

NEA'S

PREMIERE

MAGAZINE

August
2022



Three Generations of Musical Talent

FAMILY FUN

Music runs in the Family

LAST MINUTE TRIPS

Explore NEA

BACK TO SCHOOL

ADVICE, TIPS & TRICKS



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Cover Photo by Caitlin Lafarlette

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From the Publisher



Babies change our priorities, and that is okay.

Premiere has been my baby since 2007 and it feels good to be back. I believe the last few years watching and guiding it grow up and expand into new areas has been rewarding but I am looking forward to this next phase as my new creative team and I bring you more of “the Good News and the People Making it Happen in NEA.”

The best part of publishing Premiere has always been giving my readers local resources they may not know they need right now but along their paths they are able to inform someone

else or even find themselves in need. When we can wrap these resources in someone’s story it makes for an interesting read that adds to the reader and the featured person in ways beyond our specific goals. I know this because so many have thanked me or a staff member over the past 15 years, but it never gets old!

So, keep the stories coming my way. Let’s tell Premiere readers all the Good News and the People Making it Happen!

dina@mormediainc.com

Dina Alason
Publisher

An advertisement for Glen Sain Ford. The background is a photograph of a dark grey Ford Bronco SUV parked on a dirt path in a forest. The text 'Glen Sain God Bless Our Troops' is in the top left in a white script font. The Ford logo is in the top right. A red starburst graphic in the middle right says 'Paragould PREMIERE AWARD WINNER 2022'. At the bottom left, it says 'BEST PRICE BEST SERVICE' in blue block letters. At the bottom right, it provides contact information: '870.236.8546 | 1301 US 49 GLENSAINFORD.NET'.

NEA'S PREMIERE MAGAZINE

publisher/advertising sales

Dina Mason | dina@mormediainc.com

contributing writers

Richard Brummett | brummettr34@gmail.com
 Caitlin LaFarlette | caitlin_lafarlette@hotmail.com
 Chuck Long | Charles.Long@agfc.ar.gov
 Jared Pickney | jared@fellowshipparagould.com
 Linda Lou Moore | manners@paragould.net
 Karoline Risker | karole17@hotmail.com

advertising sales team

Dina Mason | dina@mormediainc.com
 Perry Mason | perry@mormediainc.com
 Brian Osborn | brian@mormediainc.com
 Natalie Harrell | natalie@mormediainc.com
 Brett Carlile | brett@mormediainc.com



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CORRECTION:

The July edition incorrectly titled a category in the Premiere Awards and also left out a category winner. Below is what should have published. The page numbers are for the advertisements in the July edition. We apologize for any confusion.

SPEECH THERAPIST

Jessica Ko -
Hands On Learning
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Kelsey Whitney -
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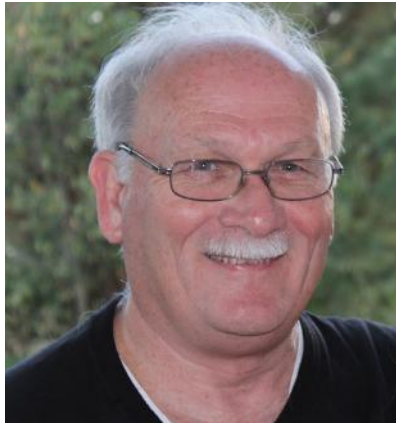
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GET RICH WITH RICHARD BRUMMETT



August has always been one of my favorite months for a variety of reasons, one being that it contains my birthday and what could be better than celebrating me? Another is that the dog days of summer usually corresponded with championship time for the baseball and softball teams I was playing for and/or coaching as we tried to become the last team standing after a long summer of competition.

Once, when the subject of birthdays came up, a woman in the group I was sitting with assumed we would be having a proper celebration in honor of my big day, complete with a party and gifts. When I informed her I encouraged my family not to make a big deal of my birthday and had, in fact, never even had a party she and another lady seemed stunned.

"Your parents never gave you a birthday party?!" one asked, looking at me with both sympathetic and unbelieving eyes. I said "nope" and could have let it go at that, letting them believe my folks were uncaring slave drivers who made me work in the mines all day as an underpaid child laborer. But I shared the truth with them, which is that one year my mom tried but I eventually shot the idea down.

I was somewhere between the ages of 9 and 12 inclusive (I remember, because I was still eligible for Little League baseball) and Mom asked if that year I wanted to have a party. Sounded great to me; she said I could invite some friends over and we could play a few games, she'd bake a cake and we would have homemade ice cream and I was all

for it. "Make a list of friends you want to invite and give it to me and I'll start making some calls to their parents," she said, so I hurried to my room and rather quickly came back with a piece of paper containing 17 names.

Mom looked at it and took a step back, saying, "Oh, no, this is way too many people. You can't have this many."

"But you said we could play a couple of games," I told her. "That's so we can have nine on each side."

"For what?"

"For baseball," I told her, explaining I thought she could take us all over to the baseball field at Labor Park and we could play until dark, then we could come home and eat cake and ice cream.

"Well, no," Mom said, explaining that for one thing the park was locked up during the daytime and even if it weren't she couldn't fit 18 boys into her Plymouth Fury. I thought since she was a person of influence -- a schoolteacher -- she could call whomever one called to get the park unlocked simply by explaining it was her son's birthday and he wanted in, and he was probably going to be a Major League player someday. But she didn't go there, explaining, "I meant invite five or six friends and play inside."

Poor Mom. I don't know how she thought we could play baseball in the house, even with only six guys. I told her I supposed I could whittle the list and we could play in the back yard and just not run the bases and slide since space wouldn't allow it, and then she said a couple of things that absolutely shocked me: "Well, not everyone likes to play baseball. And you don't have any girls on your list."

Whaaaat? There are kids who don't want to play baseball? Is there something wrong with them? Are they Communist spies? And girls? Why in Heaven's name would I want girls at my party? They throw like ... well, like girls!

That's when Mom said her vision of the party would be for me to invite a couple of my closest friends, some girls from the neighborhood and maybe two or three more kids from church. We could play board games or party games, then eat the cake and ice cream and call it a day. I think she even mentioned something about wearing nice clothes, and I was mentally submitting my resignation from the Birthday Party Club.

"So let me get this straight," I said to her. "You're saying ... no baseball?"

"No baseball," she nodded. "You can't be getting all hot and sweaty and then coming inside."

"And ... girls?"

"Yes, girls. We have a couple who live right here beside us. It wouldn't be very nice to have a party and not invite them."

"And ... churchy boys?"

"Yes, church boys. You know a couple of them have invited you to their parties, so I think you should ask them to yours."

This party idea was tanking pretty quickly as far as I was concerned and, having lived up to that moment without ever having been the guest of honor, I didn't know if it was some sort of rule that a guy had to have a party once he reached a certain age. I didn't want Mom to get in trouble with the Birthday Police but I sure as heck didn't want to stay inside on my special day.

"Do I *have* to have a party?" I asked, rejoicing when I learned it was not mandatory. Mom asked what I would do otherwise and I said I thought I would just play ball somewhere until dark. She asked if I was sure that's what I wanted and I said it was and we never again broached the subject of a birthday party. I remember when the big day arrived I grabbed my glove and bat, pulled on my cap and rode my bike down to L.W. Baldwin Park and was perfectly happy hitting and catching ground balls with baseball guys, the perfect party for me, even without cake.



LIVING A Better Story

BY JARED PICKNEY

It's the job of a parent, not the school, to raise children into adults. Unfortunately, as you might have noticed, our society, by and large, is failing miserably at this task. Many Americans are locked in perpetual adolescence. Our kids simply don't know what an adult is or how to become one. Perhaps more problematic, the older generation has forgotten that what they hate about our

culture has been shaped by the children they raised. Unless we wake up, we will repeat the same mistakes.

That said, here are ten things you can do to help raise healthy adults.

