

PREMIERE

DECEMBER 2013

Making Art from Nature

ROB PRATT

**CHRISTMAS HOUSE
GCT VETERANS PROGRAM
CIVITAN TURNS 50
ZOMBIE WALK
HARVEST CRAFT SHOW**

A PUBLICATION OF MOR MEDIA, INCORPORATED

OUR LIGHTS ARE ON FOR THE HOLIDAYS!

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December 2, 6 P.M.

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Tour some of Paragould's most exquisite homes decorated for Christmas! The tour begins at Chateau on the Ridge Assisted Living located at 2308 Chateau Boulevard. For information and tickets, call (870) 239-7077.

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With Christmas quickly approaching, many of you are spending every free moment in search of that perfect gift. You may even be considering a new puppy or a kitten for a friend or family member and I'd like to take a moment to give you some things to think about so that you can make the best gift-giving decision.

To put it simply, pets are generally not the best "surprise" gifts. I may at first sound like a farmer who hates rain showers in July. However, adding a pet to a family brings on a lot of responsibilities for what should be many years to come, so it is important to do your homework to ensure that this decision is the right one.

Unlike that new iPad-Air or blue ray player, pets are not inanimate objects. They are members of the family. Gift givers tend to forget that there is often a 10 to 20 year commitment that comes with being a responsible pet owner. Humane societies report that about half of all adopted pets for Christmas gifts end up back at their doorsteps, while others are unfortunately neglected and not given the care and love that they deserve.

There are also important financial considerations. The initial cost is relatively small as compared to the overall cost of responsible pet ownership over time. Pets can be wonderful additions to any family, but there is a right time and right place to begin that long term relationship..

That new puppy with a red bow around its neck may be the just the perfect gift this Christmas, but be sure you've done your homework. Is the pet owner ready to take on the financial, emotional, and time commitment responsibilities that go along with having a long-term animal companion?

The Reddick family and the staff at Linwood Animal Hospital would like to wish you a very Merry Christmas. Of all gifts that you receive this holiday season, please take the time to remember His eternal gift, the greatest of them all..

God Bless! Brent Reddick, DVM



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Merry Christmas
from

Fergus

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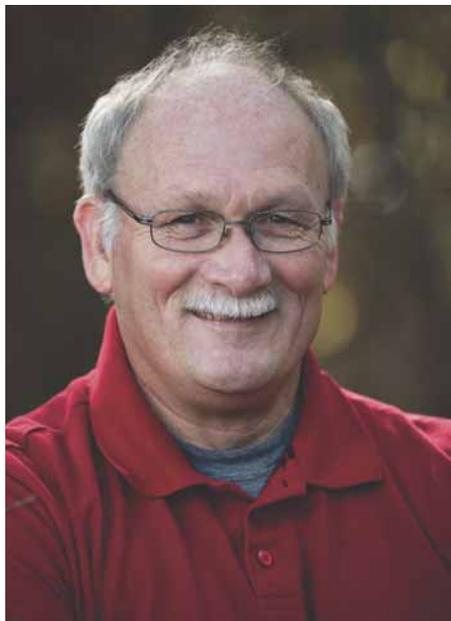


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From the Managing Editor ...



Richard Brummett, Managing Editor

If you are looking for variety, this month's issue of *Premiere* should be right up your alley.

Features this month range from Halloween-related items to Christmas themes and lots

of stuff in between. Our main focus for December is on people who dabble with arts and crafts, producing interesting items right here at home.

The cover story on Rob Pratt details how his love for his younger brother led him to begin constructing art pieces and things "mushroomed" from there. His story can be found on page 30.

We also feature other local and area artists who display their talents at craft shows and were willing to share their stories with us, people like Gary Hazlewood of PGK Crafts and Marion Jones of Nana's Creations.

Toni and Brant Johns opened their home to us in order to photograph it as our Christmas House. When Toni agreed to the photo session she emphasized that her house "isn't

anything special ... but it's special to me."

She was wrong. The rural home, featuring one large living area with bedrooms off to the side, is country living at its best and her Christmas decorations give it a true "down home" feel. Those photos can be found on pages 8 and 9.

As always, Greene County Tech High School put on a fantastic patriotic display for Veterans Day, honoring members of our mili-

tary and their families with a touching ceremony and production. A recap of that event appears on page 21.

We at MOR Media want to wish you a Merry Christmas, just as the artwork above (provided by contributing photographer Rodney White) indicates. There's plenty to like in this month's *Premiere*. ♦



Have a John Deere Christmas!

David Vanhorn

Ron Bellomy

Legacy EQUIPMENT

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Christmas House

Toni Johns calls it “just a country Christmas house,” and she’s right. From homemade ornaments to antique collectibles, Toni has adorned their “shop that was turned into a house” with countless Christmas decorations inside and out.



