers at NYITCOM at A-State, a student-led program where they visit University Heights Elementary School to read to first-graders to promote early literacy and health literacy.

She also volunteers with Greene County 4-H at its summer camp, annually serves as the CAST for Kids photographer in Greene County and has donated children's books to the Regional Clinics Book Drive to support early literacy among pediatric patients. She also participates in local outreach through events and organizations like the Melanoma Awareness Walk, Red Cross Blood Drives, Food Bank of Northeast Arkansas and health education activities at local schools.

In her free time, she enjoys crocheting, baking sourdough, sewing, going to concerts and spending time with her dogs.



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JONATHAN SCHAUFLE

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CLARA ELLENBURG



Clara Ellenburg of Paragould is a Certified and Licensed Occupational Therapy Practitioner (COTA/L) at KidSPOT in Jonesboro. She provides school-based OT services at Westside Schools and also works with children at the KidSPOT Clinic.

A graduate of Greene County Tech High School, she earned her Associates in Occupational Therapy / Applied Science from Arkansas State University. She is passionate about helping kids with a variety of needs build their confidence, independence and the skills they need to thrive in their daily living. Before her OT experience began, she owned and managed Island Glow Bronzing Studio, a tanning salon in Paragould, for three years.

Clara's community involvement includes participating in the Greene County Community Christmas Program the past 4 years. The program centers on delivering homemade Christmas meals to families throughout Paragould and spreading joy and connection during the holiday season.

In her free time, she enjoys spending time with her family, attending Pilates and Barre classes at Soul Shine Studios, exploring antique shops and garage sales, and going to Central Baptist in Paragould.

TAYLOR CUNNINGHAM



Taylor Cunningham of Jonesboro is a pre-med student at Xavier University in Louisiana where she is pursuing a major in biochemistry and a minor in Spanish. She also serves as social media intern for KHARIS Group.

A graduate of Nettleton High School, she received the prestigious Bill and Melinda Gates Scholarship. She continues to serve as a Gates Squad Leader, offering mentorship and support to the newest class of Gates Scholars across the country.

Taylor is a member of NAACP, a member of the American Chemical Society, and part of the Cancer Research and Education Club. She is also very active in the Concert Chorus of Xavier University. She serves on the executive board as a co-librarian of the Chorus and is an opera chorus member with a current principal role in the opera Carmen.

Her hobbies are directly involved with her love for music, being a part of the opera workshop and choir. She is also an avid reader, now currently in love with C.S. Lewis, and said she enjoys learning about anything and everything, whether that be different superhero characters or studying languages or religions. She said she loves the pursuit of knowledge.

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SEBASTIAN BARGER

Sebastian Barger of Paragould is a student at Arkansas State University, seeking a double major in Mathematics and Mathematics Education, and is also a part-time employee at The Moving Company.

He is a graduate of Paragould High School and enjoys both playing and promoting the game of cornhole, something he hopes to include in his career as an educator, as well.

As a professional cornhole player, he was crowned "King of Cornhole" by winning the American Cornhole Organization (ACO) Singles World Championship in July of 2025.



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LINDSEY
FULTON

Lindsey Fulton of Paragould works at Something Sweet in Downtown Paragould doing everything from baking, to cake decorating, to social media promotion. She also assists with marketing and social media for Love Beyond Borders AR and serves as a translator on mission trips to Guatemala.

After completing high school as a homeschooled student, she earned her degree in Business Management from Arkansas State University. She also has a certificate in advanced Spanish grammar from Academia de Español Antigua (in Antigua, Guatemala).

Lindsey attends Harvest Baptist Church and serves in the music, photography and youth ministries. As an employee of a local business, she is also an advocate for small businesses and shopping local.

Her main interest is serving overseas and taking the gospel to the unreached. She was 15 when she went on her first mission trip to Guatemala. After living and studying in Guatemala, she returned to Paragould, noting that her boss, Tracy Mothershed, has allowed her time off to return to translate for different mission teams. In her free time, she also enjoys photography, music and baking.



KADEN
BROWN

Kaden Brown of Paragould is lead videographer/editor at Knight Productions in Paragould, where he also works in client management.

A Greene County Tech High School graduate, he uses his skills to support the community both professionally and personally. With Knight Productions, he is always a helping hand with event coverage and commercial work to promote things in the community, as well as with media work done for local school systems.

Kaden has also been announcing Greene County Tech sports for Tech TV since 2014, so he said he is deeply invested in all things Tech athletics.

In his spare time, he loves to run, work out and play sports with his friends. He also enjoys traveling with his wife, cooking and trying new recipes.

His hobbies also include creating videos and taking photos at Greene County Tech athletic events and he has a daily vlog where he has posted a minute-ish long video of what he did that day, every day for the last 568 days.



HOLLY BLAIR
BENSON

Holly Blair Benson of Paragould is an attorney with Benson Law Firm and has been commissioned as a public defender for the 2nd Judicial District.

A graduate of Paragould High School, she earned her Bachelor of Science in Biotechnology with a minor in history from Arkansas State University before attending the University of Arkansas School of Law to complete her Juris Doctorate.

Since moving back to Paragould in August, she has been attending Kiwanis Club meetings and has submitted her application for membership. She has also supported Downtown Paragould events over the years, something she looks forward to becoming more involved with. She said she has been inspired by how much Paragould has grown and is excited to be part of its continued momentum.

Holly Blair enjoys being outdoors during the warmer months, especially spending time on the golf course. When the weather cools, she gravitates indoors, where she paints with watercolors. More recently, she has taken up embroidery — a hobby she looks forward to enjoying this winter.



