

Emily Howard
receives
Milken Award
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Local sports highlights
can be found on Page
10A, 11A and 12A



ADVANCE-MONTICELLONIAN

Drew Memorial Health System’s cash flow problems continue
Financial woes persist as January sees cash decrease of \$1,213,754

By: ASHLEY HOGG
editor@monticellonews.net

When the Drew Memorial Health System Board met Monday, February 27, they were presented more unpleasant financial news. The negative cash flow problems that have plagued rural hospitals since the pandemic continue. The hospital financial report showed an overall cash decrease of \$1,213,754.

Because of the financial problems the hospital is facing, the board contacted Baptist Health Systems in Little Rock several months ago to see if there was an interest in a partnership between Baptist and Drew Memorial.

Representatives from Baptist Health that attended the January Board meeting, CEO Troy

Wells and COO Doug Weeks, were present and accompanied by CFO Brent Beaulieu and Sydney Fellow, head of the Information Technology Department, to speak to the board about the options they had developed since the last meeting.

Wells opened the presentation by stating that a strength of the Baptist Health System is the longevity of the leadership team and that they are a faith based, non-profit organization.

The system has grown in the last 60 years to include health-care campuses across the state.

Weeks spoke to the board and stated that he had been asked what the hospital had done wrong to end up in this financial situation.

“The answer is, we aren’t

seeing anything that you’ve done wrong,” Weeks answered. “Healthcare is a challenging industry, especially challenging coming out of the pandemic. There are payer issues, labor issues and we have seen those in various locations. We want to focus on what we have done at Baptist Health to move past those challenges.”

Weeks then pointed out that Drew Memorial is surrounded by mostly critical access hospitals within the region and this affects how the hospitals are paid. Drew Memorial is not considered a critic access hospital.

“We were able to come by last week and take a very detailed tour and your facility is in great shape,” Weeks added. “There doesn’t appear to be any capitol

improvements around the corner. The OR’s are fantastic. L and D is a wonderful place for soon to be mothers. You seem to be delivering a very high quality of care. You’ve got really strong primary care and specialty clinics available here. The weaknesses that we came across, I don’t think will surprise you. You have a revenue cycle problem. There is payment issues related to payers, you don’t have the leverage that an organization like Baptist Health does when you walk into a room and start talking about rates. You have labor challenges. We have the ability to spread those costs out. We have really good data management tools that allow us to adjust costs when the hospital census changes. One thing I will point

out, and I know it isn’t popular to talk about, is taxes. With our regional facilities in Malvern and Stuttgart, which are not critical access hospitals, both of those facilities are supported by a local tax that happens to be significantly higher than the one that is in place in Drew County. Possibly three to one. We think that is possibly an opportunity for this area to consider. We want to investigate compliance further. We don’t know that there is an issue, probably bring some of our compliance experts in just to check things out. We want to make sure that their billing practices are consistent with what you are charging patients. We know that because we have experienced problems with that before. We centralize all our administrative

staff, so we have a consistent level of expertise. We have four regional hospitals and they all had a good year last year.”

“In our view, it would be smart for Drew Memorial to have a partner,” Wells added. “Baptist has a strong regional hospital model that works. We think that applying that model here would really help this hospital continue to be a leader in this part of the state. It is necessary, I can’t imagine Drew Memorial not being a healthcare provider for this area. Most regional hospitals in Arkansas do need tax support. It’s just part of keeping the local, community hospital healthy.”

“We estimate that it is going to take nine to 10 million dollars

See HOSPITAL Page 6A

A&P Commission
plans for 2023

By: ASHLEY HOGG
editor@monticellonews.net

The Monticello Advertising and Promotion Commission met Monday, February 27 at the Hampton Inn to give an update on event planning for 2023.

Commission members Mike Wigley, Al Peer, Annette Taylor, Shannon Herman, Kim Patel were present along with Ryan Copico, assistant for the commission, Dan Boice, Chair of the Planning Commission and Mayor Jason Akers.

After the previous meeting minutes and financials were approved, Copico noted that as of Friday, February 24, two bids had been received for landscape work around the welcome to Monticello signs.

The commission is tentatively planning spring market on the square and a July 4 event.

The spring market on the square would tentatively include food trucks, vendors from the local farmers market and more.

The plan for the July 4 event is the same as last year. Live music, food vendors, a fire works show, and more.

The commission will review the contract in place for Christmas lights and it was discussed to move the lights from the park to the square.

Mayor Akers mentioned that on Friday, March 24, the city and volunteer groups will be partnering with Keep Arkansas Beautiful to pick up trash and litter. Any individuals or groups that are interested in participating can contact the Mayor’s office for more information.

Taylor asked the commission members to consider looking at the newly cleared property on U.S. Highway 425, across the street from Ryburn Automotive, as a potential space for a community center. Taylor stated that a lot of work had been done to the property recently and it was centrally located.

Wigley agreed with her statement of the prime location and added that the property would come with a prime location price tag.

According to the financial report, the A and P Commission has \$166,391.12 in a checking account with a projected annual expenses being approximately \$89,930. The commission also has a CD at a local financial institution that has \$993,310.22 in it.

The next A and P Commission meeting will be held at 5:30 p.m., Monday, March 27 at the Hampton Inn.

UAM announces revamped, new scholarships,
increases awards for Fall 2023

SPECIAL TO THE ADVANCE

The University of Arkansas at Monticello has revamped its institutional scholarships and added two additional scholarships. The changes will go into effect in the fall 2023 semester to increase the awards a first-time freshman student is offered.

The newly created Weevil Legacy Institutional Scholarship will offer \$500 per semester to a first-time freshman student whose parent or legal guardian graduated from UAM with a technical certificate, associate degree, bachelor’s degree or master’s degree as long as the student qualifies for and retains a first-time freshman institutional scholarship each semester. The funds can be applied to tuition, housing or books.

The newly created Housing Scholarship will offer \$500 per semester to

a first-time freshman student living in campus housing as long as the student qualifies for and retains a first-time freshman institutional scholarship each semester. The funds can be applied to housing or meal plans.

UAM will also revamp its institutional scholarship offerings. The Green and White Scholarship is a new first-time freshman institutional scholarship that offers \$3,000 per year to a student with at least a 2.5 GPA and an ACT score between 19 and 23. The Green and White Scholarship joins three existing UAM first-time freshman institutional scholarships: the Academic Scholarship, the University Scholarship and the Chancellor’s Scholarship. The Academic Scholarship offers \$6,000 per year to a first-time freshman student with at least a 2.5 GPA and an ACT score

between 24 and 26. The University Scholarship offers \$9,000 per year to a first-time freshman student with at least a 2.5 GPA and an ACT score between 27 and 29. The Chancellor’s Scholarship offers \$12,000 per year to a first-time freshman student with at least a 2.5 GPA and an ACT score of 30 or higher. UAM superscores ACT scores. First-time freshman scholarship amounts are awarded for one academic year. Pending eligibility, they are renewable for three additional years. The first-time freshman institutional scholarships, the Weevil Legacy Institutional Scholarship and the Housing Scholarship are non-refundable.

Dr. Peggy Doss, chancellor of UAM, said, “UAM offers one of the lowest tuition rates in the state of Arkansas, and our competitive scholar-

ship offerings will continue to make quality education affordable for students. Our first-time institutional scholarships make a college education possible for many students in our region and beyond. The Housing Scholarship will make campus housing accessible to more students and give them a greater opportunity to engage in the full campus life experience, which we know contributes to their academic success and retention. Finally, we are proud to add the Weevil Legacy Institutional Scholarship to our fall 2023 scholarship offerings, giving multiple generations the opportunity to build a family legacy at UAM.”

For additional information, contact the UAM Office of Admissions at admissionsoffice@uamont.edu or 870-460-1026.

DCE TEACHER EMILY HOWARD AWARDED MILKEN EDUCATOR AWARD



Ashley Hogg/Advance Monticellonian

By: ASHLEY HOGG
editor@monticellonews.net

Drew Central School was full of excitement Thursday, February 23, 2023 as elementary students filed into the basketball gym for a surprise presentation.

Faculty and staff had been given limited information about the event in order to keep the award presentation a secret.

Governor Sarah Sanders,

along with Arkansas Secretary of Education Jacob Oliva and Dr. Joshua Barnett with the National Institute for Excellence in Teaching, presented Emily Howard, third grade teacher, with the Milken Educator Award and a check for \$25,000.

Barnett explained that the Milken Educator Award is unique because no one can apply or be nominated for the award.

The foundation finds winners from across the country. Many Arkansas educators have received this award but Howard is the first from Drew County to be a recipient.

“In just six years as an educator, Emily Howard has demonstrated outstanding dedication to honing her craft, increasing student achievement and uplift-

See AWARD Page 5A

City Council appoints
new City Clerk; handles
regular business

By: ASHLEY HOGG
editor@monticellonews.net

After two months of not having an official appointment, the Monticello City Council voted at Tuesday night’s meeting to appoint Taryn Wigley to fill the remainder of the current term for City Clerk which ends on December 31, 2024. Alderman Mike Wigley recused himself from the vote and Alderman Cedric Leonard voted “no”.

Wigley is a native of Northeast Arkansas, is married to local attorney Daniel Wigley and is a former employee of the City of Monticello.

In new business, the council voted seven to one to declare 938 E. College St. a nuisance. Alderman Leonard was the one “no” vote.

A resolution authorizing the purchase of a Knuckleboom TL3 Lightning Loader and to amend the City of Monticello One Cent Sales Tax budget for 2023 was passed. The Mayor



WIGLEY

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24-HR
NES
144
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FOR IMMEDIATE HIRING

WHAT WILL BE
HIDDEN?

KEEP PUBLIC NOTICES IN NEWSPAPERS

Public notices in your local newspaper inform citizens of changes that affect them and help hold government agencies accountable. Some state and local officials want to eliminate public notices from newspapers and place them on a government-controlled website – which would NOT keep them accountable.

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OUR 152ND YEAR
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COMMUNITY CALENDAR

UPCOMING

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 21 THROUGH MARCH 28

Shepherd's Classes

First United Methodist Church will offer Shepherd's Classes beginning at 9 a.m., Tuesday, Feb. 21 at 371 S. Main in Monticello. The cost is \$10. Learn a new skill, meet new people and fellowship. For more information, contact Gretchen at 501-467-2262.

FRIDAY, MARCH 3

Lenten Fish Fry

St. Mark's Knights of Columbus Council will host the J.J. Russell annual Lenten Fish Fry beginning at 5:30 p.m. March 3 at St. Mark Catholic Church in Monticello. Take out or dine in options are available and the cost is \$12 for pre orders and \$15 at the door. Proceeds from this event go to support coats for local children.

SATURDAY, MARCH 4

FBC Women's Conference

Ladies! Join us on March 4 at FBC Monticello from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. for a day designed to serve women in such a way that they are refreshed, renewed in their faith and ready to share it with the world around them. You are sure to be encouraged and challenged. Registration is \$30 and will include a boxed lunch. Guest speaker Andrea Lennon will be featured.

SUNDAY, MARCH 5

100th birthday for Vera Lloyd

Vera Lloyd Presbyterian Family Services will celebrate their 100th birthday from 2-4 p.m., Sunday, March 5 at 745 Old Warren Rd. RSVP to Kerri at 501-425-9547 or kerridaniels@veralloyd.org.

113th Annual Spaghetti Dinner

The 113th Annual Spaghetti Dinner will be held at Our Lady of the Lake in Lake Village, Sunday, March 5th, with drive-thru starting at 8AM. We're looking to beat last year's historic turn out so get your tickets! There are a limited number of reserved tables available, in addition to individual and drive-thru tickets. Please call (214) 533-0227 or (870) 489-2883 for tickets.

MONDAY, MARCH 6

Selma Water Association meeting

The annual meeting of the Selma Water Association will take place at 6 p.m., Monday, March 6 at Florence Baptist Church.

TUESDAY, MARCH 14

Barkada-Greenhill Water Association meeting

The annual meeting of the Barkada Water association will be held on Tuesday, March 14, 2023, at Andrews Chapel Church at 6:30 p.m. This meeting is open to Barkada Water Association Membership only. Business will include election of two board members, review financial reports, and discussion of old and new business. There will be an official board meeting to follow to conduct board business and to elect board officers. Members will be dismissed at that time.

SATURDAY, MARCH 18

Bell Choir concert

Ringers of Hope Bell Choir will present a free concert at 11 a.m., Saturday, March 18 at Monticello SDA Church, 2656 Highway 278 E. A light fellowship meal will follow. For more information, call 870-723-8238.

THURSDAY, APRIL 13

Master Singers performance

Seark Concert Association will present The Master Singers at 7 p.m., Thursday, April 13 at the University of Arkansas at Monticello Fine Arts Center. For more information, call 870-460-1888 or visit www.searkconcert.org.

ONGOING

Head Start sign up

Save the Children is offering Head Start and Early Head Start services to low income families with children getting ready to start Kindergarten. To apply in Monticello, call 870-224-8045 or visit 175 Henley Dr.

Free community yoga class

Every third Thursday, from November to March, a free community yoga class will be offered from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. at Monticello Coffee Company. Props and mats are available for use. Everyone is invited to attend and enjoy yoga, hot tea and coffee sponsored by Woodside Medical, hosted by MoCoCo and led by Maci Edwards.

City recycling guidelines

Each Wednesday, barring a catastrophe, the city of Monticello is accepting recyclable items at the Transfer Station within the following guidelines: 1) Cardboard—must be flattened. Not accepted are cereal boxes, drink can boxes or egg cartons; 2) Plastic bottles—lids must be removed and the bottles must be bagged. Only No. 1 and No. 2 bottles are accepted (the number is located on the bottom of the bottle). No wide-mouthed bottles can be accepted; 3) Newspapers—bagged or boxed; 4) Aluminum cans—must be bagged. No tin cans or pet food cans can be accepted; and 5) Shredded office paper—must be bagged. To have recycled items picked up, contact City Hall at 870-367-4400. Note: Electronics (E-Waste) are accepted at the city transfer station, 1466 Old Warren Road, but are not eligible for pick up. The city reminds all citizens to not mix household trash with recyclable items. The city does not accept glass or any item not listed above at this time.

Drew County Quorum Court Meeting

The Drew County Quorum Court meets the second Monday of every month at 6 p.m. in the Monticello District Court, 107 East Jackson Avenue in Monticello. The public is encouraged to attend.

Monticello City Council Meeting

The Monticello City Council meets the fourth Tuesday of every month at 6 p.m. in City Hall. The public is encouraged to attend.

Support for local schools

Show support for local schools by purchasing a school mascot yard sign for only \$20. All three (University of Arkansas at Monticello Boll Weevils, Drew Central Pirates and Monticello Billies) may be purchased for \$50. For more information, contact the Monticello-Drew County Chamber of Commerce at 870-367-6741 or stop by the chamber office at 335 East Gaines Street.

Borrow a book and hours

The Southeast Arkansas Regional Library, Monticello Branch, 114 West Jefferson Avenue, is open from 9 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Monday through Friday and from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday. Masks are required while entering, exiting or walking around the library. Masks may be removed while seated. Social distancing of 6 feet between individuals. Hand sanitizer is available upon entering the building and at the front desk. Call the library at 870-367-8583. Fax, copying and printing services are available. Public WiFi is available inside and from the parking lot. The password is books2015.

Information and referral outreach office now open

Southeast Arkansas Delta Solutions Community Development Organization announces the opening of its Information and Referral Outreach Office, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. The office will be open Tuesdays only. Services will include but are not limited to, COVID-19 relief information, pharmacy assistance referrals for free and reduced prescription medications, help with disability applications and other health and human services needs.

Delta Solutions is a non-profit organization, serving residents in Ashley, Bradley, Chicot, Desha and Drew counties. Its primary focus is Education, Housing, Health and Wellness, Economic Development, Community Development, Housing, Food Insecurity, and Financial Literacy.

The office is located at Revival Center Church's Business office complex. For service, please use the front entrance at 311 South Pine in Monticello. For questions or to schedule an appointment, one may call Mrs. Linda Austin at (870) 740-1093.

Local students named to Dean's List in U of A's Fulbright College

SPECIAL TO THE ADVANCE

Drew County students were named to the Fall 2022 Dean's List in the Fulbright College of Arts and Sciences at the University of Arkansas.

To qualify for the Dean's List, the following local students achieved at least a 3.75 grade-point average for the semester while completing at least 12 credit hours.

Samuel Breedlove, Mackenzie Crook, and Caroline Groves, all of Monticello were honored on the list.

"These students are the very best of Fulbright College," said Kathryn Sloan, interim dean.

"This achievement demonstrates their academic excellence and commitment to our mission of peace through education. It's an honor to recognize these outstanding students who made the Dean's List and who make Fulbright College, the University of Arkansas, and their hometowns incredibly proud."

"I'd be remiss not to also recognize the family, friends and Fulbright College faculty and staff who support these students - and all of our students - in their education journey," Sloan added. "It's the support of these individuals who make the dream of higher education a reality for

our students, and we're grateful for their influence and support."

