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From The

# PUBLISHER... DINA MASON

“

**M**y Granny was a lady of few words. She would get aggravated at my mom for reading the horoscopes in the paper every morning. You knew she was aggravated even though she didn't say anything.

I remember once my mom said as she was handing the paper back to Granny, "God knows I read the horoscopes every morning; if He needs to tell me something, He knows where to leave His message." My Granny of few words said, "Well, maybe. God knows you're not reading your Bible."

Like I said, Granny didn't say much. As a matter of fact, she had a way of asking you questions that led you to tell yourself exactly what she wanted you to hear. When she moved from Mountainburg to Ft. Smith, other cousins and I were concerned when she invited strangers into her home. She said she learned something from every conversation, especially those with people who held totally different beliefs than hers. She said, "How can I convert them if I don't know what their current

beliefs are?" And more than once she would tell me you cannot grow if you surround yourself with only people who think like you: "Too many yes men will only make the wrong road crowded."

She was a lady of few but VERY prolific words.

Premiere Magazine will every now and then have an article the mainstream is against, or may not agree with. As a matter of fact, we may not agree either, but we take the opportunity to be open minded to learning something about what others think or believe.

When someone expresses they will no longer read or follow Premiere because they disagree with a subject we published, I think how sad it is that they will miss the "Good News and the People Making it Happen" in their community over something they may have needed to know, just so they can ask the right questions and maybe lead someone down the road they believe to be the "right road."

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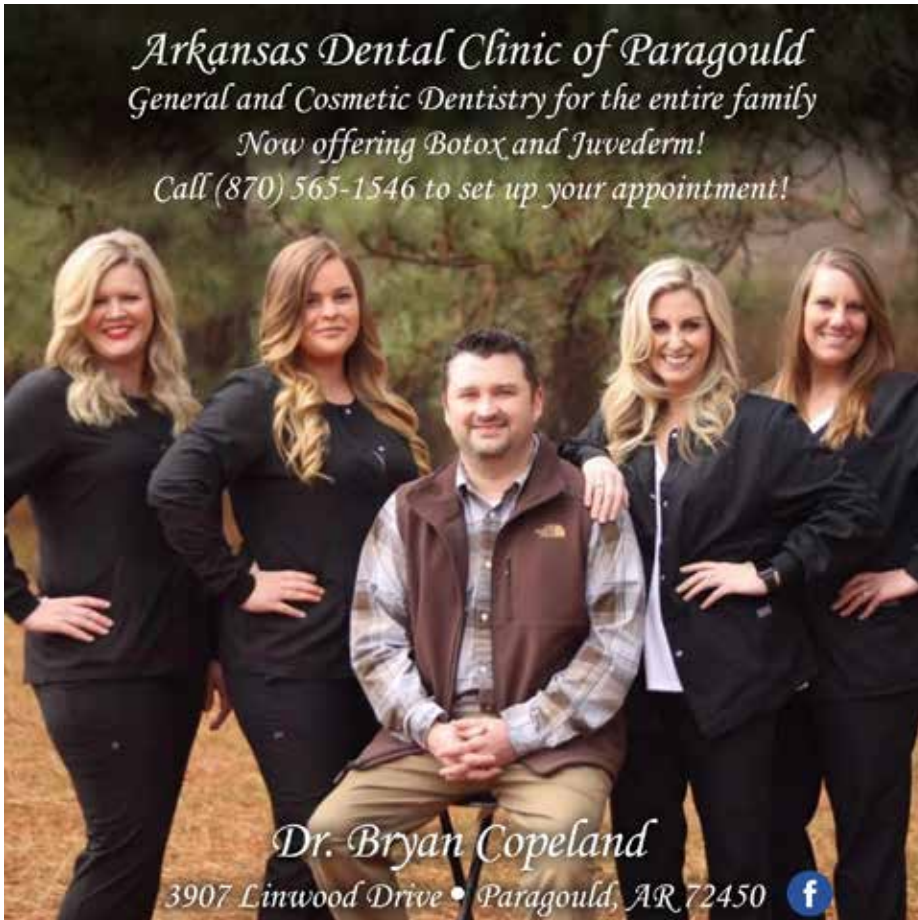


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# Have It All With a Taste of the Ridge

Why face the difficult choice of where to have dinner when, at least for one special night in downtown Paragould, you can truly have it all?

BY LINDSEY MILLS



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Main Street Paragould hosted the 4th Annual Taste of the Ridge on September 30th at The Crossing. The event offered attendees the opportunity to wine and dine, with a taste of appetizers, salads, main courses, sides, and desserts from restaurants on “the ridge.”

Live music by Beabop Beatniks set the mood while voting allowed attendees to decide on the best tastes of the ridge. CHOW at 118 took home the award for Best Appetizer with its inventive pimento cheese fritters served with its famous pepper jelly; Van’s at Fox Hills won Best Side Item with a yummy potato salad; The Main Dish received the most votes for Best Entrée with pork loin over wild rice; and Something Sweet won both Best Dessert and Best Presentation awards for its bubbly setup and array of delectable sugary treats.

Main Street Paragould also gave Taste Appreciation awards to Dodge’s Chicken Store, PostNet, and the PHS Pride students who helped make the event a success.

Keep a lookout for next year’s date because this is one night you don’t have to decide what to have for dinner!



Visit [downtownparagould.com](http://downtownparagould.com) to keep up with future Main Street Paragould events.



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# IN BETWEEN

BY LINDSEY MILLS



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The holidays are coming and life may feel just like every cliché thing your parents and teachers told you growing up: time flies.

One minute you think it takes forever for Christmas to roll around and the next you're thinking, "It's almost Thanksgiving?! This year just started!"

Many of us are past the days of wanting the holidays to hurry up and get here. We're still excited for them, but we'd rather they take their time, perhaps sit down and kick off their shoes by the fire rather than dart in, grab whatever's in the fridge and ask for some money before leaving again like a college student home from school.

We'd rather sip cocoa and spend time with loved ones for ages than skip straight to the present opening.

What changed? What happened in all those in-between years that made us want to savor the meal rather than start with dessert?

Time sped up, but when?

If I had anything at all figured out I'd call this the "Finish Line" column, but it's called "In-between" because I think it's important to wonder aloud (or in print) our thoughts, questions, and concerns even when the answers seem to elude us.

If you ever wonder at what point you grew up and life changed, well, I don't have an answer for you. But I will point out that the faster time is moving, the more time we've lived. That's a blessing worth counting, and being thankful for.

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# College Tips by a College Student

By: Sara Brown



We're already over halfway done with the semester! Our classes for next time are scheduled (hopefully), we only have a few exams left, and the pressure is on to end this semester with a bang. That's all fine and good, but the fact is, we've done a lot of work this semester; we're tired. Something a lot of students seem to struggle with is figuring out how to avoid being affected by the mid-semester burnout. By the middle of the semester, we're really just ready for things to be done for a while but, whether we want it to or not, the semester goes on, so what can we do about it?

Tip number one: Find ways to spice up your studying. By now you've probably figured out the way you want to study for all of your classes to get the best grades possible, but doing the same thing for every exam in every class can get tiresome quickly. Try something new, like studying with a partner, turning your studying into a game, or starting a study group. Who knows, you may find your exam scores going up, and you may make some new friends along the way!

Tip two: Change up your routine. Most of us have a routine we go through on class days, and it starts to feel stiff around this time in the semester. Change things up; do something different. Wake up a little earlier one day and treat yourself to some real

breakfast. Take a mid-afternoon walk around campus to appreciate the cool weather and changing leaves. Go have dinner with your friends somewhere you don't usually go. Breaking up that everyday routine will break up some of the monotony.

Tip three: Find something new you enjoy. Discover a new band. Pick a new show on Netflix to binge. Find a new place you enjoy visiting, be it local or out of town. Something new that you can incorporate into your day-to-day life is another great way to break up the monotony.

Tip four: Take a break. Sometimes the best thing you can do when burnout is hitting you hard is to just walk away for a minute (or longer) and recharge. Go listen to your favorite song. Play a round of your favorite video game. Go out for a drive. Plan and take a weekend trip with your friends. Anything you can do to take your mind off school, even just for a few minutes, can help you to take a step back, regroup, and recharge.

Finally, tip five: Don't stress. Most students struggle some during this part of the semester. You aren't alone. Make sure to take care of yourself and do whatever works best for you to stay organized. Mid-semester burnout is a pain, but it can be overcome. You got this!