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HALLE ADCOCK

Halle Adcock of Paragould is the Lead Auto Underwriter at Lumen Select.

A graduate of Greene County Tech High School, she earned her Bachelor of Science in Business Administration with a minor in Marketing from Arkansas State University.

Halle, who has volunteered with Clean Sweep Paragould and also assisted with clean-up efforts after the March 2025 tornado that hit Paragould, said she would like to become more involved with beautification efforts in her community. She also attends First United Methodist Church.

In her spare time, she loves to read, checking out a lot of her books from the Greene County Public Library. She also enjoys hot yoga and going for walks on the 8 Mile Creek Trail with her dog, Lucy.



CHASE PETTY

Chase Petty of Sedgwick is an Associate Financial Advisor with Ameriprise Financial in Jonesboro.

A graduate of Walnut Ridge High School, he earned his Bachelors in Finance with a Minor in Marketing from Arkansas State University.

A member of the Jonesboro Regional Chamber of Commerce, he is also active in the Jonesboro Young Professionals Network.

In his spare time, he enjoys spending quality time with family and friends. He also loves being in nature whether it's hiking, biking, or working out and is always looking for ways to stay involved in the community.



TAYLOR BEASLEY

Taylor Beasley of Paragould is business manager for Lance Beasley Roofing and Beasley Contracting.

A graduate of Paragould High School, she earned her Bachelors of Business Administration at Southeast Missouri State University.

Her community involvement includes working with the annual Dig for the Cure event, which raises money and awareness for breast cancer.

In her free time, she enjoys reading, taking her dog (Zeus) on walks, and supporting her younger sister and her team at their volleyball games.

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The Future of Duck Hunting

BY CHUCK LONG

CAUSE FOR CONCERN



The sound of whirring wings filled the air, followed by the healthy splash of mallards hitting the water. I sat on the wobbly stool, trying to see the birds through the thick mass of willow limbs and river cane while Papa Blanton encouraged me to stay back so the ducks would not be spooked by my shining face. It took a while for the ducks to all settle in out of the air, and then a short moment of silence ensued.

The blind, which had just been alive with the sound of Olts and Yentzens pleading the ducks out of the air, had become focused on the fowl on the water. With a quick move of the hand and an audible metallic click, Papa had cocked my .410 single shot and we were ready. The countdown began and at "Now" my .410 and the 12 and 20 gauges on either side of me began to fire. Ducks fell and without hesitation Uncle Ted was out of the blind and into the boat to pick up the harvest. I was hooked.

I consider myself very fortunate to have grown up chasing ducks on the St. Francis River. Those days with Papa Blanton, Uncle Ted, Ted Gardener, Jim Bruce and so many more are some of the fondest memories stored in my brain. It also fueled a passion for waterfowl that still burns today. But the world of waterfowling has undergone drastic changes over the years and I am concerned about the future of the sport here in the Natural State.

Duck hunting has always been a prominent outdoor sport here in Arkansas. One of the earliest commercial ventures in our state was market hunting waterfowl. Regulations did not exist during the early years of statehood, therefore the bird populations suffered years of heavy harvest. Regulations began in the early 1900s that set the path for conversation efforts of the populations. But at that same time, wetlands and forested areas were drained and Arkansas lost some its best habitat for wintering waterfowl.

Still, the ducks came to the state and duck hunting held its own. Arkansas, especially in the '50s and '60s, gained notoriety as a destination for duck hunters. As time went on, duck clubs, guide services, and leased properties slowly took hold and now dominate the landscape of duck hunting.

With the clubs, leasing of properties and private groups becoming more prevalent, opportunities for the average hunter slowly melted away. But, fortunately, the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission had the foresight in the '50s and '60s to set aside some areas like Dave Donaldson, Bayou Meto, Sunken Lands, and Bayou DeView, giving aspiring hunters an opportunity to hunt. These areas held lots of ducks, but have become very popular and very crowded. These properties are receiving such pressure that they hold a small percentage of the ducks they once held throughout the season. The landscape of duck hunting in Arkansas has seen a drastic change.

Just as the ground on which ducks are hunted has changed, so has the populations of ducks that use Arkansas. Many years ago, a cold front in late October or early November meant ducks would begin filtering



into the state. By mid to late November, flooded fields would fill with mallards. This trend would continue with the first week of December, along with a bit of bad weather up north, sending big flights and fresh birds our way. Today's hunters might see a few days of flight activity as birds seek refuge from storms in the north, but the winds are filled with teal, gadwall and pintails, not mallards.

It has been interesting, and somewhat disheartening, to watch the transition of ducks and duck hunting over the last several years. My early days on the St. Francis River were guided by regulations that included a short season and a point system based on a 100 point value. Mallards dominated the harvest, with drakes being valued at 25-35 points and hens being valued up to 100 points. If one of those was taken the hunt was over. Pintail, teal and many other ducks only carried a value of 10 points, but they were rarely seen and did not often grace the game straps of Arkansas hunters. The stringent seasons and limits of the '70s and '80s seemed to bless hunters of the '90s.

Limits and seasons are now very liberal, with sixty days of hunting and hunters being able to take up to six birds per day, depending on the combination of species. Combine that with the early goose season in October and the conservation hunt for snow geese that extends into the spring, there is pressure on the waterfowl of our state for almost six months. Personally, I feel like this is having a negative impact on the fowl that use our state.

Another issue I feel is having a negative impact is the economic side of the hunt. I am all for the economic energy that waterfowl hunting



generates, but in some ways the negative impacts outweigh the positives. Economics has generated more habitat, but that habitat has become overtaxed with use. Each and every patch of water is regarded as having value and there are those that feel the need to squeeze out every ounce of value from the land. I am all for economic benefits that our landowners, farmers and business owners realize, but I am worried about the sustainability and that an economic crash of the duck hunting economy might outweigh the current positive impacts.