More than 8,000 students call Fulbright College home with areas of study and research across the fine arts, humanities, The Fulbright College of Arts and Sciences is the largest and most academically diverse unit on campus with three schools, 16 departments and numerous academic programs and research centers. The college provides the majority of the core curriculum for all University of Arkansas students.

As Arkansas' flagship institution, the U of A provides an internationally competitive educa-

tion in more than 200 academic programs. Founded in 1871, the U of A contributes more than \$2.2 billion to Arkansas' economy through the teaching of new knowledge and skills, entrepreneurship and job development, discovery through research and creative activity while also providing training for professional disciplines. The Carnegie Foundation classifies the U of A among the top U.S. colleges and universities with the highest level of research activity. U.S. News & World Report ranks the U of A among the top public universities in the nation.

Ward named to Ole Miss Fall 2022 Chancellor's Honor Roll

SPECIAL TO THE ADVANCE

Amelia Ward, of Monticello, was named to the University of Mississippi's Fall 2022 Honor Roll lists.

Ward was named to the Chancellor's Honor Roll, which is reserved for students who earn a semester GPA of 3.75-4.00.

"The remarkable students achieving Chancellor's Honor Roll are among the best and

brightest at the University of Mississippi," said Chancellor Glenn Boyce. "I commend them for their hard work and dedication resulting in their outstanding academic achievements and this well-deserved recognition."

In order to be eligible for honor roll designation, a student must have completed at least 12 graded hours for the semester and may not be on academic

probation during the semester.

The University of Mississippi, affectionately known as Ole Miss, is the state's flagship university. Included in the elite group of R1: Doctoral Universities - Highest Research Activity by the Carnegie Classification, it has a long history of producing leaders in public service, academics and business. Its 16 academic divisions include a major

medical school, nationally recognized schools of accountancy, law and pharmacy, and an Honors College acclaimed for a blend of academic rigor, experiential learning and opportunities for community action. Recognized among the nation's most beautiful, Ole Miss' main campus is in Oxford, which is routinely acknowledged as one of the country's best college towns.

Senior Center lunch menu: March 1 - March 8

Wednesday: Meatloaf, mashed potatoes, tomato gravy, turnip greens, cornbread, banana pudding

Thursday: BBQ chicken, mashed potatoes, glazed carrots, brookie bar, roll

Friday: Cheeseburgers, tater babies, baked beans, fruit cocktail

Monday: Beef vegetable soup, cornbread, pears w/ cottage cheese

Tuesday: Pork tips w/onion, bell peppers, and gravy,

buttered squash, dessert, biscuits

Wednesday: Fried chicken, mashed potatoes, green beans, dessert, roll

Menu is subject to change. All lunches have a choice of sweet tea and milk. The Senior Center serves lunch for citizens 60 and older for \$4; under 60, \$5, Monday through Friday from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m., first come, first served. If you need any information on our senior center, please call 367-2434.



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Ark-La-Tex feral hog damage assessment provides deeper understanding

By JOHN LOVETT
University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture - Arkansas Agricultural Experiment Station

Managing feral swine — the land-damaging, disease-carrying wild hogs that roam throughout the country — starts with good data, according to Nana Tian, a forest economics researcher for the Arkansas Forest Resources Center.

To serve as a baseline for feral swine damage assessments to private landowners and help guide management practices, the Arkansas Forest Resources Center in Monticello led a multi-state survey of 4,500 landowners to gauge economic damage to croplands, forestlands, pasturelands/livestock and their combinations.

“We know feral swine can cause a lot of damage, but it was a little surprising to see so many forest landowners reporting damage,” said Tian, who is also an assistant professor of forest economics in the College of Forestry, Agriculture and Natural Resources at the University of Arkansas at Monticello.

Tian noted that forest landowners usually do not monitor their forestland as regularly as cropland owners, but many forest landowners reported damage and were aware of the seriousness of feral swine damage.

The Arkansas Forest Resources Center is a partnership between the University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture and the University of Arkansas at Monticello. Research is administered through the Division of Agriculture’s Arkansas Agricultural Experiment Station.

The recently published survey estimates feral swine damages over five years across all of Arkansas and Louisiana and 38 counties in east Texas.

The average amount of land owned by those surveyed was 200 acres. Forestland and timberland losses were estimated at \$17 per acre in both Arkansas and Louisiana, and \$12 per acre in east Texas for the five-year period.

“We wanted to understand more about what was happening to the small landowners because smaller landowners may face more limitations than larger landowners in technical and financial assistance,” Tian said.

“We wanted to have more information from their side.”

Common swine damage to forest landowners includes girdling trees through rubbing and damaging roots by rooting and chewing. In the southern U.S., feral swine are also known to root up newly planted tree seedlings in plantations of both pines and hardwood species. Tian said they can severely affect trees and timber resources.

Feral swine have rooted, wallowed and chomped their way into the ranks of America’s invasive species, causing an estimated \$1.5 billion in economic damages annually across the United States, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service. The Arkansas Department of Agriculture estimates feral hogs cause about \$19 million in damage in Arkansas annually.

Soybean, corn, and rice fields are a buffet table for a sounder of swine — the social unit of feral hogs. One sounder can root up a pasture overnight. Larger swine can kill and eat newborn calves and vulnerable cows. Feral swine teach their young how to evade traps and can trick even the most seasoned hunters and trappers. They are a problem for ranchers, farmers, and even golf course and cemetery managers, said Becky McPeake, extension wildlife specialist with the University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture.

McPeake serves on the Arkansas Department of Agriculture’s

Feral Hog Eradication Task Force, which is a group of state and partner agencies dedicated to managing Arkansas’ feral swine problem.

There are more than 6 million feral swine in 35 states across the nation, including Hawaii, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Most of the swine population was established in southern states, first introduced in Texas by early Spanish explorers over 300 years ago as a source of cured meat and lard for settlers, the report noted. Regarded as an invasive species, feral swine are in all 75 counties of Arkansas with a population of about 200,000.

For the full story, visit our website, www.advancemonticellonian.com.

Monticello Police Department makes multiple arrests

THEFT ARRESTS

Two McGehee residents are facing felony charges after the couple was arrested by the Monticello Police Department for attempting to steal catalytic converters at the former Monticello National Guard Armory. The arrests occurred early Monday morning. David Christian, 44, of McGehee was apprehended inside the fenced in area of the armory as he hid under a vehicle after being caught on surveillance

camera on the premises. Roxanne Scott, age 38, also of McGehee, was apprehended by MPD shortly afterwards near the scene of the attempted thefts. Both were charged with breaking or entering, felony theft of property and possession of an instrument of crime. Christian was also arrested for possession of methamphetamine. Both are being held in the Drew County Jail pending first appearances.

K9 APPREHENDS FLEE-

ING SUSPECT

Kevin Smith, 35, of Monticello was apprehended using Monticello Police Department’s canine, Cezar, last Saturday. Smith was seen operating an ATV on a city street. When officers attempted to stop Smith, he fled on foot to a nearby property, forcing entry into the unoccupied structure. Officers secured the exterior of the building and the K-9 unit was called to the scene. Cezar and his handler, Officer David Menotti,

arrived on scene and conducted a search of the building, locating Smith hiding inside an abandoned vehicle inside the building. Neither Smith or the K9 were injured as Smith was taken in to custody without incident once located by the canine unit. Smith was charged with felony fleeing, breaking or entering, operating

an ATV on the highway, possession of methamphetamine and drug paraphernalia. An absconder warrant was also active for Smith. He is currently incarcerated at the Drew County Sheriffs Department pending a first judicial appearance.

METH ARREST

Alicia Marshall, 40, was arrested by MPD Officers after responding to a call on North Cooper Street. Once on scene, it was discovered by officers that Marshall was in possession of methamphetamine. She was arrested and charged with possession of methamphetamine and possession of drug paraphernalia.

Sheriff’s Dept. has busy week

On February 22, 2023 Deputies were dispatched to a residence on Barkada Road in reference to a disturbance. Upon arrival, deputies spoke with an elderly female who stated a relative, Matthew Adair, 23, of Monticello, struck her in the abdominal area and knocked her to the floor. The victim then stated Adair pointed a shotgun at her and stated he would shoot her. Matthew Adair left the scene prior to deputies’ arrival. The victim left the residence with another relative to seek medical attention at the local hospital while deputies searched for Adair. Approximately 30 minutes after the disturbance call, dispatch received a 911 call from the relative and victim stating Adair was attempting to pass them on Barkada Road. Moments later

Matthew Adair struck their vehicle with his vehicle causing both vehicles to wreck. Matthew Adair was arrested at the scene and transported to the Drew County Detention Facility where he was charged with Domestic Battering first degree and Domestic Battering second degree. On February 23, 2023 Matthew Adair appeared before Judge Robert Gibson for a first appearance. Adair’s bond was set at \$100,000 cash.

On February 21, 2023 Felicia McKinley, 45, of Warren was arrested for the offense of Furnishing Prohibited Articles into the Drew County Detention Facility. During the course of the investigation, it was discovered that McKinley furnished the contraband by placing it on a toddler during a special visit. An arrest

warrant was gained for Felicia McKinley, she turned herself in and was arrested without incident on the same date. Her bond was set at \$10,000 and is currently out on bond. The case will be forwarded to Prosecutor Frank Spain for formal charges.

On February 26, Kristy Meek, 38, and William Holt II, 43, both of Monticello, were arrested while inside the Drew County Detention Facility for the offense of Furnishing Prohibited Articles. A case file will be completed and submitted to Prosecutor Frank Spain for formal charges. The investigations of such activity have been on-going to ensure the safety of not only staff members but the detainees as well.

CALENDAR

Continued from Page 2A

AA meetings

The Monticello Winner’s Group of Alcoholics Anonymous meets at St. Mary’s Episcopal Church, located at 836 N. Hyatt St. in Monticello at 12 noon on Tuesdays and Fridays and at 7 p.m. on Thursdays and Saturdays. The meetings are open. There are no dues or fees.

Andrews Chapel Cemetery

To all concerned that have family or cemetery plots in the Andrews Chapel Cemetery, please send any updated contact information

to: Andrews Chapel Cemetery Association, C/O Cindy Ferrell, Secretary/Treasurer, 2968 Barkada Road, Wilmar, AR 71675.

VFW Auxiliary


Anyone interested in joining the VFW Auxiliary is asked to contact Wanda or Melvin Veasey, VFW Commander, at mlvinj.veasey@yahoo.com or 870-723-4993. Any relative of a veteran who served overseas in a foreign war is eligible for membership. Any past members who are still interested in the Auxiliary are also asked to contact Wanda or Melvin if they are still interested in being a member.

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GETTING MARRIED?
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Anna Kay Wright Bride-elect of Steven Hill
Reception May 27, 2023

Savannah Reynolds Bride-elect of Walker Walthall
March 11, 2023

Leah Armstrong Bride-elect of Aaron Stone
January 28, 2023



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OPINION

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Making school meals work for students, nutrition professionals

I spend a great deal of my time on the road when I'm home in Arkansas. As a firm believer that the best ideas come from the ground up, I make it a priority to stay in constant contact with community leaders across our state. These visits provide me with plenty of ideas and perspective to bring back to Washington to help us grow, keep our families safer and healthier, and address some of the biggest issues we face.



JOHN BOOZMAN
U.S. SENATE REPORT

While I enjoy each unique visit, sharing lunch with kids in their school's cafeteria is high up on the list of favorites. Maybe because it takes me back to my school board roots or it might be the nostalgic feeling of a school cafeteria, but sitting down with Arkansas's future and hearing their hopes and dreams always brings a smile

to my face.

School lunches are essential building blocks for achieving the goals our students are pursuing. Volumes of research show a direct correlation between healthy meals and academic performance.

Arkansas's school nutrition professionals work hard each school day to feed kids healthy, nutritious meals. Their dedication allows many struggling parents in our state to feel confident their children will at least be able to eat well during the school day.

Officials at the U.S. Department of Agriculture are eyeing changes that will make school nutrition professionals' jobs more difficult starting in the 2024-25 school year. The department has proposed stricter nutritional standards for school breakfast and lunch programs—an added sugars limit, incremental sodium reductions, restrictions to the type of milk which may be offered and a whole grain-rich requirement.

It may seem well-meaning, but the changes pose significant challenges for school staff working to feed students, who will likely also end up suffering as a result.

This is a perfect example of an idea that looks good on paper but is unworkable when put into practice.

Many students will not consume meals offered under these revised standards. The Institute of Medicine report, on which previous iterations were based, noted that if children did not change the foods they consume at home, they are unlikely to adapt to food with significantly restricted sodium at school.

Is it rational to expect to change a child's eating habits over a 20-minute lunch period, when foods outside of school do not meet the same requirements?

Not only will these regulations likely lead to an increase in food waste, but they will also drive up the costs for schools and families. Food inflation remains at its highest rate in four decades and schools routinely struggle to procure foods that meet these proposed benchmarks.

Evidence suggests that a dramatic change of this nature is simply unnecessary. Parents, nutritionists and policymakers on both sides of the aisle all agree school meals have become more nutritious in recent years. Sometimes we forget how far school meals have come—more fruits and vegetables are being served, along with more whole grains, and there have already been drastic reductions in sodium.

Our school nutrition professionals care deeply about the children they serve. I trust them to know their students and what will work in their schools to ensure the food they're serving will be eaten, not thrown away.

When they tell me these standards are a problem, I listen. The Biden administration and the president's appointees at USDA should as well.

Patience is a virtue that I do not possess

I am good at many things and I have a wide variety of talents. One of them being confidence, obviously.

With that, I possess a self awareness that allows me to understand that I am not in fact Wonder Woman and I cannot do it all, all the time. Learning that lesson was really hard for me, but once I came to grips with the fact that there would be times that I needed assistance, my life improved dramatically.



ASHLEY HOGG
EDITOR

Among my immense list of flaws, the one that seems to always top the charts is my lack of patience.

I had hoped that once I became a mother that I would grow some sort of gene that contained patience. I've been a mother for over seven years now and I'm still waiting.

I was an impatient little kid who was difficult to console when things didn't turn out the way I thought they should and I grew into an impatient adult who is difficult to console when things don't happen in a timely manner.

Of course, I married someone that has patience flowing out of his ears so he helps keep me in check. But, I don't have the luxury of always having his extra handful of patience by my side so I end up shooting from the hip occasionally.

At times, I have been known to make less than fantastic choices because of my lack of restraint.

Don't get me wrong, I am willing to stand behind the decisions I make, I just wish I was able to think some of them through a little better.

Sometimes, I make the wrong call and I have to deal with the consequences. I guess that has tailored my ability to adjust and refocus when needed, which has proved to be a valuable life skill. Even still, I do wish that I had more staying power.

I have prayed for patience and wow, was that a crazy season in my life. I can't say I didn't learn anything, I just know that I am not for long suffering.

I have tried very hard to teach myself patience over the years but those efforts have proven to be futile because to teach something, you should probably have an understanding of it.

There are plenty of decisions that I have made

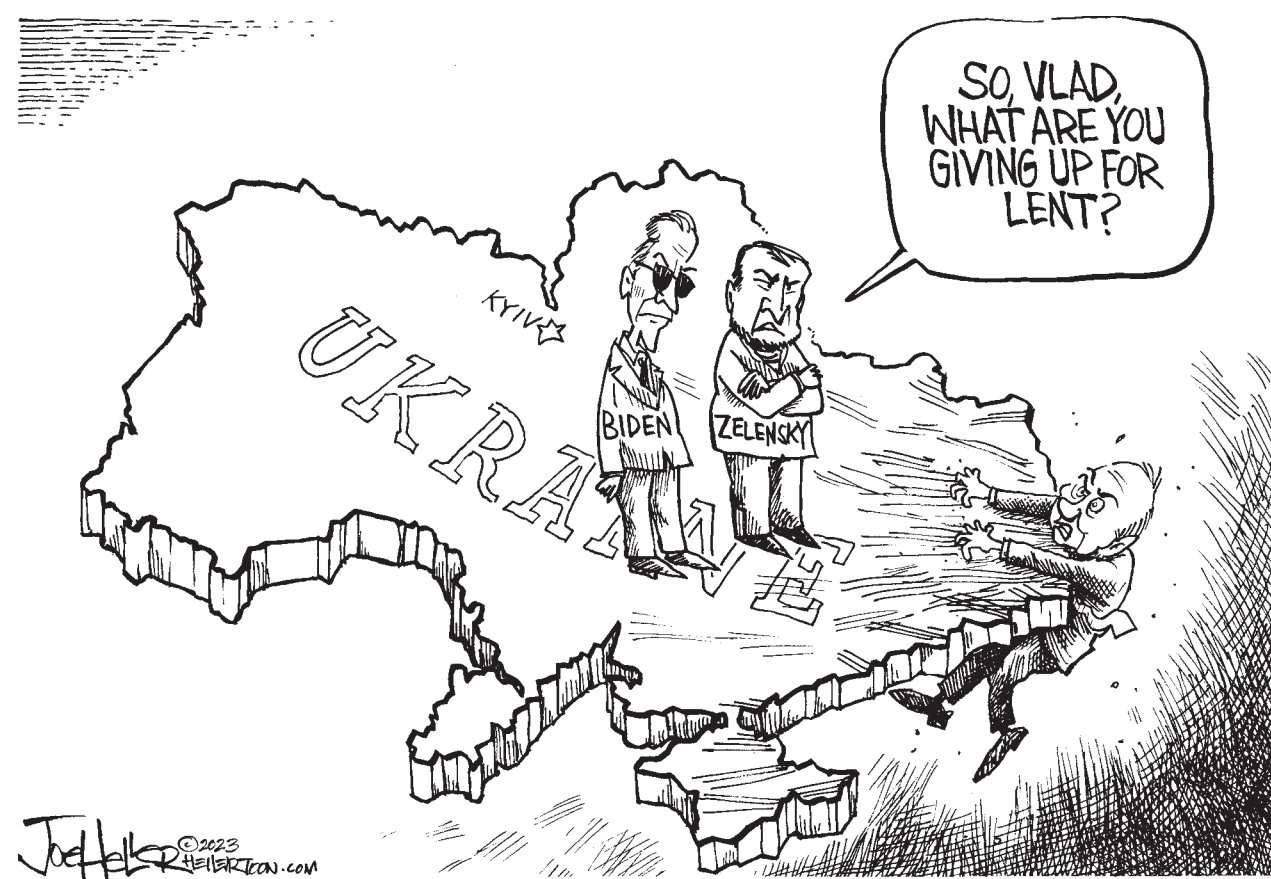
"shoot from the hip" style that have served me extremely well and I am a firm believer in not having regrets in life. That doesn't mean that I don't have the occasional remorseful feeling if a decision I made affected someone negatively.