1. Parent with the end in mind. Remember that one day your kids will leave the house. Think about what they need to know

as an adult and prepare them before they leave.

2. Set the example. Lessons are caught more than taught. We learn through imitation. What you do is more important than what you say.

3. Visit your child's planet. Draw a circle that represents a planet. Write your kids name inside of the circle. Now list everything

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inside that planet your kid enjoys. Make it a point to visit your kids' planet once a week by doing something they love.

4. Provide discipline and structure. You cannot live without boundaries and restrictions. The more your child learns this the more freedom they'll have.

5. Let them feel the full weight of their choices. Too many parents are too quick to rescue their kids from themselves. If you keep rescuing your kids every time they mess up they'll keep messing up.

6. Roughhouse with your kids. This develops strength, character and social skills.

7. Don't do things for your kids they can do on their own. One of the most underrated attributes is grit. Help your child develop some grit by making them come up with solutions to some of their own problems.

8. Create experiences. Toys break. Experiences live on. Take them hiking, fishing, exploring, etc.

9. Look for teaching opportunities. One of your primary jobs as a parent is to teach your children how to navigate life. Don't assume they'll figure it out on their own. Kids are wonderful observers but terrible interpreters. Help them interpret the world.

10. Love your kids. Love is spelled T.I.M.E. Attend their games. Look them in the eye. Listen to them. Show up. Be present. Let them know you enjoy them.



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PET

of the MONTH

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BY HOLLY BRINKLEY

Want to see your pet featured in Premiere? Submit your pet via our Facebook post each month! Follow NEA Premiere Magazine to stay in the know.

I watched my constant of 19 years, my cat Ricky, pass away right in front of me in December of 2021, two days after my birthday.

On Christmas Day, Something Pawsitive posted a story of receiving a call that two kittens had been thrown into a dumpster. I immediately contacted Something Pawsitive about the kittens and asked if I could go ahead and claim them. I knew I always wanted two after I lost Ricky and I wanted them to be rescues. We were in agreement and they went to Ozzie's Legacy to be nursed back to health.

Four days later I said goodbye to my parents forever when a disease took both of their lives on the same day.

I adopted Comet and Josie Eliza on December 31 of that year. Comet's ears are different because he was diagnosed with an animal

version of "shaken baby syndrome." Once they were both kittens nursed to health, I took on an easy responsibility to love and care for these babies.

Comet loves everyone. When you hold him, he feels like a stuffed animal. He is obsessed with practically any toy and he loves to play fetch. He loves to eat and is obsessed with his treats. If I spill something or if he accidentally spills something, he helps me clean. I will be wiping up something on the floor and he is right there with his paw, mimicking my cleaning.

Josie Eliza is a diva. If you want to love on her, it has to be on her terms. She loves "making biscuits" with her paws and when she is ready to love, she plops right on top of you. She is the overseer of her brother. I have to clean Comet's ears every few days and Josie sits right beside him to comfort him.

They do everything together like eating, taking naps, grooming, and playing. They lie with me when they know I'm sad and comfort me as well as making me laugh. They are pure entertainment.

Thank you to Hannah and Ali for being there with me through some hard times during transition. Thank you Aunt Sheryl for watching over them when I have to be away. A big thank you to Nikki from Ozzie's Legacy for being so supportive.

I am so thankful to have been able to rescue these babies because they just rescued me right back.

Adopt.





PETS ARE AMAZING

WITH DR. KRISTIN SULLIVAN

A question I often get as a veterinarian is, "Can dogs and cats get cancer, too?" The answer is yes.

Unfortunately, it is something we veterinarians see all too often. Before I get into the details, let's go over some of the sometimes confusing terminology.

Neoplasia: This is a term used to describe uncontrolled or abnormal growth of cells or tissues; it results in a neoplasm. A neoplasm is the abnormal growth or tumor itself; these growths can be benign (non-cancerous) or malignant (cancerous). Benign growths tend to grow slowly and do not invade surrounding tissues or spread to other areas of the body (a process called metastasis).



Malignant tumors do invade surrounding tissues and can metastasize (spread) to other areas of the body — it is these malignant tumors that make up cancers.

So, now we know what it is, what do we look for? There is a long list of possible clinical signs that can signal something is awry. As not all masses are found on the skin and may not be palpable on examination, it is so important for your pet to have its yearly or biannual examinations — remember, early detection is key!

Clinical signs commonly associated with neoplasia in pets: abdominal swelling, difficulty breathing/cough, difficulty eating, lumps/bumps on skin, non-healing wounds, persistent diarrhea and/or vomiting, unexplained swelling/pain/lameness.

Diagnosis is the next step. In order to find out what type of neoplasm has developed, further diagnostics are required. Your veterinarian can best assist you on which tests are necessary, but Fine Needle Aspirate, incisional or excisional biopsy, radiographs (x-rays), blood work, and/

or ultrasound exams are commonly performed to determine neoplasm type and stage of disease.

Neoplasms have no known prevention. There have, however, been certain links to causes of cancer in animals – the number one cause being secondhand smoke.

Can it be treated and how? Every case is unique and requires an individual treatment plan that will be best for both the pet and the owner. Types of treatment vary depending on the type of cancer, but range from surgery, chemotherapy, radiation, thermal surgery/treatments (freezing or heating), and immunotherapy. Treatment options are best discussed with your veterinarian or a veterinary oncologist.

The most important thing to remember is that early detection offers the best prognosis in any case. If something seems off, or just not right about your furry family member, then it is best to talk to your pet's veterinarian and have a complete physical examination performed.

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MOORE on MANNERS

WITH LINDA LOU MOORE

Summer vacation is almost over. Before we know, it will be time to get back into the routine of school. Often the transition from summer vacation to the new school year can be an adjustment for the whole family. Teachers suggest that planning for the school year can make the transition from summer vacation to back-to-school easier for parents as well as children. Keep in mind the following when beginning the school year.

SCHOOL'S WEBSITE

Check the school's website for important information.

ROUTINE

Establishing an earlier bedtime schedule will help getting up earlier. Also, giving children time to prepare for the next school day such as picking out clothes, organizing books, and learning to get up early can make hectic school mornings go smoother. Practicing these routines a few weeks before actually going back to school can get everyone off on the right foot.

SCHEDULES

Making a schedule of the school day along with after school activities helps to let everyone know

what needs to be done. Don't forget to factor in not only the school schedule, but also homework, chores, dinner, play time, etc.

LIBRARY

A trip to the library before school starts can brush the dust off some neglected reading skills. Select books that are enjoyable and interesting. Make reading fun!

STUDY TIME

Introducing children to a study schedule can assist in preparing them for homework and school projects. Playing games that incorporate reading and math skills helps children get ready for school.

SCHOOL SUPPLIES

Buying back-to-school supplies ahead of time is one less worry for both the student and parent.

ACTIVITIES

Planning back-to-school activities or parties gets everyone ready for the new school year and helps make the transition more comfortable.

SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT

Children feel more comfortable if they know where they will be and who they will be with. Knowing the location of their classroom and meeting the teacher can help lessen the "butterflies in the stomach" feeling.

COMMON COURTESIES

Take time, before school starts, to talk to your child about being courteous to others. Good manners are common courtesies that make life easier. Beginning a new school routine can be hard, but a little preparation, along with treating others as you would like to be treated, can help smooth out some of the rough spots of the school day.

BACK-TO-SCHOOL - QUOTE OF THE DAY:

"A teacher affects eternity; he can never tell where his influence stops." - Henry B. Adams

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

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Lessons LEARNED IN Motherhood

BY CAITLIN LAFARLETTE

I was six months pregnant when Covid hit the U.S. I watched the world stop turning, watched as people sat in parking lots or across the street from one another to talk. As the weeks dragged on, I saw people cease to care for the wellbeing of others because they wanted to “get back to normal.” I became scared and depressed about the world I was bringing my daughter into.