These words might seem a little dire and a little negative, but I am concerned about my favorite sport. Not for my sake, as I have enjoyed over fifty great years of ducks and duck hunting, but for our future generations. I want the kids of today to see what I have seen and experience the thrill of beating wings, ducks in the decoys and Grandpa telling them when to shoot.

Regardless, I am looking forward to the upcoming duck season. I am ready to watch the sunrise, discuss life, eat a few snacks, drink coffee and shoot ducks. It will be a wonderful time. I hope to see you out there!

Chuck Long is a lifelong Arkansas outdoorsman. Chuck retired from the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission after thirty plus years of service and now enjoys sharing his love of the outdoors through writing, speaking events and social media outlets. Have an outdoor question? Reach out to Chuck at cflong2002@yahoo.com.

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Thanksgiving Dinner

WITH DR. KRISTIN SULLIVAN

FOR PETS



Thanksgiving dinner — most of us enjoy a celebration of the fall's harvest with close family and friends, and, of course, our fur babies, too! All Thanksgiving dinners vary from home to home, but there are some traditional menu items that are found on most of our tables on Thanksgiving.

These items include a roasted turkey, cranberry sauce, green bean casserole, sweet potatoes, macaroni and cheese, deviled eggs, mashed potatoes, dressing (or "stuffing" if you aren't from around here), and pumpkin pie. Now, my doctor's inner voice is yelling at me, and I cannot ignore it, so here goes: Don't feed your pet from the table. There, I said it, it had to be done.

However, if your pet "accidentally" gets a hold of a "puppy turkey-day plate," the following are some general guidelines.

Heavily seasoned or flavorful foods should be avoided altogether, as this may not agree with them and can all too often lead to a bout of pancreatitis.

That means one delicious piece of smoked ham may lead to a three or four day stay at the vet in intensive care on IV fluids. Please avoid giving your pet any bones from the meat. This can lead to intestinal obstructions and even intestinal tears, which can be fatal fast and are very often associated with bone ingestion from the bone shards. The skin from the roasted turkey is where a majority of the fat is, and definitely where most of the seasonings are found; this, too, should be avoided for that very reason.

Now, some of you may be thinking, "Good grief, Doc, is there anything we can give them?!" Technically, yes. However, I cannot help myself



but to ease into this part of the article and give just one more glimpse into my daily dealings — I see more pancreatitis after Thanksgiving and Christmas than any other time during the year. Ok, I promise, I won't bring that up again.

Finally, to get to the true Thanksgiving YAY or NAY foods. I'll start

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with the turkey. The meat without the skin is much more gentle on their stomach, as this part is lean and not as flavor packed as the skin.

Cranberry sauce is not a good idea, however cranberries are a healthy choice. (It's raisins that you must always avoid!) Green bean casserole? No, but plain green beans with no butter or other seasonings? Absolutely! Sweet potatoes are another healthy food ... as long as it is only the sweet potato and not the way that I like mine, with butter and brown sugar.

Can they have the macaroni and cheese? Leave the cheese, take the macaroni. (Couldn't help myself but to add in a little Godfather reference). The plain macaroni noodle is safe, but avoid the cheese as it is high in fat and can cause an upset stomach and vomiting.

Deviled eggs are generally to be avoided as the yolk is normally heavily seasoned, however the hard-boiled egg white is safe. Mashed potatoes typically are made with milk or cream and other various seasonings, which can sometimes include garlic and needs to be avoided.

Dressing generally is made up of cornbread and biscuits with other various ingredients including broth and sage. This should be avoided as it is quite flavorful.

Finally, pumpkin pie — the pumpkin is safe, you may even offer a small bit from the can, but avoid offering any pie as it has nutmeg, cloves, and various other seasonings and ingredients, which may not be safe for pets.

We typically have family Thanksgiving at my home and I tell my whole family that if they feed my pups and give them an upset tummy, then they will have to take them home until their diarrhea clears. Of course,

I'm kidding (mostly), but that normally prevents any under the table feeding for the pets.

How do my pets celebrate? They are part of the family and enjoy being with my family — they love extra snuggles from my parents, sisters and brothers-in-law. They enjoy playing outside with my kids and nieces and nephews; playing fetch, chasing the kids, and of course just following them around on their backyard excursions.

But in order to best prevent my pets from begging, I make sure they had their breakfast and have a full tummy so they are less inclined to beg. If they are still putting on the best sad puppy dog face, then they can go out in our fenced yard to play or relax in their "bedrooms" while we eat dinner. By doing this, I eliminate anyone feeling sorry for them and offering them a bite to eat, which prevents my pets from getting sick.

All of our Thanksgiving dinners are different, for any dishes I left out please contact your local veterinarian or refer to a trusted source such as www.veterinarypartner.com. I hope everyone has a happy Thanksgiving!

Dr. Kristin Sullivan is a small animal veterinarian practicing since 2012. She owns ARPets Hospital and PAWliday Inn in Brookland, Arkansas, with her husband Michael Sullivan. She strives to provide the highest quality veterinary care, advocating for her patients, and works to educate the public in animal health care and preventive medicine, while promoting the human-animal bond.

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AMMC Auxiliary marks 75 years

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The Arkansas Methodist Medical Center Auxiliary held a luncheon on September 15th to celebrate its 75th anniversary. The AMMC Auxiliary was recognized by the state auxiliary organization as being the first in the state of Arkansas.