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## Music and BBQ: Good for the Soul

As September drew to a close Downtown Jonesboro held its 11th Annual BBQ Festival. Pulled pork sandwiches, mouth-watering brisket, and BBQ nachos fed the crowds that strolled Main Street and gathered around the Ritter Communications Stage.



As the sun sank, spirits lifted to the tunes of Blind Melon on Friday night and the sweet sounds of Morris Day and The Time on Saturday afternoon.

Winners of the KCBS Sanctioned BBQ Contest included: Fire Dancer BBQ for chicken, Higginbotham Family Dental for pork ribs, Smilin' Dragon BBQ for pork, and Rooters-N-Tooters for brisket. Cowboy Q racked up the most points in all categories to win the overall contest with Ridge Outlaws BBQ close behind.





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# JOHNNY CASH HERITAGE FESTIVAL

The third annual Johnny Cash Heritage Festival was hosted October 17-19 in the cotton field adjacent to the famous musician's boyhood home in Dyess. Cash's daughter, Rosanne Cash, hosted and performed along with fellow acclaimed musician Marty Stuart.

The festival, themed "Legacy, Love and Music," also featured local musician Cory Jackson and welcomed guests from all over to celebrate nearly a decade of restoration work by Arkansas State University, funded through the previous concert proceeds. This work earned the location a spot on the National Register of Historic Places in 2018.



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## A Glimpse Into the Past



Guests of Powhatan Historic State Park's annual Ghost Walk event took a stroll into the past of Lawrence County. The event held in October plays on the Halloween theme and while there's enough fright to create a spooky atmosphere, the tales told by costumed storytellers are also a glimpse into history.

"Every story is based on true events that happened in Lawrence County. They are all taken from the historic records at the Northeast Arkansas Regional Archives that were previously kept in the courthouse. Some are dramatized or exaggerated, while with others the historical record is bone chilling enough," said Park Interpreter Mick Haven.

Visitors entered five historic buildings lit by candlelight to hear three ghostly stories in each. The fall tradition takes place each year, so keep an eye on [ArkansasStateParks.com](http://ArkansasStateParks.com) for next year's information or check out the October calendar in 2020 to make plans to visit the unique event.



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# 2019 Cattle Baron's Ball

BY LINDSEY MILLS

“Save lives, celebrate life, and lead the fight for a world without cancer.” The mission for the American Cancer Society is a simple one. On October 5, 2019, the annual Cattle Baron's Ball represented each of those goals.

Event chair, Leslie Ingram Conner, was humbled when she was approached to coordinate the event. “It has always been a joy to help others, but to put on our boots and ‘Stomp Out Cancer’ with each committee member and community partner in a way that is tangible and so incredibly meaningful is nothing short of a blessing,” said Conner. “I am forever grateful to lead the charge.”

The event held at Gamble's Shop Local Park stands as the Northeast Arkansas American Cancer Society's signature gala event and was packed

with dancing, entertainment, dining, auctions, and more. Honorary guest Dwight Tosh spoke to attendees in a speech that both broke hearts and was a great reminder of hope.

Attendees celebrated life and rallied their support for the fight against cancer in an event that raised money through ticket sales, a silent auction, and event specific donations including the opportunity for attendees to purchase a “Mason Jar of Hope” in honor or memory of loved ones affected by cancer.

Proceeds from the event also helped “Fund the Mission,” a special initiative to raise money for an Arkansas Transportation Grant. The grant will allow ACS to provide transportation to patients across the state of Arkansas who are unable to get to treatment or doctor appointments on their own.



# Old Memories New Bedtimes

BY RICHARD BRUMMETT

Six classes of former Paragould High School students gathered for a reunion in October, just as they have done for the past several years.

Joe Wessell, one of the reunion organizers, said the PHS classes from 1957-62 have been combining for one big assembly instead of hosting several smaller ones since 1999. "It just gradually built up to six classes," he said. "It started with three -- one class behind ours, 1958, and one above us, 1960 -- and just built up to six."

This year the alumni gathered at the Paragould Community Center for a Friday night informal meet and greet where attendees checked in, got their reunion books and had class photos taken. On Saturday, a prayer breakfast was held at the Community Center and at 12:30 all who were interested went to Walcott for a meal. Saturday evening was the time for sit-down dinner, music and more time for visiting "until everyone was ready to go home. We used to all want to go home about midnight; now it's about eight," Wessell said.

Judging by the laughter from all corners of the room, the old Bulldogs and their guests had a great time trading stories and rehashing the past.



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# PET OF THE MONTH

By Carla Lee Wilson

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This is Sammy, named after a good friend who passed away. Sammy is definitely a one-of-a-kind good boy. He answers to his name when called with appropriate inflection. He speaks in syllables as if he is carrying on a conversation. If I'm sitting down he's either in my lap or curled at my feet. He is my little buddy!



I acquired Sam Sam after finding his momma, who was pregnant and ready to give birth, homeless on a very cold snowy night in January 2015. I knew right away Sammy was special and mine. The momma ended up running off when her four kittens were about 10 weeks old. Sammy's other three siblings were adopted by friends/family. Sammy has been with me ever since. He loves sleeping in the sun, blankets, my lap and my shoulder. He is very playful and will chase anything from his cat toys, a ball of paper, a fly or anything. I have a daughter who has cerebral palsy and he loves to cuddle on her blanket with her. He fathered one litter of kittens, and he is such a wonderful kitty daddy! There were only two kittens, but Sam Sam took care of the babies as well as the momma. He is just so, so special!



  
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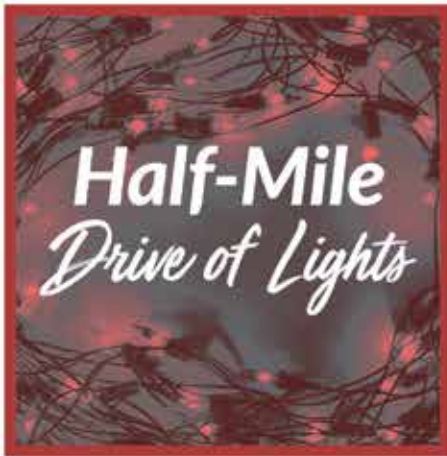
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In recent weeks I've been dealing in one way or another with class reunions, photographing others and their classmates as they gathered to reminisce about the good old days of high school while helping plan my own 50-year celebration at the same time. I didn't mean to help with the planning of mine but I stayed too long after a class dinner one night, talking to an old basketball teammate, and wound up getting put on a committee. Now I'm in charge of something, but I don't remember what it is. The lesson there is: Eat your food, shut up and go home.

Attending these things I have come to realize that conversation among friends changes as the years go by. When you haven't seen each other for a while, catching up is all-important. At a 10-year reunion many people still possess active brain cells and are good at recounting the funny things that happened just a few years ago. They remember who dated whom and what all the popular songs and hangouts were; at the 20th, it's time to observe and comment on the ones who still look young and fit and in shape, reminding us why we never liked them in the first place as we discover one can suck in the stomach but there's no way to suck in big thighs and large behinds; and from the 30th on, the talk generally centers on how many surgeries one has had and who performed them, what ailments they're currently experiencing and what type of blood pressure medication they're on.

While I was at a recent event, walking around with my camera around my neck, I found myself listening to a group of others go into detail about the various maladies peppering their daily lives and when one man looked at me and said, "You're probably too young to have much wrong with you," I made the mistake of mentioning

a slight discomfort I had been experiencing recently when trying to swallow. Though no one in the conversation circle was a medical professional, they all had ideas as to what was wrong with me and one woman emphatically stated, "Sounds like GERD."

"Who's Gerd?" I asked.

"Oh, dear boy. GERD's not a who," she said, "it's a thing you get. It sounds exactly like what you have."

"No, I'm pretty sure Gerd was my great-grandmother's cousin," I said. "I think they called her Aint Gerd and she was married to a guy named Cractus, and they twin daughters ... Nawzene and Mawzene ... and they raised peanuts down at Goobertown."

"Huh-uh," the lady said. "You've got GERD, you can count on it."

But I don't want GERD. I'm getting ready for my 50-year class reunion and I can't go in with something as simplistic as GERD. I know people in my class who have had heart

bypass surgeries and cancer treatments and kidney replacements and surgically repaired body parts; I can't walk into a conversation with people like that and toss out GERD as my malady of choice. I want something that sounds serious, like *swallowus minimus* or *extreme esophageal boo-boo*. Not GERD.

