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**MAGAZINE**

March 2023

KADENCE ALLEN - KENNETT  
WOMEN IN "LOCAL" HISTORY  
NEA SENIORS SECTION

A PUBLICATION OF MOR MEDIA, INCORPORATED

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# EVENT CALENDAR

## MARCH - JUNE 2023

- **March 11**  
**AIN'T TOO PROUD -**  
*The Life and Times of the Temptations*  
The Orpheum in Memphis  
Lunch at the Beauty Shoppe
- **April 21**  
**STAN JONES LODGE TOUR**  
Luncheon / Inspirational by Stan  
Shopping in Hardy, AR
- **May 2-4**  
**ST. LOUIS CARDINALS**  
**BASEBALL**  
Cardinals Hall of Fame  
Botanical Gardens
- **June 2**  
**DISCOVERY PARK OF AMERICA**  
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# From the Publisher



The year is Marching on ... I know, bad Dad joke. But really, the year is moving FAST! March is the start of the season's changing and I am usually ready for it. Warmer weather and longer days make my heart happy. I like having four seasons ... I don't care for them all in one day or even one week, but I like to see each season come and go in its right time.

Reading some of these women's stories got me thinking that all of us have seasons of life as well. The season to discover and explore and then to find our place and apply ourselves to making the most of our lives through our careers, volunteering and tending to our families. There are seasons when we are so busy we lose ourselves and then (I hope, anyway) there is a season when we get to slow down and appreciate the seeds we have sown and stay engaged to nurture but let them grow.

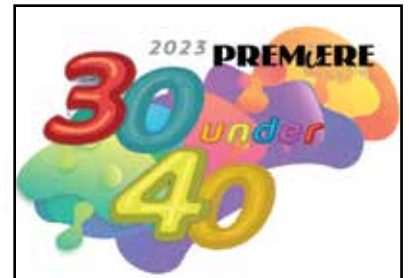
Whether you are planting, tending, or enjoying the fruits of your labor, I hope you take the time to look around and see others who may be looking at you for guidance or just a smile to lighten their load...

A quote I love --- someone I know has "edited" it:

"Be the girl that straightens the other girl's crown - even if you competed for it."

I hope you enjoy our Women in History focus as we highlight women who have made in the past and are currently making our communities a better place by being the women they are.

And as always -- Thank you for reading the "Good News and the People Making it Happen!"



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

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

People like your kids' coach (or the "Team Mom" who always has extra snacks).

The volunteer teen who is at the soccer field or helps take care of the church property.

That Millennial who defies the stereotype by volunteering on multiple Chamber committees or Junior Auxiliary.

We could go on but I think you get the idea.

email [graphics@mormediainc.com](mailto:graphics@mormediainc.com) or go to [neapremiere.com](http://neapremiere.com) for a nomination form. Deadline is April 15th.

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# Kadence Allen

## BURNING PASSION TO HELP

BY CAITLIN LAFARLETTE



The profession of firefighting has historically been male-dominated. The first female, and first black, firefighter in the United States was Molly Williams in 1818. It took 100 years after the first male firefighter was paid for work for female firefighters to earn money in the career, in 1973. And as of 2016, only seven percent of U.S. firefighters were women.

Kennett native Kadence Allen is now joining that statistic at just 18 years old. On December 19, 2022, Allen was officially brought on as a part-time firefighter at the Kennett Fire Department, while still attending school as a senior at Kennett Christian Academy. "I always wanted to be a vet, ever since I was

little, but then I started watching shows like *Night Watch* and *Chicago Fire*," Allen said. "I thought that would be a really cool job, too."

On a school field trip, Allen spoke with Lillie Roberts, a full-time firefighter at the department, and learned about an explorer program that allows participants to "do everything but go into the house." Allen added she joined the program in April just to see if she would like it, and by December was part-time.

Allen's first training was a search-and-rescue while she was still in the explorer program. With a partner, she crawled into a room, feeling walls with the back of her hand and calling out for people. Another training, Introduction to the Fire Service, lasted three days and included education on hoses, drop tanks, and nozzle operations. "We learned different types of ways to roll a hose and we learned how to unroll them," Allen said. "We learned how to hold them and the different types of streams. I got to climb the tower truck and spray water off it." Allen also learned about PPE, SCBA, how to set up ladders, and even how to vent a house. "I remember we had to put air packs on, and gear, and they had a car prop and a dumpster that they caught on fire using a propane tank," she added.

Allen isn't the first in her family to join the ranks of first responders. Her grandfather was chief of police, and her aunt was also a firefighter at one point. "The job has been really good to me," she said. "The people have been caring and accepting of me."

Since joining the department, Allen has been called to many fires. "My very first house fire was exciting," she said. "Once it paged out, I hurried and ran in the truck. Once I got there I threw my gear on. I had to carry a fan for ventilation to the door, and watched to learn what we were supposed to do."



Like all firefighters, Allen has also assisted in plenty of medical calls. She recalled multiple car wrecks, a puppy with a fish hook caught in its mouth, and various injuries.

"I hope one day I will become full-time once I graduate," Allen said. "Right now I am working on my EMT; I take the test May 16." As for college, Allen said she is still deciding where to go and what to major in. "If I go to college I would probably do something with the medical field. I might try to be a paramedic, or try to be a vet," she said.

Regardless of which path she chooses, Allen will be helping others. "I like being able to help people and seeing the smiles on their faces. It makes all the hard work worth it," she said. "If you feel like you can't do something, where there is a will, there is a way. So if you put your mind to it, you can accomplish it."



# THE CALLING OF THE FISHING HOLE

BY CHUCK LONG



**CHUCK LONG**  
Avid Outdoorsman  
Retired Outdoor Educator

The wooden bridge creaked and the dust swirled as the truck slowed on the gravel road and eased over the bridge. We let the truck clear and my cousin Steve and I went back to our positions in the middle of the bridge, casting our Zebco 33s into Eight Mile Ditch. The sinker hit with a loud “sploosh” carrying a hook baited with a barnyard worm to the bottom. With great anticipation we sat back down on the bridge and waited.

As I look back on those wonderful days of my youth, I am truly thankful I got to spend many a day on a ditch bank. I cannot remember not wanting to go fishing and that sentiment carries through today. It may seem rather odd, but I sometimes quiz myself as to what lured me to the banks of the water day after day and why that yearning continues now. And all these years later I am still not sure of the answer.

Out of curiosity, I wanted to know what others thought about fishing and what fueled them to be on the water, so I turned to the wonderful world of Facebook. Friends from far and near and across several age groups responded with their thoughts.

There were several answers that were consistent throughout many responses. One of the most common stated reasons was because it gave them the opportunity to spend time with family and friends. Dad, Granddad and/or an uncle were the most common answers and many could recount their first fishing experiences with that

special person.

Rob West said his uncle taught him to fish and, though his uncle has passed away, he still has a connection to those days through his uncle’s rod and reel. “I have one of his rods and reels and when I pull that rod out I know my uncle is with me and I smile thinking of the times we had fishing.”

President Jimmy Carter shared this quote many years ago and it aligns with the thoughts shared by many others. “Many of the most highly publicized events of my presidency are not nearly as memorable or significant in my life as fishing with my daddy.” It is rather odd how some of the memories of the “mountains” we faced in our life tend to fade, but the memories made while fishing with our family and friends tend to remain vivid.

Along with those memories, many folks said they like to get on the water to make new memories and to pass along the tradition. Mindy Tritch, for example, said she fishes because her boys “absolutely love it! And I get to spend time with them being their boat captain in tournaments.” Other responses as to the reason to be out there with children included “to help them make the amazing memories as I have” and “to watch their expressions as they catch their first fish.”

Another very consistent answer across many of the responses was the relaxation and peacefulness that can come from a day on the water. The concentration it takes to

outwit an animal with the brain the size of a pea tends to cause us to “focus on the floater” instead of all the other stuff going on in the world. It is a time to get away and let the brain declutter and breathe in some fresh air as we pursue the finny quarry.

Peaceful sounds, wonderful scenery and the possibilities of spotting wildlife are all part of the equation for many folks that makes time on the water worthwhile. Whether it be a clear, cold trout stream, a cypress lined oxbow or a sprawling lake, they can all provide a buffer to the mind that cannot be found on asphalt or concrete.

One other benefit that many fishermen enjoy as the culmination of their efforts is a fish fry for family and friends. This might be a simple fish meal on the shoreline, or it could be a grand shindig for the whole neighborhood. These get-togethers with fish as the focus complete the experience and let the fishermen share their bounty, recount the stories of their adventures and strengthen the bonds of family and friends.

I fish for all the above reasons and a few more. I like spending time with family and friends and truly enjoy spending time in the great outdoors with the anticipation of what might be behind the next tree or around the next bend in the river. I also enjoy time cleaning, cooking and sharing whatever I take from the water. But to sum it up in a few words or sentences is difficult so I will just say I simply want to be out there.





It is all too common for me to hear folks say how much they like to fish and would like to be out there but life seems to get in the way. One such comment came from a good friend of mine, Bill Muse, who said he spent time during his younger years fishing for catfish and running trotlines with his granddad and Uncle Budd. But he has not fished in over thirty years. I asked why and his response was, "I got busy chasing my gal, criminals, my kids, and my dreams."

Yes, life sometimes gets in the way, but I hope you will take some time this year and get out on a river, a lake or a farm pond and enjoy some time with a pole in your hand watching a floater dance

on the waves. The rewards of fishing are truly worth the investment.

Not sure where to start? Give me a shout and I will help you find some direction. I am looking forward to some warm spring days and getting on the water and I hope to see you (and Bill) out there!



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# Dr. Vern Ann Shotts

## HISTORY MAKING PEDIATRICIAN

By Karan Summitt



For Dr. Vern Ann Shotts, the decision to establish her pediatric practice in Paragould was more a question of when than if. Growing up in a local community that included parents with strong business ties, a large, extended family of 35 cousins and a host of aunts and uncles, Vern Ann's roots go deep in Greene County. Paragould has always been home.

Getting back took a bit of time. After graduating from Paragould High School, she entered the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville on a music scholarship. Graduation led to the University of Arkansas Medical School at Little Rock, eventually doing her pediatric residency at Arkansas Children's Hospital (ACH). Why pediatrics? The answer was simple: "I loved kids — all ages from babies to teens, and I felt like I could relate well with them. It has been very rewarding to watch them grow up and to have their children as patients." In a practice that spans 45 years, Vern Ann has seen her share of second-generation patients.