The last two years have continued to keep me stressed out about what kind of environment my daughter

will grow up in. It is so easy to get caught up in the negative headlines and worry there won't even be a world left for my child.

As the political landscape has become even rockier, a group of my friends who are all mothers have stepped up their game to provide for others and keep them safe. We have created a network all across the U.S., and even Canada, to support anyone who needs a safe haven or financial assistance.

Without hesitation, these women from all different backgrounds and lifestyles put their names on a list of contacts for anyone who might need them. Some signed up for transportation, housing, and food, just to name a few. I watched this network come together in less than 24 hours. And while it came about under bleak circumstances, it brought hope to me that my generation is making changes to raise our children in a kinder, gentler world. I felt more at peace knowing there are countless mothers out there showing this next generation how to care for others and treat them with kindness.

Everything might be falling apart right now, but I am working to piece it all back together for Eva. My end goal is for her to pass that love on to her own children, and hopefully never repeat history in the negative ways those before her have.

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I was introduced to firearms at an early age. The first was a BB gun, probably a Daisy Red Rider, though my memory is not real clear on the specifics. The transition to a .22 singleshot came at about six or seven years of age and a singleshot .410 shotgun followed soon after. This introduction was natural as firearms played an integral part in daily life in the Coffman community as they were used to gather food, repel pests and for recreational activity when the funds allowed the purchase of ammo.

Those early days included lessons in ethics, safety and how to shoot accurately and efficiently; .22s were fun to shoot but I soon gravitated more toward shotguns and wing shooting became one of my favorite pastimes. Whether it was game like doves, ducks, quail and woodcock in the fall/winter or "skeet" in the off season, I enjoyed having a shotgun in my hands. I often watched in amazement as my Papa Blanton and his duck hunting friends would knock mallard after mallard out of the sky and hoped to someday become that proficient.

I was blessed with the opportunity to grow up with a shotgun, though my training was not formal. There were very few local shooting competitions, other than between friends, but those early years still provided some great building blocks for shooting and life in general.

Fast forward from my childhood to recent times and the young

shooters of today have been blessed with a great opportunity to learn shotgunning in a more formal, competitive setting. About fifteen years ago the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission launched the Arkansas Youth Shooting Sports Program. This program is designed to get shotguns in the hands of young shooters, beginning in the sixth grade, in a program that allows them to learn the basics of firearm safety while also offering a chance to compete with other shooters. This program has become very popular with youngsters and there are currently approximately 5,000 students participating across the state.

Greene County and Northeast



Arkansas have some of the most competitive teams and individual shooters in this program. Greene County 4-H, Greene County Tech and Marmaduke field teams each year and, between the three, enroll close to 100 in the program. Anyone can be involved; all a prospective coach has to do is fill out the appropriate paperwork, which includes a background check, and go through a training course administered by the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission. This course will provide the basics for registration and supply information as well as an opportunity to get some hands-on work on the range to gain a better understanding of the program.

Once certified, a coach can then



CHUCK LONG

Regional Education Coordinator Northeast Education Division Arkansas Game and Fish Commission

create a team. The age classes for the program are Junior (6th-8th grade) and Senior (9th-12th grade). A team will need at least five members. Once a team has been fielded, it will be broken down into squads of five for competitions. One hurdle that must be overcome is the cost to be involved in the program. The AGFC does help a bit with that, providing some ammo and clay targets to get started as well as the opportunity to use a trap machine to throw the targets. But that is usually only enough for a minimal start; then most teams rely heavily on grants, donations and fundraisers to support the program. Some schools also invest in the program, purchasing targets, ammo, throwers and even firearms for the participants.

One of the great appeals to this sport is that physical parameters do not matter. Unlike other sports, physical attributes are not that important in success. This allows the sport of trap shooting to be enjoyed by a wide range of youth, regardless of their abilities.

The benefits of learning safe firearm handling and becoming a better shooter are obvious parts of trap shooting, but the mental development that shooting inspires will also be helpful as young shooters develop in life. Mentally a shooter must be able to shoot instinctively but methodically. They must be able to act quickly but shoot patiently. They must be able to forget the miss and focus on the target.

They must be able to perform as an individual but within a team concept. All these are great lessons that can be learned through the sport.

Baylee Whitaker shot trap for Marmaduke and says, "Shooting trap taught me how to be confident in myself and my ability. When I first started I was terrified to shoot, but I gained confidence and became able to shoot without hesitation. I also learned perseverance and the ability to overcome a miss and focus on the next target."

If you have a child in Greene County that might be interested in the trap shooting game there are several great folks who would be willing to help. Lance Blythe would be the contact for shooting sports through the 4-H program. Jason Murray heads up the program at Greene County Tech, while I or Daniel Hensley can help in Marmaduke. On a statewide basis, Jimmy Self is the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission's project coordinator for the Arkansas Youth Shooting Sports Program and his contact information can be found at agfc.com.

For adults interested in learning more about shooting sports or honing their skills, there are several ranges around the state that offer shooting opportunities.

That information can also be found at agfc.com. The Arkansas Game and Fish Commission also offers classes that will help with the basics of shooting and these can also be found at agfc.com.

Hopefully the heat breaks soon and the weather will be more conducive to shooting a few rounds. The lessons garnered from the shooting sports can prove invaluable in the field and in life so make some time to get out and shoot a few targets.

I hope to see you out there.



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A photograph of a firefighter in full gear, including a helmet and a breathing apparatus, standing in front of a glowing blue energy field. The field is composed of various symbols, numbers, and letters, giving it a futuristic or technological appearance. The firefighter is looking towards the field.

PARAGOULD BIG BANG



There was plenty to enjoy on the Fourth of July when MOR Media and the Paragould A&P Commission hosted a free fireworks show.

Several more local and area sponsors helped stage and promote the event and the gates of the Paragould Rotary Park softball complex opened to the public at 6:30 p.m. Guests were treated to free hot dogs and drinks and a tug-of-war “Battle of the Badges” between the Paragould Fire Department and Greene County Law Enforcement officers, with the firemen defending their title. The 870 Cornhole Nation also hosted amateur and competitive play during the evening.

The fireworks show started around 9:30, much to the delight of those in attendance.

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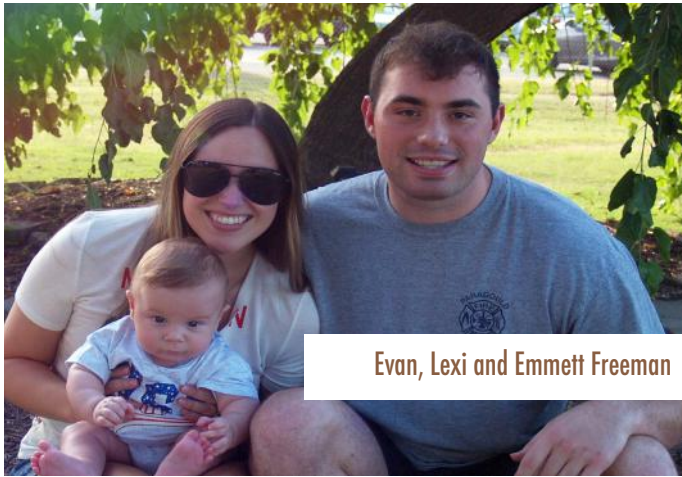
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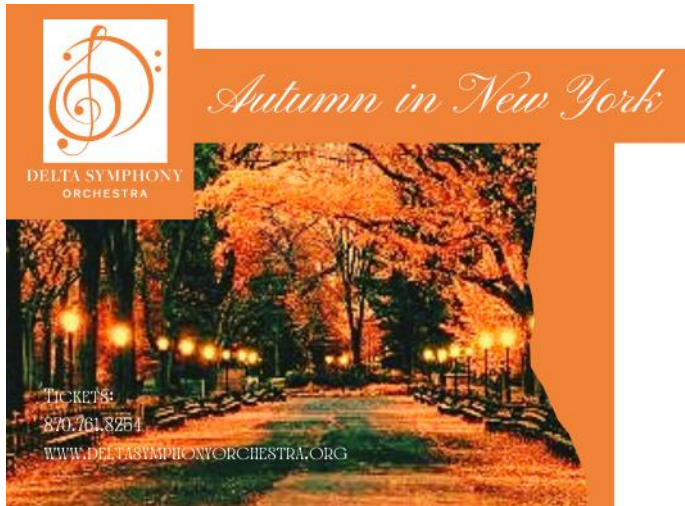
The Delta Symphony Orchestra will hold its annual gala on September 10th at the Gardens at Harmony in Jonesboro.