So I'm not taking Gerd to the reunion or to prom or to Homecoming. I've got plenty of real ailments to ante up with. Each time I try to stand, my body sounds like a large animal stepping on dried branches out in the woods. There's more snapping and crackling going on than when you eat your morning cereal, and half the time something that worked fine yesterday doesn't work at all today and I have no explanation. I just know it's more serious-sounding than GERD, whatever it is.

I suppose I should be thankful I don't have any serious issues -- at least not right now -- but I haven't faced tomorrow yet. There's always hope.

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An advertisement for Warehouse Flooring. The top part features a photograph of a group of six people (three men and three women) sitting around a large wooden dining table, eating a meal. The table is set with plates, glasses, and various dishes. The text "Here at Warehouse Flooring, we are thankful for our customers and we wish them a Happy Thanksgiving!" is overlaid on the image in a cursive font. Below the image, the company name "Warehouse Flooring" is written in a large, elegant script. Underneath that, the slogan "Where the Prices Won't Floor You, but the Selection Will!" is written in a smaller, bold font. At the bottom, the address "1709 N. Campground Road, Paragould, AR (870) 236-1754" and a Facebook logo are displayed.

# Leaders of the future

BY LINDSEY MILLS



Members of the Hillcrest High School Ralph Joseph Youth Leadership Program (RJYLP) Team hosted a gala benefit dinner at the Wings of Honor Museum in Walnut Ridge.

The team's mission for the project: raise awareness regarding veterans and their history in Northeast Arkansas, while also drawing attention to the efforts of the Wings of Honor Museum.

Event organizers planned and hosted the evening's festivities that included a catered meal, live concert and a special ribbon cutting ceremony that officially renamed a section of the museum for the late Dr. Ralph Joseph, M.D., an early supporter of the Wings of Honor.

The RJYLP, named for Dr. Joseph, is designed to teach leadership skills and foster leadership characteristics in Lawrence County youth. The event hosted by current program leaders raised \$3,830 for museum operations.



Pictured: 11th graders Emma Howard, Braden Glenn, Dillon Neeley, and Trenton Richey

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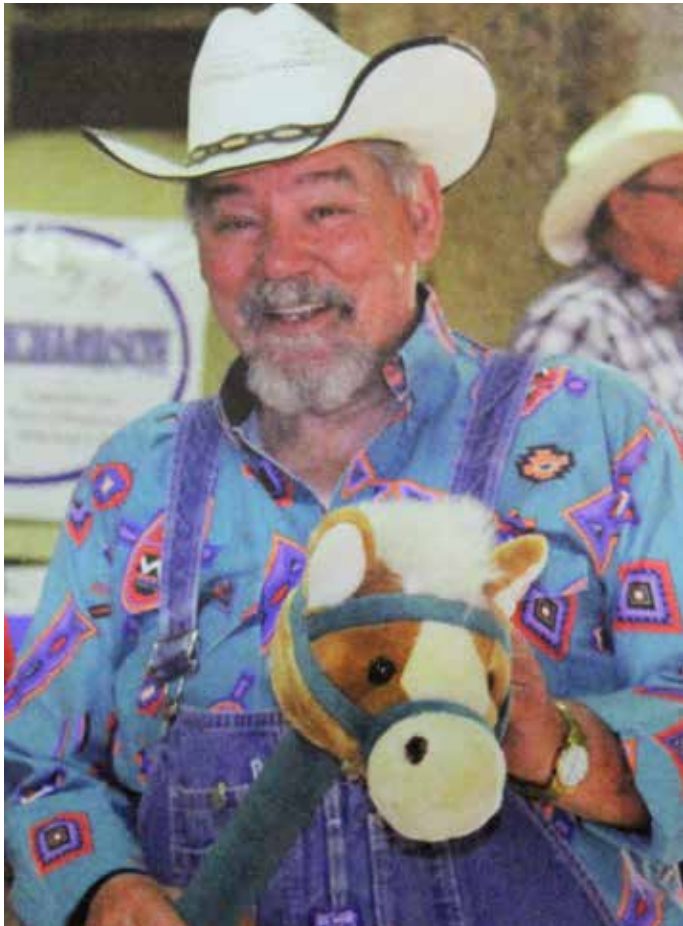
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# Miracle Rodeo

BY RICHARD BRUMMETT

The only thing missing from this year's Travis Hedge Miracle Rodeo was its founder. Hedge passed away in January of 2018, having dedicated about 30 years to the project that lets young people with developmental disabilities get to be celebrities for a night.

Hosted each year at the Greene County Fairgrounds in Paragould, the rodeo lets youngsters ride "pretend" animals inside the B.C. Lloyd Building and climb on horseback for the real thing outside with adult leaders alongside. They can also pet animals, get on stage and take their turns behind the microphone to belt out songs, get their faces painted and eat as much as they can hold, all for free.

"The family wants to keep the rodeo going in honor of Travis," said Ida Priest, Travis' sister. "It's a way for us to keep his spirit alive. He loved those kids and he loved watching them come in here. You have to be there to understand what it means for those little kids to put on a cowboy hat and a bandanna and then just have a big time. Travis was the one who saw it done somewhere else and he brought it back here to the Fair Board and it just took off from there. His daughter, Laurie, is the main one behind keeping it going."

Volunteers man all the food and activity stations and give the kids a night to remember. "Travis loved it," Priest said. "He wasn't there this time, but he sort of was there, you know?"

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# Purple Heart Poker

BY LAUREN ISBELL

If you knew Levi Crawford in high school (as I did), it was absolutely no surprise to you when he enlisted in the Army National Guard -- just 48 hours after turning 17. He was in JROTC all through high school and his lifelong dream was to enlist and serve his country. After high school graduation, many of us went on to A-State or U of A or entered the workforce in a place near home -- somewhere for the most part, familiar. But not Levi.

Levi headed to Ft. Leonard Wood for basic and AIT school and before long was headed to Afghanistan. During his time there, Levi was the lead gunner operating a 50-caliber machine gun and credited with finding over 500 explosive devices. After a brief time at home, he was deployed again but on May 10, 2009, Levi was struck with a rocket propelled grenade. The attack left him temporarily blind and he only regained sight in one eye. His arm was salvaged only by a series of state-of-the-art limb reconstruction surgeries. He spent a year at Walter Reed Hospital recovering slowly, unsure what his next chapter would look like.

He was soon connected with a non-profit organization, Rivers of Recovery. Rivers of Recovery offers combat wounded veterans the opportunity to connect with other veterans via a complementary four-day, evidence based, experiential rehabilitation program that focuses on confidence building, outdoor activities, and talk therapy in a relaxed environment.

The program promotes proven techniques that focus on the whole person and uses fly fishing to increase confidence, enthusiasm and resilience. Levi says the trip was life changing and months later, as a marketing student at Arkansas State, he began to create promotional material for the program pro-bono. The Executive Director was so impressed Crawford was offered a job as Marketing Director, where he still works to this day.



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Although he spends his days organizing trips and garnering support for Rivers of Recovery on a national level, he realized he still had more work to do. "Northeast Arkansas is quite a hub for veterans' reintegration into civilian life," Crawford said. "You've got the VA here, and the services provided by the Beck Pride Center, low cost of living, a great university and trade school options. As a result, there are many combat veterans in the area and I just felt like something needed to be done to connect them to each other, and with civilians who become friends and are critical to their long-term success.

"I thought back to my time deployed and recognized a common thread: poker. When deployed, I would often play poker with the guys in the unit to relax or whatnot. It seemed like a natural fit." A new passion project was born -- Purple Heart Poker.

Purple Heart Poker is hosted by local restaurants in Paragould and Jonesboro. "Veterans and civilians are invited to join the games," Levi said. "Just show up and tell them you are there to play Purple Heart Poker. We have four games a week, it's free to play, and we really need community support to keep it going."



For more information on Rivers of Recovery find them online at [www.riversofrecovery.org](http://www.riversofrecovery.org) or find them on Facebook. You can also find Purple Heart Poker on Facebook where each week's games are advertised.

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# Thankful FOR FAMILY

BY RICHARD BRUMMETT

To sit at the table alongside Ella Tabor you'd never get the impression part of her life has involved struggle. She's bubbly, she's funny and she's full of life, even though life started off in a stressful way.

Ella's mother, Lissa, said she was aware that heart surgery was necessary in about 50 percent of children born with Down Syndrome, as Ella was almost 15 years ago. At that time, surgeons performing such delicate operations on the very young were not as easy to find as today, so Lissa, her husband Don and their infant daughter wound up in Cleveland, Ohio, for Ella's first procedure when she was just four months old.