The event included a catered

meal, several speakers who shared about the history of the auxiliary and the hospital and a cake to mark the occasion.

Attendees also enjoyed a trip down memory lane with a table set up with mementos on display from the past 75 years of service provided by the AMMC Auxiliary.



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The Power of a Thank You Note

WITH LINDA LOU MOORE



Never underestimate the power of a thank you note. This small gesture can make a big impression. Some of the most important and successful business people are known for writing thank you notes.

What are some situations that call for a thank you note? Gifts, Business Deals, Special Occasions, Job Interviews, Client Meetings, Dinner Guests, House Guests, When Someone Has Done Something Nice For You.

Here are some quick tips when sending thank you notes.

For Gifts:

- Thank you notes don't have to be long, that's why they are called notes.
- Personalize the note.

Quote of the Day:

"Silent gratitude isn't much use to anyone."

- G.B. Stern

- Use the person's name such as Dear Mr. Smith, or Dear Jack.
- Identify the gift by name.
- If possible, tell how you intend to use the gift.
- If you don't like the gift, don't complain.
- Let the person know how much you appreciate their time and effort in choosing the gift.

Business Notes:

- If you go for a job interview, follow up with a thank you note. Thank the interviewer for their time. This is a prime opportunity to review the important points of the interview or add anything you forgot during the meeting.
- If you have secured a new account, thank the client by writing a note that shows you appreciate their business.
- When conducting business, a follow up note shows that you value the importance of your client.

Thank You Notes and E-mails:

- A follow up e-mail after a meeting is a quick way to stay in touch. However, it is important to consider the client's business environment.
- What is the business culture?
- Traditionalists may not consider a thank you e-mail quite appropriate, while others

routinely correspond by e-mail. Consider your audience.

- Sending a quick e-mail followed by a traditional thank you note can often take the guesswork out of which type of correspondence is preferred.

Showing Appreciation:

- Writing a thank you note shows your appreciation for the kindness someone has shown to you.
- If you have been a dinner guest or a house guest it is always appropriate to thank the host or hostess for their hospitality.

Whether you are acknowledging a gift, a business deal or a special occasion, a thank you note shows your appreciation. This often unexpected and surprising note adds a personal touch that others remember.

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 llmooreparagould@gmail.com.

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November 11th

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Veterans Day Appreciation Event
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6:00 p.m.

Downtown Holiday Lights & Carols
Main Street Paragould Event

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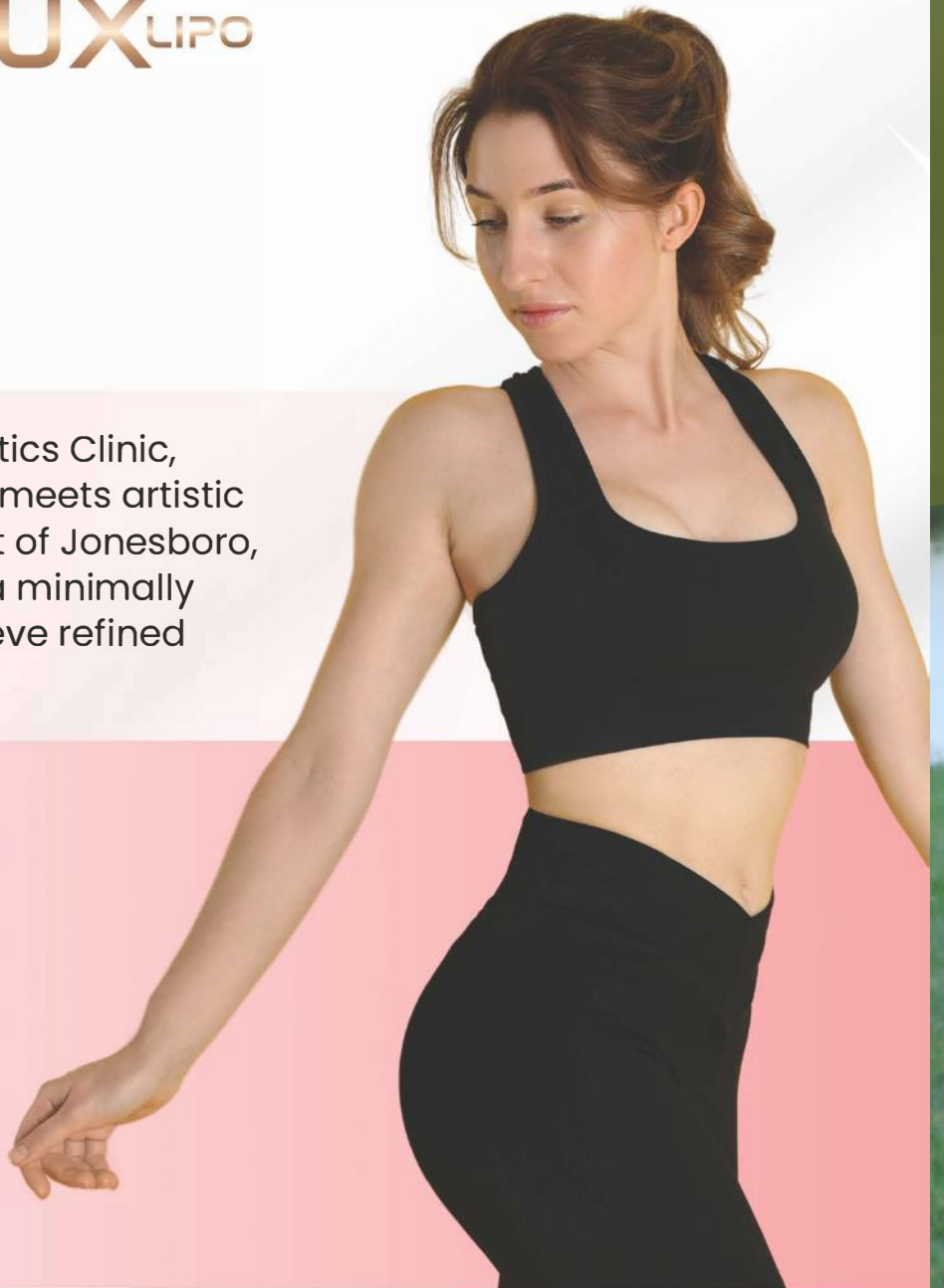
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Supporting Single Parent Students

