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From the Manager



ward season is here! This May edition of Premiere features the Jonesboro Premiere Awards and similar to any hectic season, I am quite ready to take a breather before pressing on to the Paragould Premiere Awards. As I “rest” and look back through these pages one more time, I am amazed: what an amazing community.

Thank you, Northeast Arkansas, for continuing to support the good news. We are so very proud to publish this magazine each and every month, but something about the summer months is extra special.

Perhaps it’s seeing each and every vote stream in, witnessing the support of community members as they take the time to submit their favorite businesses for awards.

Maybe it’s each ad sale – admiring that these businesses are so grateful for their customers and want to tell them that. Or maybe it’s just that the sun is shining a little brighter, a little warmer and when we deliver these magazines, we get to see the faces of business owners and employees light up. Each time I hear someone say, “Oh it’s here!” or “It looks so good!” my heart swells with pride not just for my team who made it happen, but for this community that continues to make good news happen.

This edition features stories to honor National Foster Care Month, a story to honor moms and the American Cancer Society, and a teen who felt inspired, inspired us, and we believe will inspire many others.

We hope you read and feel as proud of this community as we do.

Lindsey Spencer
Manager of Creative Content

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GET RICH WITH RICHARD BRUMMETT



One particular week this month is going to put all my recollective senses to a test. Sunday is Mother's Day, Monday is our only granddaughter's third birthday and Tuesday is our wedding anniversary, forming the trifecta of "you'd better be buying somebody something."

Contrary to the pitfalls of most married men, Mother's Day and the anniversary are the least perilous for me. Cindy and I have been together so long we are in tune when it comes to gift-buying and gift-giving for each other. When something like one of these important dates is approaching, a few days before it actually hits we look at each other from across the living room and whichever of us is obligated to make some sentimental gesture will say, "Do I need to get you anything?"

"No," is the common and preferred answer.

The rest of the conversation goes like this, year after year:

"Not even a card?"

"Nope. Do you still love me?"

"Yes."

"That's good enough."

"Are you sure?"

"Definitely," and then we both say we love each other.

I'm grateful to be married to a woman who doesn't want me spending our money on cards that will wind up in the trash, flowers that we have a real knack for killing and gifts she would probably return anyway if she weren't afraid of hurting my feelings. That's one reason I love her and feel our relationship is the most important thing to me, and if we can make it to the 10th or 11th of the month -- somewhere in there -- we will have been married for 48 years.

I don't even know what the appropriate anniversary gift is for year 48 but I think it's got to be bubble wrap or an Ace bandage.

No, it's the little kid's birthday present that has me worried because I have grown extremely close to our Roxie Jo and I don't want to disappoint. We have two grandsons -- David and Kegan -- and gift buying for them has graduated to the "here's some cash, go get what you want" stage. Conversing with them in years past led me to realize how rapidly I have become an out of touch old man.

One year I asked David what he wanted for his birthday and he told me, but his response had a bunch of letters and numbers and words I didn't recognize, and it was as if I had been sent back to my sophomore year in Geometry. There was something about an X in a box and a PS something-or-other and names and words that sounded like the hypotenuse of the perpendicular equilateral radius of the isosceles triangle's arcing radius and a bunch of other things I never understood when I was 15. Or yesterday.

I had to tell my daughter, "Uh ... I asked David what he wants for his birthday and he told me but I have no idea what he said. Apparently, I don't speak little boy anymore."

"Oh, it's a game," she said laughing, "for his Playstation. How about we just buy it and you pay us back?"

"I love you," I said, hugging her and kissing her cheek.

Not too long after that I had to pick Kegan up at school and bring him to our house while his mom endured Parent/Teacher meetings. She said he had homework and to make sure he did it, so I reminded him of that and he trudged toward the table. He didn't seem to be all that prepared to me, so I asked if he needed to borrow some paper and a pencil, things a veteran of 40 years of journalism has plenty of.

"Pappaw," he said, scrunching his face up into an expression of both aggravation and disbelief, "we don't use pencils."

You don't use pencils? What kind of school is this? How are you going to learn about biceptors and heptagons and good old Pythagoras' theorem if you don't even write stuff down?

"We work on the computer," he explained, moving right past the table and over to the computer desk, shaking his head back and forth a little as if to say inside his head, "Pencils. Who uses pencils?"

Well, I do, for one, even if it sometimes proves embarrassing. I once needed to interview Holly Burnett for a story and happened to run into her outside a local store one Sunday after church. She was all dressed up and lovely and I was enjoying our brief conversation when I asked if I could have her phone number. When she said I could I pulled out my pen and pad, just as any good reporter would.

"That is so precious," she said, smiling at my writing utensils, "I didn't know anyone did that anymore!"

"Well, yes," I started to say, "and did I mention I have invented something called fire?"

So I will spend some time in the near future walking down the toy aisles, looking for something a little person so dear to my heart might like to have. I want it to be special; I want it to mean as much to her as she does to me, if possible. Probably not, because she's priceless and not yet old enough for an X in box.



LIVING A Better Story

BY JARED PICKNEY

I love to garden. I love to work in the soil, to sow the seeds, weed, water and watch the produce grow. I love to share our harvest with others. And of course, I love to eat what we don't give away.

That said, you don't have to be a gardener to appreciate the fact that insofar as we eat, drink, and breathe we are necessarily and beneficially bound to the geophysical and biochemical processes at work in the garden. This is why even non-gardeners must be sympathetic and committed to the preservation and nurture of healthy gardens (wherever they may be) and good gardening work (whoever does it). The health of our lives and the satisfaction of our stomachs depend on the germination and fruit that gardens embody.

Besides being a practical, life nurturing task, gardening is also always a spiritual activity. In it, we attempt to make room for what is beautiful, delectable, and even holy. Every act of gardening, therefore, presupposes and embodies a way of relating to creation and to God. Though membership in the garden is a given, how we will take our place in the membership is not.

Our aim must be to develop into Godly gardeners, gardeners who work harmoniously among the processes of life and death, and in their work witness to the life creating presence of God in the world.

This means that besides vegetables, flowers and fruit, the gardeners are in themselves

undergoing a spiritual cultivation into something beautiful and sympathetic and healthy.

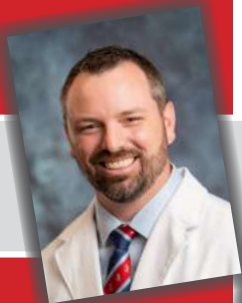
A caring, faithful, and worshiping humanity is one of the garden's most important crops.

Gardening is not an exercise in self-glorification. In it, there is a kind of self-forgetfulness that sets in. The true gardener, inspired by God, demonstrates the kind of curiosity, delight, and devotion in which no detail is too small not to be attended to, and no life so insignificant as not to warrant celebration. When we garden well, creatures are nurtured and fed, the world is received as a blessing, and God is glorified.



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RETAINING OUTDOOR INTEREST BY CHUCK LONG

To say we have been through a unique year would be an understatement. Last year at this time many Americans were caught in a new work environment and in a unique set of circumstances for navigating personal time. Many of the things we had known and focused our time and efforts toward had been taken away. Group activities were on hold, youth sports were on hold, family gatherings were on hold and even church services were relegated to an online status. With those changes came something many Americans had not experienced: an abundance of free time. And where did Americans go to use that time? Many went outdoors.

Many forms of statistical data support the return to the outdoors, not only in Arkansas, but across the nation. Arkansas saw an increase in those using the outdoors in a variety of ways. For example, the Natural State saw an increase of fishing license sales of almost 20% in the time frame following the onset of the pandemic. Statistical data indicated the same from other states, as many states recorded increases of license sales in both hunting and fishing.

The increases were not only in consumptive outdoor sports, but in non-consumptive activities as well. According to an article from the NPD Group, "America Outdoors: Consumers are Flocking to These 5 Activities," sales of paddle sports devices like canoes and kayaks increased drastically, as much as 56% for some of the watercraft. The NPD Group also noted that sales of binoculars, a primary tool for wildlife watchers, increased by 22%.

Fishing tackle shelves became bare and live bait became a scarce commodity in some areas, both due to the increase in participation and the impacts of COVID on manufacturing and

production. Boat sales for many manufacturers increased by as much as 25% and the price for used boats followed suit and increased as well. Camper sales increased too. A report from the RV Industry Association indicated some manufacturers had seen a jump in sales by over 50% with about 25% of the buyers being new RV owners.

I have discussed these short term changes in this column in the past as well as the benefits of the outdoors to the human psyche. Hopefully the trend will continue, but what will actually happen now? Will these new entrants into the outdoor realm stay connected to the great outdoors or will they drift back to their normal lives as things shift back to what we see as the "real world?" That is the million dollar question for the suppliers and manufacturers of outdoor goods, state agencies who rely on license revenue, and the local bait, tackle and outdoor shops that supply the needs of those headed out there.