"Right after surgery she was on a feeding tube but by the time we left she was drinking from a bottle," Lissa said, possibly presenting a picture of the strong will her daughter would grow to embrace. "And from then on she had done real well with her heart until last May, a year ago. They said she was going to have to have another surgery because of scar tissue. We went in, not knowing if they would have to replace a valve or not replace one. All the repairs in her heart have been using her own tissues, no artificial valves. And this last time they did the surgery on Thursday and she came home on Tuesday. We felt very thankful."

As for Ella, nothing seems to be able to slow her for long. She is

a member of a special needs cheerleading squad that practices every Sunday afternoon and travels the country entering cheer competitions. "Yesterday we worked on motions and dance and tumbling," the soon-to-be-15-year-old said. "We have lots of practices" and Ella had just been named Cheerleader of the Week for her efforts.



When Ella reflects on things for which she is thankful the word "family" quickly comes out. "They help me do as well as I do," she said. "We read books every night. I'm thankful for my nephew and that I'm loved, and for my mom and my dad."

Lissa said doctors indicated Ella was free to try just about any activity that appeals to her, in spite of her heart surgeries. "They said she will know," Lissa added, "that she will get tired and will decide to stop or keep pushing through. Of course, as a mother, I'm nervous for her but a lot of what I learned about all of this is that I'm not in control ... to let go and let God have it. I just know there have been a lot of prayers said for her her whole life.

"I'm thankful for her and that God let me be her mother. She has taken us so many places and we have met so many families. Just the love and the joy that she brings us. I'm thankful, too, that she was born now, in this day and time, where society has made so much progress in acceptance of children like Ella. That's a blessing in itself."



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# Thankful FOR COMMUNITY

BY RICHARD BRUMMETT

When Charles Noel is hurting, lots of people are hurting. The Paragould resident is active in his community, his neighborhood and his church, so when he's down and out plenty of people take notice.

Recently the 82-year-old experienced an issue with his sciatic nerve, one so serious doctors have indicated surgery could be on the horizon. But Noel keeps a positive attitude, both when considering his prospects and when relating his story.

While being treated for the painful condition, doctors said the problem may stem from an old injury and as Noel listened to their words his mind returned to a time when he was a high school football player.

"It was 1953, playing football on a Friday night," he recalled, "and we were running the Single Wing and I was supposed to block this guy but I missed him. His knee hit me and went right into my hip and I was in some pain.

"I remember we had to get me a brace and in 1953 it cost \$75. I'd had issues with it hurting sometimes over the years but I could go to the chiropractor and get it fixed ... but not this time."

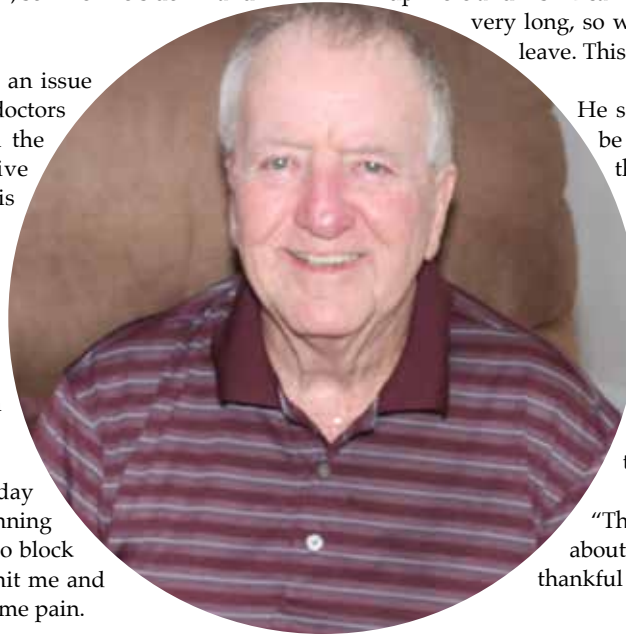
Noel was hospitalized but didn't seem to be making progress and was transferred to a Memphis clinic. There, they tried a nerve block which also failed to make much difference and when he returned home he was unable to walk up the small steps leading into his house.

He had to have his son and a nephew try to get him in, but they were also unsuccessful and the EMT service was eventually called to complete the task.

"I tried to stay here but I was in so much pain I told my wife I had to get to the hospital," he said, and since that second stay he has been doing rehab a couple of times a week and seems to be somewhere near mending. For a guy who is accustomed to mowing neighbors' lawns and volunteering for various chores at church, moving slowly with the aid of a walker is not so easy.

"If someone can take me to McDonald's I have friends who will bring me home," Noel

said, mentioning how much he enjoys joining a group of pals who meet their regularly. "You have no idea how much it helps just to get up there and visit. I can still make it to church but I can't sit there very long, so we sit close to the back in case I need to leave. This being an old person isn't easy."



He said if he isn't "where they want me to be at the end of these three weeks of rehab, then we might be talking about surgery. I hope not. But you know, throughout this thing I can't believe how many people have called and sent cards and asked about me. You know, the first thing you give thanks for is that the Lord has stayed with you; the main thing is peace. But I can't tell you how much it means for people in town and Facebook friends and just everyone to express their thoughts and prayers for me.

"This thing came on so fast I just didn't know about it. It hit me hard. But I've got plenty to be thankful for and I know it."



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# Thankful FOR THE GAME

BY RICHARD BRUMMETT

When you are a multi-sport athlete, sometimes there is no off season. You go from school sports to summer sports and back into the school schedule, trying to play a key role in the success of your teams.

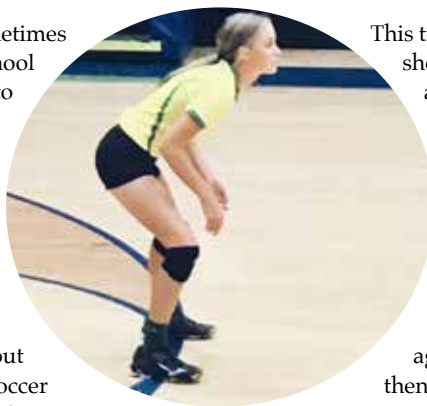
Until you can't play. Then your prayers become, "Please, just let me get back out there," as Greene County Tech's Carlee Weatherford can tell you.

Carlee was a leader on multiple teams throughout her younger days, playing on travel teams in soccer and softball, and once the school year started, performing on the volleyball, basketball and golf squads. But in February of 2017, in the semifinals of her junior high basketball tournament, the reality of not being able to play hit home.

"We were running a play made up for me, specifically," the 17-year-old GCT senior recalled. "I drove in and was pretty open like I was supposed to be and a girl shifted over and when I planted, I heard a 'pop!' It was a completely torn anterior cruciate ligament and a partially torn meniscus."

Season over. Surgery on her left knee was followed by almost 10 months of dragging around a knee brace while in recovery, allowing her to return in time to play just a few games toward the end of the basketball season and then to compete in the district and state golf matches during her sophomore year. Carlee said she was thankful enough at that stage but months later her sports life took another hit.

Playing a game in their first summer basketball team camp with her Lady Eagle teammates, she found herself trapped near the sideline with little time left on the clock. Trying to beat the opponents' press, Carlee made a spin move to escape trouble but a player coming from the opposite direction collided with her and "right away, I knew something was wrong. I made it through the rest of the day pretty fine but when I went to the doctor, he said I had a torn ACL again, and a slight meniscus tear."



This time, however, the injury was to her right knee and she was again scheduled for season-ending surgery and decided it was time to whittle down her list of sports. Knowing she wouldn't mend in time for another basketball season, Carlee set her sights on returning to the links as a senior and making a run at a state golf championship. "I was able to do some things toward the end of the summer," she said, "and then got the 'all clear' to brace up and -- with the pain tolerance -- to do whatever I could. So I started playing golf again and missed maybe two matches at the start, then made the rest of them."

Not being able to play emphasized the importance of being physically able to do something you love. "After the first surgery," she said, "I was just so ready to get back. I was scared and nervous because I'd never had anything like that before, but I just wanted to get back and was sure I would. After the second one, I was back and forth because watching my friends play while I was sitting there on the bench ... well, I cried. One day you think you're not going to get to ever play, and then one day you feel like you're back where you belong. I am so thankful I got to be with my teammates again."



She finished fourth individually in this year's conference golf tourney and earned All-conference honors, helping the Lady Eagles earn a 2nd place finish and a trip to the state tourney. The importance of being able to do -- or not being able to do -- what she loves is not lost on her.