The Gingerbread men welcome visitors to the kitchen, top, but the centerpiece of the open living area is the 9-foot Christmas tree at right, one of three trees in the main room. Above are antique Santa and Mrs. Claus, handed down to Toni from her grandmother. At left is a mix of old and new, a wooden box full of ornaments while below are decorations collected over the years from family and friends, and at right, a cookie cutter used as an ornament on the big tree.



Savannah, Toni and Brant Johns



A collector of all things old, Toni loves two of her many handpainted signs related to Christmas. Above left is an old planter that serves as a home for a Christmas village while above right is another piece of antique kitchen furniture, all dressed up for the Christmas season.



Santa knows where to stop for his Christmas Eve treats, at right; at left, the outside is a show of lights at nighttime.



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Christmas

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First United Methodist Church held its third annual "Joy of Giving" Market in November, benefitting local, national, and international missions. More than \$6,700 was raised in the single-day event where people shopped for jewelry, baskets, baked goods and many other things in an effort to raise money for organizations like the Agape House, Mission Outreach, Nothing but Nets (to supply people with nets in third-world countries, protecting them from mosquitos), Lumos, and others.

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POYNER HOME



RIGGAN HOME

AMMC Foundation, Women's Council schedule annual Tour of Homes

The Arkansas Methodist Medical Center Foundation and Women's Council will present the Holiday Tour of Homes and Chateau on the Ridge Holiday Open House Sunday, December 8, 2013 from 2:00-5:00 p.m.

Homes on the Tour include Bob and Bonida Poyner's on Pruet's Chapel Road, John and Stacey Roleson's on Highway 358 and Kody and Carla Riggan's and Robert and Tori Thompson's in the

Callaway Hills Subdivision.

Don't miss the opportunity to tour some of Paragould's most exquisite homes while they are decorated for Christmas. Tickets are \$15 in advance or \$20 the day of the event. The tour begins at Chateau on the Ridge Assisted Living, located at 2308 Chateau Boulevard, and a complimentary shuttle will be provided to the homes. For more information or to purchase tickets, call The Foundation at (870) 239-7077. ♦



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Streetscape plan discussed for Downtown

Main Street Paragould Director Gina Jarrett invited the public to a meeting to discuss “Purposeful Preservation and Making Good Design Happen,” presented by Randy Wilson of the Mississippi Main Street organization.

While the attendees were enthusiastic, it was much like preaching to the choir, according to Jarrett. “I do not know what we can do to get Paragould involved and excited about a streetscape plan to implement in our Downtown,” she said. “This group is the crowd that wants it to happen, we just

need more residents and resources to get the ball rolling.”



Randy Wilson made the presentation to those in attendance.

Wilson talked of gateways into town, thoroughfares that lead to Downtown, the Downtown District, streetscapes, facades, infill design parks and open spaces, parking and signage. From an outsider’s perspective, Wilson said, “Ya’ll have plentiful parking in your downtown.”

Jarrett pointed out there are 273 parking places Downtown, not counting street parking spots, the public lot south of the old power plant or any spots rented to specific entities.

An overall streetscape plan can be broken down into manageable steps that each contribute to a pleasant experience for downtown pedestrians, Wilson said. One district in Little Rock is even staging temporary streetscapes in hopes of creating enthusiasm and participation by helping others visualize “what could be.” Wilson used examples of many towns to show that small improvements can make a big difference and can spark more acts of improvement. The “after the meeting” discussion concluded that a small project that would set an example needs to be identified and accomplished.

Anyone interested in helping Main Street Paragould with this or any Downtown event can contact Jarrett at 870-240-0544. ♦



Wilson looks at part of his presentation with Mandy Maxwell and H.T. Moore, above. Also attending the planning session were, at left, Chris Bass and Sue McGowan, Director of the Paragould Regional Chamber of Commerce, and Winston and Tracy Mothershed, below.



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December 2013

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

Six-month-old Serena Cooper was mesmerized by the American flag during Greene County Tech's Veterans Day program. She is the daughter of Jerry and Brenda Cooper of Paragould.

Fans gather for Tailgate Party before big game

Supporters of the high school football teams at Greene County Tech and Paragould converged on the GCT campus for the annual Citywide Tailgate Party, presented by MOR Media, Inc., and other valued sponsors.

A special thanks goes to the booster clubs from each school for manning the various stations, and especially to Hays Supermarket and Payne's Meat Sales for their contributions. ♦



While volunteers cooked and wrapped hot dogs, above, ticket buyers made their way through the line and under the tents provided by sponsors, left and right, to partake of their meals. Boosters from the two high schools sold tickets and worked the various stations in the fundraising tailgate event. See more photos on Premiere's Facebook page.



Entertainment included performances by both school bands, along with routines by members of the spirits squads, as well.