The early days weren't always easy. As the first pediatrician and the first female physician in Greene County, Vern Ann encountered challenges. Some were professional, like educating the local community at that time about her role as a pediatrician. She did not deliver babies but could be available in the delivery room for infants with suspected birth complications. Other professional challenges included issues as simple as, "Where do I go to put on scrubs?" Accommodating female physicians in the hospital setting had never been an issue prior to her arrival. Other challenges were personal. Vern Ann is married to Dr. Mack Shotts, a local family practitioner. During the early days of their marriage and raising a family, Mack continued to deliver babies. Two doctors in the house could make life hectic, especially when patient emergencies occurred. Vern Ann recalled that for many years, the two sat down at the dining table on Sunday afternoons and compared their weekly schedules, making sure one parent was always available to be with the children. She recalled getting them, Zeke and Mauri, out of bed on Saturday mornings and taking them along on hospital rounds. Doctor lounges and nursing stations provided

play spaces that became a part of normal weekend life. Mauri's favorite game at the time was "answering service." The experiences must have planted good seeds. Dr. Zeke Shotts is now a radiologist at St. Bernards Healthcare and Mauri (Shotts) Rogers is an APRN with a local clinic.

The pediatric practice grew at a good pace. In a community familiar with physicians that treated a patient from birth until death, family and friends supported Vern Ann's specialized services. Today the practice includes two additional pediatricians who help her accommodate a larger patient base.

The years have brought changes. She recalled how fax machines sped up the time it took to receive medical records from other health entities. Moving patient documentation from paper to electronic medical records was another significant change. One of the most useful advances came with the opportunity to do PCR testing for many common ailments within the clinic. The ability to have a diagnosis and prescribe treatment in a short time, often while the patient waits, has been a game-changer.

Some challenges are on-going, such as finding time each month to read professional journals that help her stay current on pediatric care innovations and treatments. Another challenge involves professional growth and development to meet evolving patient needs. Vern Ann and Mauri recently received certification in autism testing from the well-respected Dennis Developmental Center associated with Arkansas Childrens Hospital. They are



one of only a few teams in the state certified in diagnosing autism. Patients previously had to look outside NEA for this service. The interest in autism led to an Arkansas Good Medicine research grant award in May 2022. Currently, Vern Ann is documenting the incidence of other co-occurring mental health disorders within the families of the autism patients she encounters. She plans to travel to Washington, D.C., this August to present her findings.

Compared to the early days of her practice, medical conditions affecting children have mirrored many of those in the adult population. Childhood obesity is a concern, as well as a rise in the incidence of neonatal withdrawal syndrome in newborns due to maternal substance abuse. Another is an increase in childhood mental health issues, especially after the COVID-19 pandemic. Social distancing, family stress and a lack of structure have led to more anxiety and its accompanying symptoms in children, just as in adults.

Vern Ann is a fervent believer in a viable local medical community, even in less-populated areas. "It's very important," she stated. "Everyone needs to have a medical home close at hand — someone to call that knows them and is familiar with their health issues. It is extremely valuable to have a local emergency room." With laughter, she went on to say that a surprising amount of expectant mothers with ties to larger medical centers end up delivering at a local hospital because they could not make it to their chosen facility. Keeping these hospitals and practices open requires ongoing community and federal government support.

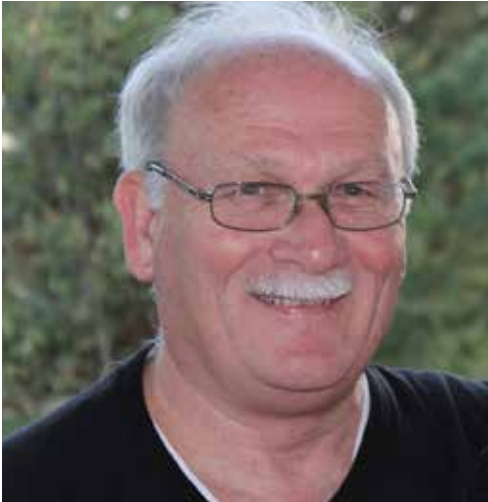
Interests outside of work are varied. Her love of music naturally led Vern Ann to be a strong proponent of the performing arts. She serves on the Delta Symphony Board and supports its guild. Giving credit to her mom's influence as an educator, she has participated in the Greene County Spelling Bee for 23 years -- 10 years as a judge and the last 13 years announcing words for the entrants. She spends about six weeks prior to the yearly bee studying correct pronunciations for that role. Hobbies include a daily early morning swim and travel. She mentioned an impromptu trip to France in September of 2021 when travel was still sluggish from COVID-19 restrictions, sharing how amazing it was to experience historic sites alongside her husband without the crowds and long lines.

Forty-five years of treating children have given Dr. Vern Ann Shotts a unique perspective. When asked what single piece of advice she could give to parents and primary caregivers of children, she gave an answer that had little to do with physical health ailments. Her experiences led her to say: "Obviously children need love, nurturing, support and safety. But more than anything, children need their parents' time. So many families live extremely busy lifestyles, but nothing — even good care outside the home — substitutes for a parent's time."

Well said, doctor. When compared to other pursuits, children easily rise to the top of the list of worthwhile investments. Her words are a timely reminder about the value of children, reflecting the heart of one who has made them a priority in her own life.



# GET RICH WITH RICHARD BRUMMETT



There have been many women instrumental in writing my personal history book, most recently my wife, daughters and granddaughter.

They make my life happy and interesting and

unpredictable. Even when I was very young it was basically women who shaped my actions and beliefs. The earliest recollections I have of life center around the family farm, where my Grandmother Brummett lived with Mom, Dad, my sister and me.

In the big city --Paragould -- I also had my Great-grandmother Higgins and my Grandmother Burton, and all of them were pretty

good at spoiling me. It was my mother, however, who left the most indelible mark on me. Since my dad settled on a career as a traveling salesman, most of the child rearing duties fell squarely upon the shoulders of my school-teaching mother, who did her best to direct Kathy and me onto the right path. Little things she said have stuck with me over the years, helping me to make decisions on how I treat people, how I react to certain situations, how I decide to be a parent myself.

I remember vividly a day when I was in the fourth grade at Woodrow Wilson Elementary. There was a boy in my class who had the unfortunate curse of being the one guy almost everyone liked to harass, especially the fifth- and sixth-graders, who seemed to delight in making his life on the playground miserable. I didn't know if before I moved into town they had some sort of election and he won the Most Likely To Get Picked On award or if he was just unlucky, but every day he was made fun of, tripped, shoved and called horrible names by the older boys, in particular.

The one thing he could do was run and during this one recess period, when he was being pelted by several maroon kickballs all at

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once, he ran toward safety as he always did. Only this time, when he reached the sidewalk at the edge of the playground he didn't stop. He made a right turn and just kept on going, completely out of sight, presumably all the way to his house. Naturally, that was the talk of the school for the rest of the day and when we got into the car and headed home that afternoon I listened to Mom's account of the event and I said, "Why does he do such stupid stuff?" I've never forgotten her response. Without even taking her eyes off the road she said, "Well, Rich, all some people want is a friend but they don't know how to get one."

For some reason that hit home with me, so at school the next day I befriended him and it felt good, as if I had done something of meaning. When we arrived home later in the day and Mom pulled the car into the driveway, there my new friend was, his bike in the yard while he sat on our front porch. The next day we again hung out at recess and upon arriving home saw first the bike, then the kid. And again the next day, and the next until I looked at Mom and sort of shrugged with a "what the heck" look. She came to my rescue and told him I couldn't play that day because I had to go grocery shopping with her and he understood, but when we arrived at Kelley's Supermarket there he was, and he spent the next half-hour walking the aisles with me.

Obviously, this good thing I'd done had taken a wrong turn somewhere, so I did the only thing I could think of to let him down without hurting his feelings: I told him I thought my sister had a crush on him. I guess it worked because he quit pursuing me and I'm pretty sure Kathy told him to get lost, but he and I stayed friends all the way through our senior year in high school, just because Mom pointed out a simple thing about kindness to me.

When I was leaving for college years later I could sense her worry that her baby would be all alone in a place 13 hours away, and I sometimes saw little tears escaping her eyes, but just before I made my last trip out the back door she said, "Remember, if you won't go where trouble is it will have a harder time finding you." What wonderful, loving advice from a mom watching her son prepare to drive out of her life for several months, visibly, at least. My dad's admonition was similar but more hard-edged: "We've taught you right from wrong, so if you do something that lands you in jail don't call home. Sit there 'til you've learned your lesson."

Fortunately, Mom's words were good enough and I avoided trouble at all costs, even though I think I may have been the nation's first official Designated Driver in order to help a couple of my teammates arrive back at campus safely most weekends.

Even shortly before her passing, Mom was still saying things I can't let go of. She was living at the Chateau on the Ridge and was discussing the way some of the activities were scheduled and detailing how she would do them instead, and I said, "Well, Mom, maybe you just need to go with the flow."

"I can't," she said in her best classroom teacher voice, "I need to direct the flow."

And I decided I'm glad she was the director for the earliest days of my life, a job I'm certain I made more difficult but one she handled very well.



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# JONESBORO JUNIOR AUXILIARY SHARE THE WEAR PROJECT



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The Junior Auxiliary Chapter of Jonesboro offers Share & Wear, a community service project created by Junior Auxiliary through which members work with school counselors to provide clothing and backpacks to children in need in our community.

Jonesboro JA volunteers work with area schools in Craighead County to get the requested items, such as clothes, underwear, socks, shoes, and coats. JA members coordinate to ensure they get the correct sizes and contact details, such as gender, age, and grade, to ensure the items are a good fit. They are prepared and ready to meet any head-to-toe needs discreetly to protect the children in our community further.

Share and wear runs from August through May and has provided for 137 students this current school year. For more information on how you can help contact:

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# Dodie Barhorst

## CALLED HOME TO SERVE

**D**odie Barhorst spent 29 years serving her country in the military, and now she is serving in a different -- albeit just as important -- capacity.

As the Associate Pastor at Ridge City Church in Paragould, Dodie has made it her mission to share the love with all who come through the doors, especially on Tuesday evenings when the church hosts Next Step, a program designed to help those battling addiction issues get headed in the right direction.

A 1985 Oak Grove High School graduate, Dodie retired from the United States Air Force as a Chief Master Sergeant E-9, the highest rank an enlisted person can attain. Along with her husband Chris she landed back home with a clear path. "When God called us back to Paragould," Dodie said, "it was to start a church. We had no idea what all was going on here with the addiction problems. We just knew we were called."

Chris, who has 26 years of military experience of his own, is Ridge City's pastor and one of his wife's biggest supporters. "I want to tell you something about my wife that she won't tell you," he said. "She has this amazing gift of connecting with people. She gets to know their names and their stories. She makes them all feel welcomed and comfortable. She just has the gift of connecting and making people feel loved and valued."

Starting out in 2017, the Barhorsts met in a home with a congregation of five; today, in a building located at 2904 Fairview Road, they share God's word with about 80 people each Sunday. When it comes to Next Step, Dodie said she is "coordinator, I guess ... Jack of all Trades, just whatever is needed. I help buy the food, order it online, greet people," and she gets emotional simply thinking of the most recent worship service.

Chris said that is not unusual, however, since she also cried the night before watching American Idol. "I'm an emotional person," she said, managing a laugh. "People still remember me at high



school graduation sobbing. People didn't get it then, but that's just who I am.