"So thankful I got another chance," Carlee said. "So glad to be able to hit a golf ball and not be fearful. I'm able to play without the brace; it's not required. And the scars are just there. I told Dr. Swymn before this last surgery, 'Can you please make them match, since I'm going to have them on both knees?' He did a pretty good job."

She has an opportunity to play on the collegiate level at Lyon College but is leaning toward making golf "be more like a hobby, just play it for fun. I'm just thankful to be back out here."



*On the cover: Santa enjoying his Thanksgiving meal thanks to a beautiful setup from our friends at Gamble's Home Furnishing and a delicious spread by Meals for Moms.*

*Design by: Cindy Shepard, Karen Cunningham, Jaslyn Fisher, and Beth Gaynes.*

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The holidays sneak up on us all – including Santa! Many of us tease department stores for leaping head-first into Christmas before we've had the chance to enjoy Thanksgiving. Some of us laugh at the irony of crazy shopping just a day after being thankful for what we already have. But there really is just a month between these two important holidays, meaning so much to do in so little time.

Still, many of us – Santa, too – are hoping to prolong the season of thanks before the season of gifting. Hmmm, what if we walked into the Christmas season lingering on Thanksgiving and thought more of giving than gifting?

With every card, every box wrapped in a bow, and every tissue-stuffed bag, perhaps we make sure to really give it: with special thought to selecting it, with a smile and a hug when it's given, and with more love in our hearts than dollars on the price tag.

Here's to celebrating seasons of thanks and giving.

May we all share an abundance of gratitude for our blessings and an outpouring of love and kindness.

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# BLESSINGS *for All*

BY LINDSEY MILLS



A Christmas tree with twinkling lights, stockings stuffed with candy, and presents under the tree may be the reality for many during the Christmas season. But it's certainly not what every kid expects in the month of December.

There are estimated to be more than 400,000 children in foster care on any given day in the United States. Life in the foster care system, whether short- or long-term, can be a series of homes and continuous uncertainty. It can mean loneliness and emotional pain. But it can also mean great joy, beautiful bonds, and bigger families.

"You may think you're going into the situation to bless someone else," said Lindsay Roberts, organizer of the Foster Families Christmas Party in Greene County, "but the kids, they bless you. They change your life."

Lindsay has been a foster parent for more than two years and says that one of the most rewarding aspects of involvement is getting to grow close to the families the kids come from. "We've built long-lasting relationships with families, even after the kids return.



*Stay close. Let them dream.*

That's the best part," said Lindsay.

This year the Greene County Foster Parents Association will partner with the Department of Child and Family Services (DCFS) again for a party that will bring Christmas traditions into the lives of kids celebrating away from their biological families.

The event caters to anywhere between 100 and 150 children, for foster families and their biological children. Santa, of course, attends the festivities and a hot chocolate bar is often a highlight for everyone.

#### WANT TO GET INVOLVED?

Donate clothes for foster families via the Clothing Closet located at Greater Visions in East Paragould any weekday between 8 a.m. and 5:30 p.m. Foster families can pick up clothes from the "closet" anytime they need.



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# COLBIE'S COAT DRIVE

BY LAUREN ISBELL

Colbie Huffman is on a mission. The 13-year-old student at Westside Public Schools hopes to collect 200 coats or more this month in preparation for the winter days ahead.

Colbie has been collecting coats as part of his project, Colbie's Coats, for the last three years. To date, he's donated over 500 coats to those in need in and around Jonesboro.

Colbie started the project as a 10-year-old, completing community service hours for his local 4-H chapter. 4-H is the largest youth organization in the world that works through land-grant universities to give young people the skills they need to be excellent members of their communities: Improving their public speaking skills, increasing their respect of animals and agriculture and teaching them compassion for others through community service.

Colbie has been active in 4-H for many years, but this is one project

he hopes to do for a long time. "It's really rewarding," he said, "to know you are meeting a real need. People are very appreciative." The community partners in the project read like a laundry list -- the HUB, school counselors, clothing closets and foster children in custody of the state. But he knows there is still work to be done and he hopes you will help.

"We are always looking for more partners, too -- more places where people can drop off new or gently used coats, hats, mittens or gloves or organizations that can connect us with people with a genuine need."

Colbie noted there is most often a need for very small coats -- infant sizes -- or very large coats, 2-3X, that are the most challenging requests. Requests for coats can be made to the Colbie's Coats Facebook page where followers are quick to jump into action for a specific need.



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# Thankful

# FOR THE SEASON

BY LINDSEY MILLS

When Steve Southard walks into a room, it's as if he brings the very spirit of the Christmas season with him. Perhaps he does.

"I believe God has given me a gift to share love," Steve said in his deep, commanding voice. "I've been given a cause and I do my best to share God's love with the world."

Love is so clearly laced into "Santa's" actions. As we walked around town to take some pre-season photos of the jolly figure, he opened doors and embraced fans who might've wondered why Kris Kringle made such an early appearance in October, but were delighted all the same.

Steve has portrayed Santa Cause for ten years, often appearing for no charge at charity and community events. His favorite part about being Santa? Reminding people to give and love and share.

That's why the sweet cheer of the holidays seems to be sprinkled everywhere Steve goes. His eyes are always lit with laughter and his voice carries happiness.

Steve loves the holiday season because everything and everyone seem more upbeat. People are more caring, loving, and happy. When asked what he's thankful for, Steve looked at his life as a whole, "I'm blessed. I'm just thankful for all my blessings."

Every year, and really every day, Steve shares his blessing with others.





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Arkansas Methodist Medical Center in Paragould celebrated 70 years of community care on Wednesday, October 16.

"We are grateful for our community and the surrounding area for supporting AMMC over the last seventy years," said Tori Thompson, Director of The Foundation and Marketing for AMMC. "We've seen lots of growth and expansion of programs and services, and we look forward to continuing to provide quality care to the residents of the area for many years to come."



# Souper Sunday

On December 8, 2019, Habitat for Humanity will host its 10th annual signature fundraising event: Souper Sunday. The event will take place at the New Embassy Suites by Hilton in Jonesboro. The community is invited to taste and vote on local restaurant soups in the fundraiser.

Also included will be desserts provided by the Oak Grove Extension Homemakers Club of Jonesboro and a silent auction with items provided by local businesses.

Funds raised will be used for building safe, decent and affordable homes for qualifying families in need. Habitat for Humanity of Greater Jonesboro includes four committees – Development,

Homeowner Selection, Construction and Homeowner Support.

Since establishment in 1992, Habitat for Humanity of Greater Jonesboro has helped 20 families reach their dream of homeownership. Jonesboro Habitat partners with qualifying individuals or families to provide a “hands up” opportunity.

Partnering families volunteer partnership hours during the construction of the home, complete homeownership education courses, and pay a zero-percent interest mortgage at their affordability. For more information about volunteering with Habitat for Humanity on a build day, visit [JonesboroHabitat.com](http://JonesboroHabitat.com) where you can access the calendar of build days.

For more information about volunteering with one of the four committees such as the Development Committee, which includes the Souper Sunday planning team, or to donate, contact Habitat for Humanity of Greater Jonesboro Executive Director Micheal Sullivan at [msullivan@Jonesborohabitat.com](mailto:msullivan@Jonesborohabitat.com) or (870) 203-9898 or Leslie Conner at [lconner@Jonesborohabitat.com](mailto:lconner@Jonesborohabitat.com) or 870-882-0798.



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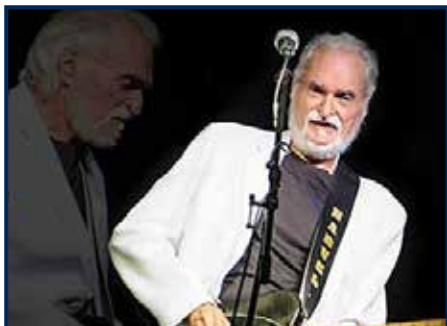
## DOWNTOWN PARAGOULD EVENTS




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### November 8th

Narvel Felts with Gary Prince and The Sugar Creek Band | The Collins Theatre 7 p.m. - 9 p.m.



### November 25th

Bluegrass Monday with No Time Flatt | The Collins Theatre 7 p.m. - 9 p.m.



### November 30th

Small Business Saturday Main Street Paragould 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.