"The New Outdoor Participant," a recent study published by the Outdoor Industry Association at www.outdoorindustry.org and its research partner Naxion Research, offers some insight into the future of the outdoors.

The study garnered some interesting findings in regard to the makeup of the "new" outdoor participants. They were more likely to be female, of a younger age, more ethnically diverse and more likely to be urban than those who participated in outdoor activities in previous years.

Why did these folks head outside? The top reasons were to get exercise, stay healthy, and enjoy time out of the house. Approximately 60% of those who walked out the door said they would continue with their outdoor pursuits in some fashion. A constant opponent in the outdoor recreation world is screens. Television, computer and phone are direct competitors for time spent outside. But, according to the Outdoor Industry study, a unique thing happened with screen use during the pandemic. Virtual learning, Zoom meetings, online training and other types of engagements with the screen caused "screen fatigue" and folks started seeing a need to get away from the screen for their downtime. So outside they went.



CHUCK LONG

Regional Education Coordinator Northeast Education
Division Arkansas Game and Fish Commission

As an outdoorsman and a herald for the bountiful benefits the outdoors can offer, I see this as a great opportunity to continue the wave of interest in the outdoors. Conservation agencies, manufacturers of outdoor gear and retailers from the box store giants to the bait shop on the corner also see this as a boom they hope rolls forward.

How do we keep these folks engaged in outdoor pursuits as the battles for time and money rise up from the remains of the pandemic? I truly believe it is up to us, as individuals, to keep our friends and family engaged in the outdoors. An interesting question from the Outdoor Industry Association study asked new outdoor participants how they learned about their activities they pursued during the pandemic. Forty-seven percent said they had participated before, but 30% said they were influenced by friends or family members.

And there is our in. Hunters, fishermen, birdwatchers, hikers and those who pursue other outdoor pursuits often continue with their business without inviting others. Not in a prideful or haughty manner, but because we feel others may not be interested. If the pandemic has shown us anything it is that there are many in our society who could become engaged in the outdoors if invited.

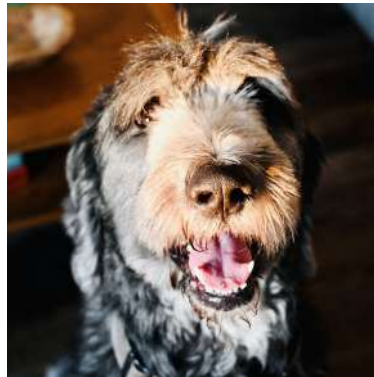
As is the case in many aspects of life, people are often reluctant to do something new on their own. But if a cordial invitation is extended to try a new activity by a family member or friend, they will often jump at the chance to be involved.

If you read this and enjoy anything about the outdoors, I want to challenge you to make a conscious effort to invite someone new into the lifestyle. Whether it be hunting, fishing, birding, hiking or just leisure walks through the neighborhood, invite someone to come along. Invite them to participate, learn and enjoy our great outdoors. I always hear people talk a lot about all the bad in our world today. I tend to tune most of that out and focus on what I know is good in our world, God's great outdoors. I hope to see you, and a friend, out there!



PET *of the* MONTH

SPONSORED BY ARPETS HOSPITAL




BY CATHERINE BALLARD

This is Ozzie, he's a 2.5 year old Sheepadoodle and weighs in at 100 pounds!! He is the biggest, chilliest snuggle bug I have ever met - he thinks he's a lap dog! His favorite thing to do is to walk between your legs and get booty scratches.

He also loves to be involved in everything ... whether that is work or cooking in the kitchen. He loves to relax on all the pillows (he secretly thinks he's a pillow too).


We got Ozzie from his first family - they felt they weren't able to give him the attention he needed (they are very busy) so we were able to be blessed with his loving soul.

Ozzie's favorite thing to do during the day is play at Central Bark.




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Thank You, Premiere Readers!!



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Sounds Like...

A playlist for May

BY SARA BROWN

May Flowers!



You know what they say about April showers, and now that May is finally here, I'm looking forward to seeing all of those beautiful flowers that spring has to offer! While you're taking a look yourself, turn this flowery playlist up loud.

Sunflower - Glen Campbell

A fun, boppy little number, this old tune will get you feeling excited to get out of bed in the morning and step into the pollen-filled air. It's also a sweet love song, so you can spin it for your love if you have one for a happy, romantic twist to your morning routine.

Dandelion Ridge - The Shelters

This is a laid-back rock tune about a beautiful but unnamed place the band visited once that they dubbed "Dandelion Ridge." It makes me want to find somewhere new and beautiful to go this spring/summer and play this tune on repeat the whole way there!

Magnolia - Brett Eldredge

This is a such a fun song, perfect to welcome the warmer weather of the months that lead into summer. It'll be the perfect jam for your kiddos (or for you!) celebrating the start of summer break, so go outside, have some fun, and play this one loud!

Wildflowers - Tom Petty

Just sitting back and appreciating the beauty of a sunny spring day is so peaceful, and this song is the perfect companion for an afternoon on the porch doing just that. Soft, sweet, and beautiful, you'll have this one on repeat.

Lily of the Valley - Queen

This song has a dark quality to it, and it always makes me think of those beautiful flowers that grow in the strangest places, like the crack of a sidewalk or underneath an old porch. Let it remind you to always appreciate the beauty in the unexpected.

Flowers on the Wall - The Statler Brothers

This is another fun and classic tune with a country feel to it. This one will make you want to load up in the car and drive out to the middle of nowhere just to see the blue sky and the flowers growing wild out in the field. Take it all in with this song bouncing in the background.

A photograph of a silver Chevrolet SUV driving on a dirt road. The SUV is shown from a front-three-quarter view, moving towards the right. The background shows a scenic landscape with a body of water and hills under a clear sky. In the bottom left corner, there is a gold Chevrolet bowtie logo and the text "Glen Sain" in a white, cursive font. In the top right corner, the text "BEST PRICE BEST SERVICE" is written in a white, sans-serif font. At the bottom of the advertisement, there is a dark blue banner with white text: "870.565.4352 | 6345 US 49 | GLENSAINPARAGOULD.COM".

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HEALTH & THE CITY

WITH DR. BETHANY DAVIS

As this beautiful spring arrives, I had already planned May's column to be focused on pelvic health, a subject I am passionate about bringing awareness to. After being in an accident at the beginning of April, the universal timing could not have been more perfect to discuss this extremely important health subject that is routinely overlooked. As a woman who now has multiple pelvic fractures, pelvic health isn't something I can do without, but nobody ever should. The health of your pelvic musculature is key to the basics of all movement. When you think of your "core" you cannot just simply focus on the "abs." Your core consists of the famous "six-pack" as well as numerous deep muscles up and down the back and sides of your spine, and your pelvic floor muscles, your base (and arguably the most important). These muscles help to stabilize your entire pelvis and lower spine, and you must have a strong base to be able to move your body in a way that is safe, effective, and that won't lead to future pain or problems with daily activities.

Madison Ferrell, a college classmate and friend of mine, is a practicing physical therapist in Little Rock who treats pelvic floor dysfunction. Madison and I graduated with our doctorates from Arkansas State University, and I am honored to be able to ask her some questions for this month's article. Before you brush this column aside and think, "My pelvic floor is fine!"; "I haven't had kids"; or, "I have no pain!"; please think again. Everyone who has a pelvic floor can have pelvic floor dysfunction -- men, women, young, old, baby or no baby. It's a subject often overlooked because it is thought of as embarrassing, but your pelvic

floor is simply just another part of your body, like your arm or leg. They are just muscles! Like I said, in my mental health article: The more it is talked about, the more normal it becomes. So, let's dive into some questions that can help guide you to understanding pelvic health.

What is the pelvic floor?

The pelvic floor is a group of muscles that resides at the bottom of the pelvis. It begins behind the pubic bone and ends at the tailbone, reaching out to both sides of the inner hips.

What does the pelvic floor do?

The pelvic floor supports you when you're lifting, coughing, running, sitting in your car, doing yoga, and having intercourse. Generally speaking, the pelvic floor has three main functions: It controls the "exits" related to bowel and bladder emptying; it supports your reproductive organs as the bottom part of the core musculature; and lastly, the pelvic floor plays a few roles in sexual functioning, helping with arousal, lubrication, sensation, orgasm, and more.

What are dysfunctions that can occur with the pelvic floor?