This year's theme is Autumn in New York and the entertainment will feature a jazz combo band and performers from The Link Theatre Company.

The 2022 Gala honoree will be Dr. J.D. Kelly (posthumous). Doors open at 6 p.m. This is the primary fundraiser for the DSO's 2022-2023 season and the event will also include a raffle and both live and silent auctions.

Tickets will be on sale August 1st. Ticket prices are \$125 for an individual ticket and \$900 for a table. Tickets can be purchased through Eventbrite, the DSO's website, or by calling 870.761.8254.

For sponsorship or donation questions contact Catherine Norvell at executivedirector@deltasymphonyorchestra.org.



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ROOKIE OF THE YEAR

BY RICHARD BRUMMETT



her category at the ceremony in Springdale.

Her favorite aspect of gardening, she said, is “to see it start from seed and see it growing and then be so happy when you realize they are all growing. Sometimes I say, ‘How many will germinate?’ And then ... they all germinate! That’s my favorite part.”

Stephannie credits two mentors -- Vicki Griggs and Susan Youngblood -- in particular with “going out of their way to show me around and give me guidance” but said all the gardeners in the local group have been supportive and helpful. “The Master Gardeners, it has only been since I came here to the states (from Pakistan) that I have done this, but it has opened doors for me,” she said. “When you go from one place to another you have to get used to new ways and new people and this has been so good for me.”

She has been employed at Rogers Greenhouse in Paragould for a year and a half, and said that seems most fitting considering her love of plants. “I won this award,” she said, “and I get to work here. What more could I ask?”

For more information on getting involved in Greene County Master Gardeners call (870) 236-6921 or email greene-paragould@uaex.edu.

Stephannie Rodrigues of Paragould has been named Arkansas Master Gardener Rookie of the Year, and she describes the honor two ways. “Happy,” she said first of all, adding, “and surprised. It is an honor, certainly.”

Approaching two years as a Master Gardener, Stephannie said she decided to join at both a good and bad time: right when the Covid pandemic was changing the way we did things. In order to become a Master Gardener one must apply, be accepted and then attend classes for training and, eventually, testing purposes. Stephannie said having to take much of her training via Zoom meetings instead of in person actually benefited her.

“I think Zoom was easier for me because I could do things on my own time,” she said, referring to mandatory sessions and testing. “And then to win this, well, I was very honored.”

She said each county nominates individuals for various awards and the decisions for winners are made at the state level. Multiple awards may be handed out in the same category, dividing them into organizations with over 500 members and those with fewer, as was the case in



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DOWNTOWN PARAGOULD EVENTS



August 5th

7pm

Rock, Country & Blues with Allen Wooldridge, Kenz, B Money & The Preacher Man
The Collins Theatre



August 6th

7pm

Costaki Economopoulos – Comedian
The Collins Theatre



August 13th

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August 20th

4-9pm

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Night Moves-Car & Art Show
Downtown Paragould



August 22nd

7pm

KASU's Bluegrass Monday featuring
East Nash Grass
The Collins Theatre



September 16th & 17th

Get Downtown Festival
Downtown Paragould

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

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JONESBORO LOCAL FEST



Kace Welch takes a swing at a target with Jonesboro's Civil Axe.

Musicians, artists and vendors gathered on the streets of Downtown Jonesboro July 16th and 17th for Local Festival, "a celebration of the culture, arts, business and music of NEA."

The lineup included 12 stages' worth of bands, a mini carnival and even a Civil Axe throwing competition. Food truck vendors, horse rides, a petting zoo, poetry readings and open mics filled the two-day event.

The goal of Local Fest, according to City Sessions, was to enhance the livelihood that serves all members of the community.



Cory Jackson, Kevin King and Joey Pruett



Arielle, Josh and Alaska Milewski



Skinny Powers takes the Main Street Parking Lot Stage Saturday afternoon at Local Fest.

HAPPENING SOON IN DOWNTOWN JONESBORO

Never miss out on the fun happening in
Downtown Jonesboro; visit
downtownjonesboro.com for an up to date
listing of events across
Northeast Arkansas.



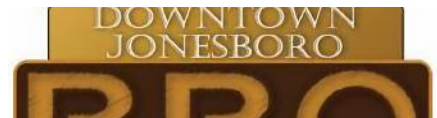
August 4th & 18th

First & Third Thursday
Thirsty Thursday Open Mic Night
The Recovery Room
7:30pm



August 6th
10-11am

Wild Tales at Crowley's Ridge
Nature Center
Presented by the Craighead County
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September 23-24th

Friday, September 23 & Saturday,
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Downtown Jonesboro BBQ Festival

explore

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Sightseeing in Southern Missouri

BY RICHARD BRUMMETT



Whether you're looking for a road trip with a quick turnaround or prefer staying away for a few days, heading up the highway from Paragould to Southern Missouri can provide either.

For a retired couple like my wife and me, a one-day sightseeing excursion to the areas around Doniphan, Winona and Eminence proved the perfect trip. We put the dog in the vehicle with us and headed out through Corning and then, just before reaching Poplar Bluff, headed west on Highway 160 to our first stop at Doniphan. It's about an hour-and-a-half drive but if you enjoy looking at historic sites and relics, this is a good place.

The main downtown street, Washington, hosts a number of shops and boutiques and ends right in front of the historic Ripley County Courthouse. The 1898 structure is a sight to behold, but also at the end of that block on Courthouse Square sits the Current River Heritage Museum, a two-story building full of displays that help explain the history of Ripley County and the Current River. Upstairs there are Native American relics, tools used in the timber industry and more, while downstairs one can get a glimpse of everyday life in the town's early years: A one-room school, military displays (including some from the Civil War era), home life and sports memorabilia just for starters.

Taking a quick turn around the courthouse you can discover the Pioneer Heritage Homestead one block to the south. It has a Civil War era log cabin, a blacksmith shop which is open for demonstrations

on Saturdays, a barn and a schoolhouse, as well as an old cemetery, all pleasing to history buffs.

But as Fawn Barbee of the Chamber of Commerce says, "Of course, what we're known for is the river" and it is a real draw. There are numerous spots along the highway where you can pull over and walk right down to the waters of the Current River, jumping in for a swim if you choose or just sitting at some of the shaded picnic areas provided.

We saw motorized craft zooming one direction while passing a group slowly floating downstream in the other, all while a family of six lazed in the water near the shoreline. Many of the access areas from the parking lots are concrete walkways, making the downhill trek to the water simpler.

And all the above mentioned attractions are free and by themselves make for a nice one-day outing. If you choose, you can stay at one of three local motels, and you can experience a day on the river and enjoy camping out under the direction of KC on the Current or the Rocky River Resort.

Cindy, Zoey and I headed out of town and connected with Highway 19, heading north for about another 30-minute drive before arriving at Winona. Much of the trip is encompassed by the Mark Twain National



Forest and provides a tree-lined journey that makes an attractive drive on the mostly two-lane highway. At Winona we veered off to the east for about 11 miles, winding up at Rocky Falls, a good old down-home swimming hole. It's a park-and-walk exercise, only a short distance from the vehicle to the water. The falls, pouring over the rocks, make for a natural water slide if you're brave enough, but mostly it makes for a beautiful sight. Families gathered in the cold waters below the falls on our visit, frolicking in the pool formed.