*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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 Morgan Whitsell / Elijah Carter: November 11th  
 Lindsey McMinn / Brian Adams: November 23rd  
 Connor Thomas / Cody Davis: November 23rd  
 Maggie Williams / Ryan Wolf: November 30th  
 Callie Mosley / Houston Peeples: December 7th  
 Kirstyn Wyatt / Christopher Salehi: December 28th  
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**November 21st-24th: Elf the Musical | Thursday-Saturday 7:30 p.m., Sunday 2:30 p.m.**  
 Buddy is determined to win over his birth family and help New York City remember the true meaning of Christmas. Tickets at [www.gcfac.org](http://www.gcfac.org)

**November 30th: Chad Garrett & Friends, 7 p.m.**  
 An evening of country music with Chad, guests and the band - Randy Aden, Dana Johnson, Kevin King and Randy Loyd. General Admission: \$10, 10-years-and-under: \$5. Tickets available at the door.

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17th Annual

# DUCK CLASSIC

NEA BAPTIST 

CHARITABLE FOUNDATION



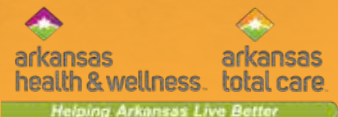
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DECEMBER 12-13

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**DuckClassic.com**





# 17TH ANNUAL DUCK CLASSIC

Jonesboro, Ark., October 24, 2019-- NEA Baptist Charitable Foundation will host the 17th annual Duck Classic Banquet on Thursday, December 12th at the First National Bank Arena, at Arkansas State University (217 Olympic Drive). Doors will open at 5:00 pm and dinner starts at 5:30 pm. Adult tickets are (\$50) and may be purchased in advance at DNW Outdoors or online at [www.duckclassic.com](http://www.duckclassic.com).

Duck Classic draws in thousands from a 10 state radius and has garnered national attention and support – all to benefit the six free programs of NEA Baptist Charitable Foundation. In addition to the dinner, banquet attendees will have the opportunity to participate in various raffles and both silent and live auctions. Items this year include hunting trips, a lab puppy, jewelry, gift baskets, duck blinds, a four wheeler and more.

Grand Classic Raffle winners will also be drawn during the banquet. Only 600 Grand Classic Raffle tickets are sold, with 14 chances to win including the Duck Truck – a 2012 GMC Sierra 1500 (a \$15,000 value – with over \$14,000 worth of additional accessories), a 2020 Polaris Ranger 1000, a Benelli Nova Max 5, a Winchester SXP and 10 chances to win \$200 cash. Tickets may be purchased at DNW Outdoors or online at [www.duckclassic.com](http://www.duckclassic.com).

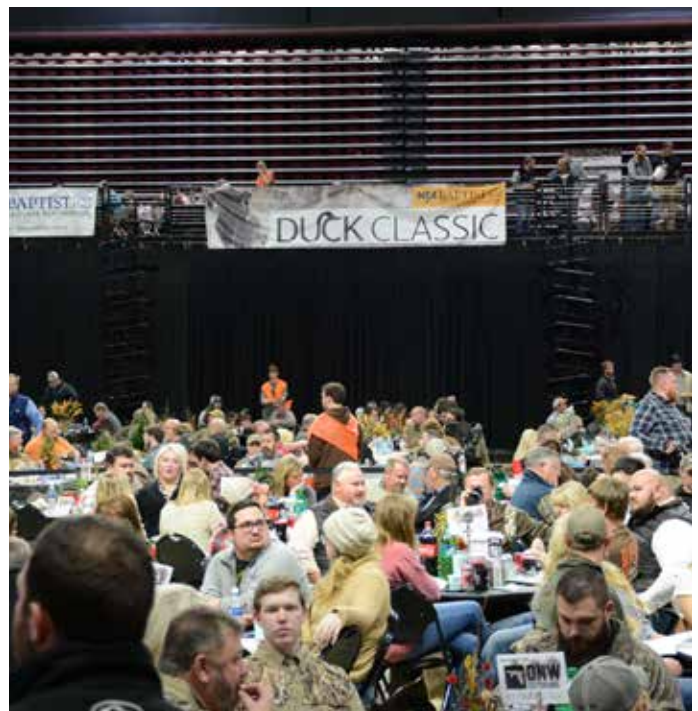
Tickets may be purchased at DNW Outdoors or online at [www.duckclassic.com](http://www.duckclassic.com).

The hunt will take place the morning of December 13th and is based on a scoring system; points are allotted for types and amounts of ducks. When the hunt is over, each team will check-in, and the dice are rolled to determine the value of each duck and the team with the most points and the earliest recorded score will be awarded as the winner.

Thanks to our participating landowners, duck blinds in timber and rice fields are donated from all over Northeast Arkansas allowing teams to compete for prizes. This event provides participants the opportunity to hunt some of the top spots in the area, that otherwise may not be accessible.

Sponsors for the 2019 Duck Classic event include: DNW Outdoors and Truck Accessories, Drake Waterfowl, Barton Powersports Jonesboro Radio Group, KAIT, KJNB-FOX, NEA Baptist, Allwell from Arkansas Health & Wellness, City Of Jonesboro Advertising And Promotion, East Arkansas Broadcasters, Glen Sain Motors, MOR Media, Nutrien Ag Solutions, CBRE Healthcare, Andy's Frozen Custard, Arkansas Blue Cross Blue Shield, Arvest, Gilliam Services, Greenway Equipment, Haag Brown, Nyit ,Ramson's Construction, Sissy's Log Cabin, and YETI.

Sponsor opportunities are still available. Contact Kim Provost at [Kim.Provost@bmhcc.org](mailto:Kim.Provost@bmhcc.org).





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Cheers for Charity, an annual fundraiser commissioned by the Junior Auxiliary of Paragould, raised \$12,000 on the evening of October 12 at the Paragould Community Center.

The theme was "Roaring '20s Casino Night." Entering the gym, guests were met with twinkling lights, feathers, strands of pearls, candles, and glitter. The music and costumes took guests back in time to the era of Gatsby and Sinatra. A silent auction, a DJ and dancing, and casino games kept guests entertained.

Raffle tickets were sold for a chance to win a lovely diamond bracelet donated by Sissy's Log Cabin. Perhaps the most important detail of the night: the Angel Tree. Specially decorated, the tree represented the wishes of 50 children in Greene County that could be "adopted" for Christmas by attendees.

"We are so proud to be a part of such a compassionate and benevolent community," said Rachel Haynes, event organizer. "Thank you, Paragould!"

## 2019 Kids' Events

# November

### Each Monday & Wednesday Storytime

**When:** Each Monday & Wednesday at 10:30 a.m.

**Where:** Greene County Public Library  
120 North 12th Street, Paragould

**Info:** (870) 236-8711

16

### Storytime and Activities Featuring Jack Frost vs. the Abominable Snowman

**When:** Saturday at 11:00 a.m.

**Where:** Barnes & Noble, The Mall at Turtle Creek  
3000 East Highland Dr., Suite 410 in Jonesboro

**Info:** eventful.com

28

### After School: Music 'n Movement

**When:** Thursday at 4:00 p.m.

**Where:** Craighead County Jonesboro  
Public Library

315 W Oak Ave, Jonesboro

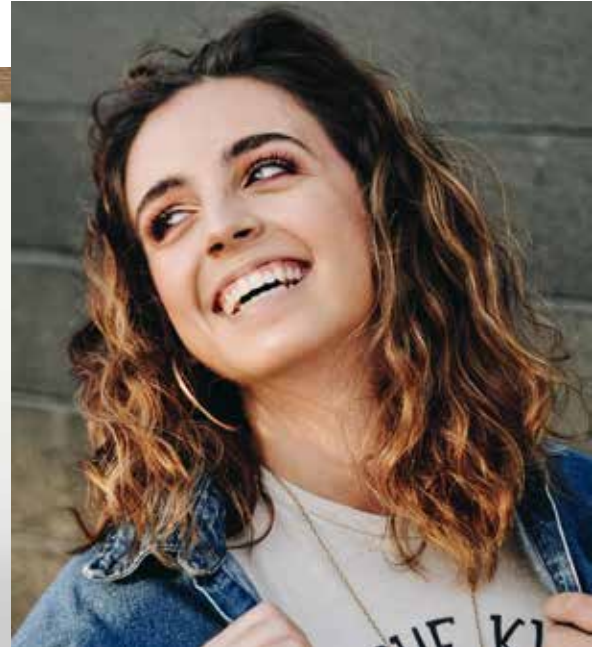
**Info:** libraryinjonesboro.org



When school is out for the day it's time to hang out with the neighborhood kids, and that's just what Kennedy Fielder had in mind. Kennedy, 8, is the daughter of Ariel Fielder of Paragould.

# NEA Artist

BY LINDSEY MILLS



**A**shleigh West has been an artist for as long as she can remember. “It began as a challenge,” she said. A bet with a friend to see who could draw a character better – a bet she won – quickly became a love of drawing.