"Now, Sundays and Tuesdays here are so powerful. You see some find salvation, you see some people who survived, you see families reconcile, you see people whose lives are completely changed. Everyone desires that change and it doesn't matter if they relapse and have to start over, I welcome everyone who comes in with open arms. I feel the love for everyone who walks through those doors. I don't care if they are broken or in a three-piece suit."

Dodie said she has had people at times ask her how she can "hang out with *them*, and I didn't get it. What do you mean by *them*? God just gave me a heart to love. Some religion has turned so difficult, when it could be so simple," she said. "Really, we're all called to do the great commission: Love other people."



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# Lessons LEARNED IN Motherhood

BY CAITLIN LAFARLETTE

**I** tried gentle parenting, but these kids aren't gentle childing.

Who knows where I first read that quote and where it originated Twitter, Instagram, Facebook, it doesn't matter. It has been on a loop in my mind the last month or so. Either my tolerance for the tantrums and no naps has significantly decreased, or my child is going through a huge developmental stage that makes her push every single button I have, plus some.

People my age likely understand when I say I use a gentle approach to parenting (or try, at least). People my parents' age or older usually don't get it. The amount of times I've been told to spank my daughter or put her in time out is getting a little ridiculous.

That older generation seems to fall under the authoritarian category of raising children, meaning they used harsh discipline, control, and even fear tactics to keep kids from misbehaving. On the opposite end of the spectrum is permissive parenting; allowing children to do whatever they want and not setting any boundaries.

Gentle parenting falls in the middle. It consists of positive discipline instead of punishment, responding to your child's needs, but still

setting boundaries. So what does this look like in practice?

For me, whenever Eva is having a hard time, I get down on her level. I ask if she needs a hug and most of the time she says yes. This usually calms her down enough where I can ask what is wrong, and then fix it. Or, she is more receptive to my saying "no" to whatever she is requesting.

I don't let her get away with everything, but I allow her to act like a child. Because that's what she is. I shouldn't expect her to respond like an adult to hard situations.

In doing this, I have found I need to gentle parent myself, too. Instead of immediately reacting to Eva's tantrums, I try to take a breath first. Am I hungry? Tired? And if I do ever react negatively to Eva, I always follow with an apology. I have begun explaining why I get upset or angry so she knows I'm not actually upset with her. Because of this, Eva is beginning to talk about her own emotions with me.

It's hard to gentle parent when your two-year-old is screaming about wanting to buckle her car seat on her own. But I'm in this for the long-term effects and hope Eva will trust me enough to truly feel all her feelings and know she is safe with me.

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# GREENE COUNTY TECH DANCE TEAM



In June, the GCT Jr. High Dance Team earned a bid to UDA Nationals. In October, they registered but the AAA contacted the school and stated they couldn't attend due to its being against AAA rules for a junior high team to attend a nationals competition.

Coaches Mallory Pickney and Paisha Joiner were devastated and did not want to break the news to a group of very excited young ladies. They quickly researched and asked if they could attend as an All-Star Team under Tabatha's Dance Company since the team takes lessons from Tabatha every week. Thankfully, they were able to. Within the next few weeks, three girls couldn't make the trip but three dancers from last year were asked to join the team for Nationals. Between their high school and junior high schedules the team could not practice together in January.

But determined to compete, these girls had a total of nine practices together. They gave up their Saturdays to practice all day. It was an exhausting and busy week, but hearing their team being announced as "National Champions of the Senior Kick

Division" was absolutely worth the struggle, stress, exhaustion, and so much more. "We literally all cried walking off the floor today after their performance," Mallory said. "Paisha and I cried during the performance. Watching a team we didn't know cheer our girls on through the entire performance, meant so much more than they would ever know, and was such an emotional experience for myself as a coach.

"Paisha and I see their hard work, their frustrations, and drive. We want those watching them to see that hard work and drive and enjoy their performances. Not only did they come in 1st in kick, they also earned 5th in Pom! SO beyond proud of these girls!!!! They represented Tabatha's Dance Company well, but they also represented the Greene County Tech School District well with their performances.

"Thank you to everyone that has supported us, cheered us on, and believed in us. Thank you to these girls' parents! Without your support and help, we would not get to do what we love doing," said Mallory.



# Nancy Poe

## FOR THE LOVE OF CHILDREN



By her own admission, Nancy Poe feels more comfortable staying in the background rather than standing out front but the work she does with young children deserves a place in the spotlight.

Dealing today with the Children's Ministry/Wee Worship programs at Lafe Baptist Church, Nancy relishes the opportunity to help little ones learn. For 18 years she was the director of a local day care center, and spent another 17 at Ascent Children's Health Services, so assuming the role of Sunday School teacher wasn't much of a stretch.

"Right out of high school I went to work at Head Start," Nancy said. "They just touched my heart. Little children are so honest,

they don't hold back. So when you can teach them when they are two or six or eight, they are so interested in learning."

A mother to two children of her own and grandmother to five, Nancy is also the owner of a wonderful sense of humor and said her official title at Lafe Baptist would be "First Lady ... or Pastor's wife, I guess. Whatever. I'm coming up on 51 years in that job," she said, referring to her time of marriage to husband David. "I think I deserve a raise."

But she's not interested in titles or in recognition for what she does. She's interested in seeing little children learn about God. "I believe in repetition," she said of her teaching technique. "We go over verses of scripture or Bible stories and after just a little while, you see it on their faces. And it makes you feel good inside to know that you can mold a little one to have an interest in God's word. It's all about teaching the word of God; that's all. I just want them to know God in their hearts."

She said that even when she worked in day care, she came to feel as if the children there "were my kids. I prayed for them just like they were my own. Even when they grew up and got out of school and went to work, I still remembered them as my own. And now that's how I feel about them here. They're just as much a part of my life as my very own children are. They are precious to me.

"I think God gave me kids to work with because He knew that's what I needed," Nancy said, and then added with another smile, "because adults scare the life out of me."

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# IS IT SPRING YET?

BY KATIE COLLINS



It's finally the month that brings us spring. Allegedly. As we all know, NEA weather can be full of surprises, and while it may say spring on the calendar, Mother Nature sometimes has other ideas. By the time you get your hands on this issue we could be knee deep in snow or sunbathing in the back yard, there's really no telling. Hope "springs" eternal, however, and we can get into the spirit of spring with Fruit Swirled Cheesecake Bars.

One thing I found when I made these is that they're a little crust-forward. It's a tasty shortbread crust, but it can overpower the real star – the cheesecake.

I'm not going to attempt to do the math required to make less crust, but I will say that you might hold some of the crust mixture back instead of putting it all in the pan. You could always bake it on its own for a little chef's treat! Also, the recipe this was adapted from called for "high quality" jam/preserves, so I splurged and bought Bonne Maman strawberry preserves when I made mine – and it was worth every penny.

A graphic for a voting event. At the top, the text "VOTING IS OPEN!" is written in large, white, serif font on a dark blue background. Below this is a purple star with a gold ribbon that says "Paragould PREMIERE" in white and gold. Underneath the star, it says "AWARD WINNER 2023". Below the star, the text "DEADLINE APRIL 15TH" is written in white. At the bottom, there is a QR code and a button that says "SCAN ME" with a mobile phone icon.

## Fruit Swirled Cheesecake Bars

### Directions:

*Preheat oven to 350*

Mix butter, powdered sugar, salt, and vanilla together with a mixer until smooth.

Add the flour and mix until just combined. It will have a crumbly texture. Press the crust into a 9x9-inch square baking dish that has been sprayed with non-stick cooking spray. Bake for 15-20 minutes until lightly browned, then let it cool completely on a wire rack.

Make the cheesecake by mixing the cream cheese, sugar, egg, and vanilla with a mixer. Mix until combined, but don't overmix. Spread the cheesecake filling over the cooled crust. Add the jam/preserves to the top, and swirl into the cheesecake with a knife.

Bake for 25-30 minutes or until set. Let cool on the counter, then transfer to the fridge. Cut into squares when you're ready to serve.

Makes 9 big squares, but you can cut into smaller pieces to serve. more people.

### Ingredients:

#### Crust:

- 1 ½ sticks unsalted butter, softened
- ½ cup powdered sugar
- ½ teaspoon sea salt

1 teaspoon vanilla extract

2 cups all-purpose flour

#### Cheesecake:

- 2 8-ounce blocks cream cheese, softened

¼ cup granulated sugar

1 large egg (room temp)

1 teaspoon vanilla extract

3-4 tablespoons strawberry jam/preserves (or fruit flavor of your choice)

# CHEERS UNLIMITED INC.



Cheers Unlimited Inc., previously One on One Cheerleading, was introduced to Northeast Arkansas in 1991 by Curtis Carter. Since our doors opened, we have striven to provide the best quality of cheer instruction to those interested in the sport of cheerleading. Over the last 20 years our talented staff has made cheer leading in Northeast Arkansas what it is today. We are constantly improving the quality of our program, by rising above the norm.

In the summer of 2004 Curtis Carter opened the doors of Cheers Unlimited, Inc. with one thing in mind, and that was to be the best not only in Northeast Arkansas but the best PERIOD. Cheers Unlimited is also the home of the Nationally Known Cheers Unlimited Chiefs All-Stars.

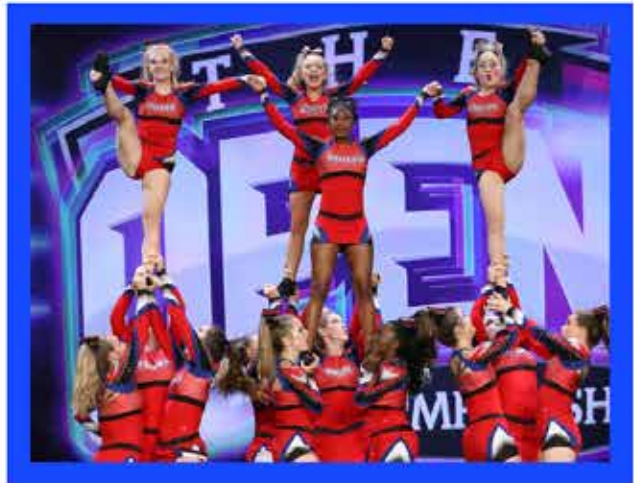
Cheers Unlimited is solely dedicated and committed to training athletes at a heightened level in the competitive All-Star cheerleading world. Our top-notch instructors are dedicated to the improvement of every athlete's cheer and tumble skills through positive reinforcement and intense training. Here at CU, every athlete will learn to reach their full potential in a challenging environment. Our goal is to provide each cheerleader with the abilities and skills that are required to be a winner while reinforcing the positive qualities, morals, and values that will make them successful in life. Our high standards have motivated our athletes, coaches, and parents to be the best competitive cheer program in our area.

Cheers Unlimited Inc. has plans to continue growing its brand in Northeast Arkansas and surrounding areas. Jackson County Dance and Cheer was recently purchased by Curtis Carter with his goal being to continue providing quality cheer and dance instruction in the Newport area. Cheers Unlimited Inc. has also added the Cheers Unlimited Tumbling Academy to its brand, which will be satellite locations throughout Northeast Arkansas that provide quality tumbling instruction to communities outside of Jonesboro, Arkansas that love and support the cheerleading community. This is just the beginning of what is planned for the future of the Cheers Unlimited Brand as a whole!