At left, workers set up the Something Sweet display, preparing to hand out free dessert treats. Tailgate partiers had the opportunity to win T-shirts by having their photographs taken with either the Jack or Jill radio logo cutout, sponsored by MOR Media, above.

Outstanding Teacher Awards

Debbie Webb, Crowley's Ridge Academy

"I choose to teach because I want to make a difference," said Debbie Webb. "I have the opportunity to help children understand their world every day. I enjoy teaching Bible stories the most. The great adventures recorded in the Bible are fun to share with my students and I know the lessons those stories teach will help them have a better life."

One of her favorite teaching memories is "the moment that one of my students realized that he could read. I teach second grade but I also work with other students who struggle with learning to

read. This particular child is dyslexic and very smart but reading words did not make sense to him. We were working through a specialized curriculum together and one day he looked into my eyes and said, 'I just read that!' It was magic for me."

She is married to Darrell Webb and their oldest son Garrett "gave us our first daughter when he married Amber. They gave us our first grandchildren this year when they had twin boys, Camden and Collin." Their middle son Brandon "gave us our second daughter when he married Jessica. Our youngest son is Conner. He is a senior at Crowley's Ridge Academy." ♦



Hillary Henderson, Baldwin Elementary



"I took a job at a local preschool during college to earn some extra cash and ended up falling in love with teaching almost as soon as I began," Hillary said. "It ignited a passion in me to give children as many good memories as possible while I do my part to help them grow into educated and respected adults."

She said she loves the "light bulb" moments students have when they finally grasp a concept they were struggling with. "The feeling of accomplishment that comes with knowing we've worked together to overcome hurdles makes even the worst of days feel

like they were worth it," she said.

With only a few months of teaching experience, every day is full of favorite moments: "Standing outside my door every morning while I greet the students as they enter class is a gold mine of treasured memories. I've had boys break dance as a way to say hello and girls delight in my reaction as they greet me in a foreign language. I always start my day with a smile!"

She is the oldest of five, with three younger sisters, Hannah, Janna, and Jennifer, and a little brother, Austin, who is in fifth grade and often "acts as my guinea pig for new science experiments." ♦

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Greene County Rescue Squad celebrates 30 years of service to community

The Greene County Rescue Squad recently celebrated 30 years of serving the community. With more than half of the current team having been on board anywhere from 10-25 years -- and Butch Heath since its inception -- a new group of volunteers is striving to carry on the vision and traditions of the Greene County Rescue Squad. As this happens, the younger members are quick to credit the founder and original members for what they've learned and the standards they keep as rescue volunteers.

"Butch recognized that Greene County had the need for a rescue squad," said Brent Cox, member and secretary/treasurer of the GCRS. "Still today, we have that need and strive to fulfill it."

In the Spring of 1982, Heath began the preliminary work to organize the squad. He was aware of the need from his experiences in operating a private ambulance service for 23 years. Early planning consisted of presenting programs to groups, civic clubs and various organizations, and obtaining information on various types of rescue equipment. Heath also traveled the state to visit other organized rescue squads, and solicited legal assistance and began constructing a set of by-laws.

Their first response was to a head-on collision on Hwy 34 west of Hwy 135. Using only hand tools from the trunk of his 1968 GTO, Heath and rescue and ambulance personnel flapped the roof back, forced a door open and removed

the patient in about 15 minutes.

Thirty years later, members like Kyle Vassar, Dallas Gillmore and Terry

Bailey give all credit and appreciation to senior members such as Heath,

Curtis Davenport, Blaine Nunn, Kyle Vassar, John Moore and Brad Smith -- all with more than 20 years of service to the squad.

"Butch is just a good human being," Bailey said. Vassar added, "We all just want to carry on his dream."

"They are here to teach us," Cox said. "And stories they pass along to us help with that. We just hope to carry on what they started and learn all we can from them every opportunity we get."

Bailey said the squad is more like a brotherhood or a family unit than an organization.

"It's a very unique friendship between us all," he said. "We are a dynamic group. Each of us has a specialty and our diversity makes us."

Kyle Vassar, son of 21-year member Jimmy Vassar, grew up watching his dad volunteer



The Rescue Squad has come a long way from the days when the official vehicle was Heath's 1968 GTO, left. Today the squad has full fleet of emergency vehicles at its disposal.

his time and energy to the squad.

"You can see the future and our children following in our footsteps," Vassar said. "Maybe not on the rescue squad, but by volunteering their time in some way. It's important for us to give back; we were taught by our parents and the long-standing rescue volunteers. We now strive to teach our children the same."

The GCRS is a completely donation-run volunteer organization. One hundred percent of what comes in goes right back into the community through not only rescue efforts, but volunteer appearances and assistance at local schools and community events.