Back in the vehicle, we headed even further north to Eminence, the



home of Echo Bluff State Park. Converted to a state park only six years ago, there is a "new" look to just about everything there. A magnificent lodge greets visitors, along with a large area reserved for campers

and RVs. The lodge provides guest rooms, meeting rooms and indoor or outdoor dining opportunities and the beautiful cabins are perfect for family stays and group getaways. Echo Bluff is set up for hiking and biking adventures, swimming, floating and fishing outings or just staying inside for modern day entertainment. Even just a sightseeing tour like ours is worth the drive if you enjoy taking in nature's beauty.

Heading home we went back down Highway 19 to Winona, this time turning east on Highway 60. In quick time we were at Poplar Bluff, only an hour from home, all on nice roads. It was a good day trip for us, which could be turned into an extended stay for anyone seeking such. All in all, a nice quick getaway.



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Hit the Trail at Rock Creek

BY CAITLIN LAFARLETTE

Whether you have been in Arkansas for 20 years or 20 minutes, it's clear the Natural State is filled with beauty in all of its outdoor spaces. And you don't have to travel far from NEA to find these special spots, making an excursion into nature the perfect last minute trip.

Just an hour and a half away from Paragould is the Rock Creek Natural Area, tucked away in the Harold Alexander Wildlife Management Area, approximately six miles south of Hardy. The drive itself is relaxing, especially after passing through Ravenden and entering the winding hills and gorgeous farmlands of the Salem Plateau in the Ozarks.



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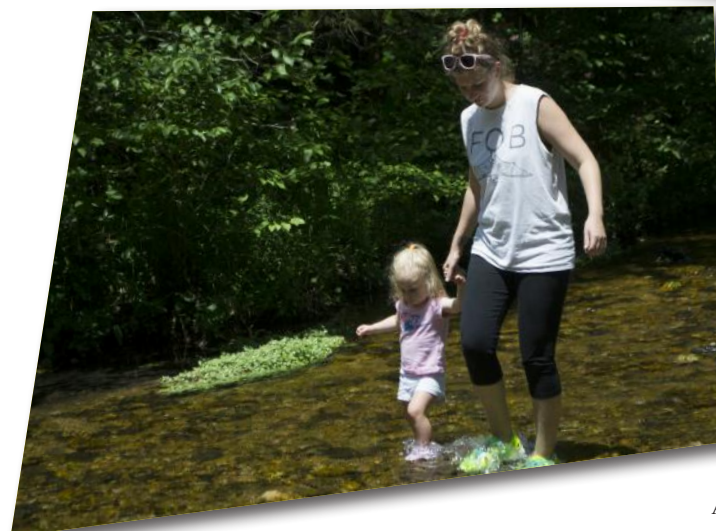
Within Rock Creek is the Bubbling Springs trail, a short 1.2 mile round trip hike that is kid-friendly. The trail ends at Bubbling Springs, a tributary to Rock Creek (which is in turn a tributary to Spring River). The water is cold and refreshing after a hike in the summer heat but flows slowly enough to wade in while little ones splash around. As the trail ends at the springs, it opens up enough to lay out a blanket and chairs to enjoy snacks and take a rest.

The actual trail has a few steep areas that the kids might need help with, but my 2-year-old navigated the majority of it with ease. There is plenty of shade from the sun and even though the trail sits half a mile from the main road, the only sounds you hear are from the trees and wildlife.

It took us a little under an hour to do the hike round trip and the best part was being such a short drive from historic downtown Hardy. We ended the afternoon with ice cream from Hardy Sweet Shop and a bit of shopping in stores that I used to visit as a little girl. Gemstones, dulcimers,

pottery and antiques are just a few of the treasures you can find downtown.

This made the perfect day trip for a Saturday afternoon, with plenty of time to spare after driving back home. And with so many access points to Spring River and vacation rentals along the way, it's incredibly easy to make an entire weekend out of it. So if you're looking to squeeze in one last getaway before school starts, you don't have to look far.







Music Through the Years.

Three Generations of Talent

BY CAITLIN LAFARLETTE

The rooms of Lillian White’s home are filled with music - not just from her piano students, but from her daughter and granddaughter, as well.

Harmony and Aria Fortson have followed in White’s footsteps with playing the piano but have branched out into singing and mastering other instruments. “I play a little bit of bass, a little bit of drums, piano, guitar and ukulele,” Aria, 16, said.

Aria started her own rock band, Truth or Dare, a year ago and is the lead guitarist and singer. She began piano at the age of five, but recounted after crying at every lesson, her mother let her quit until she was 9 years old. Harmony said it was reassuring seeing her daughter jump back into music, especially since she doubted herself as a first-time mom. Eventually, Aria also began teaching piano. “We try to be a safe place,” Harmony said. “You don’t realize it, but you’re ministering to them.”

White has been teaching since 1979 and her students range from 5 to 85 years old. “I just kept revisiting it,” she said. “I’d try this, try that, and keep coming back to piano.”

Teaching is her full-time job, and White said she loves it even more than performing. By this point she figures she has taught around “a few hundred kids,” who come not only for lessons, but popcorn that her husband makes just for the kids. White added God blessed her with skills for the piano and she thought she should use it.

“And then these girls,” White said of her daughter and granddaughter, “what they do is just triple, it’s awesome.”

White’s parents insisted she and her siblings take piano lessons, and she never had to be told to practice as it was her favorite hobby. The 64-year-old doesn’t intend to retire, ever. “It stayed with me and I stayed with it,” she said.

Harmony began her own piano lessons around the age of 6 and thought it was just what she was supposed to do since that is what her mom did. “She did it so well and I just wanted to be like her,” Harmony said.

Today, Harmony also plays saxophone, bassoon, violin

and holds two degrees from Arkansas State University in vocal performance and vocal music education. She is also certified to teach band K-12. “I probably just like singing the best, and that’s probably why I pursued that as a degree,” she added.

Harmony and her husband had an off and on rock band when Aria was younger, and the toddler would go from restaurant to restaurant on Saturday nights, singing on stage with the promise of cheesecake afterward. In addition to her own band, Harmony has played for ASU voice students as they performed for their degrees.

“I really enjoy collaborating with other artists more than solo work,” Harmony said. Aria agreed when it comes to performing with her band. “Even though I’m the front man, I’m there with other people,” she said.

White said watching Harmony and Aria carry on with their own musical talent has been one of the most satisfying things in her life. “It’s just a great generational feeling,” she said.

Aside from passing her love of music on to her family and students who learn at her home, White has also spent time teaching at the Baldwin Elementary piano lab. “Those were students that most likely would not have had that opportunity,” Harmony said.

Between 2008-2012, White served a demographic that is often overlooked with piano. It was a rewarding experience for her, though each class only lasted seven weeks. “It became my challenge to see how much I could get across to them in seven weeks,” she said.

White, Harmony and Aria are always taking new students of any age, from young children just beginning, to adults who may have always wanted to learn but never had the chance. Harmony noted that even if some students just play middle C over and over again, they are at least getting the experience.

“Everyone deserves a chance and what they do with their opportunity is up to them,” White said.

EARTHQUAKE FEST

BY RICHARD BRUMMETT



Downtown Paragould was the site for the rejuvenation of the community's Earthquake Festival in early July, a combination block party and educational opportunity for visitors.

Event director Nate Archibald said the festival was an upgrade of last year's organized block party hosted by Project Paragould added to his desire to bring back the town's method of promoting earthquake awareness via a Saturday of food, fun and games ... along with education. "We will provide information about earthquakes, especially the New Madrid Fault Line," he said, "and what we need to do to prepare and how to respond if an earthquake or any natural disaster happens." Helping out in that regard was

Martha Kopper, PG, a supervisor with the Arkansas Geological Survey. "Our goal is to educate and inform people how to have a plan in effect should such a disaster strike," she said. "We work with the Office of Emergency Management and all available resources -- Red Cross, Salvation Army, National Guard, local utilities -- to help the residents withstand a disaster and know how to prepare for the aftermath."