**CURTIS CARTER! The Man, The Myth, The Legend!**

Curtis Carter graduated in 1988 from North Little Rock High School. He was a cheerleader in High School from 1986 to 1988. He worked for The National Cheerleading Association (NCA) and The Universal Cheerleading Association (UCA), better known as Varsity Brands, from 1988 to 1995. Carter Carter was also in the United States Army from 1988 until 1994. He attended Arkansas State University in 1989 and was a cheerleader for 2 years. He is also a Proud member of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity Inc. which he joined in 1991. Curtis Carter has three amazing children and one granddaughter.

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## Community Event

### PARAGOULD CHAMBER SHOWCASE

The Paragould Regional Chamber of Commerce held the 16th Annual Chamber Showcase at the Paragould Community Center in February. Chamber members and the public were invited and admission was free with a variety of door prizes given away.

The Showcase is an opportunity for all types and sizes of businesses to exhibit their products and services. The theme this year was "Adventures with the Chamber." Vendors decorated their booths reflecting the theme and were judged for prizes.

Participants include factories, industries, real estate, healthcare, banks, counseling and therapy, insurance and more! And the



2nd Annual "Mascot Games" were held.

The Showcase is sponsored by Arkansas Methodist Medical Center, First National Bank, The Greenbrier Companies and NEA Baptist.

## Birth Announcement



### Oliver Banks Spencer

Jonesboro residents Jackson and Lindsey Spencer welcomed their newborn, Oliver Banks Spencer, into the world January 30, 2023.

Oliver was delivered at St. Bernards, weighed 8 pounds, and measured 20 inches in length.

Oliver's maternal grandparents are James and Dana Mills and the late Lisa Mills. Paternal grandparents are Jeb Spencer and Debbie and Chris Haas.

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# MICROCHIP THEIR WAY HOME

WITH DR. KRISTIN SULLIVAN



**W**hat is a microchip and how does it work? A microchip is a small, cylindrical device about the size of a grain of rice that transmits the identification number to the scanner - it does not have a battery, but is actually a transponder and emits radio waves when activated by the scanner.

Most microchips produced nowadays can be detected by a universal scanner - most veterinary clinics and animal control/rescue facilities have these scanners. When an animal is brought in, this is typically the first thing that is performed - scan them for a chip.

I will tell you that in commercials they say a microchip could get your pet home safely, and it's true. To put this in perspective, about three years ago there was a dog brought in that was found by a good family and it was scanned for a microchip. We found a microchip. We looked up the microchip and discovered this dog's original address was in Central Arkansas. When this family was contacted, it turns out the dog was stolen from their yard three years previously. We were able to return a dog to its original home. All thanks to a microchip. I have had numerous experiences of dogs and cats with microchips being picked up and returned to their homes or being safely rehomed, all thanks to microchips.

Now, something I'm asked frequently is, "Do these microchips have GPS tracking?" No, they do not. This might be something in the pipeline, but it is currently not available. There are collar tags that are GPS enabled that are quite sensitive and specific, but it's always best to prepare for worst case scenario - dogs and cats lose collars out in the wild quite frequently; best to also have them microchipped, as this device cannot be snagged on a tree branch and lost. Now, that does not mean a microchip should replace other identifying tags like a collar with name tag and rabies tag. Microchips should be implanted in addition to having other identifying factors in place.

The microchipping process is quite simple. It is an injection done in the skin between the shoulder blades. Is it painful? Not really any more than any other injection would be; the needle is slightly larger, but the injection can be done at any routine visit without sedation or anesthesia. Because the needle is slightly larger, however, this is often something I personally like to perform at 6 months of age during their spay or neuter unless the pet's lifestyle suggests otherwise.

Now, when you have your pet microchipped it is important that the microchip be registered in order for the microchip number to come back to you. Most clinics offer registration with the microchip; the reason for this is that all too often the pet was microchipped but it was never registered - in other words, the pet had an identifying number that didn't have a file associated with it. Most vet clinics, I

know I do, offer that the clinic registers the microchip as part of the entire microchip fee - this ensures it is registered as soon as it leaves the clinic from being chipped.

Something uncommon to occur but can happen is when a pet is microchipped twice. People often wonder, which microchip will it pick, or do I need to remove one of the chips? Well, the answer is quite simple. No, they will not interfere with each other, so there is no need to remove one of them. They will both transmit their signals and should both be picked up by the scanner. The reader may need to pass slower in order to read both numbers, but if one passes over the chips then both numbers will show up. Best advice that I can give if the pet is accidentally microchipped twice is to ensure that both microchips are registered to you and that the information is current.

Lastly, are there any health implications to having a microchip placed? No, there are not. In fact, the British Small Animal Veterinary Association has a database that reports the adverse reactions to microchips and there have been 391 reported adverse reactions in the over four million dogs that have been microchipped.

Microchips are a good way to help protect your pets. It is preparing yourself and knowing you are taking a necessary step to ensure your pet makes it safely back home should disaster ever strike and leaves you searching. If you have any other questions regarding microchipping please reach out to me at ARPets Hospital or to your local veterinarian.

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# PET *of the* MONTH

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BY TRACEY PILLOW

Jasper is a 2-year-old Yorkie; we got him when he was around 3 months old. We were told he'd only be around 5 pounds, full grown, but he quickly outgrew that estimate and is around 13 pounds.

He's very stubborn, and probably has us trained better than we have him trained. I describe him as being a little maniac.

Things he loves are ice cubes, pumpkin spice goat milk, and baby carrots. Any time he hears the ice maker, he comes running and bounces until he gets an ice cube. He's a Momma's boy and doesn't like it when he doesn't have Mom's full attention and will throw a tantrum by picking up one of his bones and throwing it over and over.

He also absolutely hates car rides and people he doesn't know coming into our house. He's also not fond of going to bed at night unless Momma rocks him for a while after everyone else has gone to bed. He's quirky and funny and we wouldn't change anything about him.



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.

An advertisement for 'Gracefully Southern Gifts' with a teal and white color scheme. It features a woman wearing a straw hat, a necklace with a blue gemstone, and a black mannequin head with a gold necklace. The text includes 'SHOP LOCAL online or in store.', 'gracefullysoutherngift.com', 'JEWELRY, ACCESSORIES, GIFTS, APPAREL &amp; MORE.', '870.335.5274', and '203 N. Pruettt St. Downtown Paragould'. There are also social media icons for Facebook and Instagram.

# Downtown Paragould

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Kyleigh Horner & Zac Hoggard	May 6, 2023
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Lunden Gibson & Dallas Moss	June 3, 2023
Maggie Schreit & Jonah Treece	June 24, 2023
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# SAVE THE DATE DOWNTOWN PARAGOULD EVENTS



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6pm



*March 10th*  
Parents Night Out  
Champions Gymnastics  
7pm



*March 17th*  
Stitchin' Night  
Unraveled Yarn  
6pm-9pm



*March 19th*  
Twitty & Lynn  
Collins Theatre  
3pm



*March 25th*  
Book signing with Erik Wright, au-  
thor of Main Street Mayhem.  
Weber's Book House  
3pm-5pm



*March 25th*  
Saints & Sinners  
13th Annual Angel Run  
Downtown Paragould  
10am

A complete listing of all Downtown events can be found under "Events" at [downtownparagould.com](http://downtownparagould.com) or [facebook.com/oneandonlydowntown/events](https://facebook.com/oneandonlydowntown/events).

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# DELTA TOURISM LOCAL AWARD WINNERS



by fertile cropland and was founded in 1886 by Robert E. Lee Wilson. The town underwent a renovation in the 1920s when Wilson's son returned from England, and fashioned the buildings in the style he saw there. Many of those buildings are still intact.

There are gems in the town, one of them being Wilson Cafe, a restaurant that honors the Delta land, farms, and wines from their Napa Valley vineyards and whose dishes reflect the region's influences and traditions. You'll find elegant surroundings, from heavy brown drapes to white subway tiles and old photographs on its walls. But it's the hospitality they are known for. The cafe beat out Grand Prairie Center in Stuttgart and Tacker's Shake Shack in Marion for the award. "We call it the hidden gem of Arkansas," said D.J. Tucker, manager of Wilson Cafe and Tavern. "I've been here long enough to see us

**A**wards for tourism achievement in Eastern Arkansas were given to two local institutions: Wilson Cafe, in Wilson, which garnered the award for hospitality, and the National Cold War Center, taking the award for Entrepreneur, in Blytheville. The awards were presented in January during the 21st Annual Arkansas Delta Awards.


Wilson, a town whose population is under 800, is a community surrounded




go from absolutely nothing to something you'd not expect to see if you're not from here. You drive along (on Hwy 61) and you come to it, and you go 'Oh, wow.'"

Wilson Cafe is open for lunch Monday through Friday from 11 a.m.-2 p.m., dinner Monday through Saturday from 5-9 p.m., brunch Saturday and Sunday from 10 a.m.-2 p.m.,


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and drinks Monday through Saturday from 9 p.m.-10 p.m. The cafe is located at 2 N. Jefferson Street.

The National Cold War Center beat out other nominees The Oaks of NEA and Delta Dirt Distillery. The Center is located on what was Eaker Air Force Base in Blytheville, which opened in 1942 as an advanced pilot training school for use in World War II. The space later became an alert center during the Cold War. The base was closed down and no longer used by the Air Force in March 1992, and was then repurposed as a museum to tell the story of the history of the Cold War and the military response it required, focusing on the Soviet threat, America's response, and the deterrence required to avoid nuclear war, according to a press release issued regarding the designation.

The organization is dedicated to telling the stories of the men and women who stood fast to protect all they held dear during that tumultuous time. A portion of the exhibit also honors the memory of the Hulk 46 crewmen lost during Operation Desert Storm in 1991 and tells of events like the 12-day bombing campaign known as "Linebacker II," the largest bombing campaign of the Vietnam War.

A further distinction may soon be added to the center. Representatives Crawford, Hill, Western, and Womack, along with Senators Boozman and Cotton, have introduced legislation to name the Blytheville/Eaker Air



Force Base as the "National Cold War Center." "Eaker Air Force Base played a key role in the defense of our nation during the Cold War -- we ought to preserve its legacy and encourage the continued education of future generations. Our bill will officially recognize the museum in Blytheville as the nation's National Cold War Center, which will help preserve this important history and be a boon to local tourism," said Sen. Cotton.



The Blytheville Air Force Base Exhibit, the first phase of The National Cold War Center, is open Tuesday through Saturday from 9:30 a.m.-5:00 p.m. and is located at Building 202, 3711 Idaho Street, in Blytheville.

When it is complete, the National Cold War Center will include on-site experiences, including a Welcome Center, self-guided tours, an Alert Tower, B52 bombers, and a Cold War Legacy Gallery.