I see so many younger people today that seriously lack the ability to make even the smallest decisions for themselves. This bothers me greatly. I am trying to teach Fred that she can make her own decisions and be proud of them. Hopefully, she possess that magic gene that will allow her to take a moment to reflect before making a major choice.

I guess there is some kind of trade off if you don't ever make decisions. You won't have regrets. You won't be held accountable. People won't look to you to lead them.

I can't imagine having someone else make all my choices for me. That is the worst form of capital punishment in my opinion. So I will continue to live with my own form of consequences, because that is the path I choose.

Forgive me if you see me in the wild or among the general populous and I seem impatient. It is a flaw that I will continually work on.



LEO's risk their lives for the safety of their community

I am constantly amazed by the heroism of the men and women who pursue a career in law enforcement. Every day, they put on their uniforms, leave their homes, and risk their lives to ensure the safety of their communities. With violent and drug-related crimes surging across the country, it is so important that now, more than ever, we support our law enforcement heroes. They are the ones who will protect us and keep our streets safe for our families for years to come.

This past week I had the opportunity to visit the Arkansas State Police Department Headquarters in southwest Little Rock which is now in the 4th District.

I was honored that they took the time to welcome me, give me a tour of their facilities, and share stories with me of their jobs.

Among the men and women I met

were Colonel Mike Hager, the new Director of the Arkansas State Police, Lieutenant Colonel Jason Aaron, Lieutenant Colonel Mike Kennedy, Chief of Staff Hugh Finkelstein, and Major Stacie Rhoads.

On the visit, I was especially in awe of one particular place at headquarters: The Hall of Honor. Right off the main lobby, the Hall of Honor is a memorial space for Arkansas State Troopers, including K-9 officers, who have died in the line of duty. It was truly impactful to be in such a place that honors the brave men and women who sacrificed their lives in service to Arkansans.

While walking through headquarters together, Colonel Hager shared some jarring statistics from the Arkansas Criminal Patrol's significant seizures from 2022. The numbers were shocking. In just one year in Arkansas, the Interstate Criminal Patrol seized over 8,000 pounds of marijuana, 370 pounds of meth, and most horrifying to me, 65 pounds of fentanyl. For reference, just two milligrams of fentanyl can be lethal. The fentanyl that was

seized in Arkansas is enough to kill over 14,000,000 people!

These numbers are appalling. The scariest part is that these numbers are just from the drugs that we know about and that our brave officers have seized. And Arkansas isn't even close to the top of the list of states by number of overdose deaths. The problem is nationwide, and it's growing.

This visit was very eye opening. So many of us live our lives blissfully unaware of the horrific crime that's happening right in our backyards. And why? Because the brave men and women in uniform dedicate their lives to keeping our streets safe. However, as they mentioned in our meeting, the revolving door with repeat offenders needs to be closed meaning the prosecution, sentencing, incarceration, and rehabilitation components of law enforcement need to be strengthened.

Our officers provide such an essential service to our state; they provide security to all citizens, so we can have

See **WESTERMAN** Page 5A

Legislation approved for education bill

The Senate has approved legislation that makes the single largest investment in public education in Arkansas history.



BEN GILMORE
ARKANSAS SENATE REPORT

Senate Bill 294, the governor's education package, has 144 pages and 25 Senate co-sponsors.

The bill would raise the minimum salary for teachers from \$36,000 to \$50,000, and all teachers would receive a raise of at

least \$2,000.

It will add 120 literacy coaches to

work across the state, and for children who struggle with learning to read it will provide grants of \$500 to pay for tutors. Students will have to meet third grade reading standards to advance to the fourth grade.

The bill provides teachers with up to 12 weeks of paid maternity leave. Teachers who excel can qualify for bonuses of \$10,000. It also repeals the Teacher Fair Dismissal Act and the salary schedule that mandates teacher salaries depending on their years of experience and credentials.

Teachers with degrees from certified higher education institutions will qualify for more loan forgiveness programs.

School safety measures will be ex-

panded under SB 294, which will provide training for school resource officers, and enhance training in crisis response and mental health.

The cap on school transfers from district to district will be repealed, but if the receiving district is already filled to capacity it could deny a proposed transfer. Local school officials could contract with an open enrollment charter school to take over failing school campuses.

Beginning in 2024-2025, high schools will offer a career-readiness pathway, to prepare students with job skills. It will be an alternative to academic curricula for students who

See **GILMORE** Page 5A

Bills passing through Arkansas House

In the seventh week of the 2023 Regular Session, House members voted on a number of bills impacting employment, education, and elections.

This week, the House passed HB1430. This bill reduces the maximum potential unemployment compensation benefits from 4 months to 3 months. This bill also reduces unemployment insurance tax rates for employers.

The House also passed HB1401. This bill reduces the time an able-bodied adult may receive cash

assistance from the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program. The bill limits the assistance from 24 months to 12 months.

In addition, the House passed HB1410. This bill eliminates the state's requirement that children under 16 years of age have to obtain permission from the Division of Labor in order to be employed.

Regarding elections, the House passed the following pieces of legislation:

HB1419-This bill amends the procedure for the filing of a ballot initiative and referendum petition by requiring that signatures are gathered from at least 50 counties. Currently, signatures are required from 15 counties.

HB1320-This bill would require the Attorney General to review the ballot title for an initiative petition or referendum petition before circulation.

SB247-This bill allows an absentee ballot to be issued to any person who is prevented from voting due to observance of a religious discipline or religious holiday during the entire 12 hours that the polls are open on election day.

1404-This bill outlines security procedures for county election commissioners in the event that equipment and materials from one polling site need to be transferred to another polling site during the early voting period.

HB1407-This bill states that the Secretary of State shall ensure the security and accuracy of the statewide voter registration list. It directs the Secretary of State's office to cooperate with other states and jurisdictions to compare registered voters, identify voters whose addresses have changed, and prevent registration in more than one state.

HB1423-This bill establishes procedures for the recount of ballots.

See **WARDLAW** Page 5A

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HISTORY MINUTE

WWII was a pivotal time in this country

By: KENNETH BRIDGES

World War II was a time in which America had not a man to spare. It was a war that required all of the nation's resources, manpower, innovation, and courage. Aviation played a vital role. One Arkansan served as one of the first African-American flight instructors in history. Through his efforts, Milton Crenshaw, as part of the famed Tuskegee Airmen, helped train hundreds of pilots who helped turn the tide toward victory for the United States.

Milton Pitts Crenshaw was born in Little Rock in 1919, less than two months after the end of World War I. His father, Rev. Joseph Crenshaw, was a respected minister, tailor, and long-time civil rights leader in the city. The younger Crenshaw attended local schools, graduating from the segregated Dunbar High School in 1936. He received a teaching certificate in automotive mechanics from Dunbar Junior College before heading to Alabama to further his education.

By the late 1930s, war was growing ominously close to the United States. The importance of air power became clear to military strategists long before the war began. The ability of aircraft to deliver more precise reconnaissance, to transport troops to and from battlefields, and the ability to attack targets over a great range gave militaries with strong aerial components a distinct advantage.

African-Americans were not allowed to serve as pilots during World War I, but recognizing the shortage of pilots the nation faced, President Franklin D. Roosevelt pushed to have African-Americans trained as pilots in 1939. As pilots were all officers, a college education was required. As a result, Tuskegee University in Tuskegee, Ala-

bama, soon became the heart of the African-American pilot training program. First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt, after a flight with the head of the Tuskegee flight program in March 1941, made sure that the airmen had the airport facilities they needed.

Crenshaw arrived at the university and began studying mechanical engineering and soon began participating in the Civilian Pilot Training Program, an Army Air Corps program that trained civilian pilots in possible preparation for future military service. He earned his license in August 1941 and began working as a flight instructor. He was the first known African-American from Arkansas to earn a license and one of the first Tuskegee flight instructors.

After the United States entered World War II after the attack on Pearl Harbor, training at Tuskegee intensified. In 1942, he became a supervising squadron member as he showed the young pilots all the intricate details of handling an aircraft in all types of weather and all types of maneuvers. While the scholastic aspects were handled at the university, the actual flight training took place at nearby Moton Field. Ultimately, Crenshaw trained hundreds of pilots at Tuskegee. Most of the Tuskegee Airmen served in Europe in the latter years of World War II, often as bomber escorts protecting American servicemen and ensuring the success of vital wartime missions. The Tuskegee Airmen, thanks to the training they received from Crenshaw and the other instructors, became some of the most decorated pilots of the war.

Inspired by his wartime experiences, Crenshaw wanted to extend the growing opportunities in aviation to a new generation of African-American pi-

lots. He returned to Arkansas in 1947 and approached Dr. M. L. Harris, then president of Philander Smith College in Little Rock, about the possibility of developing an aviation program for the college. The college established a popular aviation program at nearby Adams Field (which is now the Bill and Hillary Clinton National Airport). He served as a flight instructor for the college until 1953.

In 1953, Crenshaw resumed his work training army pilots. He served briefly as an instructor at Fort Sill in Oklahoma before heading to Fort Rucker, Alabama, the next year. While at Fort Rucker, he became the first African-American instructor on the base. In 1966, he went to Fort Stewart, Georgia, where he continued to train pilots until 1972 when he began working at the base's Equal Employment Opportunity Office through the Department of Defense. He retired in 1983.

In his later years, Crenshaw continued to be an advocate for the men he served with at Tuskegee. He pushed to include individuals who served in all capacities, such as cook, groundskeepers, flight instructors, and medical personnel, for veterans benefits programs. He was inducted into the Arkansas Aviation Hall of Fame in 1998. In 2007, Crenshaw along with the 16,000 participants at Tuskegee were collectively awarded the Congressional Gold Medal for their service during war and contributions to aviation.

In 2012, the film Red Tails premiered, dramatizing the experiences of some of the Tuskegee Airmen. Crenshaw appeared in Little Rock to introduce the film and discuss his experiences with an appreciative audience. He spent most of his last years in Atlanta. Crenshaw died in November 2015 at age 96.

AWARD

Continued from Page 1A

ing her peers," said Dr. Barnett. "Emily understands the unique educational needs of a rural community and works daily to strengthen the collective role of students, educators, parents and community members in building a culture of growth. The Milken Educator Award honors her service as a role model for the state and nation, and for her potential to impact the profession for decades to come. Congratulations."

Hailed as the "Oscars of Teaching," Milken Educator Awards inspire and uplift with the unique stories of educators making a profound difference for students, colleagues and communities. The specific states and schools on this year's winners' list remain a closely guarded secret until each Award is announced.

"We are always excited to celebrate excellence in teaching, and today we celebrate Ms. Howard," Oliva said. "Ms. Howard exhibits all the wonderful characteristics and traits of exceptional teachers. From

her inviting classroom and student and parental engagement to using student data to guide instruction and student growth in key academic subject areas, Ms. Howard reflects the epitome of great teaching. Congratulations to her on this well-deserved honor!"

Along with the financial prize, recipients join the national Milken Educator Network, a group of more than 2,900 and growing of exemplary teachers, principals and specialists. The network serves as a rich resource for fellow educators, legislators, school boards and others dedicated to excellence in education.

The honorees will also attend an all-expenses-paid Milken Educator Awards Forum in Los Angeles, where they will network with their new colleagues as well as veteran Milken Educators and other education leaders about how to increase their impact on K-12 education.

In addition, they will learn about how to become involved in the Milken Friends Forever (MFF) mentoring program, in which new Milken Educators

receive personalized coaching and support from a Milken Educator veteran on ways to elevate their instructional practice and take an active role in educational leadership, policy and practice.

"We find you. You don't find us!" Unlike most teacher recognition programs, the Milken Educator Awards initiative has no formal nomination or application process. Candidates are sourced through a confidential selection process and then reviewed by blue ribbon panels in each state. The most exceptional candidates are recommended for the Award, with final selection made by the Milken Family Foundation.

Veteran Milken Educators demonstrate a wide range of leadership roles at state, national and international levels.

The \$25,000 cash Award is unrestricted. Recipients have used the money in diverse ways. For instance, some have spent the funds on their children's or their own continuing education, financing dream field trips, establishing scholarships, and even adopting children.

Financial moves for military families

Military families face many challenges — one of which is the need to build and manage their financial resources. If you are connected to the military, either as an active member or as part of a family, what are some of the issues you face? And what opportunities are available to you?

To begin with, when trying to save and invest for retirement, military families encounter two main difficulties. First, many military service members don't remain in the armed forces long enough to earn a pension. And second, because military families move around so much, military spouses often don't stay at a job long enough to become eligible to receive employer contributions to retirement plans or to become vested in these plans.

However, military spouses who couldn't fully participate in employer-sponsored retirement plans in the past now have a new opportunity. As part of 2022 legislation known as SECURE 2.0, small employers — defined as having 100 or fewer employees earning at least \$5,000 in annual compensation — can receive a tax credit of up to \$500 for three years if they make military spouses eligible for a defined contribution plan, such as a 401(k), 403(b), SEP IRA and SIMPLE IRA. The credit is available for the year in which the military spouse is hired, plus the two following taxable years.

Spouses' contributions to retirement plans can certainly be one part of the retirement income picture for military families. But military members may also want to contribute to the Thrift Savings Plan, which functions much like 401(k) plans in the private sector. Specifically, if you're in the military, you can make pre-tax contributions, or after-tax (Roth) contributions, or both. By visiting the Thrift Savings Plan's website at "http://www.tsp.gov" www.tsp.gov, you can learn about investing in the plan, and you can find tips on various life events, such as buying a house.

Another savings opportunity is available for military personnel who have served in designated combat zones. If you're eligible, you can deposit up to \$10,000 and receive a 10 percent interest rate — an amount far above the rates typically paid by traditional savings accounts and even high-yield savings accounts. You can learn more about this program at "http://www.dfas.mil/MilitaryMembers/sdp/" www.dfas.mil/MilitaryMembers/sdp/.

And you may also be able to gain valuable financial benefits for education through the Post-9/11 GI Bill. Even if you're a veteran who doesn't plan to go back to school, you may be able to transfer the GI Bill's benefits to your spouse or child. To find out more about this program, go to "http://www.va.gov" www.va.gov and hit the "apply for education benefits" link.

Finally, health insurance is

another financial issue that military personnel and their families need to consider. If you're still on active duty, you have to enroll in TRICARE, and if you're veteran, you are likely still eligible for TRICARE coverage, along with your VA benefits. But there are different TRICARE options available, so you'll want to find the plan that's right for your needs. To familiarize yourself with what's available, visit "http://www.tricare.mil" www.tricare.mil.

By making the right financial moves, military families like yours can go a long way toward achieving the dignity and security you deserve. Make sure you're exploring all your opportunities.

This article was written by Edward Jones for use by your local Edward Jones Financial Advisor.

Edward Jones, Member SIPC



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WARDLAW

Continued from Page 4A

The following education bills also passed the House this week:

HB1336. This bill creates an agricultural education pilot program in public elementary schools.

HB1337. This bill classifies a building or space used for public early childhood education as an academic facility under the Arkansas Public School Academic Facilities Funding Act. It also classifies a safe room for students as an academic facility.

HB1329. This bill creates a means by which public school students may substitute comparable elective coursework in career and technical education for required core academic classes.

The legislation outlining the Governor's education initiative, SB294, passed the Senate this week and is now making its way to the House. We will post updates on that legislation including schedules for when the bill will be heard in the House Education Committee on our website www.arkansashouse.org

WESTERMAN

Continued from Page 4A

peace of mind and comfort in our homes. These heroes deserve our utmost respect and gratitude for everything they do to protect our families and communities.

GILMORE

Continued from Page 4A

choose to pursue a college degree.