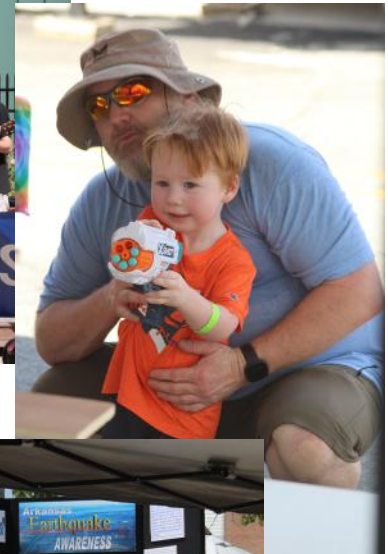
The festival offered games, face painting, bounce houses, food, craft/vendor booths and music with blocks of Pruett Street dedicated to it free from traffic. It was funded by the city of Paragould and by donations from businesses, giving locals a stake in the event.

An advertisement for Paragould Animal Clinic. On the left, a young child with curly brown hair, wearing an orange t-shirt, sits at a desk writing in a notebook. A small white dog with brown spots is lying on the desk next to the child. On the right, there is a blue background with the clinic's logo and contact information. The logo includes the text "Paragould Animal Clinic" and icons for a cross, a cat, a paw print, and a dog. Below the logo, it says "Making life better... even homework!". The hours are listed as "Monday - Friday 7:30am - 5:00pm" and "Saturday - Sunday CLOSED". The name "Dr. Emily White Carter" is at the bottom right of the ad.

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Archibald called it a fun way for people to learn how to prepare for a natural disaster while bringing friends and neighbors together in a community interaction.



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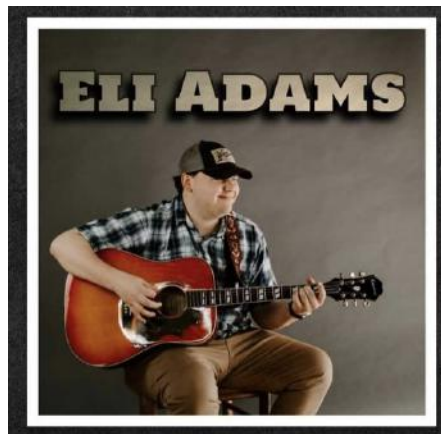
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Coming Up

 September 16th-17th

In its 6th year, the annual Get Downtown Festival is planned to be bigger and better than ever. Mark your calendars to be in Downtown Paragould on September 16th and 17th for a great time! The Greene County Future Fund first held the festival in 2015 with a goal to promote its mission of working together to improve the culture, environment and opportunities for those in Paragould to live a healthier life. The Future Fund's focus has been on protecting green space, promoting recycling and promoting healthy lifestyles for Greene County residents. Through funds raised at previous festivals, the Future Fund has been able to help secure over \$700,000 in grant funds for the new 8-Mile Creek Trail.

At the 6th Annual Get Downtown Festival, the fun will begin at 5 p.m. Friday evening in Downtown Paragould with a Block Party sponsored by Block Insurance. There will be music including the return of the Blue Heavyweights, dunk booths, games, late night shopping and more!

Kicking off Saturday morning, the Get Downtown 10k and 5k races will be held on the all new 8-Mile Creek trail at 8 a.m. At 9:30 there will be a Kids Fun Run and Doggie Dash! Visit getdowntownfestival.com to register early to guarantee a free Festival T-Shirt with race registration. New this year, each race participant will receive a free homemade cinnamon roll at the finish line. The Best Get Downtown Cinnamon Roll Competition judging will be

GET DOWNTOWN FESTIVAL

In Historic
Downtown Paragould

announced at 10 a.m. along with the race medal awards ceremony.

The Kinders, a kids favorite, will help open the Branch, Thompson, Warmath, Dale & Butler Kids Pavilion at 10:00 with a special concert. Kids activities continue all day under the newly constructed pavilion including character experiences, painting crafts and nature experiences with Crowley's Ridge State Park. For kids and kids at heart, the Nunn's Construction Touch-A-Truck event will open at 11:00. Also kicking off at 11 will be the NEA Baptist Photo Booth and the Gazaway White Real Estate Food Truck Alley.

The United Home Insurance Stage will host an array of musicians throughout the day including Sand Creek Band, Aaron Headley, Everyday Life and Greasy Tree. On the Unico Bank Stage you will find The Happy Campers, DownRiver Collective, Eli Adams, and Nashville Skyline.

New this year will be the Get Downtown Talent Show beginning at 12 p.m. on the First National Bank Main Stage. To register for the talent show, visit getdowntownfestival.com for the complete application. Headliner Universal Crush, a 12-piece mega band that delivers a high energy show, will take the First National Bank Main Stage at 7 p.m.

To start the fun, be sure and tune into 107.1 Jack FM, on Monday morning, September 12th for the first Find Foodie Clue and your chance to win \$500 cash! A complete list of activities can be found on the festival website at getdowntownfestival.com as well as vendor application forms. The 6th Annual Get Downtown Festival is sponsored in part by the Paragould Advertising and Promotions Commission.



- 6TH ANNUAL -



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Kids Pavilion &
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Tournament



Food Truck
Alley



- 10am: The Kinders
- 11am: Sand Creek Band
- 12pm: The Happy Campers
- 1pm: Aaron Headley
- 2pm: DownRiver Collective
- 3pm: Everyday Life
- 4pm: Eli Adams
- 5pm: Greasy Tree
- 6pm: Nashville Skyline
- 7pm: Universal Crush

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Celebrating AWARD WINNING WINE



The Mead makers of Juniper Tree Meadery in Paragould brought home a Bronze and Silver from a recent competition.

Honey Zin brought home a Silver Medal and Juniper's Choice won a Bronze.

Juniper Tree Meadery opened in Paragould in December 2021 and has seen guests from all over the country. Mead is wine and beer made from honey. Owners, Lynn and Deondra Childress, serve it up at Juniper Tree with great stories of yonder years.

Find them on Facebook or at junipertreemeadery.com

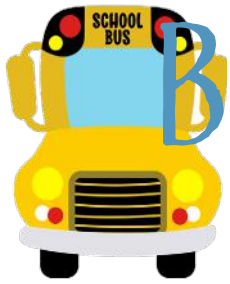


BACK TO SCHOOL

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BACK-TO-SCHOOL

BY KATIE COLLINS

Lunch Made FUN and GOOD

Those back-to-school lunches aren't going to pack themselves, so let's get into it!

If your family keeps bringing back barely picked at lunches, it's time to get creative. Creative doesn't have to mean time-consuming, just a little bit of thinking outside the (lunch)box.

Let's make lunchbox pinwheels!

The base recipe is pretty simple. You'll need a flour tortilla and fillings. The fillings can be whatever your family enjoys – pb&j, meat and cheese, cream cheese and jam, hummus and veggies, or anything else you can conjure up. Even the size of the tortilla is completely up to you, depending on how many pinwheels you want to end up with, or how many different varieties you'd like to make at once.

Start with your tortilla on a flat surface. Spread or lay your filling(s) on the tortilla, leaving $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ inch of the edge of the tortilla uncovered. Once you have all of your fillings laid out, roll it up. Slice

the rolled tortilla into circles and you've made pinwheels!

You can pack your pinwheels or other lunch offerings in a brown bag or classic lunchbox, but we're really into bento boxes in my house. With divided sections and multiple layers, you can add so many things to accompany your pinwheels, or anything else you decide to pack. Bento boxes come in all shapes and sizes and are available at many retailers and online. I like to utilize silicone cupcake liners in the boxes as well; they're perfect for adding dips, nuts, seeds, or other small items to the box without making a mess. Bento boxes are perfect for building portable mini charcuterie (homemade lunchables, if you will) for kids or adults, too.