A graphic designer for Coldwell Banker, Ashleigh was able to take her previously self-taught skills into her career after studying at Arkansas State University. She received a Bachelor of Fine Arts, but her real love remains drawing.

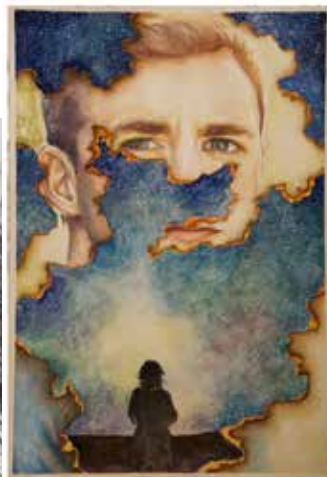
People are Ashleigh's favorite subjects. "I don't like to talk to people, but I like to draw them," she shared with a laugh.

Ashleigh's talent is clear in her work -- emotions of the characters she depicts expressed in each stroke across the page. Her creations might make you do a doubletake and wonder about the story behind the drawing's eyes, curl of the mouth, or arch of the brow. Perhaps that is what is so beautiful about Ashleigh's work: Each image is a story.

Her love for art is clear in her smile, the images posted around her office, and in the way she talks about what it means to create.

When she's not creating or working (and sometimes even then) she's hanging out with her best bud, Parker.

Check out Ashleigh's work on instagram: @stray\_west or on her website [straywest.com](http://straywest.com)



# Vixens

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**H**annah and I sat quietly waiting on the afternoon light to dim, hoping that would spur some deer activity. The trees around us, bared of their leaves by the cool days of fall, swayed in the breeze and kept our scent drifting away from the likely approach of a deer. As the light faded, the temperatures dropped but we were prepared with gloves, toboggans and layers of clothes.

We sat as motionless as possible and we finally saw a deer making its way to the food plot. We had been practicing with the crossbow and Hannah carefully tracked the deer in the scope. I quietly asked her if she was on target and she acknowledged with a head shake and I told her to shoot. She pulled the trigger and nothing happened. She looked at me and I said to pull the trigger. She whispered, "I did!" I told her to pull it firmly. She tried again, still the crossbow would not fire. At this point I got a nice look of disgust from Hannah and she carefully handed me the crossbow. I tried to pull the trigger and it would not fire and realized I had not cocked it properly.

The deer fed a while in the food plot and then walked off and I quietly recocked the crossbow. Another deer soon showed up and this time we were ready. Hannah carefully aimed, waited for a good shot and fired. Her shot was good and the deer did not go far and Hannah turned to me and said excitedly but quietly, "Daddy, I did it!" We celebrated a little more in the stand and then carefully got down and retrieved her trophy.

This year in Arkansas there will be over 200,000 deer taken by hunters. The deer herd in the Natural State is estimated to be over 1,000,000 animals and continues to grow, increasing from an estimated 500 animals in the entire state in the early 1900s. White-tailed deer favor broken habitat that includes woods, fields, edges, and heavy cover and our state is covered with perfect deer habitat.

Deer hunting in Arkansas has changed drastically over the last few decades. In the 1960s, deer hunting and deer camps were a prominent pastime but harvest numbers were only around the 20,000 mark while hunting license sales showed there were often 250,000 or so licensed hunters in the field. At this time, finding a few fresh tracks made for a good day in the deer woods.

In the '70s the thought of taking a deer, any legal deer, seemed to become a reachable goal for many hunters as deer populations grew around the state. The 30,000 mark for deer harvest was finally reached in 1972. One major change to deer hunting in the Natural State came in the mid-70s when deer hunters were required to wear hunter orange to increase safety while hunting.

The '80s could be noted as a decade that ushered in new technologies and techniques into deer hunting. The use of any type of ATV or tree stand had been limited, but both soon became essential tools for deer hunting. Muzzleloading and archery equipment also saw advancements as special seasons with those tools offered hunters more opportunity to hunt. One of the major issues that arose in the '80s was the need to take deer of both sexes to cure imbalances in the herd that had resulted from years of buck-only harvest. The need to take does was a hard sell to hunters, as many had witnessed a time of very few deer in the woods. But the deer population was growing, and by the late 1980s the take by hunters had topped 100,000 for the first time.



## CHUCK LONG

Regional Education Coordinator Northeast Education Division Arkansas Game and Fish Commission

By the mid 1990s, the deer harvest in Arkansas had exceeded over 150,000 with over 400,000 hunters hitting the woods each year. A significant change came about in the late '90s with the introduction of the three-point rule for buck harvest in Arkansas. This rule said a legal buck must have at least three points on one side before it could be taken by a hunter.

That brings us to today. With over 1,000,000 deer in our state, it could be said we are in "the good old days" of deer hunting. There are probably more deer on the Arkansas landscape now than at any time in our history. Unfortunately, instead of getting out to enjoy the opportunities, hunter numbers are declining at an alarming rate. Those getting up early and donning blaze orange to go sit on a deer stand have declined by about 20,000 in the last seven years alone. We are at a critical juncture with our burgeoning deer herd and declining hunter numbers. We need hunters in the woods.

Arkansas has a great, storied past of wildlife successes due to our hunters. We need to keep that alive. I plan to be out there and I hope you will join me. If you read these articles or know me personally, you know I like to talk outdoors and if you need any help or advice on getting out there, please contact me. Any of our Arkansas Game and Fish Commission offices can offer assistance as well. I hope to see you out there!





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## Sun Belt Success

The Sun Belt Conference recognized over 2,000 student-athletes for academic excellence, of which 187 were A-State Red Wolves named to the Commissioner's List and the Academic Honor Roll for the 2018-19 school year.

The Commissioner's List honors student-athletes who maintained a 3.5 grade point average or better during the 2018-19 academic year while the Academic Honor Roll honors those who maintained a GPA between 3.0 and 3.49 for the academic year.

Arkansas State had 98 student-athletes on the Commissioner's List and another 89 on the Academic Honor Roll for the Sun Belt Conference.

A big "Howl Yeah" for the Red Wolves as they reach for success on and off the course, field, and court!



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## COMMITMENT TO COMMUNITY

Anchor Packaging recently purchased a new piece of rescue equipment for the Paragould Fire Department: the Arizona Vortex High Directional System.

The versatile piece of equipment allows first responders to elevate rope lines above edges or other obstructions. The Arizona Vortex System is unique in that it can adapt to a variety of rescue scenarios including cliff edges, grain silos, sewage lift stations, or other confined spaces.

The new equipment is expected to aid the Paragould Fire Department to respond safely and quickly in unexpected scenarios at facilities across the community.





# Northeast Arkansas Women's Expo

On October 19th and 20th, 2019, women from all over the area gathered at the first Northeast Arkansas Women's Living Expo to learn, shop, and simply relax at the "Expo With a Cause."

Women met with healthcare and fitness professionals, shopped with local retailers, and celebrated with activities that included a Mother Daughter Look-Alike contest and music from Cory Jackson.





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## Chelsea & Andrew

“Beautifully made.” Chelsea Knopp isn’t talking about her wedding, which was indeed beautiful, she’s referring to the groom. “Andrew and I met at our college ministry campus,” she shared. “He treats me like a princess and makes me feel so special and loved.”

Chelsea and Andrew tied the knot on June 8, 2019, at Houston’s in Brookland. After a proposal in a petal-filled gazebo, the two were engaged for a little over a year before their “elegant chic” wedding.

“My mom and I had so much fun picking out all of the elements, planning the layout and adding all of the special touches, such as customized napkins and glasses for the snack shack, designing the candy bar, picking out table settings as well as the details for all the gorgeous floral that would make my dream wedding a reality.”

Blush, taupe, and white, with a touch of gold for the reception, and an abundance of floral arrangements decorated the venue that fulfilled Chelsea’s dream. Though rain threatened to send the party inside just hours before the wedding, good weather prevailed so the couple could wed under the sky.

Decorations included a double-sided arbor draped in white fabric and dripping with white roses, an aisle runner featuring 18,000 white rose petals, white linens and more floral adorning the ceremony and welcome tables. Special touches were added for the summer event: white custom fans printed with the reception schedule and pictures.

Three cakes fed the crowd but another feature for guests was a special creation all its own.

“We had what we called our wedding snack shack set up outside for the guests to enjoy after the wedding while the reception hall was being photographed. We served iced coffee and frozen hot chocolate along with an assortment of sweet and savory snacks.”