Pelvic floor muscles can become weakened, which can lead to problems such as incontinence, pelvic organ prolapse, low back pain, hip instability and pain, and much more. Weakened muscles are not playing their roles on the team and thus other team members have to pick up the slack, which will lead to additional problems

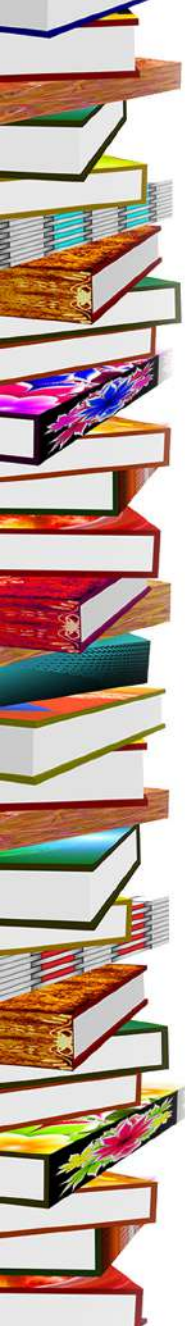
in other parts of the body. Muscles can also become too tight, shortened, or even spasm. This can also lead to pain both locally and globally in the body. Common complaints I see are pain in the pelvis, abdomen, back, legs, hips, and, of course, in the genitals, and sometimes all of the above. The tightened muscles are unable to relax and can also present as constipation, inability to become aroused or to achieve orgasm (or an increase in pain if you do), urinary frequency and urgency, and incontinence. Yes, you can have incontinence related to muscles that are too tight! Just because a muscle is contracted does not mean it is strong.

Why is it important to talk about and normalize pelvic health?

The pelvic floor is just another part of your body. If there is something going on with your body that is affecting the way you live your life, you should advocate for yourself and speak up. Male or female, 3/10 of your friends have urinary incontinence, and that doesn't account for the other types of pelvic floor dysfunction. Dysfunction of the pelvic floor is very common, and there is no need to suffer in silence because so many others can relate to your circumstance. Studies report some degree of urinary incontinence (UI) in 25-45% of women and in 11-34% of men, with 2-11% reporting daily UI; 10% of 7-year-old children, 3% of 11-12 year-old children and 1% of 16-17 year-old children are not dry at night. Pregnancy, childbirth, diabetes, increased body mass index, and surgery for prostate disease are also associated with an increased risk of UI.

If one thinks they may have pelvic floor dysfunction, how could they seek help?

If you are experiencing pain, it is best to speak with your doctor and discuss the symptoms you're having, especially those involving bowel, bladder, and sexual function. Your doctor may know of a pelvic floor physical therapist to refer you to, but if not, it's important to advocate for yourself and your needs, so you should ask the doctor for a referral. If you're not having pain but experiencing some of the symptoms listed above, you can still speak to your doctor about participating in pelvic floor therapy. Arkansas is a direct access state, which means if you want to be evaluated by a physical therapist, a referral from the doctor is not required. You can simply call and make an appointment yourself.



College Tips by a College Student



BY SARA BROWN

It's finally May, and you know what that means: The semester is coming to a close! We've almost done it; we've almost made it through another semester in the pandemic. Fingers crossed that in the fall we can return to some kind of normalcy. Now that we're just about finished, I know we're all looking forward to summer break and some time to just chill and not think about anything related to school or what we're doing once we graduate. That's perfectly fine – you need to take time to do that, to just relax and enjoy a nice break after a tough semester, but it's not a bad idea to use some of your free time to start prepping for the future. Easier said than done, I know, but that's why this month's tips are all about what you can do to start thinking about the future, whatever that future may be for you. For those of you getting ready to apply to graduate school for the upcoming application cycle, I've got tips for you, and for those of you not applying to graduate school for the upcoming application cycle, whether you intend to apply one day or not, I've got tips for you too!

IF YOU'RE APPLYING TO GRADUATE SCHOOL SOON

Tip number one: Spend your summer making the final decisions on where you want to apply. Keep looking at programs that interest you, faculty research that is related to your interests, and reach out to these faculty members and express your interest in their work and in working with them at the graduate level.

Tip number two: Start working on the necessary elements of your applications. Many universities require you to submit scores from entrance exams, exams like the GRE and the MCAT.

IF YOU'RE NOT APPLYING TO GRADUATE SCHOOL SOON

It's never too early to start thinking about what else you might want to do after you graduate if not graduate school. Figuring out what kind of job you might want to get is a big decision if you don't already know what you want. You should spend the summer trying to figure that out. What are your passions? Once you figure that out, start thinking about what kinds of jobs you can get that align with those passions. Then, you need to think about whether or not the degree you're pursuing will qualify you for those types of jobs. If it will, great! If not, you might need to think about changing your major and finding a degree that will qualify you. Once you know what kinds of jobs you're interested in and whether or not you can get one after graduating, you need to consider where you're going to live. Is the job you're passionate about one that can be done in this area, or will you need to go somewhere else? Are you okay with going somewhere else if need be? I know, it's a lot to think about and it's very stressful, but it's worth thinking about now, while you have some free time, as opposed to waiting until you're neck deep in coursework the semester before you graduate.

And finally, a tip for everyone: Pat yourself on the back. Seriously, you've made it through another semester of pandemic-based learning. It's been tough, I'm sure you've struggled through it a bit. I know I have. Take some time this summer to relax and be good to yourself. Make sure you're doing the work you need to do to make the fall semester easier too, but take some time for yourself. You need it, and you deserve it. We made it through – go you!



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DOG MOM'S DAY
WITH DR. KRISTIN SULLIVAN

Mother's day- a day for celebrating all mothers, but what about animal moms? For years, my mother and I have made it a tradition to plant flowers on her back deck area as my gift to her in celebration of Mother's Day and my special way of thanking her for being such an awesome mom, who has helped to guide me, offer advice, and geared me up for adulthood. In my career path, I meet a lot of people -- many dog and cat moms.

I can't say enough of how supportive these women are in caring for their babies. I wanted to take this opportunity to discuss how wonderful these mommas are and how special this day is.

These wonderful fur-baby mommas care for their pets so selflessly, and this day offers tribute to those mommas out there who love and dedicate themselves to their pets. Dog moms come in many forms -- from the countless women who care for their own pets, to the women who foster animals in need of a home or at risk of being euthanized at a local shelter, to the women offering transportation to a pet's new home, to the women who offer donations in the form of food or monetary contributions to help aid in the care of other pets. These mommas are amazing.

All the moms need a pat on the back, a loving gesture so they know just how important and amazing they are. The second Saturday of the month of May is now Dog Mom's Day -- Happy Dog Mom's Day to all these special doggy mommas! A shout out to all the human baby mommas out there, too! Being a mom is a challenging and ever-rewarding path of life and I wish you all a Happy Mother's Day!

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HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO YOU!

JOIN THE PREMIERE NEWSLETTER TODAY

A-STATE PIC(K)S



© Justin Cook- RWRC Photography

The A-State Committee with the Jonesboro Regional Chamber of Commerce is hosting a monthly photo contest in which participants are invited to [pick] their favorite [pic] within a given category and submit via the post found on the Chamber’s Facebook page.

April’s theme – “Sporting Events” – yielded this winning photo submitted by Lori Gillis Fitts.

May’s theme is “A-State Campus.” Submit your photo by commenting on the post found on the Jonesboro Regional Chamber of Commerce’s Facebook page. The winner will be given a prize sponsored by a local business and will have their photo run in the June edition of Premiere.

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MOORE on MANNERS

WITH LINDA LOU MOORE

CELEBRATING MOTHER'S DAY

Spring has sprung and now Mother's Day is just around the corner. Did you ever wonder how this tradition began?

It was approximately 1856 when Anna Marie Reeves Jarvis of Grafton, West Virginia, organized "The Mother's Work Group." According to an article in Goldenseal, a West Virginia magazine, Anna Jarvis was concerned about the relationship between poor sanitary conditions in the community and diseases such as diphtheria, scarlet fever and whooping cough. Hence the Mother's Work Group Motto: "Mothers Work - For Better Mothers, Better Homes, Better Children and Better Men and Women."

When Anna Marie Reeves Jarvis died in 1905, her daughter also named Anna, wanted to commemorate the life and the accomplishments of her mother

and to recognize a special day for all mothers. Through Anna's tireless work, President Woodrow Wilson signed a bill in 1914 that proclaimed Mother's Day as a National Holiday.

Mother's Day is an occasion to let your mother know how much you love and appreciate her. If you are honoring your mother with a gift, take into consideration what your mother would like.

Here are a few things to consider:

Does she like dining at a five star restaurant, or does she prefer casual dining?

Does she like perfume? Is she delighted by a bouquet of flowers? Does she like jewelry?

Is she an outdoor enthusiast? Is she a gardener? Is she interested in sports and fitness?

Does she like to cook? Does she keep up with the latest technology? Does she love to read?

Does she like the arts?

Does she like to travel? Does she like to be pampered?