Lunches DON'T have to be boring. Find something you and your family like and pack it with confidence. A little planning and some prep can help get everyone out the door with a lunch they'll be glad to eat every day!



Step 1-2: spread filling
Step 3: roll tortilla
Step 3: cut
Step 4: enjoy!



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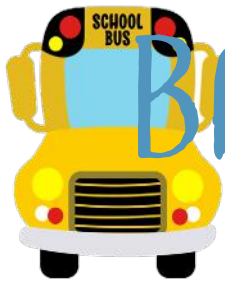
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BACK-TO-SCHOOL

Make Your Point with FREE College Tuition

BY TAYLOR MITCHELL



Chick-fil-A Turtle Creek now offers free college tuition online at Point University to all employees.

Tyler and Taylor Mitchell, local owners of Chick-fil-A Turtle Creek, have decided to partner with Point University to ensure their employees have access to higher education and to graduate without student debt. Employees of Chick-fil-A Turtle Creek can earn certificates, undergraduate degrees, and graduate degrees through Point University.

Point University is a fully accredited, private, nonprofit university located in Georgia and founded in 1937. Point University offers more than 40 in-demand, fully online programs. The online semesters are eight weeks long, with no set class times. The university's main goal is to empower and coach each student to achieve their goals of success.

Anson Caddy, Director of Culture at Chick-fil-A Turtle Creek, said: "The idea of 'business' was never a career field that I saw myself fitting in to. I always believed that it was about cubicles and numbers. My time at Chick-fil-A has shown me that business is just a method for caring for people and that is what I've become passionate about.

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“That’s why I’m so excited and grateful for the opportunity to pursue an MBA with Point University through this partnership. I truly believe in the value of these organizations and how together they can help to transform the way we do ‘business’ in our community of Northeast Arkansas.”

Chick-fil-A Turtle Creek is a job or career for those who are seeking business leadership opportunities. They provide wonderful benefits alongside free college tuition such as health, dental, vision and life insurance, Sundays off, college scholarships, paid time off for leadership, competitive wage rates, and much more.

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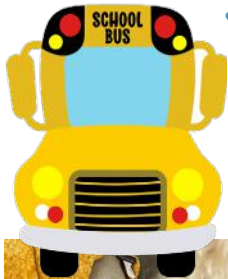
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August 20th, 2022 from 4pm to 10pm
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BACK-TO-SCHOOL

School Ready with HIPPy



As the face of education changes, so do the wants and needs of those preparing to enter school for the first time.

Leslie Woodard, Coordinator of the Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters (HIPPy) program at the Northeast Arkansas Education Cooperative in Walnut Ridge, said the project is a valuable resource for families

eligible to enroll. "Kindergarten is not like it used to be," said Woodard. "They are doing things in kindergarten now we used to not see until the third grade. The expectations today are so much higher."

HIPPy is a 30-week school readiness-parent involvement program for parents of three-, four- and some five-year-old children. Its goal is to prepare both child and family for success in school and

beyond. "We stress that we will hold them accountable for our once-a-week, one-hour, sessions," Woodard said. "It's for thirty weeks, in the comfort of their own homes, and we go in not in any judgmental way, but go in with resources that can help point them in the right direction when help is needed."

For instance, if they notice clothes hanging on an outside clothes line because the family has no washer and/or dryer, they will try to help gain access to those appliances. "We take in families, then try to meet the different needs or find resources for them," Woodard added. "We try to bring the resources to light in order to enable them to be the greatest they can be."

According to information provided by Woodard, the program serves families from diverse ethnic and geographic groups. Although HIPPy is for any parent who wants educational enrichment for his or her child, the HIPPy model was designed to remove barriers to participation due to poverty, social isolation, and other issues. All lessons and storybooks are available in English and Spanish.

Parents are provided a set of carefully developed curriculum, books and

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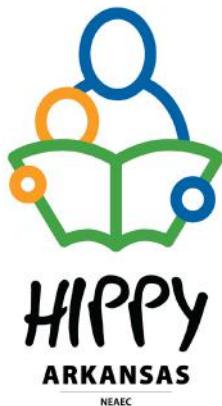
materials designed to strengthen their children’s cognitive skills, early literacy skills, and social/emotional and physical development. HIPPY runs concurrently with the school year and is staffed by a professional coordinator and well-trained home-based educators, serving families in Clay, Greene, Jackson, Lawrence, Randolph and Sharp counties free of charge. It is funded by Arkansas Better Chance/Arkansas Department of Education.

“The biggest thing people need to know,” Woodard said, “is that for qualifying families we will work on kindergarten-ready skills for their children. We strive to have the kids ready from Day One for kindergarten. We fill in the gaps; we can provide them with resources maybe they don’t otherwise have access to. I guess I would say to them, ‘Let us help you.’ That’s what we’re trying to do.”

Those interested in learning more about the program should call the cooperative at 870-886-3212.



Back row: Leslie Woodard- HIPPY Coordinator, Laura Richards- Home-Based Educator for Greene County; front, Tammy Montgomery- Home-Based Educator for Lawrence & Randolph County, April Brantley- Home-Based Educator for Sharp and Lawrence County, and Cheryl Gookin- Home-Based Educator for Clay County.





Gone Fishing with NEAKA

BY CAITLIN LAFARLETTE

Kayak bass fishing first hit Western and Central Arkansas as its popularity grew across the nation, but as it moved east, a local group formed to get more people into the great outdoors.

The Northeast Arkansas Kayak Anglers was formed in 2016 by founding tournament director Eddie Ishmael Jr., owner of a kayak shop in Cherokee Village and Hardy. Nathan Bohannon of Mountain View co-ran the initial group, and served as director of the Twin Lakes Kayak Anglers. NEAKA and TLKA ran schedules together as a single group in 2017 and 2018, but growing interest in the sport led to two groups again for the 2019 season. The NEAKA has continued to flourish since then.

“Kayak bass fishing is one of the fastest growing sports in the country with literally hundreds of local clubs, as well as three major professional circuits,” current tournament director Phillip Weese said. “Our area contains many guys that are passionate about kayaks and bass fishing, and this brotherhood of kayak fishermen was born.”

Weese has been fishing since he was 10 years old and began competing in his 20s. He said that while a career in fire service and a growing family cut his tournament fishing short, he eventually found the sport of kayak bass fishing through the show “Kayak Bassin” hosted by Chad Hoover.

“Watching him chase after bass on a kayak just refueled my competitive spirit and gave me a desire to do that on a kayak,” he said.

In 2016, Weese bought his first boat and four years later, he joined the NEAKA. Weese’s brother and fishing partner, Jonathan, began his journey on a kayak around the same time, and the two now share a love for the sport.

“Some great friendships have been formed with some awesome people that have the same passion for kayak bass fishing,” Weese said. “I am forever hooked on this sport and my desire as the tournament director for the NEAKA is to grow and share this sport, and our group, with even more people in our area. You can never have too many fishing friends.”

The NEAKA is made up of a five member advisory board that sets the season tournament schedule and approves rules and regulations.





NEAKA runs the tournament series through the TourneyX app. Weese said participants can register, pay fees, and find specific rules and details on the app.

“All of our tournaments use a CPR format which stands for ‘catch, photo, release,’” he said. “When you catch a fish on tournament day, you must take a photo of the fish using your smartphone.”

The fish must be on an approved measuring device and meet certain criteria, such as having a Tourney ID in the photo that is only given out the night before or the morning of the tournament. After meeting all requirements, fishermen upload their photo and release the fish.

“Where a boat tournament uses total weight to determine a winner, a kayak tournament uses total inches,” Weese explained.

There are typically eight regular season tournaments and a year end

NEAKA Classic Championship that requires anglers to participate in at least four regular season events to qualify. Weese said NEAKA also runs an Angler of the Year that rewards anglers with points for their finishes in the tournaments and is determined by their best five tournaments of the season. There are also opportunities to qualify for state and national championships.