Students will have to complete 75 hours of community service in order to graduate from high school.

A provision in SB 294 creates Education Freedom Accounts, which parents can draw on to pay tuition at private and parochial schools or to pay the expenses of home schooling. The state will put into the accounts an amount equal to 90 percent of per pupil foundation funding, which is \$7,413 this year.

Schools will be prohibited from indoctrinating students with theories that conflict with the principle of equality under the law. An example in SB 294 of a prohibited ideology is critical race theory (CRT).

The Senate also approved SB 81, which gives parents more options to have offensive

material removed from local libraries and school libraries. After making an objection to the librarian and if necessary making an appeal to the library board, parents would be able to appeal to the county Quorum Court or City Council. Both are composed of people elected by voters.

SB 81 removes the current exemption that protects librarians from criminal prosecution. If librarians knowingly maintain material that is deemed obscene, they could be prosecuted.

The Senate also passed SB 254 to eliminate write-in candidacies in state elections. Senators approved SB 199 to allow more medical malpractice lawsuits against physicians who perform gender transformation procedures on children. It allows lawsuits up to 15 years after the minor turns 18. For most medical malpractice suits the limit is two years after the injury.

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March Event Schedule

March 10th	5:00pm-7:00pm Pottery Painting
March 17th	5:00pm-7:00pm Pottery Painting
March 18th	10:30am-12:30pm Try It: Pottery 2:00-4:00 Handbuilding Pottery 6:00pm-8:00pm Date Night
March 20th	10:30am-12:30pm Kid's Art Camp
March 24th	5:00pm-7:00pm Pottery Painting
March 25th	10:30am-12:30pm Photography 101 1:00pm-3:00pm Watercolor 101 6:00pm-8:00pm Open House
March 31	5:00pm-7:00pm Pottery Painting

Message us on Facebook or come by Main Street Art to reserve a spot!

Are you a Monticello or Drew Central High School Senior Art Student?

Art Education Opportunities and Main Street Art offer two \$1,000 college scholarships to a graduating senior from each high school to study the visual arts.

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All information is to be sent to: Art Education Opportunities
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Historic Highway 35 Junk Hunt returns to Drew County

SPECIAL TO THE ADVANCE

The eighth annual Highway 35 Junk Hunt will take place Thursday, March 9 through Saturday, March 11.

The hunt includes miles and miles of yard sales, hubs of vendors and sales at local businesses along the route running south from Benton along Highway 35 through Sheridan, Rison, Monticello and ending around the Collins community in Drew County.

Along the route, there will be hubs of multiple vendors set up.

Hubs along the route and notices of sales can be found in the Highway 35 Junk Hunt Sales Group on Facebook, as well as the official Junk Hunt Facebook Page.

While the Junk Hunts give locals a chance to turn stuff laying around the house into cash, an

organizer of the event said one of the motivating factors in her putting the event together in the first place was to bring people to a part of the state they normally would never visit.

“I’m not sure everyone understands how the 35 Junk Hunt and the 79-63 Junk Hunt impacts not only the individuals setting up, but our cities and counties,” Via said. “A lot of those who I know are coming in don’t just visit our area other than to go junkin’, so the ‘junk’ is the ‘bait’ to bring folks into our neck of the woods.”

Via said those who travel the route are generating local sales tax revenue every time they buy food, gas, snacks, etc. along the route that stretches across four counties: Saline, Grant, Cleveland and Drew.

“Not only are we helping each



other, we’re meeting and visiting with one another, and sharing our knowledge of our friends’ and neighbors’ businesses and our local landmarks,” Via said. “It only takes one statement to help spread the word about our assets.”

For general information regarding the Junk Hunt, contact Via at (870) 917-8267 or Vickie Padgett at (870) 489-5687.

From the desk of the Mayor:

The City of Monticello was assisted last Friday by Arkansas Department of Corrections inmates in addressing drainage and debris issues in Monticello.

Inmates and staff worked near Gabbert, Shelton, and Jackson Streets last week cleaning ditches and overgrowth of organic material. Previously this year, the inmates assisted in cleaning the City Transfer Station.

The inmates work is part of an ongoing and focused effort

by the Mayor’s Office to address decades long drainage and debris issues faced in Monticello.

The arrangement with ADC to have inmate labor requires the city to supply the food for the inmates, which can get costly with a large number of inmates working.

Instead of purchasing commercial fast food, the Mayor has arranged to feed the inmates by utilizing the Senior Citizens Center, which is funded by the City, to supply meals for those

working at roughly half the cost.

“While inmate labor is greatly appreciated, city public works staff has also been working to clear clogged streams and ditches using heavy equipment.

The vast network of ditches and drains throughout Monticello did not get overgrown overnight nor will they be fixed overnight. We have to start somewhere and the time to start is now. We will continue to utilize every tool at our disposal,” Akers stated.

WINNER, WINNER!



Ashley Hogg/Advance Monticellonian

Roger and Brenda Brannon were the lucky winners of the second set of tickets to see Blake Shelton at Simmons Bank Arena later this month.

HOSPITAL

Continued from Page 1A

in capital investment from Baptist Health, for just normal transition costs and operating losses until we can get things going in the right direction with the revenue cycle, which will take time. Our board thinks that this is a smart decision to partner with Drew but they are interested to know this board’s appetite and willingness to support to increase the tax that supports the local hospital. Those are the things we would like to here more from you on.”

Drew County Judge Jessie Griffin addressed several questions including the issue of taxes.

“I don’t have a problem with it if its worth while and we are educated on the importance of the tax,” Griffin stated.

“Part of the conversation with the community is unfortunately the idea that Baptist will tax our community and take the money back to Little Rock,” Wells stated. “That is absolutely not true but we have to be able to communicate that properly to the community. We produce documents now to our regional hospitals so that people can see where the money goes.”

Board member Josh McKiever asked what the implications would be to the outside specialty clinics that are already in place at Drew Memorial.

“We always try to do what the community needs and what they will support,” Wells added.

“What if we have physicians that are affiliated with JPMC for example. Will a partnership prevent people from seeing the doctors they are already established with?” McKiever added.

“No,” Wells stated. “Hospital privileges are hospital privileges. We have open medical staffs at all of our hospitals.”

Board President Mike Akin asked if a partnership was made, would Baptist enter into some type of lease agreement with Drew Memorial and the county.

“Yes, we would sub-lease from the 501c3,” Wells added. “This keeps the local involvement.”

“If a partnership is the decision we jointly decide to take, is there a line in the sand drawn and a particular date set where Baptist would take over,” Akin asked.

“Yes, there is an affective date that would be picked and we

typically chose the first of the month to keep it clean for tax and governmental purposes,” Wells said.

Board member Wayne Owen asked how Baptist would deal with the existing debt that the hospital has.

“We would continue to make payments to those debt holders,” Beaulieu stated.

In regards to staffing, Wells said that there would be local administration but there would be less administrative positions on the local campus if a partnership with Baptist was made.

Akin then asked how much time was needed for Baptist to complete their compliance checks and Wells said a few weeks.

“By next months meeting, if you get all the information you need, we should be able to make a thumbs up or thumbs down decision on this partnership,” Akin added.

A representative from HRG, the company that is contracted

by Drew Memorial for revenue cycle management, was present at the meeting to discuss mistakes from the previous month is collection efforts.

The representative stated that previous problems included a labor shortage and that this issue had been rectified with off shore labor.

Board members Mike Akin and Carl Lucky expressed their extreme disappointment with the downward trend in collections that HRG has produced.

Stout Technologies made a presentation about antimicrobial lighting. Robert Akin introduced the company stating

that they had done some work previously at the Drew County Courthouse.

The meeting then went into Executive Session to discuss the quality and credentials report and personnel matters.

The next hospital board meeting is scheduled for 11:30 a.m., Monday, March 27.

ATTENTION - AUCTION NOTICE

Drew County will be placing the following items for public auction on March 18th at 8:45 am at Tony Cathey Auctions, Warren, AR. Items include pick up truck, military truck, 18’ double-axle trailer, Ford tractor, generator, large electric cooler and other equipment.

REQUEST FOR QUOTES

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) One-Stop Operator Monitoring Services

Application Period: February 27, 2023 – March 17, 2023

The Southeast Arkansas Workforce Development Board (SEAWDB) serving Arkansas, Ashley, Bradley, Chicot, Cleveland, Desha, Drew, Grant, Jefferson, and Lincoln counties is seeking an independent consultant or firm to conduct One-Stop Operator monitoring of the Southeast Arkansas workforce development area. The scope of the monitoring shall be limited to the role of the One-Stop Operator during Program Year: 2022 (July 1, 2022-June 30, 2023). Southeast Arkansas Economic Development District (SEAEDD) serves as the past and current One Stop Operator.

Obtaining Application Packages: The full RFQ application package contains the criteria/information, all requisite forms, and instructions. Criteria/information may be requested by contacting Steven Bloomberg, One-Stop Committee Chairperson, Southeast Arkansas Workforce Development Board via email at sbloomberg@seark.edu. The deadline for interested parties to request a package is March 6, 2023.

Deadline for Submission: Completed responses must be received via email NO LATER THAN 12:00p.m. CST on March 17, 2023. (Submit to: Steven Bloomberg, One-Stop Committee Chairperson, Southeast Arkansas Workforce Development Board via email at sbloomberg@seark.edu) Responses received after this date/time will not be considered. Questions may be directed to Chaketa Alexander, SEAWDB Director, via email at chaketa.alexander@southeastarkansas.org SEAWDB is an Equal Opportunity Program Provider, Organization & Employer. Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities.

Bridal REGISTRY

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Featured Couple:

Halley Ryburn and Johnathan Powell,

June 10, 2023

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Monday-Friday 8AM-6PM

Saturday 8AM-5PM

Sunday 12PM-5PM

CLASSIFIED

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CLASSIFIED RATES

BUSINESS ADS

1 Week - \$8⁵⁰
(25 Words Or Less; 34¢ Per Additional Word)
Includes one insertion in the Shoppers' Guide and one insertion in the Advance.

4 Weeks - \$20
(25 Words Or Less; 34¢ Per Additional Word)
Includes four insertions in the Shoppers' Guide and four insertions in the Advance.

FREE CLASSIFIEDS: To individuals for all ads with items priced at \$50 and under. All free ads must be for a single item, and be of a noncommercial nature. Lost and Found ads and Give away ads will also qualify as free ads. All other classified ads will be charged at the rates listed above. Free ads will run for two weeks.
PAID CLASSIFIEDS: Any ads of a commercial nature will be charged at the rates listed above. Classifieds to individuals must be pre-paid – you may use a credit or debit card or stop by our office at 314 N. Main St. For Rent, Hay for Sale, etc. are classified as **BUSINESS ADS**.

ADJUSTMENTS AND CREDITS: Check your ad for errors the first day. In the event an ad is accidentally omitted from publication or contains printer's error, the publisher's liability for such omission or error shall not exceed the charge made by the publisher for the ad which is omitted or which contains an error. Notice of the typographic or other errors must be given before the second insertion. No refunds on items sold before the last run date of the ad. No refunds are available with the \$20 classified special.

WE MAKE IT EASY TO PLACE YOUR CLASSIFIED ADS. CALL THE ADVANCE AT **870-367-5325** OR
SUBMIT YOUR AD ONLINE 24 HOURS A DAY, 7 DAYS A WEEK AT **WWW.ADVANCEMONTICELLONIAN.COM**.

DEADLINES: Newspaper - Monday 5 PM, Shoppers' Guide - Thursday Noon

RUMMAGE SALE RATES

Rummage Sale ads are now

FREE

to individuals!

Includes date, time and location of sale, plus a short list of items.
Limit 25 words.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Drew County Historical Museum is back. Opened each Saturday from 10am till 4pm. Come on by and visit with us and see some of Monticello's treasures. We're located at 404 South Main Street. See you soon

Hope Place

Hope Place in Monticello is in need of newborn and size 6 diapers. We are open to receive donations Tuesday - Wednesday - Thursday from 9:30am-4:30pm. TFN f

Fight Hunger

Hope Place of Monticello invites our community to drop off non-perishable food donations. We are open to receive donations Tuesday - Wednesday - Thursday from 9:30am-4:30pm. Suggested items: Pasta, Peanut Butter, Rice, Beans,

Soup, Canned Meats, Canned Fruits & Vegetables, Mac&Cheese, Cereal, Juice and Boxed Meals. 224 South Main, Monticello. TFN

Historical Preservation Funds Needed For Enon School

Funds are needed for the maintenance of Enon's 2-room schoolhouse located at 2474 Highway 35E outside of Monticello. Any donation amount will be greatly appreciated to keep the legacy alive and well. For more information on how to help preserve Enon's schoolhouse or to make a donation contact, Laura Whitaker, 870-460-5690. TFN

CASA of the 10th Judicial District is seeking volunteer advocates and board members. To find out how you can help a child in need,

please contact (870) 367-9449. TFN

Monticello 2nd Chancefurdogs is in need of supplies: Dog pens, kennels and crates, dog houses, 20x20 plastic tarps, dog feeders, dog and puppy food ALWAYS needed. If you would like to donate, please contact: Monticello2ndChancefurdogs@yahoo.com or find us on facebook. TFN

AUTO SALVAGE

BUYING JUNK CARS NEW YEAR - NEW PRICES

\$200 And up on complete vehicles. Please call 8970-224-1750 8pd 3/4

Mr. Johnny's Salvage

421 Ambrose Street
8am to 4:30pm
870-308-1025

Now Buying Junk cars running or not and scrap metal. We also have good used parts for sale too. Call 870-308-1025 4pd 3/25

The Advance classifieds are online! www.advancemonticellonian.com. Log on now and click on the E-Edition. You can also place your classified ads online or by calling 870.367.5325

JOB OPPORTUNITY IN SOUTHEAST ARKANSAS.

Delta Family Center, a psychiatric residential treatment center for adolescents, is looking for qualified individuals to work as a

• BEHAVIOR COACH •

Qualifications: Must be 21 years of age, pass state police and child maltreatment background checks, and possess a high school diploma or equivalent.

Applications may be obtained at:
815 East St. Louis St. • 870-853-4224 • Hamburg, AR
Equal opportunity employer.

Warren School District

has the following positions vacant:

Central Office Secretary & Central Office Bookkeeper

Applicant Requirements: Great computer and phone skills; excellent customer service, ability to multitask, Excel/Word experience and data entry and willingness to learn new skills.

The positions qualify for Full time benefits:
Call 870.226.8500

Ask to talk to Catrina Tatum
Starting Salary Secretary - \$26,244.00
Starting Salary Bookkeeper - \$27,636.00
Pay depends upon experience.
We are an Equal Opportunity Employer.



HARVEST RICE IN MCGEHEE AR IS NEEDING WORKERS!

Mill techs, sanitation, packers/small pack/big pack, quality manager, scale room tech, bran operator, rough rice dump pit operator. \$50 sign on bonus.
Call Patsy.

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2600 S Olive
Pine Bluff, AR 71601

870-535-3330
or 1-888-477-7846
EOE - Equal Opportunity Employer

HELP WANTED

LPN/RN - charge nurse CNA - (all 3 shifts) Dietary - full time cook evening shift & part time dietary aide

 1440 E. Church St., Warren
870-226-6766



Center Director -Lake Village

\$10,000 Sign-on Bonus

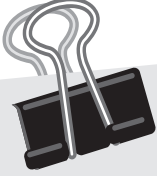
Arkansas licensure in Social Work or Counseling is required and current experience in providing mental health services is a must.

Responsibilities include providing an array of services, including substance abuse, if applicable, to a variety of ages and population in Chicot County, and administering the daily operations and staff assigned to the Lake Village Center

Benefits include: Paid time off, health, dental life insurance, and company contributions to retirement plan.

email resumes to: t.lindsey@deltacounseling.org

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Legals

NOTICE TO BIDDERS

Drew County will be accepting bids on asphalt and culverts for the year 2023. The items should bid as follows:

ASPHALT
9.5 MM Surface 3/8"
PG 64-22 (Virgin)
Cost per ton for in place, including tack coat
FOB Monticello plant site per ton
12.5 MM Surface 1/2"
PG 64-22 (Virgin)
PG 64-22 (RAP)
PG 70-22 (Virgin)
PG 70-22 (RAP)
PG 76-22 (Virgin)
PG 76-22 (Rap)
Cost per ton for in place, including tack coat
FOB to Monticello plant site per ton
25.0 MM Binder (1")
PG 64-22 (Virgin)
PG 64-22 (RAP)
PG 70-22 (Virgin)
PG 76-22 (Rap)
Cost per ton for in place, including tack coat
FOB Monticello plant site per ton
37.5 MM Base (1 1/2")
PG 64-22 (Virgin)
PG 64-22 (RAP)
PG 70-22 (Virgin)
PG 76-22 (RAP)
Cost per ton for in place including tack coat
FOB Monticello plant site per ton
***HIGH PERFORMANCE COLD MIX GALVANIZED CORRUGATED METAL PIPES**
12" diameter 16 Gauge Arched
18" diameter 16 Gauge Arched
24" diameter 16 Gauge Arched
26" diameter 16 Gauge Arched
30" diameter 16 Gauge Arched
36" diameter 16 Gauge Arched
42" diameter 16 Gauge Arched
48" diameter 16 Gauge Arched
60" diameter 16 Gauge Arched
SOLID CEMENT
Solid cement delivered and spread, per ton
ROCK
Class 7 Base Course
Class 2 Granite Chips
Stone Backfill
Bids must be received by March 15, 2023 at 5:00 pm at the Drew County Judge's office. Send bids to Drew County Judge's Office, 210 South Main Street, Monticello, AR 71655. Fax bids to 870-412-1134 or email to: drewcojudge@sbcglobal.net. Drew County reserves the right to accept or reject any bids.