"To help people is a calling," Bailey said. "You either have it or you don't. It's an opportunity to make a difference." ♦

-- By Joy Robinson and Brent Cox

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"Every day, we expected to die."



Holocaust survivor Martin Weiss shared his experiences with the audience at Black River Technical College in Pocahontas.

Martin Weiss indicated he prefers to be called Marty, but what he is happiest to be called is "alive."

As a survivor of the Holocaust -- the Nazi regime's systematic persecution and murder of approximately six million Jews during World War II -- Weiss speaks very matter-of-factly about his and his fellow Jews' prospects for survival during their stay in the concentration camps.

"Every day, we expected to die," Weiss said while appearing at Black River Technical College in Pocahontas. For the ninth year in a row, BRTC had Weiss speak in collaboration with the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum.

Addressing an assembly hall full of mostly high school and middle school students, Weiss talked about having lived a somewhat comfortable life in Czechoslovakia before his family was rounded up and deported to Auschwitz. Weiss, his brother, sister, father and two uncles were all selected

for slave labor; the rest of his family were killed upon arrival.

He spoke of the atrocities he and his family at first heard about, then experienced, and how his daily existence was simply a matter of survival.

"I never talked about it to anybody for a long,

"Then, one day, the guards were gone and the word was that we were being liberated, but we were afraid to walk outside; we thought it was a trap, just to kill us."

long time," said Weiss. "In fact, I had a sister who was in camp with our sisters who died, and my father died where I was and we never spoke about it."

The Weiss family's horrible adventure began in May of 1944, when they were removed from Hungary to Auschwitz-Birkenau, a complex divided into three major camps, one of which was used for mass exterminations.

After a short stay there, Weiss and his father were moved to Melk, a subcamp in Austria, and were forced to carve tunnels into the side of the mountain. It was there that his father died of exhaustion and starvation, and there that Weiss held out little hope of rescue.

"Food ... there was so little," he said, "and we froze and we starved and we were literally being worked to death. Then, one day, the guards were gone and the word was that we were being liberated, but we were afraid to walk outside; we thought it was a trap, just to kill us."

But on May 5 of 1945, after a year of living in terror, Weiss and his fellow prisoners were freed by the United States Army. Weiss said he hopes their story will live on, even though the number of WWII veterans and Holocaust survivors is disappearing rapidly.

"We should never forget," said Weiss, "... never forget. That's what this is really all about." ♦

-- Richard Brummett



Guest speaker Joshua Costner, above, addressed the audience at the Greene County Tech Veterans Day Program.



Mrs. Leigh Sullivan presented plaques to this year's Hall of Fame inductees. Above, Nicholas Cupp accepts his award while below, Sullivan welcomes James H. White to the podium.



GCT dancers spelled out "We are 1!" on their shirts.

GCT program honors veterans

Students and faculty at Greene County Tech High School staged their 42nd annual Veterans Day Program, inducting two new members into the school's Veterans Hall of Fame.

The program featured patriotic skits and songs

performed by GCT students, and those in attendance were treated to a talk from guest speaker Joshua Costner, who served in Iraq.

Added to the Hall of Fame during the 2013 ceremony were Nicholas Cupp and James H. White. ♦



The flag was a point of emphasis at the annual program, whether being handed out to visitors by Karen Cremeens, top left, or displayed, worn, saluted or examined by people of all age groups during the annual ceremony. See additional photos on Premiere's Facebook page.



Wounded Warrior Project schedules December hunt

The Northeast Arkansas Wounded Warrior Project Affiliate, which serves all of Northeast Arkansas' wounded veterans, has partnered with the American Legion Post #6 out of Randolph County to sponsor a Wounded Warrior Winter 2013 Duck Hunt for local veterans who have served and been wounded in war. However, the organization also has big plans to provide a much-needed piece of equipment to the veterans as well.

This is the second year the Wounded Warrior Duck Hunt has taken place. Last year the event hosted 15 soldiers over the course a weekend. While last year's event was considered a success for the veterans who participated in the hunting venture in the Biggers area, this year's is expected to be even better, according to John Phillips III, who serves as event coordinator. Thirty-one Wounded Warriors have signed up to participate in the hunt in Pocahontas.

"We had a change of venue this year," Phillips



John Phillips III, far left, poses with veterans and guides after last year's hunt.

stated. He said this year's event was particularly special because December 7, the date of the banquet, is also the anniversary of the

attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941. The program includes a keynote speaker (a World War II historian), special guests who actually witnessed the Pearl Harbor attack and presentations to each veteran. Local legislators will thank the veterans for their service.

Throughout the year, the NEA Wounded Warrior Project Affiliate attempts to raise funds to help support our local wounded veterans. According to Phillips, the group is trying to raise funds to purchase "track chairs," or motorized off-road wheelchairs, for every local veteran's service office in the four-county region it services.