Would she like a gift certificate to her favorite store? Would she like a night out on the town?

Would she simply like to hear from you?

Of course, showing your mother love, honor and respect all during the year, rather than just one day a year, can make any day -- Mother's Day!

Quote of the day:

"A suburban mother's role is to deliver children obstetrically once, and then by car forever after." - Peter de Vries

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

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For more information contact jennifer.clay@cancer.org or 870.926.9552

The Jonesboro Open



Paige Pierce, professional disc golfer, with sisters Steele and Brett



Coach Daniels of First Community Bank mans the grill at the VIP tent

April 16 through 18 marked three days of a very special event in Jonesboro: the Jonesboro Open, part of the Disc Golf Pro Tour.

Spectators from around the country gathered at Disc Side of Heaven (located down Strawfloor Drive on the West side of town) to watch the pros compete.

First Community Bank, an event sponsor, hosted a VIP tent for attendees and players.



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Lee, Will and Ben Tracy

More photos from this event can be found on Premiere's Facebook page.



Will (Georgia), Eric (North Carolina) & Michael (Colorado)



Saints & Sinners



Jonny and Carol Sarber

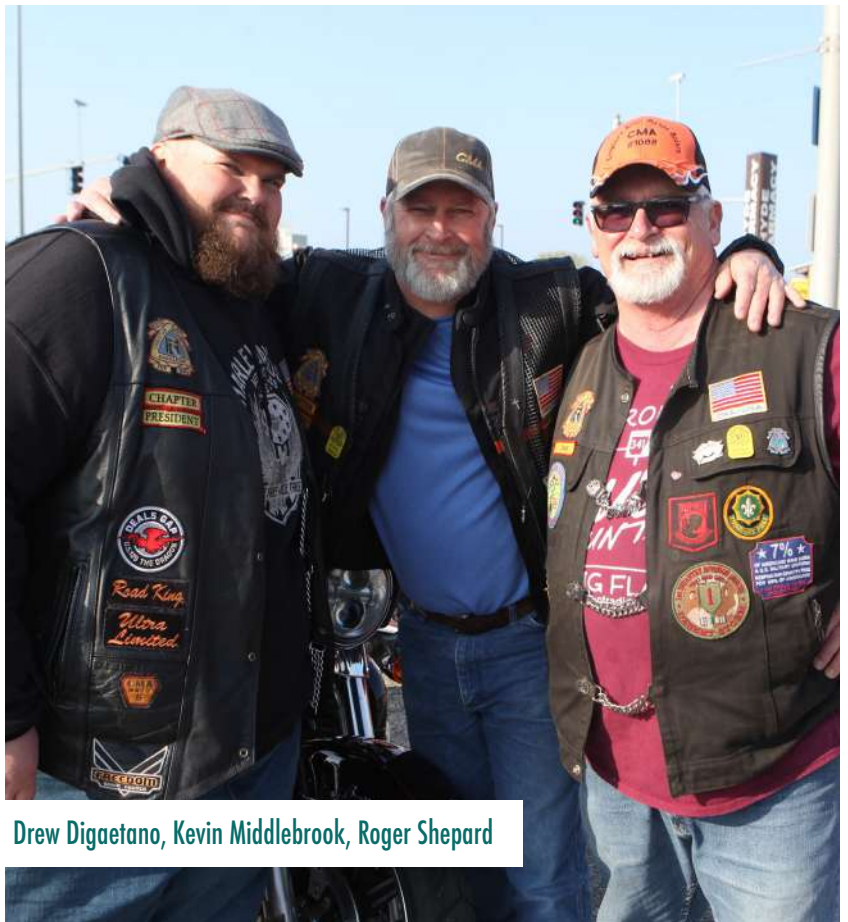


PHOTOS BY KAROLINE RISKER

Paragould was host to a multitude of events the last Saturday in March in an annual fundraiser for Arkansas Children's Hospital hosted by Saints and Sinners riding group. The day started with a dice run, and continued downtown with a bike show, car show and auction, and culminated in a concert at the Collins Theatre with the Kentucky Headhunters. The event is expected to surpass all previous fund-raising records of the group. Breakfast for the bikers was sponsored by the Christian Motorcycle Association.



Sundy Hattenhauer, Dan Massie, Heather Massie



Drew Digaetano, Kevin Middlebrook, Roger Shepard





Chase Burns and Patrick Gauthier



More photos from this event can be found on Premiere's Facebook page.

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INSPIRED TEEN INSPIRING OTHERS



BY LINDSEY SPENCER

It is a comforting feeling to realize we are not alone – in our experiences or in our thoughts and feelings about them. For Evelyn Edgar, it was the realization she was not alone in her grief that inspired her to want to make sure other people knew that, too.

Evelyn’s dad passed away while she was at school in 2018. The teen said it wasn’t unexpected, but also, she and her mom thought they had more time to say goodbye. Mr. Edgar was going to return home the following day.

“I had a really rough time trying to get back into a normal routine,” Evelyn admitted. Her mom, Deanna, had seen something about the Grief Center on Facebook and decided to give them a call. Within 30 days, Evelyn was visiting with a counselor to work through the loss.

“I started grief therapy and it helped me a lot because I didn’t really understand that I had a lot of grief to process,” Evelyn shared. “I thought I was just really depressed and sad and that I would just eventually get over it. But I didn’t realize how complicated the grief process was until I started coming here.”

She shared that coming to the grief center was incredibly helpful as she waded through her feelings after the death of her dad. “It was a miracle for me to have a place to go and for someone to understand that it wasn’t just me and it wasn’t just my brain, that it was a real thing and that it was something that I could have help with. That it was normal.”

Evelyn took heart in realizing she wasn’t alone, that her grief is certainly normal and help is out there. During her therapy, Evelyn discovered Tuga: a stuffed animal (creature) designed by the NEA Baptist Center for Good Grief team to give

visitors as a reminder they are not alone. Tuga means “grief and deep sorrow” in Croatian.

Evelyn recalls saying, “WHAT is a Tuga?” The “mascot” for the center, she took Tuga home for comfort and soon realized he could be a symbol for others, too.

The teen had hopped off social media for a while after realizing the negative effects it can have on mental health, but she hopped back on knowing it can have positive impacts, too. She started an Instagram for Tuga’s adventures.

“I wanted something that would share my grief story through something that wasn’t my face, my story necessarily, but is a positive light for other people. Tuga was just a great fit for that,” she explained. She began taking pictures of Tuga at home and on trips, sharing them to the profile. Though she says it didn’t last very long, it had a lasting impact on her. The outlet helped her express herself and her pain in a different way, a reminder to herself and others that no one is alone.

Evelyn said her family has always loved to travel and that taking photos of stuffed animals on their adventures was a fun way to document their trips since she was a kid. She added that taking similar photos means even more now.

“After my dad died, as we started to travel again, Tuga is a lot more special and has a bigger place in my heart because he is a symbol for something I’ve gone through. It was given to me by a group of people that mean a lot to me and has helped me through a really rough time in my life that

I don’t think I could have gotten through without help,” she shared.

Evelyn and all who take comfort in Tuga are a beautiful reminder that we may all be in different boats but we all pass through similar storms. Accepting help during the storm is one of the strongest, bravest actions we can take. “Grief is not something that’s talked about a lot and grief is something that should be talked about a lot,” Evelyn said. “It’s very helpful when you have someone who’s gone through that to help you through it. You’re going to realize a lot more about yourself in your grief, even more about the person that has passed than you [thought] you knew. It’s like grief counseling opens up this whole other side of your brain that you never understood before. It kind of gives you a deeper meaning on life.”

The NEA Baptist Center for Good Grief is completely free to residents of Northeast Arkansas who are mourning the loss of a loved one -- adults, teens and children.

“I think with children specifically, the main goal with grief counseling is to help them understand any big feeling that they may have,” said Anna Paige Umhoefer, a counselor at the center. “We talk a lot about sadness, anger, and even happiness. You have all these different feelings. When you’re young and you’ve lost someone you have all these different feelings and it’s okay to feel that way. I think that’s the main thing, just validating those feelings. It’s okay to feel sad and to express that.”

Expressing those feelings can come in many different forms and it is the team’s mission at the center to help people find the best way for them ... talking through grief with a friend, drawing, writing in a journal, etc.

“Sometimes we just have them draw what their grief looks and feels like and that for them, it helps us teach how to manage strong emotions and how to remember and honor their loved ones,” Anna Paige explained.

Tuga’s Project will help raise money for the Center for Good Grief during the month of May by incorporating local businesses. Customers can add \$1 to their purchases at places like Smoothie King, or shop on a specific night at a store that will donate a percentage of proceeds that evening to Tuga’s Project.