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# MOORE on MANNERS

WITH LINDA LOU MOORE

## HOSTING A BUSINESS MEAL WHO PAYS?

The question often arises: “When a woman hosts a business meal, who pays?”

Hosting a business meal can be tricky. Here are some quick tips from the experts to help the meal go smoothly.

### INVITING GUESTS

When inviting guests to a business meal make it clear in advance that you, as the host, will be paying the bill. There is nothing that ruins the dining mood more than grappling over the check at the end of the meal.

When you issue the invitation, state clearly that you would like for the other person to be your guest. If possible, make arrangements ahead of time to take care of the bill.

If you cannot make arrangements ahead of time, quietly let the wait staff know at the beginning of the meal to bring you the check.

If your plans to handle the check fail, be prepared to pick up the check as soon as the waiter brings it to the table. Don't let your guest wonder about your intentions.



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Many women find themselves inviting male colleagues to a business meal. The question is often asked: "What is the most professional and diplomatic way to let the server know that you will be taking care of the check?"

As a woman, you will often be asked to order first. When the server requests your order, simply say, "I'd like my guest to go first."

You will be accomplishing two things with this response:

- ( 1. )You will let the server know that you, the host, should receive the check.
- ( 2. )You will put your guest at ease by confirming that the meal is your treat.

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](mailto:manners@paragould.net).

Quote of the day:

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# Community Event

## JONESBORO CHAMBER NEW MEMBER LUNCHEON



The Jonesboro Chamber welcomed more than 60 new members for its first 2023 New Member Luncheon in February.

The meeting focused on informing new members about what Chamber committees do and how each member could get involved.

Committees include Business Network, Agri Business, Governmental Affairs, Community Benefits, A-State, Green Business, Membership Development, and Workforce Development. Jonesboro Young Professionals Network also presented.

Members left with information on the upcoming 2023 Business Expo, JYPN and Involvement forms.

For more information on the Jonesboro Chamber contact the Jonesboro Regional Chamber of Commerce at 870.932.6691

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# PARAGOULD POLAR PLUNGE



The 2023 Paragould Polar Plunge for Special Olympics was hosted at Crowley's Ridge State Park in the swimming area. The event raised over \$20,000 with 73 Plungers participating.

Awards were presented for:  
The Cool School Challenge - GCT Intermediate Team

The Most Money Raised by an Individual - Sandra Kelley, a Paragould Realtor

The Most Money Raised Team - GCT Intermediate School

The Guardian of the Flame Award - Paragould Fire Department

The Best Individual Costume - Elsa (Aubrey Schalk)

The Best Team Costume - Where's Waldo (GCT Middle School)

Gift Card Winner - Wesley Hathcoat

A new feature this year was the auction of a wood plaque created by Jason Mace, Signs By Design. The auction was a great addition with fierce bidding by Kevin and Malory Caruthers, who offered a solution of making another plaque for both the high bidders.

The Paragould Polar Plunge raises money for Area 1 athletes to compete in Special Olympics and the organizers wish to thank everyone for their help and a special thanks to the hosts at Crowley's Ridge State Park.

[www.specialolympicsarkansas.org](http://www.specialolympicsarkansas.org)....  
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# Greene County History

MYRL RHINE MUELLER

BY RICHARD BRUMMETT



It seems fitting when discussing women important to the history of Paragould and Greene County that we pay tribute to Myrl Rhine Mueller, a local resident who spent countless hours documenting our past.

Mrs. Mueller and her husband, John, came to Paragould in 1946 and established *The Big Picture*, a newspaper that published weekly at first and later was

turned into a daily during the years of 1948-1961. Her love of journalism had taken her all over the map and it was her fondness for both writing and history that led to the publication of two books: *A History of Greene County, Arkansas* and *Lost In The Annals: History and Legends of the New Madrid Earthquake 1811-1812*.

She was born in Kansas and taught briefly, then wrote for McCall's magazine and the McGraw-Hill News Bureau; she was a copywriter for ads in Washington, D.C., and traveled the United States in the public relations arena. During World War II, Mrs. Mueller was a writer in the public relations department at Luke Field in Arizona, and later the publicity director for USO clubs in the D.C. area. She also spent a year in England as a magazine correspondent, then settled in Paragould and inserted herself into the local society.

She was very active in the Greene County Historical and Genealogical Society (GCHGS), where she served on the editorial board of the Greene County Historical and Genealogical Quarterly. Much of the information for this feature was, in fact, provided by the GCHGS. But one of her favorite contributions was the book documenting local history, and she was said to be especially

happy when young people made use of it to learn more about the beginnings of the places we call home. She sold some of her personal real estate and borrowed from her sister to come up with the \$13,000 needed to finance publication of *A History of Greene County, Arkansas* in 1984 and continued her valuable work editing quarterlies for the historical society and helping with special commemorative editions until she left to work on her second book, which took years to research and complete. She said she first became interested in the subject as a child during a vacation visit to Reelfoot Lake in the northwest corner of Tennessee, which was formed as a result of the 1811-12 quakes.

Still, it is the local history book -- used today by so many to research the history of towns, schools, churches, businesses and families -- that keeps Mueller's name at the forefront.

She passed away in August of 1991 but left such a valuable record of our past for posterity to enjoy and appreciate. "The last word on history is never written," she said in the preface to her book, "and other historians who come later may give a different interpretation to the material they uncover."

Copies of *A History of Greene County, Arkansas* may be found at the GCHGS and at the Greene County Regional Public Library for those interested in our local history.



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**March 9, 2023**  
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# NORTHEAST ARKANSAS 1K FOR HABITAT



**D**owntown Paragould will be the site for one of the most unique running events ever held in Northeast Arkansas this spring. On Friday night, April 28, the inaugural NEA 1K will be held, with something for everyone.

The one kilometer running event will feature a series of individual races at the new Community Pavilion in Power Plant Park just off of Court Street. Participants will run the paved circle around the new pavilion in front of cheering onlookers, with music and an announcer adding to the excitement.

A benefit for Habitat for Humanity, the event will be a safe and fun way for kids and adults alike to try their hand at a one kilometer race, which has never been offered in the area.

One kilometer is just about two thirds of a mile, making it easy

to prepare for a fun outing or providing an opportunity for experienced runners to set a new personal best. The event is broken into stages to allow individuals to pick their preferred pacing, though individuals can participate in more than one stage.

Each stage will consist of laps around the facility, which is completely removed from automobile traffic. Underneath the pavilion's covered area, teams and spectators will have the perfect place to keep up with the on-track action.

The stages are:

Elite Men (8:00/mile or faster), Elite Women (8:00/mile or faster), Open, High School Men, High School Women, Family Fun Run, Dog Run, Costume Run and the first ever Beer K.

Similar to a beer mile, participants will run laps and have small servings of beer while in a specified zone. If necessary, additional heats will be added to accommodate for participants.

Registration will include a t-shirt and professional timing services with online results from Stearns Race Timing. There will be refreshments for the whole family, including a selection from Native Brew Works for those 21 and over.

Registration opens March 1 and more information is available at [www.nea1k.com](http://www.nea1k.com).

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# CROWLEY'S RIDGE COLLEGE DISTINGUISHED ALUMNUS

Jonathan Mays is a 2023 recipient of Crowley's Ridge College's "Distinguished Alumnus Award" in recognition of his outstanding service to the church, the community, and christian education.

Jonathan is a graduate of Paragould Leadership Class of 2014-2015, he is the Chairman of Washco Bancshares, and a member of Arkansas Bankers Association and the Missouri Bankers Association. He is a Past President of the Rotary Club and a member of Kennett Country Club, he has served on the Sports Advisory Council at Freed-Hardeman University and is a member of the CRC Board of Trustees, serving since 2014.

Jonathan and his wife, Ashley, have been married for 16 years. They have three children together: Jordan, Maggie, and Bentley. They are members of the Center Hill Church of Christ. Jonathan graduated from CRC in 1994. After his time at CRC, Jonathan attended Freed-Hardeman from 1994 to 1996, where he earned his Bachelor's Degree in Business Administration. He has been with Unico Bank in Paragould for 15 years, where he is currently the President/CEO and Chairman of the Board. He graduated from the Christian Brothers College School of Banking in 2010.



CRC's Homecoming was Saturday, February 18th. Pictured from left are Jonathan, his wife Ashley, and CRC President Richard Johnson.

 An advertisement for Paragould Animal Clinic. The top half shows a woman with long blonde hair, wearing a yellow top and white pants, sitting on a grassy field and holding a brown dachshund dog. The bottom half is a blue banner with white text and icons.
 

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# CHARITY PHEASANT HUNT



The 1st BKHworks Charity Pheasant Hunt in Memory of Brady Herbert was a huge success with thirty hunters, amazing prizes for getting a banded pheasant, raffle items and a Tito's cooler door prize.

BKHworks Charitable Foundation will now be able to help our local schools with hygiene and clothes closets, book fairs and backpack programs, Foster Care, Recovery Support, People in Need and be able to show Random Acts of Kindness.

"First, I would like to thank my husband, Mike, for supporting

me through this & helping make the pheasant hunt possible. I would like to give a big shout out to Marla Crancer and Stephen Crancer at Liberty Hill Outfitters for helping me make the pheasant hunt possible and my sister, Melissa Friend Fenton, my mom and daughter for all their help," said Libby Farrell, Brady's mother.

"I would like to thank all of our sponsors and hunters. Because without all of you this would not have been possible. Our hearts are so touched by the generosity shown to us and helping keep Brady's memory alive."

Tim Rollins talked about the true heart and kindness that Brady showed for mankind. He talked about Brady's faith in God. Brady's wreck changed his life but he never lost his faith in God and his love for others.

BKHworks' mission is to always show Kindness to Others, Provide Random Acts of Kindness in your everyday life and put your faith and trust in our Heavenly Father, all in memory of Brady.

Follow their Facebook page for details on the next Annual BKHworks Charity Pheasant Hunt.

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# Happenings

## GCH&GS HOLDS HERITAGE FAIR IN PARAGOULD MARCH 25TH



Paragould's Community Center will host the Greene County Historical & Genealogical Society Heritage Fair on Saturday, March 25.

The event is open to the public and there will be no registration fee. After a sign-in session, which begins at 9 a.m., Jim Burgess and Paulette Parker of the GCHGS will provide both a welcome and opening remarks. Lunch is Dutch treat and a full schedule can be found on Facebook.

Heritage Fairs are generally programs promoting heritage history in a fun and engaging learning environment. Participants recount significant events, highlight famous people, or share family histories and present heritage items of personal value.

For additional information on the Paragould event, call the GCHGS at 870-240-8944. Or go to the event on Facebook.

The Community Center is located at 3404 Linwood Drive in Paragould.

## SPRING BREAK ACTIVITIES AT THE "STAYCATION"



The Craighead County Jonesboro Library announces plans for its Spring Break Staycation!