The couple danced to “When I Say I Do” by Matthew West because they felt it was “an amazing representation of God’s love for us, and our love for each other.”



Photography By Emilee Gill Photography

# ENGAGEMENTS

## *Ashley Mobley & Justyn Westmorlan*

Ashley Mobley and Justyn Westmorlan have announced their plans to be married.

Ashley is the daughter of Richard Mobley and Stephanie Carter-Flynn of Paragould, and Justyn is the son of Gary and CJ Westmorlan of Hornersville, Missouri.

The wedding will be January 18, 2020, at The Crossing in Paragould.

Photography by Hailey + Alan Photography



# BIRTHS

## *Hudson RayAnn Smith*

Holden and Jordan Smith of Paragould welcomed their newborn, Hudson RayAnn Smith, into the world on October 14, 2019.

Hudson was delivered at St. Bernards Medical Center, weighed 7 pounds, 1 ounce and measured 20 inches long.

Hudson is also welcomed by Julie and the late Larry Smith, and Karen and the late Scott Mallard.



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# LIVING A Better Story

By Jared Pickney

Gratitude is an emotion that expresses our appreciation for what we have — as opposed to, for instance, a consumer-driven emphasis on what we want or think we need.

In his book, *The Psychology of Gratitude*, Robert Emmons outlines his scientific study on the role and benefits of gratitude. Gratitude, Emmons concludes, leads us away from criticism, cynicism, despondency, and depression and toward a sense of thanksgiving, fulfillment, appreciation, and the capacity to be present.

When practiced regularly, gratitude improves our mental, physical, emotional and relational well being. Its benefits include heightened energy levels, a strengthened heart and

immune system, improved emotional and academic intelligence, an expanded capacity for forgiveness, decreased stress and anxiety and improved self care.

Perhaps, this is part of the reason why writers of the Scriptures practiced and taught on the importance of gratitude thousands of years ago. I think of the Apostle Paul's line in 1 Thessalonians 5v17-18. He says, "Pray without ceasing. In everything give thanks for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus."

My encouragement to you is to take the time this holiday season to cultivate a spirit of gratitude and express it with lots of thanksgiving. We honor God when we do that. And we make things a lot better for ourselves and others as well.

To that end, I encourage you to spend time each morning practicing gratitude. Grab a pen and paper (or use your phone) and begin writing down 24 things within the past 24 hours that you are thankful for. It doesn't have to be anything big. Sometimes for me it's a cup of coffee, the laughter of my children or the ability to get around in a truck that still works.

Upon making your list, take time to thank God for all the blessings in your life. You will be surprised how practicing gratitude, even in the small things, will begin to have a massive impact on your life.

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## Team Effort



For years Central Chevrolet has been in a bit of a competition with Memphis and other big markets for top sales. Recently, the tide has turned and Jonesboro's Central Chevrolet has taken home the trophy for the past three months with no intention of letting it go.

"It's a testament to Jonesboro, and NEA really, that this market has grown and is continuing to grow," said Ken Yarbrough, owner of the dealership.

He attributes this success to a combination of things: "Northeast Arkansas is coming into its own. There's more people. There's more traffic. We've been here a long time and we're growing with this community. We've got good products and good staff."

As they grow and continue to adapt to the market, Ken wants people to know they're always hiring, and has the philosophy that, "If you're willing to try, we will too." The company takes pride in training hard-working individuals.

"Best price, best service, and best selection," Ken says, that's why they have so many loyal customers and why the business continues to grow.



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NEA BAPTIST 

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# HAPPENINGS



Greene County Tech's Class of 1969 gathered at the middle school cafeteria to celebrate its 50th reunion.



Jason Mullins spoke with the Greene County Master Gardeners recently about Kokodama: a century-old Japanese gardening technique. Jason demonstrated two ways of using either moss or burlap, then presented his crafts as door prizes. A Brown Bag Lunch is held on the second Tuesday of each month at the Greene County Library in Paragould.

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# November

## EVENTS CALENDAR

### 8

**What:** 3rd Annual Senior Expo

**When:** Friday, November 8th from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

**Where:** Nettleton Baptist Church

**Info:** Join the UAMS Center on Aging-Northeast for the 3rd Annual Senior Expo on Friday- November 8, 2019. This premiere event showcases services a senior adult and their family caregivers may need. Door prizes, lunch, giveaways, vendors, health screenings, Ask the Doc panel and more!

### 8-10

**What:** Lit'l Bit Christmas

**When:** Friday, November 8th through Sunday, November 10th

**Where:** First National Bank Arena

**Info:** One of the premiere events in all of Northeast Arkansas and has grown into one of the largest Arts and Crafts shows in the entire Midsouth Region. Visit the Facebook page: Lit'l Bit Christmas, view the current vendor information, visit the LBC website or call the Red Wolves Foundation at (870) 972-2401 for more information.

### 9

**What:** 2020 Campaign Fundraiser Celebrity Waiter "The Greatest Show on Earth!"

**When:** Saturday, November 9th at 5:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

**Where:** Paragould Community Center

**Info:** Fundraiser in support of Greene County Community Fund. Corporate Sponsors, Corporate Tables and Individual Tickets available! Dinner, silent auction and more fun! For more info: Lauria Baker 870-239-8435

### 16

**What:** Jingle Bell Run

**When:** Saturday, November 16th at 9:00 a.m.

**Where:** Craighead Forest Park

**Info:** The Arthritis Foundation's Jingle Bell Run is a fun way to get out, get moving and raise funds and awareness to cure America's #1 cause of disability. Wear a holiday-themed costume. Tie jingle bells to your shoelaces. Show off your ugly Christmas sweater. Complete a chip timed 5-kilometer run or 1 mile fun walk with your team members, spreading smiles, good cheer and a winning spirit ... and be a Champion of Yes!

### 22

**What:** International Food Festival

**When:** Friday, November 22nd at 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

**Where:** Centennial Hall at Arkansas State University

**Info:** Free event that all are invited to. There will be international food, music, fashion show, and workshops including Henna tattoo, calligraphy, Origami, and tea ceremony.

### 22

**What:** RetroSpec - The Exhibition

**When:** Friday, November 22nd at 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

**Where:** Art House downtown Jonesboro

**Info:** Come see the artwork of Braden Walls up close and personal! Featuring original artwork from today throughout the past five years of his career including some never before seen paintings, prints, stickers and more. There will be drinks, food and giveaways. This is something you don't want to miss!

### 22-26

**What:** The Nutcracker Ballet

**When:** Friday, November 22nd through Tuesday, November 26th.

**Where:** The Foundation of Arts in Jonesboro

**Info:** Kick off the holiday season with a community favorite. This Forum tradition never fails to delight the young and old alike with the tale of Clara and her new Nutcracker doll. Stunning ballerinas take audiences on a magical journey to far-off dream lands through dance. Magical fun for the whole family! More info at foajonesboro.org

### 28

**What:** Get in Gear Turkey Trot

**When:** Thursday, November 28th at 9:00 a.m.

**Where:** Craighead Forest Park

**Info:** This is a free event for the entire family. Participants have a variety of trails to walk or run on and can shorten or lengthen the mileage as desired. We will meet at Access 6 by the Softball Fields. All participants are encouraged but not required to bring a non-perishable item for the Food Bank of NEA.

### 30

**What:** New Jazz in Jonesboro

**When:** Saturday, November 30th at 7:00 p.m.

**Where:** The Jonesboro Public Library

**Info:** Come listen to the reignition of ClusterFunk and another great performance of NJHB. NJHB, the new jazz house band, will read original charts. This is FREE and open to the public. Follow ClusterFunk on Facebook and Instagram for future concert details!

### 30

**What:** Small Business Saturday

**When:** Saturday, November 30th at 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

**Where:** Main Street Paragould

**Info:** Shop "small" on Small Business Saturday! On Small Business Saturday we all come together to support the local places we love. Join Main Street Paragould November 30th by shopping "small," by shopping local!

To have your calendar items included in Premiere Magazine, email information to: [graphics@mormediainc.com](mailto:graphics@mormediainc.com)

# Stay Tuned

What's in store next month?  
Sounds of Christmas



Bells will be ringing and kids will be singing: We're bringing you the sounds of Christmas and what that means to our community.

## Shop Local Guide



The holiday shopping guide to local businesses in-store & online.

## NEA Seniors



The good news in the NEA Senior community.

On The Cover: Steve Southard as Santa Claus  
Photo By: Amy Reeves Photography

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Sat: 8am–5pm

Sun: 12–5pm

***Bilingual  
physicians  
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