See a list of participating businesses at exploremornea.com/tuga

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around the town, the state, the county, and even the globe (loved when we got to travel to ASUCQ!). He is always on and always seeking to make someone's day. He doesn't pick favorites or treat anyone less than himself. He is humble and the definition of servant leadership, and I am all the better for knowing him!"

One might wonder how Dr. Damphousse shows up at so many A-state events – the Chancellor is often taking selfies with students at everything from football games and black-tie events, to small campus gatherings and track meets. Is he super human? Most likely not. He is, however, super involved because he recognizes the importance of his role.

BY LINDSEY SPENCER

When I sit down across from Dr. Kelly Damphousse to interview him, it is I who am asked questions. The Chancellor is genuine in his curiosity – one question leads to the next and it is easy to understand why he is so well respected in the community, among students, and amidst his colleagues. His interest is authentic, as he tries to figure out who I am and that leads to wondering about something else or connecting me to my own A-state roots. Dr. Damphousse is one of those people who makes you feel welcome, and like he is really listening when you speak.

"One of the things I'm most proud of is finding the time to make sure everyone who knows what they are doing is important," Dr. Damphousse said when asked about managing to show up at so many events, both big and small. He acknowledged it's not really "Kelly the Person" that is so important, but "Kelly the Chancellor."

"It doesn't matter who is in the role but the fact that you show up to things can be important," he explained. "It can inspire people. For me the biggest thing is to let people know that I think what they are doing is important."

The Chancellor has earned the respect of not just the Arkansas State faculty, staff and students, but the entire Northeast Arkansas community.

"My family jokes that Dr. Damphousse must be a twin ... or even a triplet. I don't know how he does it, but where there are students, you can find Dr. D," said Haley Stotts, an A-State alum and now good friend to the Damphousse family. "Not just on campus between 8-5, but

Dr. Damphousse believes everyone and every action is vital, that it's essential to let them know that, and so showing up is simply part of showing that. While it's easy to show up for some things, it's not easy to show up for others. Still, he wants everyone to know they're appreciated, so incorporating life into work is how he effectively uses his time to do his job and still have a personal life. The Chancellor and his wife, Beth, use games, banquets, and even small campus events as their personal entertainment.



So, what else does he do as Chancellor? Though he used to think Presidents and Chancellors “came from Mars” – simply unfamiliar with their roles and not part of a vision he saw for himself – these days Dr. Dampousse describes his job as basically “head cheerleader” for the university.

“My job is to make sure we’re promoting the image of Arkansas State so that people beyond the state and beyond our reach know what’s happening here,” he explained. This helps him and his team recruit faculty, staff, and students to come here. “There’s a huge leadership component to it and that’s something that, you know, you evolve. You learn your leadership skills over time. I didn’t take a leadership class – I probably made a lot of mistakes early on, but the point is, in part leadership is really about not doing everything yourself, or knowing how to do everything, but having people in place and encouraging them to do things. A big part of leadership is encouraging people. The idea of encouragement – the root here – is to put courage into other

people. So, I spend a lot of time, as part of my leadership role making sure the recruiting team is excited about what they’re doing and that they understand the product that we have here and encouraging the faculty to want to do the best they can, both the teaching and research, and motivate the housing staff and just everybody at every level – it has to be every level.”

His leadership and influence at every level are certainly appreciated. We asked Premiere readers to nominate community role models and one participant said Dr. Dampousse is a “great ambassador for our university and our community. Warm and engaging. Respectful of others.”



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About the nomination Dr. Damphousse says it is truly “awesome.”

“It’s obviously a great honor. But it’s kind of awesome in the truest sense of the word,” he shared. “It’s awe-inspiring to think that other people look up to me.”

He also acknowledged the honor is a reminder we are all being watched, even when we don’t realize it. He recalled a teacher who reprimanded him during school and how that moment really helped him shape his path forward, but when he wrote the teacher to thank him, he couldn’t recall him or the instance. This made him realize we all have moments where we are impacting the lives of others even when we don’t realize it. Sometimes people remember us and sometimes they don’t, but when we are reminded that people are watching and we could be helping influence the lives of other people for the better, it could be just what we need to hear.

“When you are recognized like this,” Dr. Damphousse said, “it gives you the boost you need to keep going.”



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May 21
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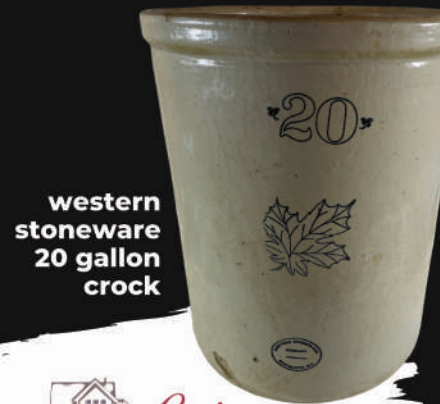
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PART OF A PLAN

BY RICHARD BRUMMETT

When the kids grow up and move out to make it on their own, there is a way to avoid becoming “empty nesters.” Just fill that nest right back up, like Teresa and Herman Fisher did.

“We felt like God was calling us to foster,” Teresa said, “and we prayed about it and eventually acted on it and ... well, it sort of blossomed from there.”

Starting in 2010 the Fishers served as foster parents for about 40 children total and then decided the number of young people needing to be adopted would never shrink if people like them didn't make a move to reduce it. "We realized how big a need there was and decided to adopt. We talked about adopting older children -- sibling groups -- because it seems like all people want is babies. We felt like we wanted to take siblings, to keep them together and give them a chance at life," she said, finding on the Heartfelt website a pair of brothers up for adoption. When they called the Department of Human Services to express their interest in giving the boys a permanent home, they had no idea where they resided at the time.

"They told us they were right here at the Children's Home in Paragould," Teresa recalled. "They said if we wanted to see them, we could meet them at the courthouse the next day because they had to go to court. They were six- and seven-year-old boys and we met them the next day at the courthouse and visited with them two or three times and decided to go ahead and adopt."

The boys had been through a pair of failed adoption attempts already and it took time for them to begin falling in line with a steady family approach to life, but after a while the Fishers -- new and old -- began to mesh. Many of the finer points of life and of growing up had never been shared with the two youngsters because of their uncertain living circumstances and each had been diagnosed with ADHD. But their new parents bought a bigger house, welcomed them in and started building a family unit. It must have felt like a successful venture, because after about two years Herman and Teresa again felt the need to add to the family.

"We thought we would do a sibling group again, and would do boys again because we figured they would get along well with the two we had," Teresa said. "But when we called DHS we learned there were two girls, ages 1 and 3, and they were having problems getting them placed together because they weren't getting along with each other at all. The younger one used signing -- she wouldn't talk. She could, but she wouldn't. So they came to live with us and we adopted them. It was a

long, hard process. We held hands, we prayed; we said we had to do the right thing. Now, they are flourishing."

So there you go. Older parents, as Teresa calls them, with two adult children of their own, adding in four little ones to keep things interesting. But it wasn't "game over" just yet. "Some neighbors were fostering a little boy for almost a year and planned to adopt," Teresa said, "and our boys had made good friends with him. One day one of the boys ran in and said, 'Mom! Mom! You've got to adopt him! They're putting him back in foster care!' And I thought, 'Oh, God, we can't adopt another one,' but I told the boys to have him come down and he stayed about thirty minutes and I knew. I called Marsha Bobo, who is the case worker for our girls, and the next day we were literally moving his stuff in."

So now the happy family plugs along. Their biological kids are 29 and 31; their newly formed clan -- Grace, Reagan, Alex, Logan and Christian -- range in age from 8 to 17. "There are still struggles," Herman said. "It's eye-opening. But they look up to us, and we look up to Him," referring to a deeply religious connection. "What we feel," both suggested, "is in the Bible verse (Matthew 25:40), 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.' We believe in that."

Teresa said. "We're certainly not perfect, but we've learned a lot along the way. Our goal was to never separate family members; that's one reason we wanted older siblings. We have been told the boys probably would not have been adopted and maybe the girls would not have gotten to be together. There's a Matthew West song 'Looking Up.' That song tells it all, says it all.

"They need a good environment ... and love. They come to you not knowing how to hold a fork and spoon and then it's amazing to see how much they grow. Fostering and adopting is a long journey but comes with many blessings, and the blessings come in all forms. It's hard fostering, but well worth it. We just think adoption is what God had planned for us."