He said the organization will receive some grant funding for the project, but is still looking for matching funding to go along with the grant, money the group must raise in order to provide the service to the veterans. Each wheelchair costs approximately \$10,000 and the group plans to purchase four.

For more information about the Wounded Warrior Project, visit its website at www.woundedwarriorproject.org or contact Mike Richardson, Veterans Service Officer at 870-892-3143 to see how to get involved and help those who have been injured while serving our country. ♦

-- By Jennifer Thompson

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The festive setting included everything needed to perfectly present the Hawaiian theme.

Pine Valley Ranch hosts Luau Party

Pine Valley Herb Ranch in Paragould was the site for a Luau Party, hosted by Ray and Dee Lindsey.

Friends of "The Rock" church group gathered to kick off the fall season in style, playing fun relay games and mixing and mingling with non-alcoholic Hawaiian drinks. ♦



Guests enjoyed conversation and games.



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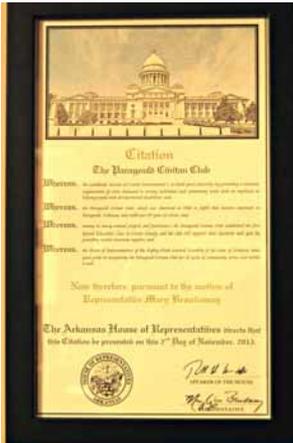
Paragould Civitan Club marks 50 years

Civitan Club members, guests and various dignitaries gathered at Paragould's Red Goose Deli and Banquet Hall to commemorate the local club's 50th anniversary.

Jay Albertia, President Elect of Civitan International, presented local club president Mary Crawford with a certificate on behalf of the organization while Heartland District Governor Joyce Sullivan, Governor Elect Steve Jackson and Paragould Mayor Mike Gaskill headed a list of celebrities marking the occasion. ♦



Civitan Club members and guests posed for a group photo at the conclusion of the 50th anniversary celebration. Below left is the local club's first president, Pat Watson; center, a citation of service recognition presented by Paragould Mayor Mike Gaskill; and at right, Terri Rogers, the first female club president.



Above, Jay Albertia, President Elect of Civitan International, presents Mary Crawford, President of Paragould Civitan, with a certificate for 50 years of community service. Below, Lori Dial and members of the band Everyday Life perform.

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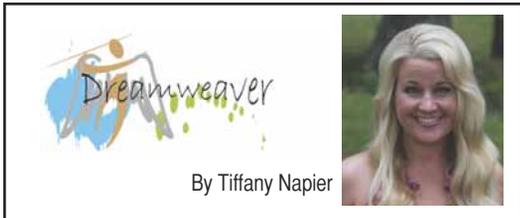
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Simple, inexpensive centerpieces

It's Christmas time! Clients constantly ask how to create a simple, inexpensive centerpiece for holiday parties. I love crafts that can be recycled for a later project or double as a gift for the holiday.

My first example is the forever popular bud vase with a twist. Instead of using a traditional vase, take the top off a Christmas ornament and add flowers to the opening. I've used a shatterproof, oversized ornament with a ring, which doubles as a stand, from my local hardware store. This makes a festive centerpiece that can be easily taken home and used by your guests.

Secondly, succulents are fabulous. They are good looking, easy to take care of and fairly inexpensive. Take a group of succulents and apply them to a styrofoam cone tree. Use the cone trees for table accents.

Afterward they can be easily removed and placed in pre-prepared geranium containers for your guests to take home. I've used artificial succulents, but live plants are also fun. You can order air plants as well that look nearly identical and are impossible to put to death ... even for amateur planters. It hangs out on roots alone.

Lastly, a mini evergreen is a perfect centerpiece. Add it to an attractive vase with some ribbon. These trees can also be removed from the vase as a parting gift. ♦



A shatterproof Christmas ornament, above, can be turned into a beautiful bud vase as a way of making an inexpensive centerpiece. Other ideas include succulents, pre-prepared geranium containers for transporting them home and finally, mini evergreens.



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Conservation District names building for Walter Lange, Jr.

A ribbon cutting ceremony marked the dedication of the Greene County Conservation District's building in memory of Walter Lange, Jr.

Lange served the district in several capacities for many years, and his family was on hand to help cut the ribbon and officially name the building the Walter Lange, Jr. Greene County Farm Service Center.

Pictured are Lange's son Josh and daughter-in-law Ashley, daughter Erica, wife Judy and daughter Courtney Floyd. ♦



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Nan Snider models the proper dress for the cotton patch in the 1950s and 1960s.

Greene County retired teachers step into past

Members of the Greene County Retired Teachers Association (GCRTA) recently took a step back to the time cotton picking was done entirely by hand. Nan Snider, a noted Northeast Arkansas writer and speaker, reminded approximately 70 retirees that they are who they are because they grew up and picked cotton on small family farms as she presented "A Day in the Life of a Cotton Picker."