“While the options are unlimited to set up and accessorize a kayak for tournament fishing, it isn’t really necessary for anyone to begin participating,” Weese said. “Most guys start out with smaller boats, a paddle, a few rods, and a tackle box. And that is just fine.”

Weese said one of his favorite things about the sport is that it can be for everyone, regardless of how much money someone spends on equipment, or if they compete.

“Being on the water in nature is an incredible experience that we

should all be promoting,” he added. “For me, there aren’t many things more enjoyable than being in God’s creation at sunrise on a lake or river. Being able to chase after my passion for the outdoors and bass fishing is an awesome experience that I hope to be doing for a very long time.”

Weese said the challenges of competing, kayaking, or just fishing for fun can help one grow as a person, and give a greater appreciation for the outdoors from a different and fun perspective. The sport can be addictive and rewarding, and have health benefits from paddling for miles.

“The biggest benefit that I have found is the relationships and friendships that I have formed around a sport that a lot of people in our area have a passion for,” he said. “These friendships go far beyond the sport and will hopefully last a lifetime.”

For more information, visit the NEA Kayak Anglers Facebook page.



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Community Gardening

BY CAITLIN LAFARLETTE

Those who frequent the Craighead County Jonesboro Public Library have more than just books available to check out; they can now take home vegetable, herb and flower seeds thanks to 16-year-old Gwendolyn Hutton.

Hutton has been a Girl Scout for almost four years and to receive her Gold Award - an act of community service that is sustained beyond her initial involvement - she began with a seed packet donation of over 6,000 seeds to create a seed library for the community.

"Gardening is a helpful life skill that I wanted others to be able to experience, particularly young would-be gardeners," she said. "I thought one of the best ways I could help others start their gardening journey was to provide them with seeds."

Currently, the seed library

is located in the teen section, near the children's library. People can take up to four packets at a time and even leave their own labeled packets for others. Over 400 seeds have been provided to the community since Hutton gave her first donation.

"I've seen lots of little kids get super excited when they see the seed library," she said. "I've noticed that they are more drawn to colorful flowers and watermelons."

Hutton said gardeners typically have unused seeds, and she was inspired by the little free book libraries. Other libraries in the region have seed libraries or something similar, and she thought the project would be a beneficial addition to the CCJPL.

"I've been gardening for about 6 years," she added. "Every summer my aunt has a huge garden with all



types of plants, tomatoes, squash, cucumbers, okra and zinnias. When we'd go over there, my aunt would always walk around and show me what's been happening in the garden that week. I also just loved playing in the dirt."

That introduction to gardening led Hutton to become a Master Gardener in 2019. She took a six-week class on general gardening, types of plants grown in NEA, and how to care for them. "Each year, I fulfill the 20 volunteer hours and 20 educational hours. My favorite project that I've worked on has probably been the native plant garden at the nature center. It's filled with native plants and always has lots of pollinators and wildlife," she said.

According to Hutton, there are many benefits to gardening such as improved mood, decreased stress, and stabilized feelings of depression or anxiety. However, it can also bring families together.

"It can encourage spending time outside and trying new things," she said. "It can encourage healthy eating by growing your own food."

The 11th grader said she still has many of her initial 6,000 seeds to stock the library with, but this fall there could be a seed drive for community members to donate any extra from their gardening. Hutton said she is happy to give advice and facilitate any plans for beginning other seed libraries.



At the 2022 Greene County Fair! Monday, September 5th- 10th

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5:00 Sand Creek Band
6:00 Lauren Reno
7:00 Lance Curtis & Lawson Wayne

Tuesday:
7:00 Gravel Yard -Bluegrass

Thursday:
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Music announcements soon!

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Celebrating 25 Years of Paragould Leadership



Sue McGowan, founder of Leadership Paragould, and Dina Mason, Class 1 Graduate 1997-98

The Leadership Paragould Alumni will be hosting a 25-Year Reunion on September 24th at the Paragould Senior B.E.E.S. Center from 5-9 p.m.

All Leadership Paragould graduates and their plus ones are invited to join the celebration. "There have been over 700 graduates, so we hope to have a big group for food, fun and festivities," said Dina Mason, chair of the 25-Year Reunion.

The Happy Campers Band will be performing and there will be yard games and a video of pictures from the past. Ironhorse BBQ will cater and there will be spirited drinks available.

Tickets are \$25 per person and include two drink tickets and a commemorative cup and can be purchased at the Paragould Chamber of Commerce.

LPA held Plates on Pruet as a fundraiser to purchase exercise equipment to place on the Eight Mile Trail with a plaque commemorating the 25-year mark. There will be a dedication when it is installed. The committee asks that graduates contact former classmates and help us have a big celebration in September!

Congratulations to Class 25 and we hope to see you all there.



Save the Date September 24th

Join us in the celebration of 25 years of Leadership Paragould!

The Reunion will be at the Senior Center in Paragould from 5 to 9pm
Renew friendships- network with 25 classes and enjoy The Happy Campers Band

Dinner will be Ironhorse BBQ at 6pm
Tickets for dinner will be \$25 per person
Contact the Paragould Chamber to purchase tickets or email ahestand@paragould.org.

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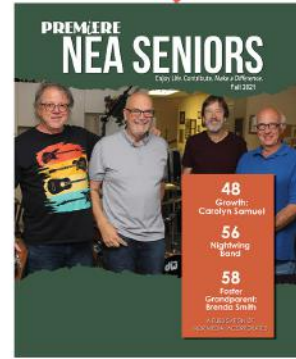
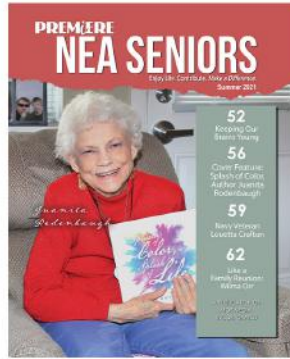
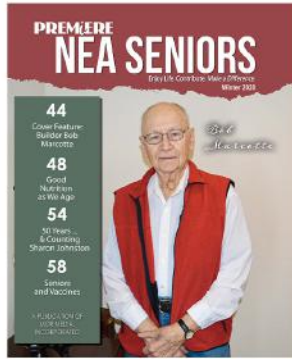
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Happenings



Allen Williams, a veteran employee of First Community Bank, has been named Executive Vice President, Market President for the Jonesboro region.

Williams joined First Community Bank in 2013, and now has over 30 years of banking expertise. In his current position, Williams oversees and manages the entirety of the Jonesboro area market, which also includes branches in Lepanto, Bay and Brookland.

“I am grateful for the opportunity to continue my leadership role with a true community bank and help to execute the ambitious strategic vision that we have for First Community Bank,” said Williams. “I work with an excellent team of professional bankers, and I am excited to see what the future holds.”

A graduate of Arkansas State University, Williams holds a bachelor’s of science in finance, and attended the National Commercial Lending School at the University of Oklahoma. Community service and family are at the heart of Allen’s approach to banking and to life in general. He currently serves on the board of directors for the Delta Symphony Orchestra. Williams has previously served with the Kiwanis Club and the Nettleton Education Foundation, and encourages his employees to serve and to give likewise. He and his wife, Danna, have three boys: Chandler, Spencer and Cooper.

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Halleigh Ruthven was decked out in patriotic attire at MOR Media's fireworks show.

Halleigh, 8, is the daughter of Kay and Richard Ruthven of Paragould.

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Eat, shop, play;
the local's guide to NEA.

Looking for things to do in NEA with your kids??
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exploremornea.com/kids

Next Month

Fairs & Festivals



Get the details to enjoy the fairs and festivals all September long.

NEA Seniors



Our NEA Seniors section will highlight area seniors and those who help care for them.

Celebration Events

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Details on the celebration of 50 years of serving Greene County area elders!



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