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J-RAY

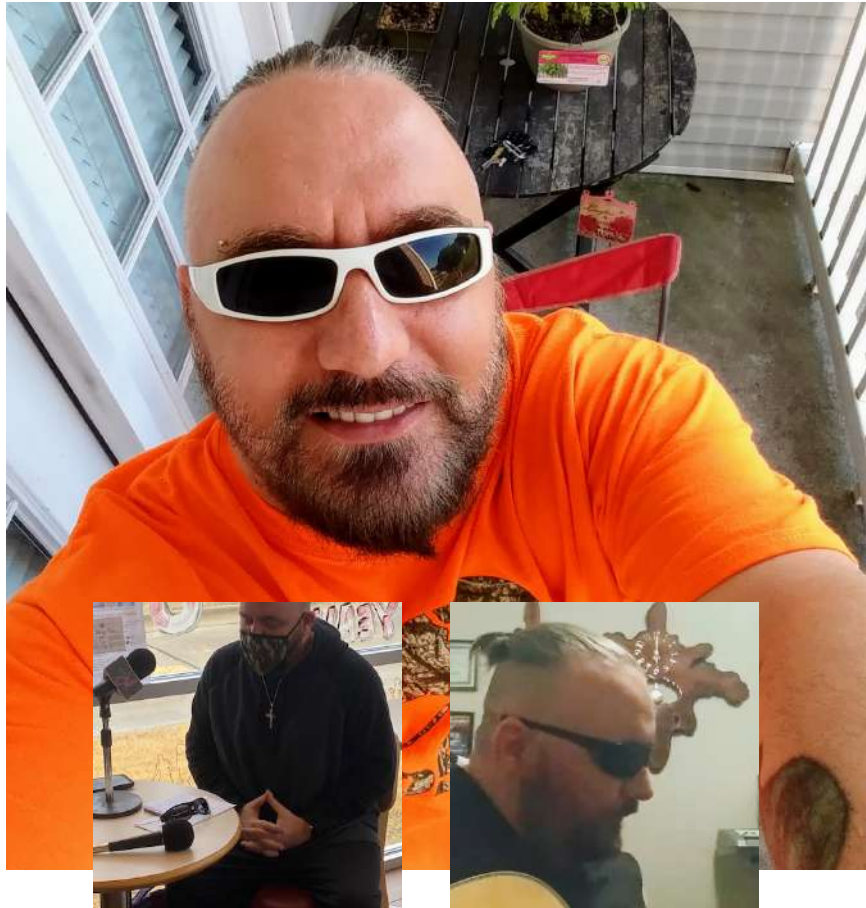
BY CAITLIN LAFARLETTE

Jonesboro performer Jody Ray Garner, known onstage as J-Ray, took the winner's title at the very first United Way NEA Sings competition in March, all while giving back to a great cause.

United Way of Northeast Arkansas created the competition as a way for artists from Craighead, Greene, Clay, Cross, Poinsett, Lawrence, Jackson, Randolph and South Mississippi counties to be recognized during the Covid-19 pandemic. Bands and musicians went head to head beginning February 4.

Garner has been performing since he was 15 years old with rock band R.S.R. Along with Shannon Russell and Jeremy Brewer, Garner spent his high school years playing house parties, wedding receptions and any other gig that paid. "After graduating we became the house band for the Sigma Phi Epsilon fraternity house, where we performed every weekend at their outrageous college parties," he added.

After that band broke up, Garner spent the following years working with musicians in Boston, performing in Jonesboro, and even taking on gigs at The New Daisy Theatre in Memphis. He was part of three different bands and even spent time working on rap music in Memphis, but eventually found his way back home.

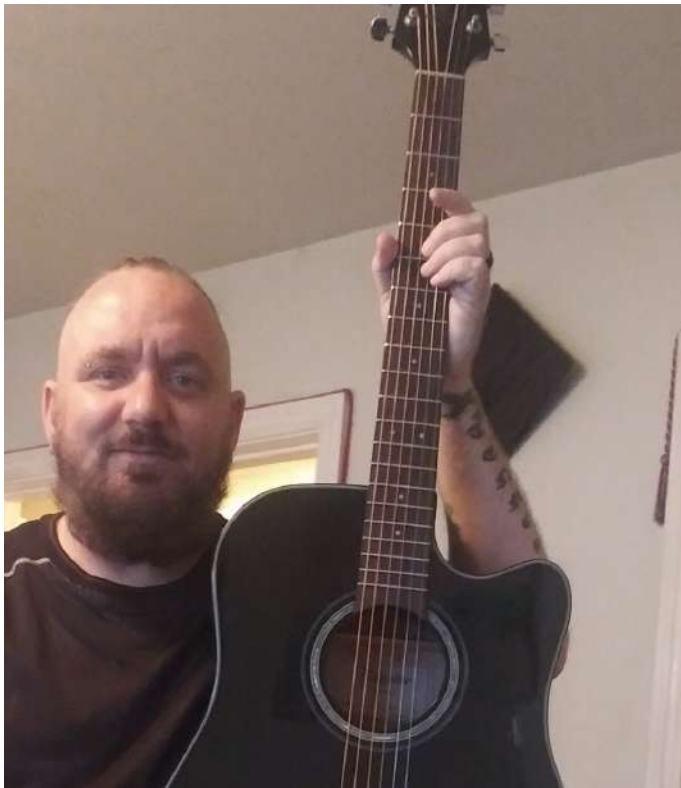


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“I then moved back to Jonesboro and got back to my music roots of singing and playing the guitar,” he said.

Garner heard about the NEA Sings competition from a commercial just a few days before the entry deadline.

“I was recording music videos already on my Facebook music page, ‘J-Ray Music.’ So I quickly sent in a video that I had recorded the previous week,” he said.

Forty-six competitors kicked off the competition before that number was narrowed down to 32. Artists then battled in a bracket style tournament by sending in music videos for fans to vote on. Each vote cost one dollar and proceeds went directly to United Way. As the event carried on through February and into March, the number of competitors eventually came down to two, Garner and T.J. Smith. Garner said due to an increase in sponsors, artist Karlie Thompson was brought back into the competition for a redemption round. On March 16, Thompson took home second place and Smith went home with third.

Garner won \$1,000, which he used to buy music equipment, a produced musical performance video by Anthem Pictures, a recording session of four songs at BackBeat Music and a photoshoot with James Bickham Visuals. To top it all off, he will perform center stage at the next Downtown Jonesboro BBQ Fest, the Foundation of Arts First Fridays in December and the next Live United Way event.

“I felt great when I won,” Garner said. “It was an honor to work with everyone, knowing we raised \$51,590 to help our community.”



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Greene County Foster Parents Association

NEW VISIT CENTER

BY RICHARD BRUMMETT

As President of the Greene County Foster Parents Association, Lindsay Roberts is in tune with the many needs both children and parents in our area have. And as May rolls in -- officially recognized as National Foster Care Month -- there is some really good news for all involved in the process.

A brand new Visit Center has been established for foster children and their biological families to make use of, and Roberts said it was not only much-needed but is also much-appreciated. "It's for biological parents, where it can be a little more private," she explained, "and it's right here in Paragould. There are six

rooms for different ages and different family sizes."

Roberts said the arrival of the Covid-19 pandemic put a serious crunch on acceptable and available places for parents to have supervised meetings with their children who have been placed in the foster system, so having a building of its own is quite a boost to the local Foster Parents Association. "Because of Covid we couldn't go to McDonald's or to Burger King or to parks or the library," she said. "They were all shut down, and it's hard to find 'family friendly' places. This is such a blessing to us."

The association serves only as a site host, performing duties like taking out the trash and frequent clean-up chores. The parent-child visits are scheduled and supervised by DCFS personnel. The rooms are furnished to meet the specific needs of the children, who are "supposed to have so many activities per week. There are areas for Special Needs, and sensory; and there are larger ones for ages 4-and-up, 5-and-up with different activities for the kids: crafts, activities and toys. Community sponsors helped set it all up and helped out with the rooms. We are really fortunate," Roberts said.

The association held an open house for

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August 13 - Spencer Herren Band

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Come see what Downtown After Hours is all about!



DCFS staff, foster parents, and room sponsors who purchased crafts, snacks, board games, and other things needed to supply the facility. It opened on March 22, a quick jump from start to finish. “Actually, at the end of January is when we were discussing it pretty seriously, and it started coming together really fast,” Roberts said. “John 3:16 sent us a crew who helped with the painting and things like that and in six weeks’ time we were good to go.”

With the help and support of local churches, businesses, individuals and families the Visit Center came to be. The GCFPA helps meet the needs of children in foster care in Greene County. It provides support to the local DCFS office, foster parents, biological parents of children in care and protective services cases. Currently in Greene County there are more than 100 children in foster care with just slightly more than 20 foster homes. That means some children placed in foster care may have to be placed in another county, possibly hours away from family and friends. That’s what makes the Visit Center so important.

“Having our own place to coordinate family visits, right here at home ... well, it’s just such a blessing,” Roberts said.