Paid for by the Drew County Judge's Office in the amount of \$96.56.

#107612 3/1 3/8

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF DREW COUNTY, ARKANSAS

PROBATE DIVISION

IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF CELENE C. EFIRD, DECEASED

NO. 22PR-23-20

NOTICE

Name of Decedent: Celene C. Efird
Last known address:
105 Russellville Road
Malvern, AR 72104
Date of Death: April 10, 2022
On February 17, 2023, an Affidavit for Collection of Small Estate by Distributees was filed with respect to the Estate of Celene C. Efird, Deceased, with the Clerk of the Probate Division of the Circuit Court of Drew County, Arkansas, under Ark. Code Ann. § 28-41-101.

All persons having claims against the estate must exhibit them, properly verified, to the distributees or their attorney, within three (3) months from the date of the first publication of the notice, or they shall be forever barred and precluded from any benefit in the estate.

The name, mailing address, and telephone number of the distributee or distributee's attorney is:

Hani W. Hashem
Hashem Law Firm, PLC
P. O. Box 739
Monticello, AR 71657
(870) 367-4223

This notice first published the 22nd day of February, 2023.

#107219 2/22 3/1

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TFN

CHILD CARE

Good Shepherd 203 E. Trotter Avenue, Monticello (870)460-0503 Educational child care, after school care and summer programs. Open Saturdays from 7 am to 5 pm. Come in for a free trial day and see what makes us different. 50% off first week. We are bilingual and accept vouchers. #81546 TFN mt-bw

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OFFICE FOR RENT

dog and puppy food ALWAYS needed. If you would like to donate, please contact: Monticello2ndChancefurdogs@yahoo.com or find us on facebook. TFN

Post on our Facebook page designed to reunite missing pets in the Monticello/Drew County area with their owners! Monticello Lost Pet Network. TFN

REAL ESTATE

APARTMENTS

Cedar Hill Apartments

Newly renovated. Veteran units available. New appliances and interior. Income restrictions apply. Washer/dryer in each unit. 839 S. Gabbert St. 870-367-3394. TFN cc-11/28

HOMES FOR SALE

For information, call 870-723-4996. TFN. mt-bm #101799



For Sale: 3 bdrm, 2 bath, 2 car garage, large enclosed sun room, 1791 sq ft living area, 288 sq ft storage bld, located at 106 Bellview, call for appt. 870-723-5306 4pd 3/4

PUBLISHER'S NOTICE:

All real estate advertising in this newspaper is subject to the Federal Fair Housing Act which makes it illegal to advertise any preference, limitation or discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, handicap, familial status or national origin, or an intention to make any such preference, limitation or discrimination. Familial status includes children under the age of 18 living with parents or legal custodians, pregnant women and people securing custody of children under 18. This newspaper will not knowingly accept any advertising for real estate which is in violation of the law. Our readers are hereby informed that all dwellings advertised in this newspaper are available on an equal opportunity basis. To complain of discrimination call HUD toll free at 1-800-669-9777. The toll free telephone number for the hearing impaired is 1-800-927-9275.

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RESALE SHOP

Blane's Resale. Household goods, movies, furniture, and games. Also buys household furniture and unwanted storage buildings. Open Fridays and Saturdays. 708 N Gabbert Street. For weekdays Call 870-220-1359. 12/26 tfn

SERVICE

Bubba Stump - Stump grinding.

Free Estimates. Call 870-501-0970 12pd 4/28

Pressure Washing: Driveways, sidewalks, campers, houses, etc. 870-308-2047. TFN.

Brewer's Lawn Care

Contact Maurice or Edwin at 870-718-5280. limb removal, bush-hogging, pressure washing, and car washing TFN mt-bm- #101847

Scholarships guaranteed or your money back! Beware of scholarship "guarantees". Before you pay for a search service, get the refund policy in writing. Call the Federal Trade Commission at 1-877-FTC-HELP to learn how to avoid scholarship scams. A message from The Advance-Monticellonian and the FTC. TFN

Call the Federal Trade Commission to find out how to spot medical billing scams. 1-877-FTC-HELP. A message from The Advance Monticellonian and the FTC.

PROPOSED BUDGET OF EXPENDITURES WITH TAX LEVY FOR FISCAL YEAR BEGINNING JULY 1, 2024 TO AND INCLUDING JUNE 30, 2025

The Board of Directors of Monticello School District of Drew County, Arkansas, in compliance with the requirements of Amendments No. 40 and No. 74 to the Constitution of the State of Arkansas and of Ark. Code Ann. § 6-13-622, has prepared, approved and hereby makes public the proposed budget of expenditures, together with the tax rate, as follows:

1. Salary Fund Expenditures	8,562,900
2. Instructional Expense	3,411,900
3. Maintenance & Operation Expense	2,259,300
4. Dedicated Maintenance and Operation Expenditures	0
5. Pupil Transportation Expense	785,400
6. Other Operating Expense	1,575,900
7. Non-Bonded Debt Payment	0
8. Bonded Debt Payment	1,113,381
9. Building Fund Expense	7,750,000

To provide for the foregoing proposed budget of expenditures, the Board of Directors proposes a total school tax rate (state and local) of 39.90 mills on the dollar of the assessed value of taxable property located in this School District. The proposed tax includes the uniform rate of 25.0 mills (the "Statewide Uniform Rate") to be collected on all taxable property in the State and remitted to the State Treasurer pursuant to Amendment No. 74 to the Arkansas Constitution to be used solely for maintenance and operation of schools in the State. As provided in Amendment No. 74, the Statewide Uniform Rate replaces a portion of the existing rate of tax levied by this School District and available for maintenance and operation of schools in this district. The total proposed school tax levy of 39.90 mills includes 25.00 mills specifically voted for general maintenance and operation and 14.90 mills voted for debt service previously voted as a continuing levy pledged for the retirement of existing bonded indebtedness. The surplus revenues produced each year by the debt service millage may be used by the District for other school purposes.

The total proposed school tax levy of 39.90 mills represents the same rate presently being collected.

GIVEN this 21st day of February, 2023.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF MONTICELLO SCHOOL DISTRICT OF DREW COUNTY, ARKANSAS

/s/Curt Preston
President of Board

/s/Sandra Lanehart
Secretary of Board

#108097 3/1

Good Shepherd 203 E. Trotter Avenue, Monticello (870)460-0503 Educational child care, after school care and summer programs. Open Saturdays from 7 am to 5 pm. Come in for a free trial day and see what makes us different. 50% off first week. We are bilingual and accept vouchers. #81546 TFN mt-bw

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MISCELLANEOUS

Call the Federal Trade Commission to find out how to avoid scams. 1-877-FTC-HELP. Never give any personal or financial information to unfamiliar websites without researching those sites. Even those sites listed in classified ads here. A message from The Advance Monticellonian and the FTC.

PETS

Monticello 2nd Chancefurdogs is in need of supplies: Dog pens, kennels and crates, dog houses, 20x20 plastic tarps, dog feeders,

ADVANCE-MONTICELLONIAN

Buy your copy of the Advance at any of the following vendors:

- Drew Farm Supply • City Drug
- Monticello Northside Deli
- Corner Express • Jenkins
- Cash Saver • Circle K
- Prescription Pad
- Both Monticello EZ Mart Locations
- Pauls Smoke Shop
- Exxon • Corner Store 278
- Both Monticello Dollar General Locations
- Walgreens • Valero 425
- Monticello Express
- Walmart • Ray's BBQ
- Monticello Coffee Company

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STATEWIDE CLASSIFIEDS

Call Neil McConnell at (501) 374-1500 to place your ad here!

ANNOUNCEMENTS

LRS D JOB FAIR

March 11, 2023

LR SW Magnet High School Arena, 9725 Mablevale Pike, LR. REGISTER by March 7th at www.LRSD.org. Interviewing for Teachers: Elementary and Secondary Teachers, Guidance Counselors, Library Media Specialists, Special Education, Gifted and Talented. Also Support Staff: Secretaries, Administrative Assistants and General Support Staff, Technology Specialists, Programmers, Web Developers, Nurses, Bus Drivers, Food Service Workers/Managers, Security Workers, Paraprofessionals, Custodians and MORE!

501-447-1000



AUCTION

ESTATE AUCTION

Saturday, March 4, AT 9 am
Doors open at 8AM
283 Lake Valley Drive
Maumelle, AR 72113

FAMILY MOVING! MUST EMPTY HOUSE!
All remaining items sold regardless of price to highest bidder.

ITEMS INCLUDE: (But not limited to) High Quality Home Furnishings, 2002 Dodge Truck, 2005 Honda Car, Guns, Old Coins, Diamond Ring and other Jewelry, Huge Patio Furn. Set, Candy Dispensers, Artwork, Lawn Mower, Yard Tools, Jacuzzis, Flat Screen TVs, and more!

Concession on site!
This is a Residential Neighborhood - DO NOT BLOCK DRIVES!

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SAVE BIG on HOME INSURANCE!

Compare 20 A-rated insurances companies. Get a quote within minutes. Average savings of \$444/year! Call 844-463-4011! (M-F 8am-8pm Central)

Struggling with Your Private Student Loan Payment? New relief programs can reduce your payments. Learn your options. Good credit not necessary. Call the Helpline 877-248-8044 (Mon-Fri 9am-5pm Eastern).

Over \$10K in debt? Be debt free in 24-48 months. Pay a fraction of what you owe. A+ BBB rated. Call National Debt Relief 866-916-4956.

Do you owe more than \$5000 in tax debt? Call Wells & Associates INC. We solve ALL Tax Problems! Personal, Business, IRS, State and Local. "Decades of experience"! Our clients have saved over \$150 Million Dollars! Call NOW for a free consultations. 1-855-815-0405

HEALTH & MEDICAL

WE SHOP, YOU SAVE on your Medicare Supplement Insurance! Call 833-924-0438 today to compare Medicare benefits and costs from up to 20 top-rated carriers. Receive the best option for you

Portable Oxygen Concentrator May Be Covered by Medicare! Reclaim independence and mobility with the compact design and long-lasting battery of Inogen One. Free information kit! Call 855-589-4673

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AT&T Unlimited Talk and Text. Get a new device every year with AT&T NEXT! Call us today 1-855-524-1405

WATER DAMAGE to your home?

Let us do a fast professional cleanup & maintain the value of your home! We will work with your insurance company. Call now! 855-401-5267

Get DIRECTV for \$84.99/mo for 24 months with CHOICE Package. NEW 2 YEAR PRICE GUARANTEE. First 3 months of HBO Max, Cinemax, Showtime, Starz and Epix included! Directv is #1 in Customer Satisfaction (JD Power & Assoc.) Some restrictions apply. Call 1-855-400-3297

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with Beautiful New Blinds & Shades. FREE in-home estimates make it convenient to shop from home. Professional installation. Top quality - Made in the USA. Call for free consultation: 844-461-0600. Ask about our specials!

Earthlink High Speed Internet. As Low As \$49.95/month (for the first 3 months.) Reliable High Speed Fiber Optic Technology. Stream Videos, Music and More! Call Earthlink Today 1-844-452-6769

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Prepare for power outages today with a **GENERAC home standby generator** \$0 Money Down + Low Monthly Payment Options. Request a FREE Quote – Call now before the next power outage: 1-877-319-0598

Eliminate gutter cleaning forever! LeafFilter, the most advanced debris-blocking gutter protection. Schedule a FREE LeafFilter estimate today. 15% off Entire Purchase. 10% Senior & Military Discounts. Call 1-855-977-9614

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POSITIONS AVAILABLE

Need experienced/licensed electrician for established company in Monticello. Great pay, good benefits. Send resume to patsy.reynolds@expresspros.com.

BRAN OPERATOR Solid work history. Above average pay.

QA TECHS Solid work history. Ability to learn quickly.

MILL TECHS Solid work history. Quick learner.

Send resume to patsy.reynolds@expresspros.com

SEWING MACHINE OPERATORS NEEDED
Experience a plus but will train. \$12/hour.

WELDERS needed in Dumas area
Night shift. 20.25/hour with 1.00 shift differential. Must pass visual welding test. Call Patsy.

FORKLIFT DRIVERS/LABORERS NEEDED

WELDERS, FORKLIFT DRIVERS, UTILITY WORKERS Needed in the Dumas/McGehee area. Great \$\$\$.

LOOKING FOR experienced applicants in the Monticello/McGehee area for jobs in the McGehee/ Dumas/Dermott area. Must be able to work shift positions. Verification of past employment will be completed for employment. Call Patsy.

Mark Your Calendars!

MARCH



MARCH 8TH - Express
Employment will be taking applications in **Dumas at the Workforce Office from 8 A.M. to 10 A.M. and in McGehee at UAM from 1 P.M. to 3 P.M.**

MARCH 15TH - Express Employment will be taking applications in **Monticello at the Workforce Center from 9 A.M. to 12 Noon and in McGehee at UAM from 1 P.M. to 3 P.M.**

MARCH 22ND - Express Employment will be taking applications in **McGehee at UAM from 1 P.M. to 3 P.M.**

MARCH 29TH - Express Employment will be taking applications in **Monticello at the Workforce Center from 9 A.M. to 12 Noon and in McGehee at UAM from 1 P.M. to 3 P.M.**

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Lady Pirates’ season comes to an end at Regional Tournament 32-29

By: JEFF YOUNG
Advance Correspondent

The Drew Central Lady Pirates’ season came to an end on Thursday, February 23, in the first round of the 3A Region 4 Regional Tournament at Drew Central.

Facing the Glen Rose Lady Beavers, who was the second seed from the 7-3A, the Drew Central Lady Pirates, who was the third seed out of the 8-3A, controlled the opening tip and scored the five points of the contest.

Ali Jo Cruce connected on a pair of free throws and Edrinana Hunter would nail a three-pointer to give the Lady Pirates a 5-0 lead, however it would be the only points the Lady Pirates would score in the quarter as the Lady Beavers would end the quarter on a 12-0 run to outscore Drew Central 12-5 in the quarter.

The Lady Pirates got six points from Lana Boykin on two three point shots in the second quarter to lead the Lady Pirates on the scoreboard in the second quarter.

Cruce would score the first points of the quarter for Drew Central followed by the two threes by Boykin.

Cruce would score with 2:06 remaining in the half to cut the Lady Beaver lead to one point, 16-15, and Hunter would score the final points of the quarter for the Lady Pirates with 38 seconds remaining in the half to help the Lady Pirates outscore Glen Rose in the quarter 12-7, but the Lady Beavers would continue to hold the lead at the half, 19-17.

Returning from the break, neither team could get anything going offensively.

The first points of the third quarter would come with 2:42 remaining in the quarter on a free

throw by Sayveiona Durden.

Glen Rose would take the quarter 3-1 after Glen Rose’s Sydney Riggan connected on a three-pointer as time expired in the quarter.

Those three points would prove to be the difference in the contest.

In the fourth quarter, Glen Rose would score the first four points of the quarter with Drew Central getting on the board at the 6:16 mark on a free throw by Boykin.

With the free throw, the Lady Pirates would go on a 6-0 run to trail by one point, 26-25, with 3:09 remaining in the game.

Glen Rose extended the lead to 28-25 with 2:51 remaining with Cruce connecting on a free throw to cut the lead to 28-26.

The Lady Beavers added two more points with 2:05 remaining in the game to extend the lead to four points, 30-26.

The Lady Pirates would close in on the Lady Beaver after Hannah Meeks connected on a free throw with 23 seconds remaining and a two point shot by Sayveiona Durden with 11 seconds remaining to cut the Lady Beaver lead to one-point, 30-29.

The Lady Beavers would score the final points of the contest at the free throw line to hold on to the 32-29 win to advance to the 3A State Championship Tournament with the Lady Pirates season coming to an end.

Leading the way for the Lady Pirates was Ali Jo Cruce with nine points followed by Edrina Hunter and Lana Boykin with seven. Sayveiona Durden scored three, Kaiya Williams with two, and Hannah Meeks with one.

The Lady Pirates season ends with the team having an overall record of 20-10.



EDRIANA HUNTER (23) and ALI JO CRUCE (14) played in their final Lady Pirate Basketball game on Thursday night. Cruce led the Lady Pirates with nine points with Hunter scoring seven in the Regional Tournament loss to Glen Rose in the first round of the 3A Region 4 Regional Tournament.



Jeff Young/Advance Monticellonian

Bobcats defeat Pirates 60-28 to win the Region 4 Regional Championship

By: JEFF YOUNG
Advance Correspondent

The Drew Central Pirates entered into the 3A Region 4 Regional Tournament as the second seed from the 3A-8 and drew the third seed from the 3A-7, the Centerpoint Knights as their opening round opponent on Thursday, February 23.