TRANSFORMS ARKANSAS FAMILIES

Last year, Dawn Howard found herself at a crossroads. As a single mother of two, she was determined to provide stability for her children. But on a fixed income and with an aging van that seemed to need constant repair, Dawn knew something had to change.

"I realized how bad this economy is, and it's been a struggle to make ends meet," Howard said. "I told myself, 'Okay, Dawn, you have to make a better life for your kids.' My dream has always been to become a nurse, and now that my kids are older, let me try to fulfill the dream I've had to become a nurse."

That decision — to return to school to pursue nursing — marked a turning point.

But as many single parents know, the journey toward higher education can feel impossible without financial help and emotional support. Between bills, childcare and the responsibilities of parenting, the dream of earning a degree often takes a back seat to



simply surviving.

That's where the Arkansas Single Parent Scholarship Fund (ASPSF) comes in. Since 1990, ASPSF has awarded more than \$50 million in scholarships and support services to help low-income single parents complete their education and secure family-sustaining careers. In 2025 alone, ASPSF has distributed over \$1.1 million in financial aid statewide to more than 600 single parents, including 61

recipients in Craighead, Greene and Poinsett counties.

Unlike most scholarships, ASPSF awards funds directly to recipients, allowing them to use the money for whatever obstacles stand between them and graduation, whether that's tuition, child care, rent, groceries, or even car repairs.

For Dawn, that support couldn't have come at a better time this summer. "My van has over 200,000 miles on it, and when the alternator went out, I didn't know what we were going to do," she says. "The scholarship helped me get my car fixed, which meant I could keep going to class and getting my kids where they needed to be. It helped me believe in my community again."

Today, Dawn is thriving. She's maintaining a 3.83 GPA, recently scored a 178 on the nursing entrance exam (well above the required 130), and continues to balance her studies with part-time work as a dispatcher in Jonesboro.

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She's making plans to buy a house once she completes her degree and license, and her career goal is to become a utilization review nurse.

"Before enrolling in school, I was just a typical single mom, just taking it one day at a time, wishing I could do something better with my life," Dawn said. "I wanted to stop being afraid of not being able to leave my kids something tangible if something happens to me. Now, I know that once I complete school and get my degree and license, I will be able to provide my kids something we all want and that's our own house."

Her 14-year-old son, Chris, is now talking about wanting to further his education, while her 19-year-old daughter, Skylar, is thriving at Arkansas State University, a reflection of the confidence and drive that runs in the family. Stories like Dawn's show the power of investing in single parents. When donors

give to ASPSF, they're not just helping one student earn a degree — they're changing the trajectory of an entire family.

The data backs it up: Last year on average, ASPSF graduates experienced an 86% increase in income. Plus, recipients share how their children perform better in school and are more likely to pursue higher education themselves. Every scholarship awarded means a family has food on the table, gas in the car, and hope for a brighter tomorrow.

And the need has never been greater. More than 130,000 single parents in Arkansas are raising children alone, and 35% live below the poverty line, according to the U.S. Census. ASPSF has seen record growth this year — including over 1,700 fall applications — and must turn away eligible students simply because funding can't meet demand.

As the holidays approach, many Arkansans are thinking about where to give — and how to make their gifts truly matter. A donation to ASPSF is more than a scholarship; it's an investment in the future of Arkansas families. "If I could thank a donor in person," Dawn said, "I'd tell them there are no words to express how much their help means. My goal is to be able to make donations and pay it forward to other single parents in the future

SEE THE IMPACT

- 839 scholarships & stipends awarded in 2024 (859 so far in 2025*)
 - 595 single parents served in 2024 (614 so far in 2025*)
 - \$1,135,200 distributed to single parents in 2024 (\$1,083,500 so far in 2025*)
- Other 2024 numbers:
- 144 graduates
 - 86% graduates' average income increase
 - 3.11 average GPA
 - 1,102 children impacted by the power of education

*2025 numbers include Spring and Summer scholarships. Fall won't be released until November or December.

who will need that help to get through their education journey."

This season, you can do the same. Your year-end gift to the Arkansas Single Parent Scholarship Fund provides not only scholarships, but also the confidence and community that single parents need to succeed.

Because when we lift up a parent, we lift up a child — and when we lift up a child, we lift up Arkansas.



Wrap their future in hope.

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Give now to fund scholarships that help single parents build a brighter future. Donate at **ASPSF.ORG/GIVE.**



1P

SINGLE PARENT

scholarship fund





Miracle Rodeo

FAMILY FUN

Started by Travis Hedge in Paragould around 30 years ago, the annual Miracle Rodeo is kept alive by his family and loved ones and provides an opportunity for special needs people of all ages to enjoy a night of food and fun with family and friends.

This year's Travis Hedge Miracle Rodeo at the Greene County Fairgrounds saw excellent participation and included events like wagon rides, stick pony races, face painting, balloon art, karaoke, line dancing and lots of free food.