In the 1950s and '60s, rural school districts had split terms, allowing students to work in the fields. The work day began at sunrise with a big breakfast and went until dark. Before going to the field, the cotton picker had to get properly dressed. The male usually wore a straw hat, jeans, and a shirt, but it was more complex for the female. According to Snider, the proper Southern lady had to wear jeans, a long sleeved button up shirt and a bonnet to protect her delicate skin, and brown jersey gloves with the fingertips removed to protect her hands. After getting dressed, one had to put cool water in a jar and wrap it in several layers of paper so it would stay cool. After a brisk walk to the far end of the cotton patch, the real work began to meet the picker's goal of 300 pounds.

Snider said it was hard work, but it was a way of life -- a life that built a strong family bond and developed strong work ethics. ♦

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A way to stay connected to his younger brother started Rob Pratt on his way to making mushroom art objects.

Local artist keeps memory of younger brother alive through his work

When his younger brother Wesley signed his name, he finished it off by drawing a mushroom. If he left his mother a note, he added mushrooms at the end.

"That was just something he did," said Rob Pratt, who describes himself today as a reluctant artist. "Everybody knew Wesley had this thing for mushrooms and now, whenever we see one, we immediately think of him."

Wesley fell victim to cancer at the young age of 28 and Pratt said his death "hit me really hard. I struggled for quite a while and even though I was older, we grew up like we were twins."

His younger sibling's fascination with mushrooms was not something anyone sought to explain, just an accepted quirk, one so prevalent in his life that his tombstone features an engraving of the fleshy fungus on the back. Whenever anyone connected to Pratt's family sees a mushrooms growing in the yard, they sense that Wesley is there.

It was this connection that led Pratt to begin dabbling in mushroom art while living in Key West, Florida. Walking the beaches, he glimpsed pieces of coral stone that looked to



Pratt's work today is self-explanatory.

him like mushrooms. "I just picked some up and found some that looked like stems and hot glued them together and put them on some driftwood, and it really seemed like a way of keeping Wesley in my life," he said.

While working in a group home for troubled children, Pratt said a teenage girl in his care left her designated area and ran into an art gallery and when he went after her he wound

up in a conversation with the gallery director. That led to his bringing some of his mushrooms in for consideration, and the director was eager to display them. Soon, Pratt was selling his art, much to his amazement. "I never really planned to sell any," he said. "I was just making them for my brother's sake."

Upon leaving Florida and returning to Arkansas, Pratt found shells much harder to come by but driftwood aplenty, so his artwork changed course. Now he produces things like horses and dragons and birds from the pieces of wood, although he did carve a giant mushroom out of a tree in the back yard.

"I look at it, and I start seeing things," he said. "This one will look like a bird, that one like another animal. I can't tell you why. I really think it's a 'God thing' ... that girl walking into that gallery at that time and me following her in. That started it, and even though it's really just a hobby people seem to want to buy a bunch of it."

Examples of Pratt's work can be viewed on his website Wesley's Creations. "I'm not trying to sell a whole lot," he said. "It's mainly therapeutic. I do it mainly for me." ♦

-- By Richard Brummett

"I never really planned to sell any. I was just making them for my brother's sake."

-- Rob Pratt



Craftwork is stress reliever for Hazlewood



Gary Hazlewood sits at his own creation, a hand-made wooden foot treadle scroll saw that he uses at festivals and craft shows to make his wooden art.

His beginning is short and simple. “We bought a house with a shop and I wanted to do something productive with it,” he said.

Gary Hazlewood of Paragould creates unique pieces of art using methods called intarsia and fret work. Intarsia, by definition, is a mosaic made of wood fitted into a support. Most patterns are designed by Hazlewood, but occasionally he’ll use pre-made designs.

“I take quarter-inch-thick oak, draw the pattern and spray adhesive it to the wood,” he said. “I drill small holes in the pattern and cut the rest with a scroll saw.”

Fret work, patterns or decoration on a surface made by cutting into or through the surface, has a totally different look than Intarsia.

Hazlewood also likes making folk toys. His most recent toy is called a “limber jack,” which was once used to help teach children how to keep time with music.

Hazlewood has displayed work at craft stores in the past, but now limits himself to craft shows and festivals. He also works with people individually and takes special orders or design requests.

“It’s a great stress reliever,” he said. “When I have a hard day I can come home and spend a couple of hours doing this. It’s so relaxing.”