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Suzie Woodring with daughters Sarah and Lora



Barbara Harper with daughters Klaire, Jessie and Cassidy



MOM SQUAD

#goldtogether

BY CAITLIN LAFARLETTE

A group of Northeast Arkansas women have banded together to form the Mom Squad, a team dedicated to raising awareness for childhood cancer with the American Cancer Society's #GoldTogether campaign this September at Craighead Forest Park.

Jennifer Clay, ACS community development manager, said #GoldTogether, while part of Relay for Life, has typically not been held in this area.

"We are doing a standalone #GoldTogether event in Northeast Arkansas because there have been so many children affected by childhood cancer," Clay said.

Currently, 3-5 mothers make up the Mom Squad team for the campaign, with more expected to join before the September 11 event kicks off.

"I hope to get more involved now that we have found a rhythm in our treatment at the clinic," said Suzie Woodring, whose 5-year-old daughter is participating in cancer treatments.

When her daughter was just four years old in June last year, she was diagnosed with leukemia. Woodring described Lora as a happy, funny and sassy girl "that amazes me every day with her strength."

"As if 2020 wasn't bad enough, we couldn't even wrap our minds around what our leukemia diagnosis really meant at first," Woodring added. "We just did what we had to do to make sure she was okay."

Woodring explained that for that first month, she and her family were on auto-pilot and had to trust the process and the team at St. Jude.

"I will say that the only positive of the pandemic was that the isolation helped me to focus on Lora's treatment and her needs," Woodring said. "It was awful to be away from our family for two months, staying at Ronald McDonald House in Memphis, but I'm thankful for family and friends that helped as much as they could in our absence."

Now, almost a year later, Woodring said Lora is chugging along with her treatment. Woodring initially wanted to get involved with Relay for Life before the pandemic, but now with the #GoldTogether event will still raise money for childhood cancer research and cure efforts.

"I've seen the slogan at St. Jude that says 'Not Rare, Not Fair,' which hits so hard if you think about it," Woodring said. "Cancer is not one in a million. Latest statistics show 1 in 5 children will be diagnosed with cancer, and anyone can be affected by cancer."

Woodring, who lost her husband's parents to cancer, added she is passionate about cancer research and wants to bring more awareness and get others involved to work to end such an awful disease.

Barbara Harper's 6-year-old daughter, Cassidy, was diagnosed with B-Cell Acute Lymphoblastic Leukemia in September 2018, and will finish treatment near the end of May.

"This journey has been long, terrifying, exhausting, but most of all rewarding," Harper said. "I have watched my family grow closer together through all of the scary parts."

Harper also has a 13-year-old and 9-year-old, and said she has watched her girls mature into amazing human beings since Cassidy's diagnosis.

"They love their baby sister and do whatever it takes to keep her happy and safe," she said. "We have missed countless family celebrations, school events, social gatherings because of Cassidy not being able to have contact with others. My big girls never bat an eye."

Harper added there have been times they were not sure they would be able to bring Cassidy home, and the family has learned to treasure every single second, "even the bad ones."

When it comes to #GoldTogether, Harper wants others to know how little childhood cancer gets for funding: just four percent of national funding, for every type of childhood cancer combined.

"To be honest, it is just not enough," she said. "The #GoldTogether campaign focuses on fundraising strictly for the kiddos. These kids do not have a voice. It is up to us to show our support and bring awareness when they cannot. We all have to come together for these sweet babies and make sure that they know we are fighting for them."

To sign up for #GoldTogether, visit www.GoldTogetherAR.com.



SAVE THE DATE

#GoldTogether will be held September 11, 2021, at Craighead Forest Park in Jonesboro, Arkansas

Visit GoldTogetherAR.com to create your #GoldTogether Team of fellow employees, friends, and family members. Download the FUNdraising App on your smart device to accept donations, connect to Facebook, and track your progress and fundraising goal!



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Q: Adam, I keep getting phone calls stating I may qualify to get \$148 back toward my Medicare premium. Is that true?

A: I have been getting this question a lot and there is a lot to talk about. First of all, if you are getting calls from someone stating they are Medicare, it's not, hang up.

Second, here in NE Arkansas, some Medicare Advantage plans do have what's called a Medicare Part B give back but it is not \$148. The only way to get \$148 back toward your Part B is to qualify for Medicaid.

Be aware, the ads and phone calls are designed to pique your interest, compel you to call the number, or speak with someone that will try to sell you a different plan than you're on now. It may or may not be in your best interest so be careful. There are many different Medicare Advantage plans available with different benefit packages and most importantly...-networks. Not all plans fit everyone so it's important to have a good advisor that has your best interests at heart and know the local landscape of the plans available in your area.

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Black River's First CTC Class

Aziza Tahki, Maynard High School, Pocahontas Campus

My name is Aziza Tahki and in the mornings I go to Maynard High School and in the afternoons I go to BRTC for the Phlebotomy program. I love this program because I don't just do book work all day. In the mornings I can do my class work and in the afternoons I come here and I am able to do a lot of hands on work. My favorite thing about this program is that I can gain many different credentials, not only my CNA and Phlebotomy certificates, but I have also earned a Career Readiness Credential. The Allied Health program at BRTC has also helped me get a foot in the door in the medical field, and it will also help me decide what I want to do with my future.



Morgan Shepherd, Pocahontas High School, Pocahontas Campus

Ever since I was 11 years old I have wanted to work in the healthcare field when I grow up. I love being around people and helping them. During my 10th grade year, my high school counselor recommended that I enroll in CNA Courses at BRTC while still in high school. I did not even know this was something that was available to me as a high school student. I wasn't too sure I was up for taking college classes while still in high school, either. Would I be able to do well in college classes? I wouldn't know anyone! Honestly, I was scared, but I told myself I could do it and I applied for this amazing opportunity and was accepted. As classes started I met lots of new people from other high schools and we formed some great relationships. I also developed a strong bond with my instructor, Ms. Holli. In this program we were sent out to clinicals where we worked alongside a CNA in a healthcare facility. I have now been working as a CNA for a little over a year at the same facility BRTC sent me to. I've worked through the COVID pandemic earning \$44 an hour, an opportunity that I would not have had if it were not for BRTC! Throughout this journey I have learned so much about myself, others, and the healthcare field. The job can be demanding and emotional but it is so worth it! I highly encourage others to enroll in this program and get a head start on your career!



Dillon Willcockson, Paragould HS, Paragould campus

Hi, I'm Dillon! When I was 15 years old I started looking into becoming an electrician, and ever since then it's been a dream of mine. Me and my mom talked about it for a couple of years but were unsure of how I could acquire learning experience at such a young age. Until one of my mom's friends mentioned BRTC and how they had an electrical program. I enrolled in the BRTC Career & Technical Center for my senior year of high school not knowing what to expect. Within my first semester of the class I learned so many valuable life skills. This program doesn't just teach you how to become an electrician, my instructor has been very helpful in many ways. He has taught us all things to help us achieve our life goals as well. In just this one year, I have learned the basics of electricity, how to wire up a receptacle, the dangers of electricity, and how to safely work with electricity. We even learned how to bend conduit. We've also had guest speakers to tell us about the opportunities available for employment here in our local area. This isn't a class you can go to and goof off in. If you actually see yourself becoming an electrician or seeking a job in the electrical field this will be perfect for you. You can learn so much at an early age and get a head start on a career in the electrical field. Oh yeah, and did I mention that it's free for high school students? Don't miss out on this amazing opportunity.



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Ruth Lamborn, Maynard High School, Pocahontas Campus

I joined the CTC program because it was a great opportunity to get a head start on my career as a high school student. This program has helped me become a great welder. I love welding! I will be a certified welder by the time I graduate high school thanks to BRTC, and the experience this program has provided me is going to help me get a great job. Over the 2 years I have been in this program I have worked on several welding projects for myself and for others. Also, I am the only girl in this program. I recommend anyone to join this program if you enjoy welding, males and females!



Chase Bippus, former welding student, now assistant to BRTC's welding instructor

I graduated from BRTC's welding program as a senior in high school. Now I'm working here at BRTC as an assistant welding instructor! I'm glad I got to be in this program because I was already certified in welding when I graduated high school. We have high school students coming through here making \$19-20 an hour starting out. There are a lot of opportunities that come out here because you can do so many things with a certification in welding.



Career & Technical Students
Pocahontas Campus
2020-2021



Career & Technical Students
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HAPPENINGS

Erik Wright Awarded Grant



The Wyoming State Historical Society (WSHS) announced that Erik Wright of Paragould is the recipient of the 2021 Lola Homsher Research Grant. Wright was awarded \$1,000 to help fund and complete research efforts for his book on the 1868 Bear River City Riot, Irish labor violence, and Hell-on-Wheels towns along the Transcontinental Railroad in Wyoming.

Realtor Awards



The Paragould Board of Realtors celebrated sales level winners at its annual awards meeting in April.