Organizers are always thrilled to sponsor the night for the guests and their families, and offer a debt of gratitude to all the individuals and businesses contributing to the effort.



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JETT SMITH

Making his Mark

BY RICHARD BRUMMETT

Jett Smith can't drive a vehicle yet, but he sure can drive a golf ball. The Marmaduke 8-year-old is making a name for himself on the golfing circuit at both the state and national levels, and he's loving every minute of it.

"I just like doing it. I like having a club in my hand," he said, looking back on a pair of trips to Pinehurst, North Carolina, after qualifying for the World Championships in his age division. The historic Pinehurst



No. 2 has hosted more golf championships than any other course in the United States: US Opens, PGA Championships, a Ryder Cup, US Women's Opens, US Amateur Championships. It is a place of legends, which Jett someday hopes to become. "I've been playing since I was 10 months old, I guess. It's just what I love to do."

Parents Trent and Kelsey Smith, along with little sister Hensley, make up his biggest fan club as they travel the country watching the young golfer make his mark. He started out with a set of plastic



golf clubs when he was around one year old, and he has continued to play golf any and everywhere he can, from the living room to the front yard. "We went to Memphis to the zoo and on the way home bought him his first legit clubs," Kelsey said. "He just loves it, inside or outside. Sometimes I got tired of plastic golf balls flying by my head in the house, but it has been worth it."

Jett started playing in tournaments when he turned 6 with the U.S. Kids Golf Little Rock Tour. Since starting tournament play, Jett has



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won 1st place in 24 out of the 30 tournaments entered and has placed in all the others. He has also won the Tour Champion Award all four seasons. "I go to the Regionals in Destin in January," Jett said. "It's for 8-year-olds; you have to qualify for it just in local tournaments."

"I'd like to be a pro when I grow up," he said, with an eye on the future, then sounded very much like a third-grader when admitting, "but I don't watch much golf on TV because it's too long to be still."

Trent said he thought his son had more than average talent from the start. "As early as two or three he could hit it every time, and hit it pretty far," he recalled. "There was nowhere around here for kids his age to compete so we had to drive a lot, but he shot a 41 ... 5 over ... in his first tournament. I always said if I had a kid I wanted him to play golf, because you can play it all of your life. He would play every day if he could."

Father and son started out hitting the courses in Paragould and now are members at the Sugar Creek Country Club in Piggott, but Jett is willing to play anytime, anywhere. "The U.S. Kids Golf Tournament ... we watched that and he liked it, and they're all over the U.S.," Trent said. "So we had to try and find somewhere to go. We've been all over, and now he's been to Pinehurst twice, which is something special. What I love about golf is you can almost always find a course to play. I didn't start playing until he was born. I am okay, but not to his caliber."

Jett said taking his driver and hitting the ball for distance would probably be his strong point, but his irons and putter are no slouches either. "Probably my driver," he said with confidence. "I can hit it about 150 or 160 yards. My longest is around 200-210. And I'm a good putter."

Kelsey said it's "almost aggravating that they can pick up anything and be good at it," referring to father and son. Of Jett she said, "His first time on the tour he shot a 36 back-to-back. But he is also good at his schoolwork. We've really got an all-round kid there."

And a competitive one. By his own admission, Jett plans on winning every time out. "It's him vs. everybody," Trent said, and Kelsey added, "He's willing to try just about anything, but he'll say, 'Only if we can keep score.' He wants to win. The competition is everything. But he's definitely willing to work at it. He has a spot in the yard for practice ... maybe the grass will grow back one day."

By earning the rank of one of the top 100 8-year-old golfers in the world, Jett has



been allowed to make friends from different countries and have experiences not all kids his age are fortunate enough to do. Kelsey said the U.S. Kids Golf "is 100 percent family oriented, as well. We have met so many nice families through this organization both at our local Tour in Little Rock and at the World Championship in Pinehurst. Coach Pat Sanchez and the Little Rock Tour crew always go above and beyond to make each tournament a good experience for all the kids."

While Jett will play basketball for his school team for the first time this year, and as he also has a fondness for baseball, it is golf that dominates his thought process. Making it back to Pinehurst and taking part in the many activities that make up the week of World competition -- practice rounds, the Parade of Nations (estimated to be more than 1,500 youth qualifiers plus their family members), visiting the Golf Hall of Fame, putting on the greens at Pinehurst No. 2, and playing in the three-day tournament -- and then lining up against the best in the world are becoming second nature to the young golfer.

"It's the best. It's me against the best," he said, then summed up his feelings about competition by saying, "It's everything ... competition. Me against them."

The moment isn't lost on his family members either. Grandparents have also made the long journey more than once to see Jett work his magic on the course, and his dad enjoys the close-up view. "I absolutely love to watch him play," he said. "I coach baseball and help with basketball, but there's nothing like being on the course with your kid and being his caddy. Especially when you see his work pay off."



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ENTREPRENEURIAL SPOTLIGHT

REESIE TRITCH

A Story to Tell

BY RICHARD BRUMMETT

When someone uses the phrase “typical teenager” they are definitely not talking about Reesie Tritch. Reesie is a Paragould 16-year-old who gardens, sews, co-hosts a podcast, is a certified Master Gardener, gives speeches at community events and churches and, just for good measure, has been selected as the young Entrepreneur of the Year by Arkansas 4-H.

She is a teen with a definite plan for her future and a firmly constructed path for getting there, punctuating her busy world with a deeply religious outlook. She hopes upon graduation from college to have a degree in ministry with an eye on writing and public speaking. And when speaking, she very easily delivers conversation that comes off as comfortable in any arena, frequently sprinkling in a delightful sense of humor to accompany it.