Hazlewood has worked at American Railcar Industries as a Quality Superintendent for 16 years. After travelling the world with the Army, he says he would rather be here in Paragould than anywhere else. He can be reached by calling PGK Crafts at 870-450-9038. ♦

-- Joy Robinson

Hobby turns into money-making enterprise for Marion Jones, owner of Nana’s Creations

Marion Jones, owner of Nana’s Creations, is a 70-year-old retiree who lives in a quiet country home in Paragould and spends the majority of her free time making costume jewelry for her home-based business. When she is not busy crafting and/or baking she and husband W.H. Reynolds, whom friends simply refer to as “H,” spend time traveling and tending to their home.

“I retired from the telephone company and went to work as an inventory clerk at a wholesale jewelry company in San Antonio,” Jones said, explaining how she began her jewelry-crafting hobby. “I purchased some of their stock when they went out of business and I hope, over the last 15 years, I have improved my craft.”

Jones sells her costume jewelry, night light boxes and baked goods at local festivals, craft shows and said she even has some of her jewelry in a couple of consignment shops. She

also provides jewelry repair services and can custom make items for customers.



“When I sit down and pull out beads,” Jones said, “somebody helps put it together. A miracle happens. I will pull out the beads, but I don’t know what I am going to do when I start. It just happens. Sometimes I will see something I like and keep it in mind, but it doesn’t end up looking just like the other one I saw.”

The type of jewelry Jones makes varies. Most often, she has necklaces, earrings, bracelets, memory bracelets, button rings and bands. Each item varies in price, starting with the bands, which sell for \$1.

“When I lived in Missouri,” she said, “I would sell all of this, including my banana nut bread, zucchini bread, homemade salsa and trash (a Chex-Mix concoction) along with the jewelry.” Now she runs her business from her home and often donates items to St. Mary’s Catholic Church for their fundraising bazaar. “She also volunteers out at Chateau on the Ridge,” her husband added. In addition, Jones hosts jewelry-making parties with residents at the retirement community “every couple of months,” she said.

Jones does not have a website for Nana’s Creations, but is in the process of working on one. She can be reached by phone at 870-573-4100, or by email at noiram7338@yahoo.com. ♦

-- Jennifer Thompson

Paragould Community Center hosts 38th annual Harvest Craft Show

There was a definite Christmas theme to the 38th Annual Harvest Craft Show at the Paragould Community Center, but vendors offered pretty much something for everyone.

In addition to the handcrafted items relative to the Christmas holiday, visitors were also able to choose from unique wood crafts, food items and many other gifts suitable for any time of year.

This year's show was one of the center's largest ever. ♦



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Room 2 Grow is located at 113 West Court Street in the One and Only Downtown



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Get Rich

By Richard Brummett



“We” got our deer, until it was time to carry it out

One year, while squirrel hunting, I began to see several deer in the same spot, day after day.

Since my father had never killed a deer -- having come close only once, knocking one down only to have it suddenly leap up and run away -- I thought I would tell him about this great opportunity for him.

He agreed that it sounded like a prime hunting spot and so, on opening day of gun season, Dad, one of his friends and I walked deep into the woods. Dad's buddy couldn't walk long distances so he brought a lawn chair and sat down beside the trail; Dad and I went to the spot where I had been seeing the deer and when I suggested where he sit, he said, "Well, I like the looks of these woods down here. I think I'll slip down there and probably get me one."

I kept telling him that I had seen bucks atop this ridge for several days, but he had in his mind what good deer woods looked like and refused to listen. After sitting in a downed tree for about 20 minutes, I turned to my left, pulled back the hammer on my shotgun and knocked down an 8-point buck.

Dad climbed the hill while the deer, still breathing, tried to get up so Dad shot it again and finished it off. When his friend yelled out to inquire about our luck, Dad said, "We've got ours already! How about you?"

Ours? I thought it was mine since I stayed in the right spot, then I learned I was correct shortly thereafter. Our fellow hunter arrived and admired the 8-pointer just as it began to sleet. We decided we'd better head back toward the truck and Dad reached out his hand to hold my gun.

"It's time to go, Rich," he said. "Get your deer."

At least we settled the ownership issue. ♦



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Compassionate Friends will stage candle lighting service

Members of the 2401 Chapter of The Compassionate Friends (TCF) will participate in an annual worldwide event designed to honor the memories of all children, regardless of age, who have died.

The chapter is joining Sunday, December 8, 2013, with hundreds of organized memorial services around the world for The Compassionate Friends 16th annual Worldwide Candle Lighting, an event now believed to be the largest mass candle lighting in the world.

The local candle lighting will be part of a special service held at 6:30 p.m. at Southside Community Church Conference Room and will feature music, readings, and poems. Annually tens of thousands of families, united in loss, light candles for one hour during the Worldwide Candle Lighting, held the second Sunday in December. To contact The Compassionate Friends of Northeast Arkansas, call 870-476-6025. ♦

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Dickinson holds "October Fest" to benefit Mission Outreach

On Saturday, October 26, an "October Fest" was held on the parking lot of Dickinson and Associates Real Estate to benefit Paragould's Mission Outreach, and admission was a canned good or a donation.