Bring the kids and enjoy the schedule:

Monday Mar 20: 10am-11am: Kid's BINGO  
2pm-4pm: Construction Zone & LEGOs  
Tuesday, Mar 21: 10am-12pm: STEAMy Experiments  
2pm-4pm: Comic Workshop  
Wednesday, Mar 22: 10am-12pm: Coloring Roundtable  
2pm-4pm: Dinosaur Tea Party  
Thursday, Mar 23: 10am-12pm: Yoga  
2pm-4pm: Nature Art Afternoon  
Friday, Mar 24: 10am-12pm: Mini Gardens - Starting Seeds  
2pm-4pm: Kid Karaoke

The Library is located at 315 W. Oak Ave., Jonesboro. Email [terell@libraryinjonesboro.org](mailto:terell@libraryinjonesboro.org) or phone 870.206.9953 for questions.

## DSO SPRING CONCERT WITH LIMMIE PULLIAM



Join the Delta Symphony Orchestra and Conductor Dr. Neale Bartee on Sunday, March 19. at 2 p.m. in welcoming nationally known tenor, Limmie Pulliam, back to the Riceland Hall stage in the Fowler Center on the A-State campus in Jonesboro, Arkansas.

Pulliam will perform opera selections from Verdi, Wagner, and Puccini and the Delta Symphony Orchestra will celebrate Women's History Month with pieces by Florence Price and Amy Beach.

Ticket prices range from \$20 - \$35 and are available at [www.deltasymphonyorchestra.com/tickets](http://www.deltasymphonyorchestra.com/tickets) or by calling 870.761.8254. For group rates and special needs accommodations, please call 870.761.8254.



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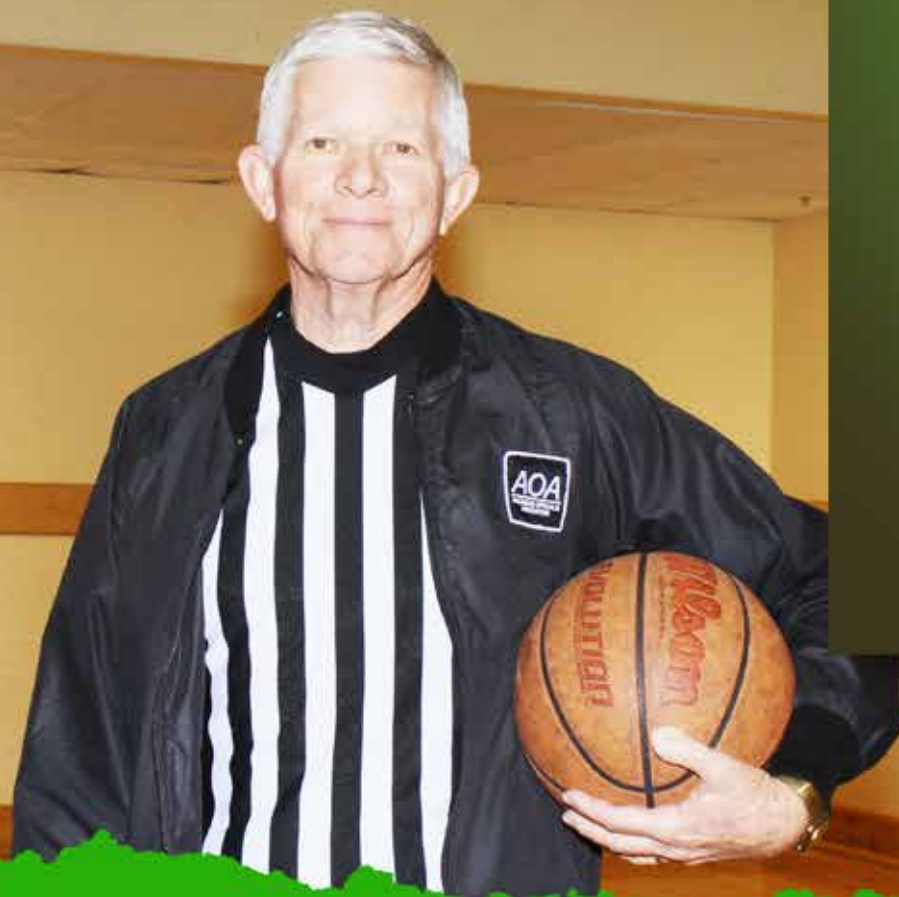
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# Bob Holloway

## NATURAL CREATIONS

BY RICHARD BRUMMETT



Almost every room plays host to some of his workmanship to the point, he says, "... that Maggie said, 'Don't bring another thing home!' I get requests for tables and for small things like cutting boards, but I don't typically sell things. I give some away ... or bring them home."

Growing up in Northern Indiana, Bob enjoyed an extremely close relationship with his grandfather, a tool and die maker. "He could make about anything," he said of his grandfather. "When I was 10 or 11 years old he had this issue of *Popular Mechanics* magazine and the cover advertised that you could make this boat in one weekend for \$20. It was basically two sheets of marine plywood. We lived around a lake so he and I made that boat. It was basically like a go-cart on the water. I used it for a couple of years.

"Years later, my younger brother came along and we said, 'Let's dig out the boat and let him have it,' but when we put it out in the water it got too heavy and he didn't get to use it like I did."

About four years ago, while looking for a project to undertake, Bob came across the plans for the same boat on the Internet and decided to build his sibling his own version: "I built the boat again for my brother. I surprised him with it at Christmas. And this time it took longer than a weekend to make, and it took more than \$20."




He likes the challenge of seeing something he thinks he can replicate and then giving it a shot, and he admits he

It's not necessary to travel too deeply into a conversation with Bob Holloway to realize his life has been far from mundane. He's owned a Fixed Base Operation at the Jonesboro Airport, bought and sold planes, flown hazmat and owned hot air balloons.

After selling his interest in the airport he bought a sailboat with plans to sail around the world before deciding to return to Jonesboro and take up his current role as a real estate appraiser. He owns horses, he loves to travel the globe ... but it's something he does in the quieter times that is just as interesting as his adventurous side.

Having developed an interest in woodworking when just a child, Bob has improved his skills over the years to the point where he now produces items of beauty and function "just because I like to. Not really to sell, just because I enjoy doing it." The long dinner table in his family dining area is one of his creations, as are additional tables representing even more creative endeavors.



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sometimes sees a piece of wood and envisions a work of art he can make from scratch. "Years ago we had a house and typical dining room furniture and Maggie said she wanted to get rid of the table and have me make her a farm-type table," Bob said. "She showed me pictures of what she had in mind and I knew a guy in Lake City who had cut down a tree, so I built our current table that seats 10 or 12. From that I pushed on and built more."



them I've made and given away."

He's been known to make beautiful boards to be personalized and used as wedding gifts and he's handed over various items for agencies like the NEA Food Bank and others to be used for fundraisers via silent auctions. He is appreciative when others see his work and view it with admiration, but he puts in the necessary time

His favorite creation is a decorative table that never reached the finish line he foresaw-- in fact, it broke during production and he had plans to scrap it before Maggie encouraged him to go forward with what he had, and now he loves it. "It looks pretty simple but it was really difficult to build," Bob recalled. "It was a root wad when I started out and I sanded and chipped until I was getting it where I wanted it. A lot has to do with the wood you can find. And it's better with a live edge (rubbing the fringe of another table) and not a precision edge. It doesn't have to be as exact. I've made cutting boards, put different woods together. Finding wood, messing with it, deciding what to do with it ... I really enjoy that."

to complete the works of art for one reason.

"Between woodwork and my horses," Bob explained, "it's my 'golf game.' I can be in the shop for a couple of hours before I realize it, and absolutely forget about anything else. Horses you've got to go out every night and feed them, but I can spend a few hours working with this stuff and I always feel better.

"One thing I really enjoy is taking a piece of wood and seeing what I can do. There's always more you can do."

He said he's fortunate to have a friend who owns "a big shop building we share and we have more tools than we know what to do with and we keep getting more and more. Some we buy, we just have an inkling of what to do with, but there is this wonderful source called YouTube. Can you do something? Well, watch a video and then go try it.



"It's fun to see some of these things and say, 'I can try that.' Maggie wanted me to make her a bread bowl and I had to look it up to see what it was, but I got on a kick and must have made 30 of those things. It's the same with cutting boards; no telling how many of



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# Art Smith

## JOURNEY WELL TRAVELED

BY RICHARD BRUMMETT



When Art Smith retired from Crowley's Ridge College in December it marked the end of a long journey, one that took him from student, to instructor to administrator over a 40-year period.

Born in Alaska and having graduated high school in Idaho, Art hitched a ride to Arkansas with the Herschel Johnson family and enrolled at CRC in 1965. Johnson had been preaching in Idaho and was returning to Greene County; he told Art of the new college and he "got in the car and came back with them and just stayed."

He met his future wife Brenda during his sophomore year ("One of the really good things to happen to me at CRC," he said) and upon graduation moved on to Harding, hoping someday to return to the Paragould campus he had come to love. It was at Harding that Art decided his career focus should be on teaching Bible classes, and when the opportunity to return home and do just that surfaced he jumped on it. "I absolutely feel great love for CRC," he said. "One of the saddest days of my life was when I left there, because it was just a two-year school at that time. I couldn't imagine not being here. I was determined to get back somehow, some way."

Eventually he was asked to teach Bible at the school and taught his first class in January of 1983. "One of my first students was Richard Johnson, who is now the president of the school," Art said, and mentioned that the people -- both co-workers and

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students -- come to mind upon reflection. "Emmett Smith, Boyd Morgan ... just so many," he said, mentioning he was a part of the school in some capacity under all of the CRC presidents.

"When I was first there, the Administration Building was not there, the gym was not there, the Science Building was not there," he recalled. "So, obviously, there is growth in that way but it is also most satisfying to teach some of the young people I did and know many of them are now parents or grandparents. Some of them have accomplished so much in their communities and churches and if I played even a small part in any of that, that's a blessing."

In 2002 he became a part of the administration as Vice President for Development and later was asked to serve as Vice President for Student Affairs and Dean of Students.

"I've had the opportunity to work with some great, great people, some great young people," Art said. "Second to none."

The year also brought recognition in the form of an Outstanding Alumnus Award from Harding University in the College of Bible and Ministry. He earned a bachelor's degree from Harding in 1973 and a master's degree from Harding School of Theology in 1979.

"I haven't completely separated myself from school yet," Art said of his ties to CRC. "I still send some of the young men out as preachers on Sundays and I still do the mission trips. I thought I would enjoy not having a schedule every day, but I do miss the students."

He will continue his preaching at the Commissary Church of Christ, as he has for more than 20 years, and he and Brenda will make time to spoil their five grandchildren, two great-grandchildren and three kids of their own.

"I have been blessed," he said, simply. "I have had a wonderful experience."

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# VALENTINE KING AND QUEEN SENIOR B.E.E.S.

The B.E.E.S. Senior Citizens Center held its Valentine's Day Celebration.

Bill and Debbie Drake were crowned King and Queen for raising the most money. Dean and Ann Tripp and Jerry and Shirly Kersey were 2nd runners-up. The three couples together raised \$1,619.

Over 70 B.E.E.S. enjoyed a delicious meal and extra goodies and extend a huge thank-you to all the businesses and individuals who gave money to this great cause.