“I’m a talker, definitely. Sixteen and home schooled,” she said in describing herself, then turned her attention toward her selection as Entrepreneur of the Year. “Kids from all over the state sent in 200-word essays,” she said, then added with a laugh, “... They must have been pretty sorry if I was chosen. But, really, I’m very confident in writing. I love it. I basically told what I do and the opportunities I have like the Master Gardeners and my farm and my podcast with friends.”

Reesie’s extensive background in 4-H led her to expand on projects in sewing and gardening, turning them into a most successful business called Bountiful Blessings Farms. She grows fresh produce for family consumption but also sells it at the Paragould Farmers Market, along with delivering to individual customers. Reesie also creates handmade items such as crocheted towels, bags and custom-sewn goods, and



says much of the drive for the business side just comes from a lifetime of being subjected to it. “I’ve always been around a family garden,” she said. “Dad’s family all farmed and I’ve always been around it. I developed a love for it. Being part of 4-H, the teaching and education

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is when I found where it came from. Presently I have two high tunnels, like greenhouses, that I use year-round," increasing or decreasing temperatures relative to what she is growing at the time. "Right now I have a bunch of weeds, but a ton of ginger and leeks.

"As far as crocheting, my great-grandmother taught me. My great-grandmother, who taught me. My great-grandmother left tons and tons of yarn to my grandmother and me, every texture you can imagine. I started crocheting at 7 and started my first business at 9. I am an old soul. I love it."



While thrilled to have been selected for the award, it is her close relationship with God that fuels her multi-faceted daily life. Finishing school by 1:00 in the afternoon, Reesie said she then takes care "of my business and do some writing. I take college concurrent classes. After lunch it's farm work and other stuff. Get the produce and crocheting ready for the Farmers Market." Pointing to her ever-present oversized tote that holds everything from crocheting supplies to an obviously well-used Bible, she said, "This bag is representative of my life ... organized chaos.

"When I graduate high school, I'm going to Williams Baptist to seek a degree in ministry. I want to write and to speak at conferences. I've done a few little speaking jobs, like at a St. John's Lutheran seminar with women's ministry. Definitely God has opened doors for lots of opportunities. I know about God and his word comes naturally. Do I get nervous speaking in front of people? Not about people, but about the message. I always want it to come out right."

Her mother, Mindy, proudly points out that Reesie is active in the leadership for youth group at Harvest Baptist Church, a part of the worship on Sundays. "Reesie's leadership and communication skills have opened doors for her to speak at local churches and community events, where she shares her journey and encourages other young people to pursue their passions," she said. "She is also co-host of a podcast called Girls in the Garden. With a heart for service and a strong work ethic, Reesie is proving that age is no barrier to making a meaningful impact in her community."

Her recent award carries with it being the subject of a cover story for the state 4-H magazine, complete with article and photos. "Wow, me, a cover model," Reesie said. "Who would have thought? Really, I was very shocked to learn I had won. I know all the kids strive to do things to the best of our ability, so I'm honored."

Reesie is the daughter of Mindy and Jason Tritch of Paragould, and plans to remain in the public eye for a long time to come. "I have a story to tell and I love to share it," she said, "anytime I can. God has been very good to me."



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- Annual Drive-Thru Picnic at our Paragould North Center



- Annual Drive-Thru Backpack Event at our North Little Rock Center



- Annual Drive-Thru Picnic at our Blytheville Center

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- Annual Drive-Thru Backpack Event at our Jonesboro Center



- Sensory Saturday at Let's Roll Paragould



- Annual Drive-Thru Backpack Event at our Trumann Center



- Annual Drive-Thru Picnic at our Brookland Center



- Annual Trunk or Treat at our Jonesboro Center



HOW PARENTS' HEALTH & HABITS IMPACT THEIR KIDS SHAPING YOUR CHILDREN'S WELL-BEING

SUBMITTED BY LE BONHEUR CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL

Children inherit more than genetics — they absorb daily habits, emotional patterns and wellness approaches from their parents. Dr. Donald Bearden, Chief of Pediatric Psychology and Behavioral Health at Le Bonheur, emphasizes that parental mental and physical health directly influences a child's development.

Research shows strong links between parents' physical activity and mental health and those of their children. A healthy parent-child relationship can explain more than 30% of adolescent mental health outcomes. When parents invest in their own wellness and nurture strong bonds, they foster better long-term health for their children.

Everyday habits matter. Children often mirror parental behaviors in sleep, nutrition and screen time. Affectionate parenting is linked to emotional stability and conscientiousness in adulthood. Modeling healthy routines and nurturing behavior sets children up for success. Stress is inevitable, but how parents handle it shapes their children's emotional regulation. Open conversations, honest acknowledgment of



stress and modeling coping strategies help build resilience.

Communication should evolve with age. For toddlers, use simple phrases and body language. Preschoolers benefit from naming emotions. Preteens need modeled coping strategies, while teens thrive with open dialogue and transparency about mental health.

Even parents who didn't grow up with healthy habits can raise resilient kids. Small changes — like calm bedtime routines or affectionate communication — can break cycles. When mistakes happen, repair matters more than perfection. Apologizing and discussing emotions builds trust.

Dr. Bearden reminds parents: "Self-care is not selfish." Simple acts like walking or resting help parents show up with patience and presence.

Start small. A 20-minute walk or shared meal can create lasting connections. Parents don't need to be perfect — just intentional. Modeling wellness, managing stress and fostering communication builds strong foundations for lifelong well-being.