The Pirates would get on the board first against the Knights on a two shot basket under the goal by Nick Bailey gave the Pirates a 2-0 lead.

Centerpoint went up 4-2 but Bailey would tie the contest at four on a pair of free throws.

The Pirates would go on to outscore the Knights in the first quarter 14-8.

Both teams would play an even quarter in the second quarter.

Drew Central would get scored from Tramond Miller and Tralon Miller, Ja’Corrian Love, and Tra’Bennett Fuller in the second quarter as each team would

score 14 points each with the Pirates holding on to a six-point, 28-22 lead at the half.

Returning from the break, Centerpoint would score the first four points of the quarter to pull within two points, 28-26, with 6:26 remaining in the quarter.

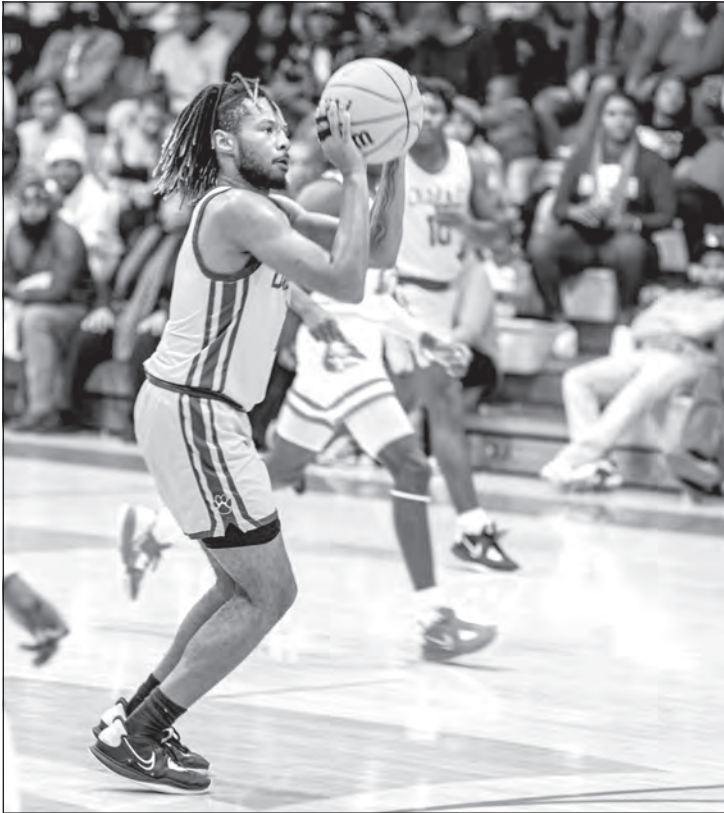
Tramond Miller would score the first five points of the quarter to extend the lead to seven points, 33-26 with 4:36 showing on the clock.

Centerpoint would get within two points once more, 33-31, with 1:59 showing on the clock.

Centerpoint would outscore the Pirates in the quarter 10-9 in the third quarter with the Pirates holding a 37-32 lead heading into the fourth quarter.

Centerpoint continued to hold the momentum in the fourth quarter, but foul shots for the Pirates would be the closing argument in the contest despite the Pirates being outscored 16-13 in the quarter.

Traon Miller would score the



Jeff Young/Advance Monticellonian

MIKE REDDICK shoots a three against Drew Central in the Regional Championship game. Reddick, who has committed and signed to the UAM Boll Weevil Basketball team, scored 12 points in the contest against the Pirates.

final six points for the Pirates as Drew Central was able to hold off the Knights 50-48 advancing to the semi-finals of the regional and secured their spot in the 3A State Championship Tournament.

Leading the Pirates was Tralon Miller with 17 points followed by Tramond Miller with 16.

Nick Bailey added seven points, Ja’Corrian Love with four with Tra’Bennett Fuller and Alex Preddy each scoring three points.

The Pirates would face the Lakeside Beavers in the semi-final game on Friday night.

Lakeside advanced to the semi-final by defeating the number one seed, the Jessieville Lions, 70-46 in the first round of the tournament.

A slow start to the contest, the Pirates would score five points in the first quarter with Tra’Bennett Fuller and Tramond Miller scoring in the quarter.

Lakeside would outscore the Pirates in the quarter by one point, 6-5.

Neither team could gain the advantage in the second quarter, as both teams scored eight

points with the Lakeside Beavers holding a one-point lead, 14-13, at the half.

Drew Central would begin to take over the contest in the third quarter.

Ja’Corrian Love would score eight of the 19 points the Pirates scored in the third quarter.

The Pirates would outscore the Beavers 19-12 in the quarter to take a 32-26 lead heading into the fourth quarter.

In the fourth, the Pirates would continue to put space between themselves and the Beavers on the scoreboard.

Tralon Miller would lead the Pirates in the quarter with nine points with Love scoring six to help the Pirates outscore Lakeside in the final quarter, 22-14, to take a 14-point, 54-40, victory.

With the win the Pirates advanced to the Region 4 Championship game.

Leading the way for the Pirates was Ja’Corrian Love with 16 points followed by Tralon Miller with 14. Tramond Miller and Tra’Bennett Fuller each scored eight, Nick Bailey with seven, and Will Watson with one point.

In the other semi-final contest, the Dumas Bobcats would advance to the finals to face Drew Central for the fourth time this season by defeating Benton Harmony Grove 42-37.

In the championship game, the Bobcats would control the opening tip and would begin the contest by going on a 10-0 run before Tramond Miller stopped the Dumas scoring run with a layup.

Dumas would outscore the Pirates 18-10 in the quarter.

The second quarter did not fare well for the Pirates as Dumas would dominate the Pirates the second quarter, outscoring the Pirates 23-3 in the quarter to take a demanding 41-13 lead heading into the half.

Dumas would continue to lead the Pirates in the third quarter, outscoring the Pirates 14-9 in the quarter to take a 55-22 lead heading into the fourth and final quarter.

The fourth quarter would start

under the “Sportsmanship Rule” as the Bobcats led by over 30 points in the fourth quarter to force the game to be played under a running clock.

Dumas Coach Larry Harris would pull all of his starters as would Drew Central Coach CJ Watson, to give the bench players some postseason experience.

Dumas would go on to defeat Drew Central 60-28 to claim the number one seed out of Region 4 heading into the state tournament.

Drew Central will enter the tournament as the second seed out of the region.

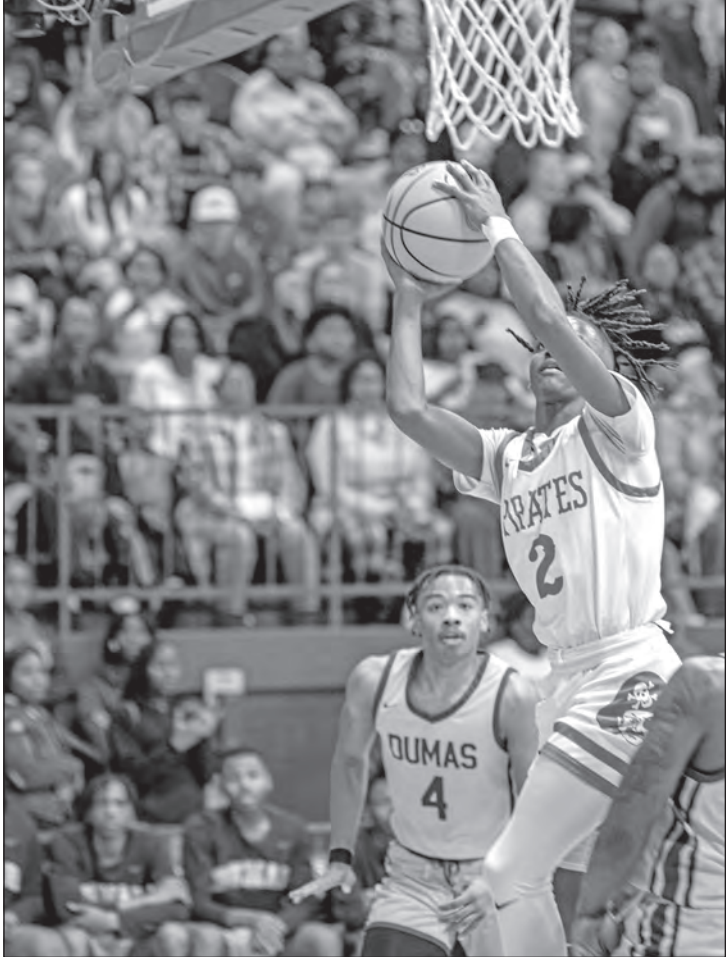
Leading the way for the Pirates was Tramond Miller with 10 points followed by David Jordan with five. Tra’Bennett Fuller added four, Nick Bailey and Ja’Corrian Love scored three each. Tralon Miller with two, and Alex Preddy with one.

The Pirates will face Bergman on Thursday in Lamar.



Jeff Young/Advance Monticellonian

TRALON MILLER played in his final game at Drew Central High School on Saturday night in the Region 4 Regional Championship game against Dumas. The Pirates would lose to the Bobcats 60-28.



Jeff Young/Advance Monticellonian

TRAMOND MILLER scored a total of 34 points in three games in the Region 4 Championship Tournament. Miller scored 16 points against Centerpoint, eight against Lakeside, and 10 against Dumas.

Billies defeat Camden Fairview 7-1 to open baseball season

By: **JEFF YOUNG**
Advance Correspondent

The Monticello Baseball Billies opened the 2023 season with a home victory over the Camden Fairview Cardinals on Monday, February 27.

The defending 8-4A Conference Champions would go to Easton Byrd to start the season on the mound for the Billies.

Byrd would strikeout the first two Camden batters before the Cardinals would get a baserunner on an error.

The next batter would ground out to Brooks Bowman who would make the throw from third to first for the final out of

the inning.

After two consecutive fly outs, Brenden Brown would double to right field.

Jagger Hines would single to right field and Brown would score to give the Billies a 1-0 lead.

Monticello would extend their lead in the bottom of the third inning.

Warren Pennington led the inning off with a double to left field followed by a single by Brenden Brown.

Jagger Hines would hit a sacrifice fly to center that scored Pennington to give the Billies a 2-0 lead.

Monticello added two more

runs in the bottom of the fourth.

After a lead off out, Nathan Palmer singled to right field. After the second out of the inning, Brooks Harvey singled to center and would advance to second with Palmer advancing to third.

Pennington would reach on an error by the first baseman that allowed Palmer and Harvey to score to give the Billies a 4-0 lead.

Camden Fairview would get on the scoreboard in the top of the sixth inning after two batters were hit by pitches and a single drove in the Cardinals only one of the contest.

Monticello got their final runs of the contest in the bottom of

the sixth inning.

After a lead off strikeout, Brooks Bowman would be hit by a pitch followed by a single by Tystan White that advanced Bowman to third.

A successful bunt by Kaleb Romero would score Bowman and would allow pinch runner Evan Bealer to advance to second.

Bealer would advance to third with Romero advancing to second on defensive interference.

Bealer would score on a wild pitch with Romero advancing to third.

Brooks Harvey would draw a walk and would steal second with Romero scoring the final

run of the contest to give the Billies a 7-1 victory.

Easton Byrd would get five innings of work, allowing one hit, no runs, three walks, and striking out eight.

Jon Luke Brotherton threw two innings allowing one run on one hit, walking one, and striking out two.

Byrd was awarded the win in the game.

At the plate, Brenden Brown went 2 for 4 with a double and a run scored, Nathan Palmer was 1 for 1 with an RBI, Jagger Hines went 1 for 2 with two RBI, Warren Pennington was 1 for 4 with a double and a run scored, Brooks Harvey was 1 for 3 with

a walk and a run scored, Kaleb Romero was 1 for 3 with a run scored and an RBI, and Tystan White was 1 for 1 on the day.

The Billies will return to action at home against Fordyce on Wednesday, March 1, with a first pitch scheduled for 4:30 pm.

The game is being moved from the originally scheduled Thursday due to the potential for rain and thunderstorms that are predicted to move into the area Wednesday night into Thursday.

The Billies will host DeWitt on Friday, March 3, for a scheduled 5 pm and are scheduled to host Dumas on Monday, March 6, at 5 pm.

Weevils' basketball season comes to an end with road loss at OBU



Jeff Young/Advance Monticellonian

RAY PRICE missed half of his senior season due to injury but returned to the team to score 99 points in 16 games to finish his career with 371 points.

By: **JEFF YOUNG**
Advance Correspondent

The University of Arkansas at Monticello Boll Weevils concluded the 2022-23 season with three consecutive losses including a close loss to then #14 ranked Southern Nazarene.

In their final home game against Harding University, the Bison would score the first points of the contest and would not relinquish the lead for the remainder of the contest.

The Bison would lead by 19 points, 41-22, at the half and would go on to defeat the Weevils by a score of 69-57 with the Weevils outscoring the Bison 35-28 in the second half.

The Bison would lead by 11 points with 6:35 remaining in the first half and never allow their lead to go under double-digits for the remainder of the contest.

Leading the way for the Weevils was Issac Jackson with 15 points followed by Mario Fantina with 14 and Ray Price with 10.

Cole Anderson added eight, Josh Denton with six, and Timur Krupalija and Walter Covington rounding out the scoring with two points each.

Traveling to Arkadelphia for

the final game of the season, the Tigers would get on the board first in the contest with Ray Price getting the Weevils started with a three-pointer.

The teams would remain close throughout the first half until the Tigers began to pull away towards the end of the half, extending the lead to double-digits to close the half leading by 12 points, 34-22.

Ouachita continued to lead throughout the second half with their largest lead coming with 8:03 remaining in the game at 22 points.

Ouachita would outscore the Weevils in the second half 41-39 to take the 75-61 win.

Issac Jackson led the way for the Weevils with 15 points followed by Cole Anderson and Josh Denton with 11 points each.

Edwin Louis added eight points, Timur Krupalija and Ray Price with four, Mario Fantina and Walter Covington with three, and Gabe George with two points.

The Weevils finish the season with an overall record of 11-17 and a GAC record of 7-15. The Weevils improved by one game from last season.



Jeff Young/Advance Monticellonian

ISSAC JACKSON led the Weevils in scoring in his first year at UAM. the sophomore guard scored 325 points on the season.

Blossoms end the season with loss at Ouachita Baptist University, 81-62

By: **JEFF YOUNG**
Advance Correspondent

The University of Arkansas at Monticello Blossoms season may

have ended on a down note after losing the final seven games of the season, but head coach David Midlick and assistant Marissa Webb's first season at the



Jeff Young/Advance Monticellonian

JOI MONTGOMERY scored 194 points this season. The junior from Marion, Arkansas was 74 of 171 in field goals, 11 of 47 from the three-point line, and was 35 of 51 from the free throw line.

helm of the women's basketball program was a successful one.

The Blossoms season came to an end this past Saturday, on the road at Ouachita Baptist University with an 81-62 loss to the Lady Tigers.

Before traveling to Arkadelphia, the Blossoms would drop their final home contest to the Harding Lady Bison on Thursday, February 23.

Against Harding, the Blossoms would fall behind early in the contest, trailing 21-8 after the first quarter.

The Blossoms would have better scoring quarters for the remainder of the contest, but could not make up the difference set by the first quarter.

Harding outscored UAM 15-11 in the second quarter to hold a 36-19 lead at half time, 17-14 in the third, and 15-14 in the fourth to take the 68-47 win.

For UAM, Joi Montgomery led the way with 10 points followed by Cyarah Kensmil with eight.

Aeryn Hawkins scored seven, Bailey Harris with five, Azaria Hulbert, Nyah Banks, and Alindsey Long each scored four, Tori Hamilton with three, and

Laia Balcels with two points.

Against Ouachita Baptist, the Blossoms would play the Lady Tigers close in the first quarter, trailing by two points 17-15.

Ouachita would increase their lead in the second quarter, extending the lead to nine points, 36-27, at the half.