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There were a few months there where many NEA residents were in [mild] distress – the local Chick-fil-A closed for some time in order to revamp its drive-thru and kitchen. The makeover includes a two-lane drive-thru, a larger drive-thru cockpit, and more.

Now that it's back open, Jonesboro's favorite chicken has seen support in droves: literally.

“The support from our community has been amazing,” said Taylor Mitchell, co-owner of the local business – though Chick-fil-A is a franchise, ownership of the Turtle Creek location lies with local residents Taylor and her husband, Tyler. “Especially our opening weekend – it was absolutely incredible. Our whole team felt so giddy!”

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This table was built by artisans from A Better Way Ministries. The materials used were salvaged from unwanted and abandoned homes. The hands that built it belong to a person who also once felt unwanted and abandoned. Love, compassion, and grace are powerful tools. www.abetterwayministries.com

The changes to the cockpit and kitchen are improvements designed around efficiency, but the changes also require some getting used to. "It's a brand new operation in the kitchen. We added on 500 square feet to the back. It's a brand new layout that we are still trying to get used to and iron out a few kinks on but as long as the community continues to have patience with us, we're promising we're going to make it better than ever."

The location also has a few updates inside: A tiled wall is the first thing you see upon entry, but the real jewel is the community table in the center. This table was forged with love – handmade by a member of Better Way Ministries using discarded materials. Above the table, a beautiful chandelier is composed of re-used coke bottles. What was once thrown away, has been salvaged and repurposed.

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DAY SPA

The Basic Bee Spa

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ESTHETICIAN

Melissa Alonso, The Basic
Bee Spa

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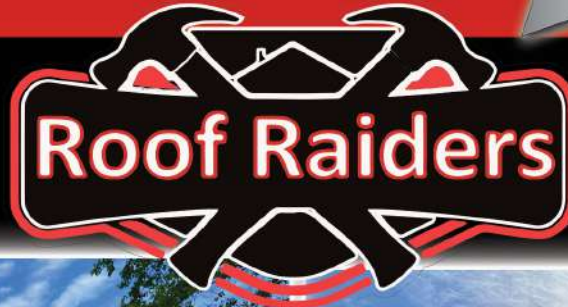
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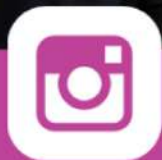


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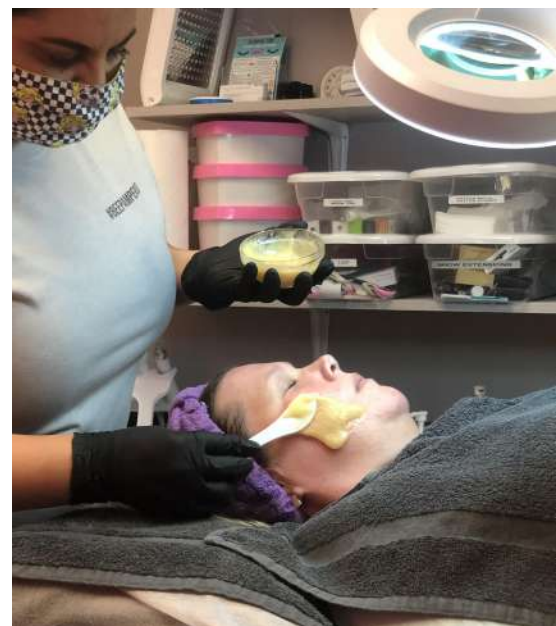
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Dr. Kristin Sullivan,
AR Pets

arpetshospital.com



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VETERINARY CLINIC

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Hollywood Feed

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Amy Reeves
Awarded Best Photographer

218 Union Suite A
Downtown Jonesboro

Restaurant WINNERS

APPETIZERS

JTown's Grill



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BAKERY/SWEET TREATS

Abby Cakes

BBQ

Que49 Smokehouse

BEST FOR BUSINESS LUNCH

Houlihan's

BUFFET STYLE

Chef's In

BEST FOR DATE NIGHT

501 Steakhouse

BREAKFAST

Fat City Steak & Grill House

3721 E Johnson Ave.



Page 70

BURGER

Five Guys

BURRITO

BA Burrito

BRUNCH

The Parsonage

CATFISH

Murdock's Catfish

CHICKEN

Chick-fil-A

1800 Red Wolf Blvd.





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CHINESE

Oriental Express

CHEF

John Meyers,
The Parsonage

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COFFEE

Shadrachs

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DESSERT

Southern Confections

DONUTS

Shipley's

ETHNIC

Curry Leaf

FAMILY FRIENDLY

Lost Pizza

FAST FOOD

Chick-fil-A

1800 Red Wolf Blvd.



Page 89

FOOD TRUCK

Wrap City

FRIES

Five Guys

FROZEN TREATS

Andy's

HAPPY HOUR

Houlihan's

JAPANESE

A1 Sushi & Hibachi

Late Night Bite

IHOP

MEXICAN

Papitos

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Pella Café

PIZZA

Eleanor's



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”

-Ashley Lauren Nicole



PATIO

JTown's Grill



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RIBS

Demo's Barbecue & Smokehouse

SALAD

Newk's

SANDWICH

Munchy's

SEAFOOD

The Madden Crab

SOUP

Chicken Salad Chick



Page 71

SUSHI

Sumo Japanese Steakhouse

TACOS

Tacos 4 Life

TAKE OUT

Honey Baked Ham

STEAK

501 Steakhouse

STEAKHOUSE

Fat City Steak & Grill House

3721 E Johnson Ave.



Page 70

VEGETARIAN

Stem and Spoon Café



JTown's GRILL

We serve breakfast
Thursday through
Sunday!

Thank you for voting us
BEST APPETIZERS & BEST PATIO!

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Shopping WINNERS

MEN'S CLOTHING

Orville's Men's Store



Page 94

WOMEN'S CLOTHING

Adara Boutique

240 Union Street



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TUXEDO

Men N' Black Tuxedos

JEWELRY STORE

Sissy's Log Cabin



Page 95

BRIDAL STORE

Jessica's Bridal & Formal



Page 94

FORMAL WEAR

Jessica's Bridal & Formal



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UNIFORM CLOTHING

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Page 95

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PARAGOULD WINNER

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EYEWARE

Elite Eyecare and Optical



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SHOE STORE

Gearhead Outfitters

SPORTING GOODS

DNW Outdoors

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HARDWARE/TOOL STORE

Gazaway Ace



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LIQUOR STORE

Mr. T's Riverside

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FOR YOU, ONLY OUR BEST



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2021 Kids' Events

May

May

Art Display - Peggy Carroll

When: Month of May

Where: Greene County Library

Info:

facebook.com/GreeneCountyLibrary/

May 10

Take and Make: Suncatchers


When: May 10 (While Supplies Last)

Where: Craighead County Jonesboro
Public Library

Info: @ccjpl on Facebook
or libraryinjonesboro.org

Stay Tuned

As organizations continue to plan with caution, please check Premiere's Facebook page or exploremornea.com for updates as we do our best to keep you informed!



Adam and Allyson Wilson found a shopping trip with Mom much to their liking. Adam, 2, and Allyson, almost 3, belong to Christian Duke and Joshua Wilson of Paragould.

ENGAGEMENTS



Ashley & Zach

Ashley Stanfill and Zach Hobbs have announced their plans to be married on April 24, 2022, at The Silos.

Ashley is the daughter of Teena Batten and Dr. James and Lesa Thrasher and Zach is the son of Tammy and Mike Retherford and Ronald and Kim Hobbs.

Photo by Rasha's Photography. Ring by Richardson's Jewelry. Hair and makeup by Ashley Newman.

BIRTHS



Blakely Caroline Herget

Proud parents Nate and Kersten Herget of Paragould welcomed newborn Blakely Caroline Herget into the world on March 18, 2021.

Blakely was delivered at St. Bernards Hospital, weighed 7 pounds, 4 ounces and measured 21 inches long.

Blakely is also welcomed by big brother Barrett Herget.

MATERNAL
MENTAL
HEALTH WEEK
MAY 3-7, 2021

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AND ANXIETY
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PREGNANT AND
POSTPARTUM
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Next Month

Pets



Who doesn't want to talk about pets?! We'll highlight some furry friends and the people who are helping them find better homes.

Dads



Dads are worth celebrating – especially the ones we'll feature in the next issue.

Special Section: NEA Senior



Our quarterly special section features good news and resources for seniors in our community.

Spring has sprung and Summer is soon...
We can Help You Get Ready



- Specializing in Hormone Optimization for men and women
- Testosterone replacement therapy injections for men
 - BioTe pellet therapy
- Aesthetic procedures: Botox, Xeomin, lip fillers and chemical peels
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