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DON'T MISS THESE

Upcoming Events in NEA



Souper Sunday

November 2nd

Habitat for Humanity of Northeast Arkansas will host its 15th annual Souper Sunday on Sunday, November 2nd, from 11 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. at The Embassy Suites by Hilton Red Wolf Center in Jonesboro.

Guests can enjoy all-you-can-sample soups, breads, and desserts from over 15 local restaurants and vote for their favorite, with the restaurant receiving most votes winning the Ladle Trophy. Tickets are \$20. Children five and under are free.

All proceeds support Habitat's mission to provide safe, affordable housing for families in Northeast Arkansas.



FOA Fundraiser

November 8th

The Foundation of Arts will present its annual fundraiser, Breakfast with Ballerinas, on Saturday, November 8th, at Central Baptist Church, located at 3707 Harrisburg Road in Jonesboro.

Make magical memories with your little ones as they meet the Nutcracker ballerinas and watch a sneak peek dance. There will be two time slots, one from 9-10:30 a.m. and one from 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. The events will also include a Ballerina Boutique, story time, crafts and a silent auction.

Tickets are \$15 in advance at foajonesboro.org and \$18 at the door.



Day of the Dead

November 15th

The Centro Hispano of Arkansas invites the community to attend the annual Día de los Muertos – Day of the Dead Celebration on Saturday, November 15th, from 6-11:00 p.m. at the A-State Cooper Alumni Center, 2600 Alumni Blvd., in Jonesboro.

The evening will feature live music, dinner, dancing and an auction. Tickets are \$80 per person, and seating is limited. Purchase by calling 870-931-1884 or 870-926-1118 or by sending through Cash App: \$elcentrohispano or Venmo: @elcentrohispano.

Attendees are asked to wear black and white cocktail attire for this special evening.



HOLIDAY PET PHOTOS

Holiday Pet Photos, benefiting the Northeast Arkansas Humane Society, will take place Nov. 17, 18 and 22, in the classroom of the Jonesboro Shooting Sports Complex, 3702 Moore Road in Jonesboro with Joey Glaub as the photographer.

Appointments can be scheduled from 3-7 p.m. Monday, Nov. 17, and Tuesday, Nov. 18. On Saturday, Nov. 22, appointments can be made from 9 a.m. to noon and 1 to 5 p.m. To schedule an appointment, call or text 870-897-5258; appointments cannot be made at the NEAHS shelter or the Shooting Sports Complex.

Organizers noted that the range sits on a large, mostly undeveloped tract of land, making it difficult to recapture animals if they decide to bolt and that

pets should be on leashes or in carriers for their security.

Photographs will again be offered in digital format only. For \$35 per pose, pet owners will be able to choose one image from their online proofs and receive a copyright-released file emailed to them. Those who want prints or Christmas cards can either order them online from Glaub or have them printed elsewhere.

The Northeast Arkansas Humane Society shelter is located at 6111 E. Highland Drive in Jonesboro. It is open from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Mondays-Fridays. For adoption policies and general information, visit www.neahs.org, [facebook.com/HumaneSocietyNEA](https://www.facebook.com/HumaneSocietyNEA) or call 870-932-5185.

Engagement Announcement



Boyd - McFarland

Shelly Boyd of Rector and Gavyn McFarland of Paragould have announced their engagement.

The bride-elect is the daughter of Brian and Heather Boyd and Heath and Starr McClung.

The prospective groom is the son of Terry and Angila Beamon and Brad McFarland.

Plans for the wedding have not been finalized.

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HAPPENINGS



HISTORICAL MARKER UNVEILED IN WR

An Arkansas Heritage historical marker was unveiled at the Walnut Ridge Regional Airport during a ceremony on Saturday, October 11th.

The marker recognizes the airport's origins as a World War II Army airfield. Opened in 1942, the Army flying school at the airfield trained over 4,600 pilots during the war. After the war, the airfield served as a storage and scrapping facility for thousands of surplus warplanes. The historical marker tells the story of the historic airfield and flying school.

The Lawrence County Historical Society, which partnered with Arkansas Heritage on the placement of the historical marker, hosted the dedication ceremony. Following the unveiling, a donor appreciation banquet was held at the Wings of Honor Museum in Walnut Ridge.

NAMED ASPSF VOLUNTEER OF MONTH

Statewide nonprofit Arkansas Single Parent Scholarship Fund (ASPSF) has honored Shaneka Brandon of Craighead County as the September 2025 Volunteer of the Month.

"Shaneka is always willing to help however she can when called upon, despite her busy schedule," ASPSF Program Manager Joy Smith said. "She is great with applicants, always smiling."



Shaneka has been a volunteer with ASPSF for the past two years, but her connection to the organization runs even deeper. She first heard of ASPSF as a student at Arkansas State University-Newport (ASUN) in Jonesboro and later became a scholarship recipient herself in the mid-2010s.

Today, Brandon is the director of career pathways at the University of Arkansas Community College of Batesville (UACCB) where she helps students overcome barriers to education and achieve their career goals. Her passion for supporting others carries into her volunteer work with ASPSF, where she lends a hand wherever she is needed. "I'll do anything I'm asked," Brandon said. "I've interviewed recipients, presented scholarships, and advertised the scholarship. Honestly, I love doing all of it."



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Next Month

Holiday Events



We will have a preview of holiday happenings in Northeast Arkansas, including a listing of Christmas parades.

NEA Seniors



You won't want to miss the winter edition of NEA Seniors with features, resources and advice to make the most of each day!

Christmas Greetings



December brings a chance for your business to wish our readers a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

Wishing you a Happy Thanksgiving

During this time of giving thanks, my team and I want to express our gratitude to our customers and our community.



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