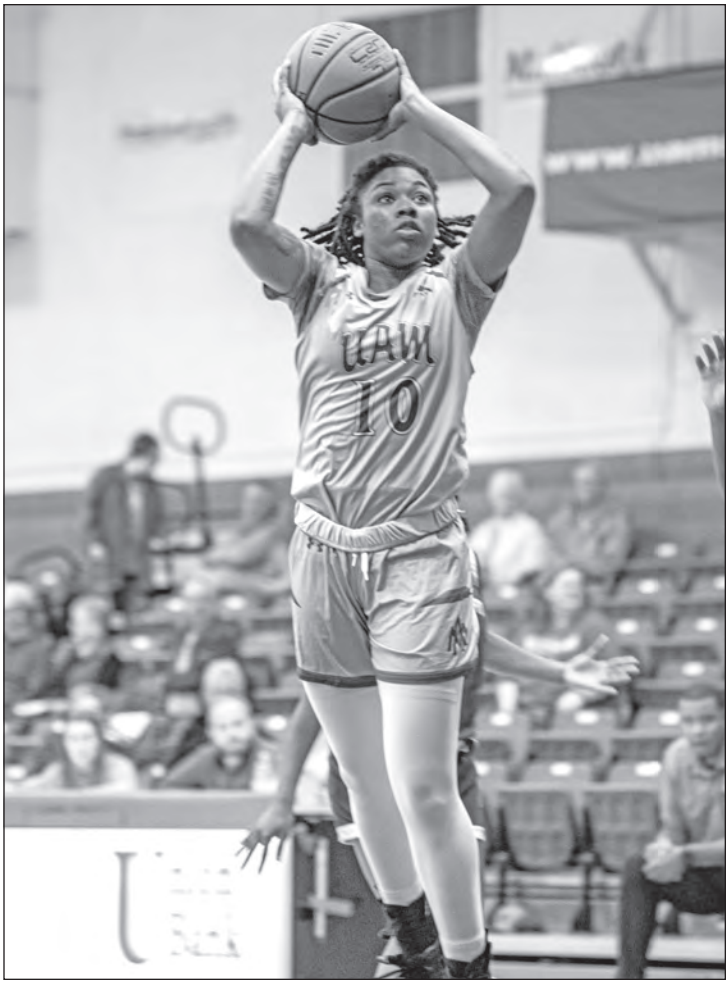
Ouachita would outscore UAM 25-17 in the third, and 20-18 in the fourth to take the 81-62 win.

Joi Montgomery scored 14 points followed by Aeryn Hawkins with 10. Alindsey Long scored nine, Nyah Banks with eight, Bailey Harris and Cyarah Kensmil with six each, Azaria Hulbert with five, and Tori Hamilton and Taylor East rounding out the scoring with two.

For the Blossoms, they finish the season with an overall record of 9-19 and a GAC record of 6-16.

The 2022-23 record showed an improvement from the previous two seasons under the former coaching staff.

The Blossoms had only managed to win one game in the past two seasons, but was able to improve on those records in one season under Midlick.



Jeff Young/Advance Monticellonian

BAILEY HARRIS finished the 2022-23 season leading the Blossoms in scoring with 261 points. Harris has scored 508 total points in two season at UAM.

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Lady Billies begin 2023 season with 4-2 win over North Little Rock

By: JEFF YOUNG
Advance Correspondent

The Monticello Lady Billies opened the 2023 Softball Season on Monday, February 27, at home against North Little Rock. Originally scheduled to open the season against Rison, the opponent had to be changed to Rison being in the 2A State Championship Tournament for basketball. Alaina Lyle would get the call to be the opening day starter for the Lady Billies and would begin the contest by giving up a double

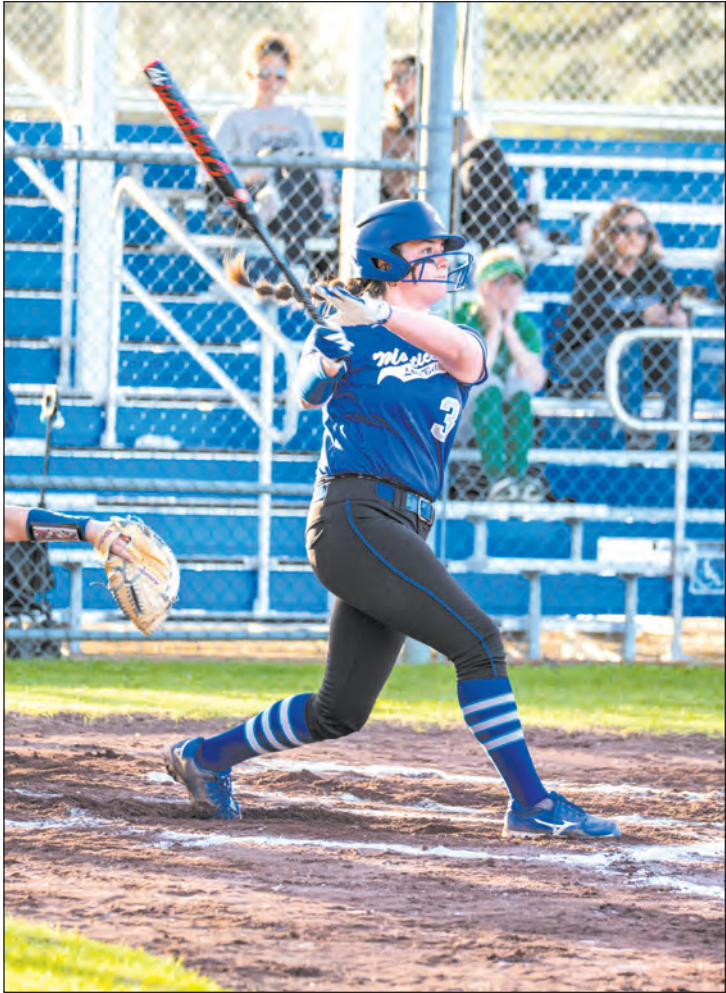
to the first North Little Rock batter, Lyle would walk the next batter before settling in, striking out two of the next three batters and getting the other batter to flyout without allowing a run in the inning. For Monticello, the Lady Billies would have one baserunner in the bottom half of the first inning with Lyle hitting a single. Lyle would return to the circle in the top of the second to record three consecutive outs, getting the lead off batter to ground out followed by striking out the next

two batters. Kiley Lane would lead things off for the Lady Billies by connecting for a double followed by a sacrifice bunt by Meygan Bivens to advance Lane to third. Addi Frazer singled to center field to score Lane. After the second out of the inning, Madeline Stanley would single, advancing Frazer to second. Kate Morgan would single to score Frazer, but the Charging Wildcats would record the third out throwing Stanley out at third base with the Lady Billies taking a 2-0 lead.

North Little Rock would cut the lead to 2-1 in the top of the third inning on a RBI double. The Lady Billies would add to their lead in the bottom of the fourth inning after Skylar Burns drew a walk and would score on a double by Stanley to extend the lead to 3-1. The Lady Billies would add their final run of the contest in the bottom of the sixth inning when Kiley Lane led the inning off with a solo homerun to centerfield. North Little Rock would come back in the top of the seventh in-

ning to score their final run on a lead off homerun, but the Lady Billies would record the next three outs in order to take the 4-2 win. For the Lady Billies, Alaina Lylw would pitch the complete seven inning game, recording nine strikeouts, walking two, allowing two runs on six hits. Both runs were earned. Lyle would go 3 for 3 at the plate. Kylie Lane went 2 for 3 with a double and a homerun, scoring two runs and recording an RBI. Kate Morgan was 1 for 3 with

an RBI, Madeline Stanley was 2 for 3 with a double and RBI, Skylar Burns was 1 for 2 with a run and a walk, and Addi Frazer going 1 for 3 with a run and RBI. The Lady Billies improved to 2-0 on the season on Tuesday night with a road victory over Smackover, 7-3. The Lady Billies will return to action on Friday, March 3, travelling to Woodlawn for a 5 PM start, and will begin conference play on Monday, March 6, travelling to Warren to face the Lady Jacks for a 5 PM scheduled start.



KYLIE LANE (left) started her first high school softball game on Monday as the Lady Billies designated batter. Lane would double in her first at bat and would connect for a solo homerun to lead off the bottom of the sixth inning. MEYGAN BIVENS (center) attempts to reach first base on a sacrifice bunt advanced Kiley Lane to third base. ALAINA LYLE (right) would go 3 for 3 from the plate and would pitch a complete game to earn the first win of the season for the Lady Billies.



KATE MORGAN (left) would record one hit in the contest against North Little Rock. ADDI FRAZER (right) extended the Lady Billie lead to 2-0 after two innings of play.

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DCE teacher receives surprise of a lifetime

By: **ASHLEY HOGG**
editor@monticellonews.net

Students flooded into the gymnasium Thursday, February 23 for what they thought was a presentation on the U.S. government. To their surprise, Governor of Arkansas Sarah Sanders and Secretary of Education Jacob Oliva were present to give a unique award to a Drew Central Elementary teacher.

Emily Howard was in complete shock when her name rang out from the microphone as the winner of the Milken Educator Award that includes an all expense paid trip to Los Angeles and a financial award of \$25,000.

Emily Howard creates a classroom community where students build confidence, are engaged and love learning. A third grade teacher at Drew Central Elementary, Howard uses a variety of teaching strategies, including sensory tools and open-ended questioning, and is constantly researching new methods to help students learn and grow. Howard uses student data to tailor her instruction and set expectations. Her students show consistent growth in both literacy and mathematics, with the majority ending the year working on grade level.

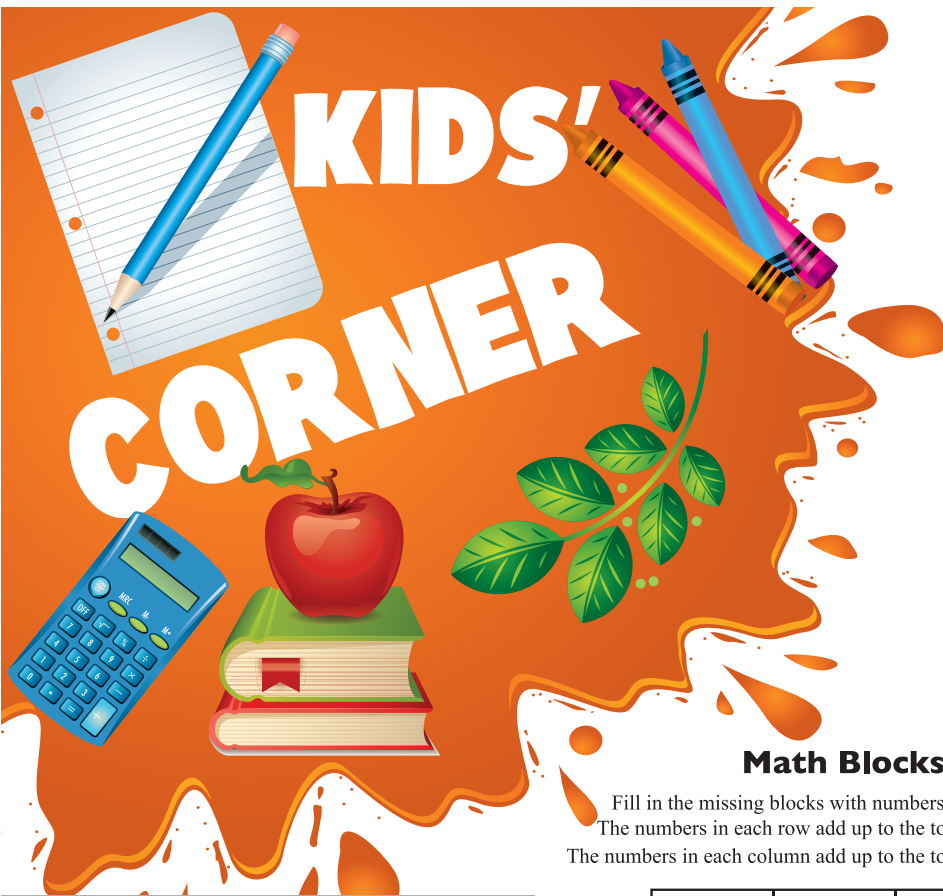
Howard is known as a trusted resource for fellow educators, supporting and motivating her peers to succeed. She serves on the school's instructional leadership team, helping to plan and lead weekly professional learning communities. Howard had experience with Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) at her previous building and brought the program to Drew Central Elementary, where it is now entrenched in the school culture. She also introduced the school to Class Dojo, a tool that facilitates parent communication and encourages model behavior.

When legislators wanted to see the state's R.I.S.E. (Reading Initiative for Student Excellence) program in action, they visited Howard's classroom to observe a literacy lesson. Howard is a trained teacher leader who receives additional mentoring and support through Drew Central's participation in the Arkansas Rural Educator Network, a partnership with the National Institute for Excellence in Teaching and the Arkansas Association of Educational Administrators. Howard mentors new teachers, researches and tests new instructional strategies, and served as a model for peers when the school recently adopted new curricula.

As Drew Central Elementary's parental facilitator, Howard is a strong advocate for parental involvement in their children's education. During pandemic-related building closures, Howard went above and beyond to connect with students and families, providing additional support and communicating regularly. She often attends students' sporting events, piano recitals and dance performances. One measure of the meaningful relationships Howard builds with families: When it's time for parent-teacher conferences, it's not unusual for Howard to see 100 percent participation.

Howard earned a bachelor's in early childhood education in 2015 from the University of Arkansas at Monticello.





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Here are some fun activities for our younger readers to enjoy!

Get Scrambled

Unscramble the words to determine the phrase.

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Answer: Freezer Burn

Math Blocks

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7	10		23
	4		13
10	16	20	

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Melvin Rauls focuses on honesty, integrity

By: Kristie Nail
graphics3@monticellonews.net

Melvin Rauls, owner of Rauls Landscaping, Housepainting and Yardwork, has been around awhile. His business started out in 1996 in the Pine Bluff area, but he's since moved to the Monticello area (around 2000). The business has two employees, Melvin and Aaron Rauls.

Mr. Rauls' business philosophy is short but sweet: "A job done is a job well done."

He attributes his company's success to 'staying with it.' When life is sour or when life gives Mr. Rauls lemons he 'makes lemonade.'

Melvin says that the greatest obstacle he's had to overcome to make his business a success is not giving up and staying focused when money is low or business is slow.

Mr. Rauls hopes to see his business grow in the future. In the next year, five years or ten years, he wants to go from a small



Photo by Annette Buzzell/Advance

HERE TO SERVE YOU Melvin Rauls and wife Tracy are pictured above.

business to a large business covering the whole state. Melvin has a bit of advice for someone interested in starting their own business. He says, "Don't give up. Keep the business dream alive."

We asked why customers should do business with Rauls

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COUNTRY

CONTACT US
Ashley Hogg, Editor
870-367-5325
editor@monticellonews.net

BARKADA

JANA WRIGHT

It is nice to see the sun today. My yard is like a giant mud pit. I am ready for everything to dry up for a bit. I am tired of rain. We celebrated my great-nephew, Sawyer Sears's, birthday Saturday. He had a Pokémon themed birthday party. There were a lot of people there so I will not even try to name them all. They had some BBQ nachos that were really good. Mrs. Peggy Williams had a great time with Jane Harrison, Shana Wilson, Maranda, Bree, and Kamryn McEntire. They took her out to eat. She said the food was good, but the visit was better.

I wish people inside the city limits would be more careful with gunfire. Someone I know had some bullets hit her house. What a shame. Mrs. Mary Lasiter had some company this weekend. Kim Stiles Sanders came down from Bentonville and spent a few days with her. She says Kim is her daughter from another mother. Nancy and Kim were very good childhood friends. Sheena Tucker used her talents and baked some homemade bread this weekend. It looked really good! She may inspire me! Robert and Tammy Stafford explored the Buffalo National River area and stayed in their favorite cabin in Ponca. She shared some beautiful pictures.

We attended the NWTB banquet in Star City at the Civic Center Saturday night. I had a chance to talk to Hunter Stafford, my bestie Jaye Jones, Robert and Chas Bowden, and Eric and Jed Wright.

We just found out that my first cousin Tony Phillips passed away. Please pray for our family. Happy birthday to DeShundra Griddine, Chris Riley, Steven Stevens, Debbie Martin, Pat Cruce, Judy Tipton, TaKesha Johnson, Jill Brown, Jonathan Herring, Becky Pace, Kim Pounds, and Tony Herring. I hope you all have or had happy birthdays. Please call 870.224.3383 with news or email wrightwom-an_66@yahoo.com. No news is too small!

GREEN HILL

WANDA PACE

Greenhill Community Baptist Church enjoyed a wonderful

Sunday morning service. Brother Caleb's message titled "Can He" from Luke 5:12-16. Sunday school is at 9:30am and worship service is at 10:30am, you are all invited to attend.

Aunt May had a doctor's appointment in Pine Bluff this week and received a good report. I enjoyed a wonderful lunch with Aunt May and Aunt Pepe on Tuesday.

Cindy McKinstry of Little Rock came through on her way to Baton Rouge, LA and then back from Whitehouse, TX. While here she visited with her uncle, Jimmy Cockrell; stepmom, Liz McKinstry; Colleen Watkins; and cousin, Beverly Burks. While in Texas Cindy attended a baby shower for her cousin, Eden Hyde (daughter of Mark & Terri Odom). Cindy also visited with her uncle Robert Hodges. She returned Monday to stay at the home place for a few days to work on projects at the house.

Tom & Skylar Ellis welcomed their baby, Tynslee Rayne, into the world on Tuesday, February 21, 2023. She is a beautiful and healthy baby girl.

Verse of the week: "Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth". Matthew 5:5
If you have any news to share please call or message me on fb.
Have a safe and blessed week.

LACEY

IVANELL HANDLEY

Hello readers, It's another week that the Lord has blessed us to see, let us rejoice and be glad in it!

We were blessed with another great Sunday service at Mt. Olive AME Church, Lacey. The Sunday school lesson was from 1 Peter 2:1-10. The key verse was "But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people, in order that you may proclaim the mighty acts of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light". Although I was a little late the part I heard was very good. Minister Edgar Spencer's message was from Job 5:1-5, his thought was "Praying Time", it was a blessed word.