You are invited to join the B.E.E.S. for lunch, trips, beanbag baseball, dancing, singing and so much more. Look at B.E.E.S. Senior Citizens, Inc. on Facebook for details.

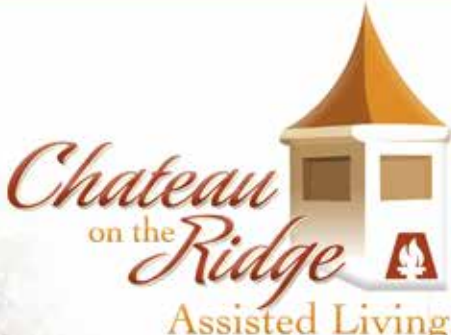


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# Ray Bishop AOA HALL OF FAME 2023

BY RICHARD BRUMMETT



was to be inducted into the Arkansas Officials Association (AOA) Hall of Fame in the Class of 2023. "I was kind of speechless," said Ray, now 67 and living in Paragould. "Two weeks later I got a letter from the AAA confirming it giving me all the details and I consider it a great, great honor."

Having been out of the game for about three years now, Ray

money," he said, recalling that he and his wife Brenda were practically newlyweds as well as being college students. "I figured refereeing was a way to do that and, besides, what could go wrong refereeing, right? So I started in with help from some other people and, well ... here we are."

His first game, in January of 1976, was a junior high girls' contest between Stanford and Knobel. "It was 3-on-3, and I had never even seen 3-on-3," he said with a smile. "I was scared; I knew nothing." But Stanford coach Jim Bowlin offered Ray and his partner useful tips during time outs and quarter breaks, and became not only that night but forever "really instrumental in me being an official over the years. Jim Bowlin was a great mentor for me."

Over a 42-year span as a basketball official Ray Bishop made a lot of calls, but it was one he received in November that he won't soon forget.

On the other end of the line was a representative of the Arkansas Activities Association bringing him the news that he

is able to look back over the years he ran up and down the court and recall plenty of good times -- along with the obligatory bad -- and consider the choice he made as a young married man a pretty good one. "Like a lot of other young guys, I was looking for a way to make a little extra

Decades later there are games that stand out and comments that amuse and sometimes sting, but being a ref brought much more joy than anything else. He still runs into people who comment about times he called their games, or their kids' games, or their grandchildren's games and he gets a laugh from the conversation, and he also smiles knowing the job put him next to the guy he considers his best friend today. "Ron Bellomy and I for about 15 years called ballgames together all over the country," Ray said. "He is the best friend I have in the world and we hunt together, and fish together and have vacationed together and I have the AOA to thank for that. It is the best fraternal organization I have ever seen because if you stay around long enough you become like family."

Over his career Ray was fortunate to have called in 19 state tournaments and 12 state championship games and he said looking back he knows the reward was in "the excitement of calling in a really good basketball game and knowing you were a part of it. It's a thrill. People are going to yell, 'You missed it!' and sometimes you know you did but you are supposed to go on to the next one. You also know you are a part of the game and you have been invited in to work it, and if you walk away knowing you did a good job it is tremendously satisfying."

He's officiated games where some of the players -- like Derek Fisher and LaPhonso Ellis -- were good enough to wind up in

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the NBA, and he's called games where the talent and skill level were not top-notch but the goal was to always give the players his best effort. "No one has to tell you if you didn't get a call right," he said. "You're the first one to know it if you kicked a call or not. But I like to think I always was out there to keep the game under control and get it right."

Today's game is much different from the one he left just a short time ago, with players seemingly getting bigger, faster, stronger all the time and "so gifted it makes it hard to officiate. It's hard to be on top of every play because the players have taken their skills to another level, but what is most disappointing about today's game is when someone in the stands wants to yell at you that you need to get your head in the game or that you're missing a good game -- just like they've always yelled it -- only now those things are preceded by curse words and that spills down from the fans onto the players. They're having trouble getting enough people and keeping good ones because of how the fans act, and I hate that."

Shortly after his retirement he did some field work for the AAA, evaluating on-court

officials, but said a return to the floor would be "only if an emergency arose and by an emergency I mean if like someone died in the last hour. Then I might go back out there."

His list of people to thank for help and guidance along the way is lengthy, but he said without a doubt the most important person in the equation is his wife. "Without Brenda, I could not have done this. No way," he said. "Many, many nights when I had to be gone Brenda came home after working all day and fixed supper, helped with homework, got the kids to bed and then I'd roll in about midnight and she'd do anything I needed help with. A good official needs an even better wife."

Now, with time to reflect before his induction, Ray can laugh at things like the night he got KO'd by a cheerleader's kick or how Coach Bowlin had to sometimes point to the proper spot for him and his partner to inbound a ball on that first night. "But, you know, I still talk to a lot of my buddies I called with," he said. "I call them, they call me. You build a wonderful relationship when you call together for so long and someone who hasn't done it can't really grasp that. I miss being around referees and

going to state tournaments. It's a chance to get together as a group and that's what I miss the most.

"But the Hall of Fame is a dream come true, a real honor, even though I honestly never thought about that," he said. "I never did it to get an honor, I did it because I loved it."

Ray will join the other inductees at a ceremony July 14 in the Hot Springs Convention Center.



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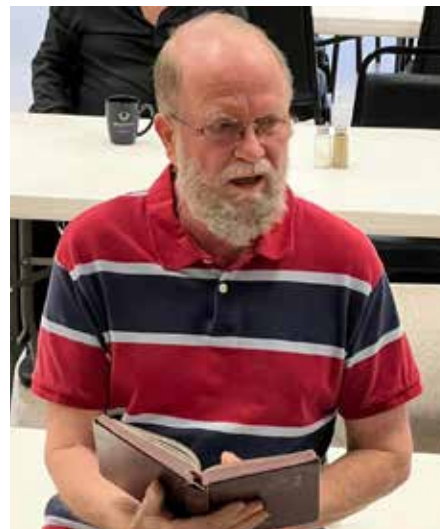
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# 100 Years of Family Service

## MITCHELL FUNERAL HOME

BY RICHARD BRUMMETT



If longevity indicates a sign of business success, then Mitchell Funeral Home has certainly been a proven leader for a long, long time.

Founded 100 years ago, Mitchell Funeral Home is Greene County's oldest family established funeral home. The business was started when Randal L. Mitchell purchased the funeral home portion of Trice Brothers Furniture and Undertaking, Co., in 1923. Mitchell Funeral Home originated on Pruett Street before moving to West Kingshighway in 1967, its home until the recent opening of a brand new facility at 1520 Highway 49 North.

"One hundred years obviously says you're doing something right, something right for the community," said Paige Rooney, Funeral Director/Embalmer at Mitchell's. "We serve many repeat families ... they appreciate that we value the traditions and respect of the past."

Over time, ownership was passed down to Randal's son, Richard M. Mitchell in 1967, and then to grandsons Robert "Bobby" Mitchell and Richard "Dick" Mitchell in 1998. The Mitchells also established a branch of Mitchell Funeral Home in Rector in 1936, of which Bobby and Dick were owners for many years.

In 2011, Bobby became the sole owner of the business until its sale in 2018, and Dick continues to work at the funeral home his grandfather established so long ago. The business' new owner, Billy Curl, is a retired Army helicopter pilot having served twenty-four years. He is a 1991 graduate of Northwest



Community College School of Mortuary Science and is a licensed funeral director in Arkansas, Mississippi and Tennessee. Having been in the industry for more than thirty years, he understands the importance of tradition, family, and community.

"People love to deal with people instead of with a business," Paige said. "Customer service ... I definitely think with the history of this place it does have a lot to do with families. When you get to know the people they develop a sense of trust in you and I love being a part of that. I love the atmosphere when we sit down and we have a conversation. I don't know this person but I want to get to know this person who is your loved one. Especially the older generation, they know Dick, they knew Bobby, they feel a sense of family here. So while we celebrate 100 years, we also celebrate that we are keeping the same traditions and values."



The new facility makes use of the most modern forms of technology, but there are still definite links to the past. "We've definitely come a long way," Paige said, "but one of the coolest things is that even with a lot of new stuff, we have kept a lot of the old. We have the original pews from the highway location in the chapel. It's a nice touch. We still cater to the new, but we have not forgotten who we are."

Plans for the move to the current building hit a snag when the Covid virus stalled pretty much everything, everywhere, and Mitchell's had to rent a building on North 12 th Avenue for quite some time. Now, however, the staff is settled into its new home. "Covid took a while to get the building up," Paige said, "but after being here it was definitely worth it. We were in the temporary building about two years and we appreciate people sticking with us since we were kind of in limbo. Now I think the people realize that we're still here, we're still serving the community. "I think one of the main reasons why we're still here is just that -- we're still serving. We have a wonderful staff ... professional, wonderful people. We're still happy to be a part of families, just as we have been for 100 years."

To gain more information about Mitchell Funeral Home and its full range of services, it may be reached by telephone at 870-236-7765.





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# RETIREMENT ADVICE SPENDING {YOUR RETIREMENT} WISELY

BY CHAD OLDHAM

Not everyone wants to take the required minimum distributions from their retirement accounts right away. If you don't want your distribution, one option is to donate it to charity and get a tax deduction.

You are required to begin taking distributions from your tax-deferred IRA when you reach age 72 (70 ½ if you turned 70 ½ in 2019 or before) even if you don't need the money. The distributions are added to your income and taxed at the same rate, which could put you into a higher tax bracket, especially if you are still working.

If you don't want the distribution, you may want to consider donating the distribution directly to charity through a qualified charitable donation. By donating your required minimum distribution, the distribution won't be included in your gross income, which means lower taxes overall.

A qualified charitable donation can also be a good way to get a tax deduction after the 2017 tax law doubled the standard deduction, making it harder to get a deduction for a direct charitable contribution. If your charitable contributions along with any other itemized deductions are less than

\$12,950 a year (in 2022), the standard deduction will lower your tax bill more than itemizing your deductions, which can be a disincentive to donate to charity. A qualified charitable donation is a way to make a donation and receive a tax benefit from it.

In order for the donation to count as a required minimum distribution, the donation must be made directly from the IRA to the charity. Funds distributed directly to you do not count. The charity must be approved by the IRS, and different IRAs have different rules about how to make the distributions. If you make a qualified charitable donation, you cannot also itemize the deduction. The maximum amount you can donate is \$100,000. If you donate less than your required minimum distribution, you will need to take the remainder as a distribution. For more information, visit <https://www.irs.gov/retirement-plans/retirement-plans-faqs-regarding-iras-distributions-withdrawals>

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Chad R. Oldham is an Arkansas licensed attorney practicing in the areas of elder law, estate planning and probate with offices located at 603 SW Drive in Jonesboro, Arkansas. He can be reached at 870.930.9919 or [www.oldhamlawfirm.com](http://www.oldhamlawfirm.com)

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-Bridget Smith**

# Iconic Jonesboro Store

## GETS A REFRESH



You may notice some new faces and décor inside one of Jonesboro's most established local businesses. Meet Shelby Ashburn. She has a passion for natural remedies and family.