Mr. and Mrs. Denver Robertson, Pastor Ephraim Johnson, Patricia Staple, and I attended the Celebration of Life of Pearl Jean Smith Gatewood on Tuesday February 21, 2023 1 p.m. at The Brown Funeral Home, 2704 Commerce Circle, Pine Bluff.

Do you have any community tidbits?

The Advance-Monticellonian is actively seeking other community reports to join the seven you read on a weekly basis. If you live in a community not represented on this page (and we know there are several around Monticello)—and you want to write about your particular area of the world, contact us at 870-367-5325, via email at editor@monticellonews.net, by U.S. mail at P.O. Box 486, Monticello 71657 or just drop by the office during business hours on either Thursdays or Fridays. Let's discuss your participation in our newspaper.

Her Pastor, Dr. John D. Tolbert of Trinity Missionary Baptist Church, Pontiac Michigan, officiated the service. Continued prayers for the family as well as prayers for other families that have lost a loved one.

Prayers for Ardell Allen, he will have surgery this week; he is a patient at Jefferson Regional Medical Center, Pine Bluff. Prayers for also others that are sick and shut-in.

Carolyn and Ray King, Erica and Ronnie Rochelle, and Jessica King had dinner at Golden Corral on Sunday evening.

Happy Birthday wishes to: Harlen Colbert, March 1; Shirley Spencer, March 2; Kimberly Staple, March 4; Alfonso Franklin, March 5; Tatiana Randolph, March 6; Jaylynn Phillips, March 8; Mary Foster, March 9; and Rose Brown, March 9. I hope you all enjoy your day!

Thought for the week: "People may not tell you how they feel about you but they always show you, pay attention". Author Unknown.

Be blessed and by grace I will see you next week.!

POSSUM VALLEY

KAY CRAIG SPURLOCK

I am sitting here just looking at the keyboard of my laptop wondering what in the world I'm going to write about this week. Sometimes I cannot think of a single thing. My life is really boring and I begin to overthink about why anyone would want to read about what I do every week. Invariably, I do eventually come up with some things to write about. Whether it's church, birds, flowers, bugs, doctor appointments or grandchildren, my writer's block will unlock and I'll come up with some halfway interesting content. I suppose if I received compensation for this column I might try a bit harder to use correct sentence structure and proper English. Alas, I am what I am. Just a simple country gal trying to carry on her mother's legacy. I always wished my handwriting was a beautiful as my Momma's was. And I am so happy I don't have to handwrite this column the way she had to. Speaking of Momma brings me

to the fact that my siblings and I have finally been able to arrange a gathering such as we've not had since my brother's passing. Family is important and cannot be replaced. Once someone you love is gone, you may look back and wonder how you can fill that void. Certainly you can't replace them, but losing them should make you appreciate those left behind even more. Choose forgiveness and love each other.

I can really see Spring popping up in my yard. For the past month, the bright, yellow daffodils have been the only bright spot on the waning winter landscape. Recently though tiny Spring Beauty flowers, dandelions and teeny Bluets have begun to appear among the grass. I've even seen a Question Mark Butterfly this past week and can hardly wait to see more of the other butterfly species. Insects are appearing, too, including mosquitoes. Yes. On one of the recent warm days, as I sat out on the porch, a mosquito and a fly found me. I am hoping and praying this is not a portent of things to come. In the meantime, I will continue to enjoy my porch time even if I have to turn on the mos-

quito repelling Thermocell.

I can even sense a change in the birds. During winter, birds are pretty quiet. But once Spring and love begin to fill the air so does the birdsong. Apart from the usual birds at my backyard feeders, I'm seeing Yellow-rumped Warblers and even Yellow-bellied Woodpeckers. I haven't seen the Eagle again, but did spook a couple of Wood Ducks in one of the trees behind the house. The bluebirds have not come back to build a nest in the new nesting box, although I can still hear bluebird songs nearby.

Rick and I have had a pretty quiet week except for Friday evening when Addie stayed with us awhile. Over the weekend, Leigha and the kids traveled to Hot Springs for baseball. Bo, and the South Arkansas Rally team, played very well and came away with a 2nd place ring to add to their collection.

Sunday morning we met at Bethel for a wonderful message from Bro. Steve Jacks. His message, "How Can We Know We Are Filled With The Holy Spirit", from Galatians 5:16-24. That

See **COUNTRY** Page 5B

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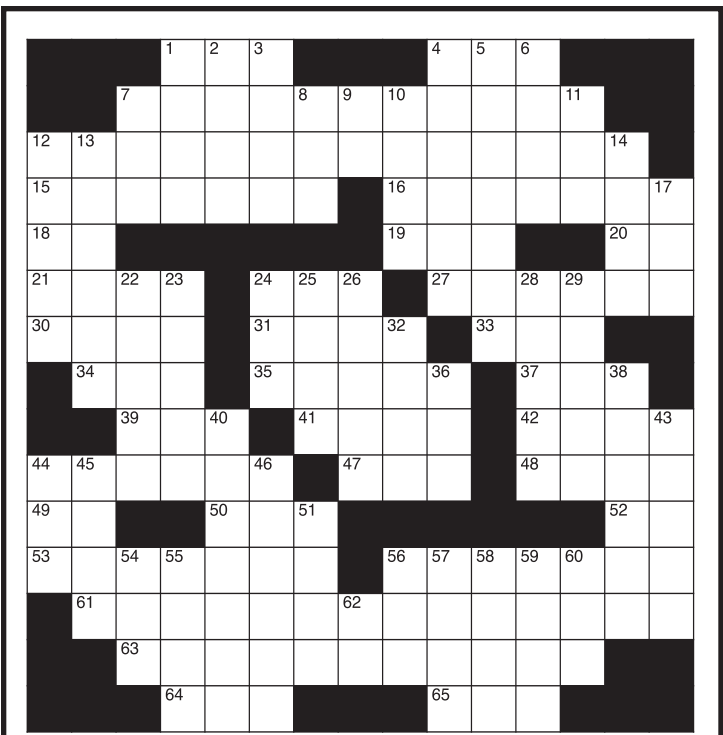
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- CLUES ACROSS
1. Relaxing place

4. Plant by scattering

7. A type of explorer

12. Unique traits

15. Lady

16. Dismayed

18. Railway

19. Type of whale

20. Sodium

21. Manning and Lilly are two

24. Where golfers begin

27. Entrapped

30. Influential punk artist

31. Hebrew calendar month

33. Car mechanics group

34. Undesirable rodent

35. Minneapolis suburb

37. Witch

39. Get free of

41. A written proposal or reminder

42. British School

44. Country on west coast of Africa

47. Cool!

48. Information

49. __ route

50. Jim Nantz's network

52. Something to register (abbr.)

53. Give cards incorrectly

56. One who's learning on the job

61. Stevenson adventure novel

63. Taking careful notice

64. CNN's founder

65. Speak badly of

- CLUES DOWN
1. A person with unusual powers of foresight

2. Single sheet of glass

3. Portrays a character

4. Expresses happiness

5. Acquires

6. "The Martian" author

7. Degree

8. 60-minute intervals

9. A detective's pal

10. Group of nations (abbr.)

11. Popular Georgia rockers

12. Fencing swords

13. Basement

14. Samoan monetary unit

17. Male parent

22. Finnish lake

23. A smooth fabric

24. Arctic explorers (abbr.)

25. Mild yellow Dutch cheese

26. Very willing

28. Expressed pleasure

29. Lasso

32. Hindu model of ideal man

36. Move your head in approval

38. Ill-__; gained illegally

40. Die

43. Accused publicly

44. Precious stone

45. Individual thing or person

46. Behaved in a way that degraded

51. Derogatory term

54. No seats available

55. Liability

56. Popular beverage

57. Tough outer skin of fruit

58. __ Spumante (Italian wine)

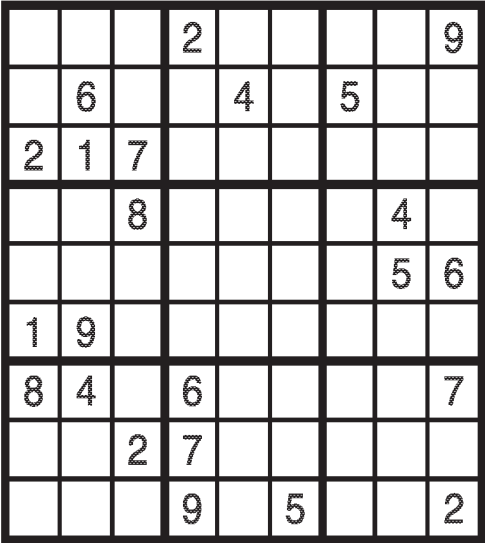
59. Troubles

60. Negative

62. Camper

Answers can be found on Page 3B

SUDOKU



Level: Intermediate

Here's How It Works:
Sudoku puzzles are formatted as a 9x9 grid, broken down into nine 3x3 boxes. To solve a sudoku, the numbers 1 through 9 must fill each row, column and box. Each number can appear only once in each row, column and box. You can figure out the order in which the numbers will appear by using the numeric clues already provided in the boxes. The more numbers you name, the easier it gets to solve the puzzle!

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K Q E V K V H H R H A E R R W R E H O Q
T C L K F I R L A F B G O K B T L G W R
L M E B C S E A U H E R G H Y K O E O E
E H K H O O H I Q S C E R A T C R Y R T
I S D W C R V U D U I E E D D O G I K U
C F I H J Y S N A V F E S B K L A K E P
U W B A C L A F E H F V S I B C U S R M
B T C Q R L H P H G O T A J O E Q F J O
J E E Y O L P M E G B C H S V M Y J P C
Y O T V K G N I T E E M R H W I K N V B
W C N O I T I S O P C Q W Y S T P Y B V
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Find the words hidden vertically, horizontally, diagonally, and backwards.

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JOB
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OFFICE
PAYCHECK
POSITION
PROGRESS
RAISE
RESOURCES
ROLE
SUPERVISOR
TIMECLOCK
TRAINING
WORK

COUNTRY

Continued from Page 4B

evening we reconvened for a belated Valentine banquet presented by our Youth and their leaders. I have to say that this year's menu rivaled that of any upscale restaurant and the service was excellent.

That's pretty much all I've got to say. I guess my writer's block opened up after all, huh?

Corny joke time: What excuse did Adam give his children about why they no longer lived in Eden? Your mother ate us out of house and home!

That's my news for this week. Please, be safe, stay warm and dry, or cool, as the case may be. Most of all, remember to be thankful to God for His many blessings, His love, His grace and His mercy.

WILMAR

TERRY HOPSON

Hello to you, the chosen ones. God has been good. Thank you Father God for the blessings.

An incidence happened in our little city that made me really unhappy. Violent acts happening right here on an innocent resident's home while she was inside. We should love one another. Love thy neighbor as thyself. This is the first and greatest commandment. God is watching you.

So, so sorry Betty Carter for the unfortunate disturbance at your home, making you feel no longer safe. May you find answers, comfort, and peace is my prayer. Amen.

Scotlynn Sanders was apart of the Drew Central school photo cover update. Congrats to each of you.

Kasia Orr, Edriana Hunter and the Drew Central Senior girls played their last game Thursday night. Congrats for a great season, Edriana Hunter made the 3A District Top Talent

list.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY to: Ming Henry and Galvin Jr., Feb. 21, Lola Faye, Jerry Johnson, and Stephen Ridgell Feb. 22, Anthony Douglas Feb. 23, Quincy Hopson Feb. 25 -Tedrick Jones Feb. 26, Christine Riley and Vivvian Clifton March 2, Cory Riley, Frances Tare and Evelyn Gonder March 5.

Ms. Riley called to report she was visiting her son and grands. She attended a three day Fire Revival from Wednesday-Friday, Evangelist Apostle Michael Jenkins was the speaker. Friday they had dinner at TGIF and Sunday they ate at Tazikis.

Get well soon to Wanda Rhodes, Demetrick Oglesby, Johnnie Mae Douglas, Karen Jackson, Carlton Jackson, Stephon Ridgell, Carol Hooper who is rehab in Crossett, Janice Corneal, and all others that are

shut-ins.

My aunt Sylvia Shorter, who is the last of my momma's siblings, and I visited Yvonne Holloway, her niece and my cousin. I had not visited her in a while because COVID was so rampant. But our visit was not long, because she was so sleepy.

The Wilmar community center will be opening the weight room with a certified trainer available. Come go with me and join. I'm ready to be healthy and fine.

Jeramiah Maham, Jr., born April 3, 2020 died February 15 2023. The funeral was held on Thursday, February 23, at Bethesda Missionary Baptist Church in Little Rock. The Wilmar community sends our condolences and prayers.

The Masons and the OES had their yearly banquet in Pine Bluff Friday night. The meal was

very satisfying and the company was good. They just did not pull the correct ticket with my name on it for the 2023 Toyota Camry, nor for neither of the \$500 cash money give-a-ways. Oh well, there is always next year.

DC Senior boys have earned the right to play in the State Tournament in Lamar. They lost to Dumas on Saturday night Regionals. Pray hard, play hard, be strong.

I would like to thank everyone who wished me a Happy Birthday. Thanks for the Birthday party from the Community Center. You all know how to make a ol' gal feel special. May God keep on blessing you.

If you want to report some news call me 870-224-6507 or inbox me.

Til next week love, peace, and always have the joy of the of the Lord within.

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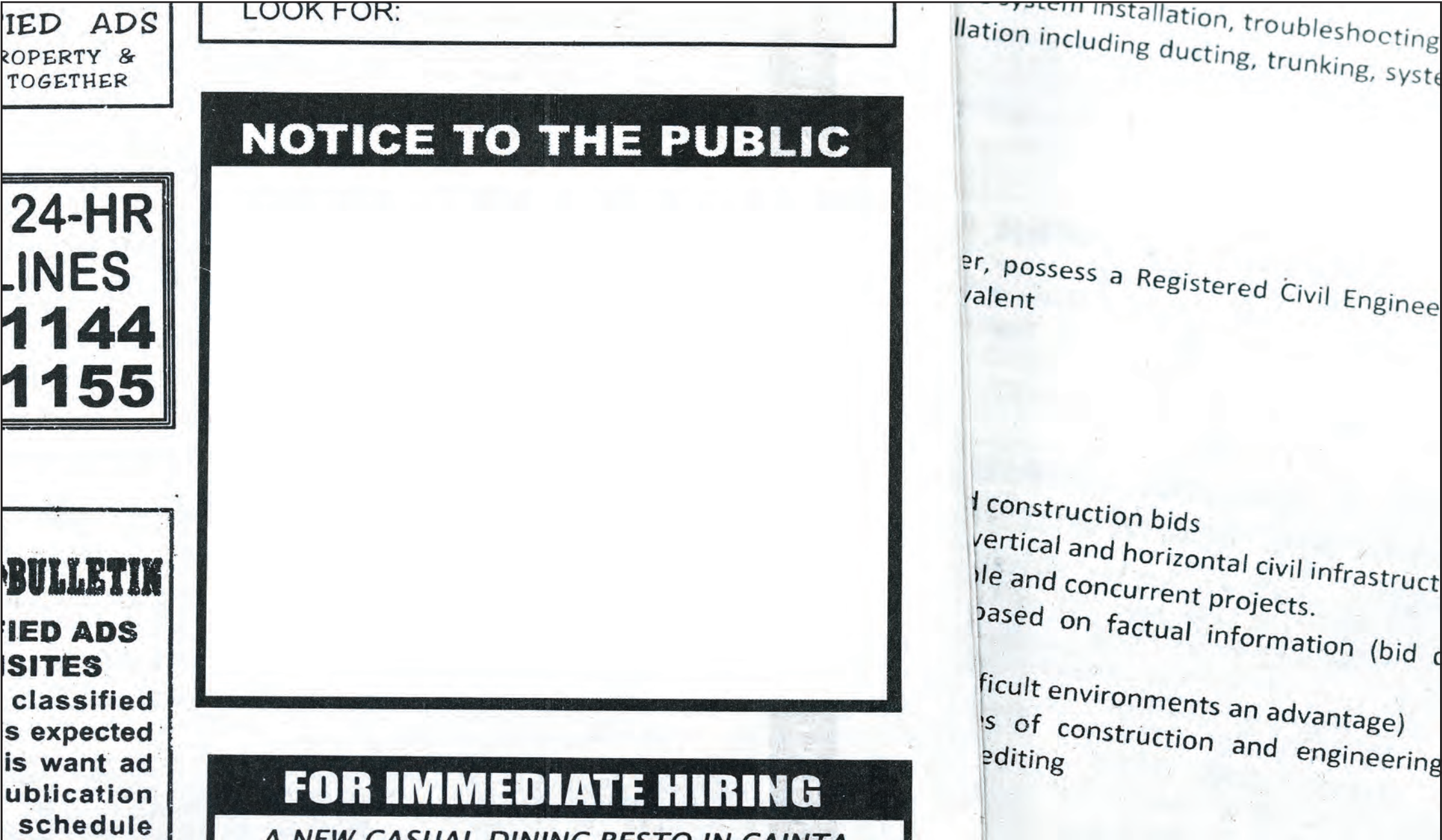
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