This January, Amanda Yates, who has owned Jonesboro Health Food or managed it for the past 15 years, sold the business to Shelby. Amanda has a doctorate of Natural Health and is an Iridologist and a nutritionist. Her passion is helping people find their way back to health naturally and has loved being able to do this for NEA. Now, Amanda works a couple of days a week at the store, exclusively providing health consults: "This is a great new dynamic for everyone. I get to focus 100% on helping people in the same environment they have been accustomed to all these years. While Shelby brings new excitement and fresh ideas to the retail store and can focus on growing it and bringing new options to NEA."

Most things will stay the same. Customers can still expect to see their favorite, high quality supplements and products but look for new options as well. One new area of focus will be on natural products for babies, children and



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mamas. They hope to fill that gap for young moms looking to raise their families more naturally. Expect to see more foods and boutique items as well.

Jonesboro Health Food is having a re-grand opening event the last week of March with daily giveaways and activities. Discounts will be offered throughout the month of March and they hope to have as many customers as possible come in and get re-introduced. Watch their Facebook page to see the details.

Since 1975 Jonesboro Health Food has been serving NEA. It has had several new owners and facelifts through the years but the commitment to natural healing and quality products has never changed. Shelby and Amanda are excited to continue this tradition and look forward to providing the best care and support possible for many years to come.



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# Thrive with Changes

## WOMEN'S HEALTH

By St. Bernards Media Relations Manager Mitchell Nail with Carl B. Edwards, M.D., FACOG, St. Bernards OB-GYN Associates

A new stage of life brings challenges. For example, we don't always welcome changes that come with aging, especially if our bodies lose function or gain less desirable qualities. Women, in particular, change on a level not experienced since puberty. These changes, at their worst, can leave them feeling helpless inside their own bodies.

Still, many of us know at least one person who embraced aging and emerged thriving. Thankfully, physicians who specialize in Obstetrics and Gynecology (OB-GYN) can help all women of all ages understand and embrace these normal changes.

### Menopause and Perimenopause

The average woman goes through menopause between 45 and 55. A Gynecologist diagnoses it after she goes a year without having a period.

We call the two- to three-year time period prior to menopause "perimenopause," and a woman may experience the symptoms that people associate with menopause, including hot flashes and mood swings. Gynecologists offer effective hormonal and non-hormonal treatment options, and women can ask their doctor for help.

Of note, a woman should contact her doctor immediately for symptoms like depression or post-menopausal bleeding.

### Lifestyle Screenings

Health risk factors increase as a woman enters her 40s. Lifestyle screenings grow more important during this decade. Most importantly, each woman needs an annual mammogram beginning

at age 40 or younger if she has a family history of breast cancer. In addition to yearly mammograms, women need annual pelvic exams and should have their first colonoscopy at age 45.

### Lifestyle Choices

Our bodies compensate for not-so-healthy decisions during our youth, but we must take better care of ourselves as we age. For women, Gynecologists encourage plenty of calcium, vitamin D and exercise geared toward cardiovascular health.

If possible, women should exercise outdoors where vitamin D emanates from the sun. In addition, they should drink plenty of water, practice a consistent sleep rhythm and eat more vegetables, fruit, fiber and lean protein.

Finally, they should maintain a solid support system with friends or family and eliminate or curb habits that sabotage efforts toward better health.

Together, not only can we age well. We can thrive.

For more information on St. Bernards' comprehensive women's services, call 870.207.7300, or visit [www.stbernards.info/services/womens-services](http://www.stbernards.info/services/womens-services).



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# HEALTH MATTERS! LONGER LIVES LIVED BETTER

BY KARAN SUMMITT

According to the CDC's National Center for Health Statistics, life expectancy in the United States is dropping. Numbers compiled from 2021 and reported in December of 2022 reached the lowest levels seen in 25 years.

As you might guess, the COVID pandemic played a major role in the turnaround. Seniors, many already frail with chronic disease conditions, were especially susceptible to the virus. From 2019 to 2021, the average lifespan for women dropped from 81.4 years to 79.3 years. Already prone to earlier death, men saw an even greater drop, falling from 76.3 years to 73.5 years.

The second heartbreaking contributor to this phenomenon was drug overdoses. Addicts struggled to find the support they needed when social distancing guidelines shut down support systems. Mental health issues soared during that same time span, increasing the incidence of addictive behaviors.

We hope and pray COVID was unique and that longevity rates will rebound. Time will be the test of that hope. What we do know is there are lifestyle behaviors documented by solid research that give all of us the best possible opportunity for outliving the averages. The earlier in life we practice these, the better our chances, but it is never too late to start good habits. They are a win-win for not only a longer life, but a better life lived independently and doing the things we love as long as possible.

You probably already know most of these, because the basic message of what contributes to better health has not changed. The problem is many of us bank on being an exception, or we underestimate the value small efforts can contribute.

The most recent research indicates even a little goes a long way toward better quality of life as we age. Begin with check-ups, periodic doctor visits if you have chronic conditions and appropriate vaccines. Our bodies were not made to last forever. Even the healthiest of us will experience illnesses, especially as we age. Vaccines and medications can extend good health and protect us from life-threatening events like strokes, heart attacks and organ damage.

Stretch yourself when it comes to the basics. Eat a few more vegetables each day. Move a little more -- some of the latest research suggests as little as nine minutes of daily activity can impact longevity! If you are prone to sugared drinks, set aside one serving a day and drink water. Choose fruit over sweets or salty junk food more often.

Stay connected. In our mobile society, family members may not live near us. Find a way to be involved with people. Attend church and participate in ministries that help others. Visit local senior centers that provide daily meals, trip opportunities, games and time with people of common interests. If you have a hobby look for a gathering of like-minded people. Isolation and loneliness are a well-documented recipe for accelerated aging.



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

Accept what you can't change. This includes a wide variety of situations. Use your experiences to comfort and connect with others, be willing to use aids that prevent a fall, make peace with your past. Find joy in the life you have today.

Lastly, if it isn't good for you, give it up or reach out for help. Tobacco use, too much alcohol, substance or drug abuse and depression are just a few of the thieves that rob us of quality and quantity of life. Even for these it is never too late to reap a benefit.

An old adage states, "A journey of a thousand smiles begins with a single step."

This year believe in the power of small steps. Your health matters!

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# Peace of Mind

## AWARD WINNING SERVICE



PowerPro Premier and Eagle award winning dealer. From sales to install to service, our company has a staff of factory-trained certified generator technicians, certified salesmen, electricians and plumbers providing a turn-key generator installation to our customers.

Financing and other payment options are also available. While our customer base age varies, we have seen a rising trend in the senior population over the last two years. Whether buying for self, parents, or grandparents, back-up power gives peace of mind to all ages. "Jetton Power Solutions is operated on Christian principles. After the installation of our generator, they take great pride in their service, which is second to none!" say Bob and Peggy McMillon of Walnut Ridge, who have been customers since 2016.

Providing services in Northeast Arkansas and Southeast Missouri, Jetton Power Solutions has grown with more than 50 years in business, but we are still family owned, family operated, and family trusted. "JPS is a great company to work for; they have Christian values and take care of their customers," says Robb Allison, master electrician and nearly 10-year employee.

Have you thought about an automatic generator for yourself, your loved one, or even your business? As consumers begin to look at safety, security and convenience into their senior years consider a standby generator. Give us a call, or stop by just off the 412 bypass at the Highway 358 intersection. We provide free in-home consultations to ensure you get the back-up power needed during outages.

**G**rowing up in a multi-generational family of electricians, it was an easy decision for 14-year-old Redgie Jetton to embark on a career as an electrician. Redgie spent many years wiring residential and commercial buildings, and then the ice storm of 2009 happened.

Redgie began to see the need for generated back-up power and by 2012 had become a certified Generac sales and service dealer. By 2014, the generator side of his business was continuing to grow and he brought on his son, Russell. The business then became two aspects of service: residential/commercial wiring and full-time generator installation. Russell began to oversee Jetton Power Solutions while Redgie continued to oversee the electrical side.

Today, Redgie Jetton Electric/Jetton Power Solutions is a Generac

# Power your life



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The frequency in severe weather has led to an increase in power outages. More than ever, you need to be prepared. Think about it, without power, you will have no lights, heating or cooling, or refrigeration. You can't even charge your cell phone. But when you have a Generac automatic standby generator, you will have power when you need it most.

**Call or go online today for more information**



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### PERSONAL CARE

We help our patients with daily activities like personal hygiene, meals, medication reminders, mobility, errands, and many other daily living needs they may have.



### RESPITE CARE

Caring for an elderly parent or disabled family member is a kind, thoughtful endeavor requiring time and dedication. We are acquainted with your challenges and are here to provide much needed relief.

## ABOUT US

Founded and owned by Alycia Merila, RN, 1st Choice Home Care is a private home care agency devoted to providing the best, in-home care services for seniors, disabled persons and children throughout Arkansas. Alycia and her team maintain eight offices in Arkansas, with more than 30 years combined experience.

## OUR MISSION STATEMENT

Our Mission is one that is simple. We want to help our clients regain a sense of independence with the help of a guiding hand. We've been changing the way our clients and families think of onsite assisted living because we treat your family like our own. We perform our services with a level of personalized care and compassion that is unmatched. From respite care to general day-to-day services, we are here for you when you need us most.



1st Choice Home Care treats their patients like family. We understand that letting someone into your home (or that of a loved one) can be uncomfortable; that is why we work hard to maintain our award winning reputation.

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870-300-2122

501 Hwy 463 N, Ste A  
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# Next Month

## Celebrate Volunteers



April is National Volunteer Month and we will be highlighting volunteers who make NEA the greatest place to live.

## Emergency Services



We will be honoring those who put it on the line to keep us safe.

## Kids Play Section



Our second edition of Kids Play NEA will help get you ready to keep the kids busy this Spring and Summer!

## 8 life events that can affect your life insurance needs

1. Change in Income
2. Marriage
3. Purchasing a Home
4. Birth/Adoption
5. Divorce
6. Starting a Business
7. Becoming a Caretaker
8. Retirement



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## WHY WORK FOR US?

Vacation Time  
Paid Holidays  
Weekly Pay  
Bereavement  
Tuition Assistance  
Scholarship Program  
Advancement Opportunities

Medical Insurance  
HSA Alternative  
Prescription Drug Program  
Vision Plan  
Dental Plan  
401(k) Retirement Savings Plan  
Basic Life Insurance  
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Credit Union



Our Entry Level Packaging Specialists now start at **\$15.50** /hr and are able to top-out at **\$18.00** /hr within 12 months. Anchor offers regular reviews for pay increases and has career advancement opportunities available.



Anchor Packaging started here in NE Arkansas as a family-owned company out of St. Louis. Our current plant locations in NE Arkansas include Paragould, Jonesboro, and Marmaduke. We encourage our team members to get involved in their communities and we support them when they do. Join our Team today!



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