Numerous games were provided and the young people, most of whom wore Halloween costumes, were able to throw rings over witches' hats, throw darts at balloons, and toss beanbags. They also picked "pumpkins" from a "pumpkin patch," participated in a cakewalk, and guessed the number of candy pieces in a large jar. The one who guessed closest to the actual number won the jar and all the candy.

Game prizes were given, and a \$50 gift card awarded to the winner of each of the following categories: Best-costumed Family, Best-costumed Pet, and Best-costumed Child. Two Paragould firemen displayed a fire truck for the youngsters, and many of them were able to have their pictures made with the firemen and truck. The winners and additional pictures of the event can be seen on the Dickinson and Associates Real Estate Facebook page. ♦



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Christmas tree lighting, auction set at AMMC

The Arkansas Methodist Medical Center Auxiliary and The Foundation will hold the annual Auxiliary Christmas Tree Lighting and The Foundation's Christmas Auction Monday, December 2, at 6 p.m.

Beautifully decorated Christmas trees, swags, wreaths, poinsettias and centerpieces donated by local individuals and organizations will be auctioned off with the proceeds benefiting The Foundation at AMMC.

The auction and accompanying entertainment will take place in the Arkansas Methodist Medical Center Herget Atrium.

For more information, call The Foundation at (870) 239-7077. ♦



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Sophomores victorious in Marmaduke Spirit Link Competition

The junior class at Marmaduke High School conducted a Spirit Link competition in order to raise money for prom.

For two weeks, the juniors sold "spirit links" for 25 cents each or five for a dollar to the 7th-through-12th grade students during their lunch periods.

The class compiling the most spirit links -- and, in turn, proving they were the most spirited by having the longest spirit chain -- was rewarded with a pizza party. In addition to the grand prize, each class' spirit chain was stretched across the gym floor at the homecoming pep rally on Friday, November 15, and the lucky student whose name appeared on the link that broke won a prize package.

Four local businesses donated free coupons for the six Marmaduke students to enjoy a free ice cream cone at Sonic, a free Whopper value meal at Burger King, an 8-ounce free



Coupon pack winners at Marmaduke's homecoming assembly were, from left, Braden Smith, Lexy Harley, Corey Burks, Adrien Reynolds, Elijah Carter and Tyler Garrett.

frozen yogurt at Swirlz, and a free movie pass from the Paragould Cinema 8.

The Spirit Link competition pizza party was won by the sophomore class with a total of 1,565 links. Individual winners of the coupon

packs were photographed after the pep rally. They are: 7th grader Braden Smith, 11th grader Lexy Harley, 8th grader Corey Burks, 9th grader Adrien Reynolds, 12th grader Elijah Carter, and 10th grader Tyler Garrett. ♦

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Girl Scouts organize local "Misfit March" as anti-bullying campaign

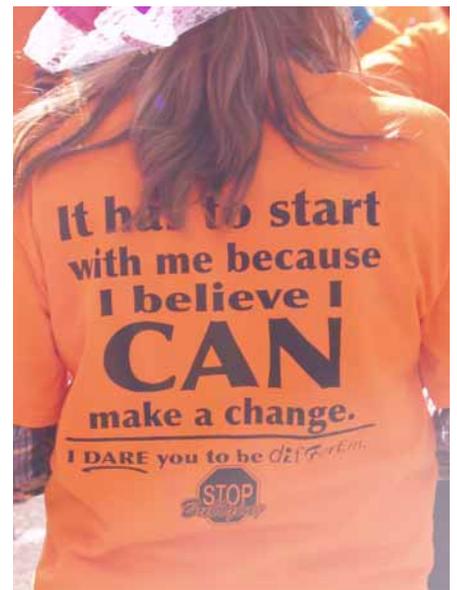
Five local Girl Scouts staged the "Misfit March" in Downtown Paragould, designed to encourage people to take a stand against bullying.

The girls planned the march as their community project in order to earn the Bronze Award. They performed a skit to make others aware that they may be a bully or a witness to bullying.

The girls, members of troops 3433 and 3023, hope to make the march a yearly event. ♦



Girl Scouts Charlene Okert, Brooke Todd, Lacey Ray, Keirsten Sharpe and Ashley Russom performed a skit and staged the "Misfit March" to emphasize their anti-bullying campaign.



Thank you for making 2013 a great year!

						
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From the top: Cub Scouts Ian Ellingston, Sam Stuart, Zachary West, Shawn Fulco, and Assistant Cub Master Lenny Fulco visit the Greene County Museum.

Greene County Museum proves interesting to scouts

Recently, four Cub Scouts representing Pack 138 stepped back in time as they toured the Greene County Museum in Paragould.

The scouts seemed fascinated by the historical artifacts on display. Shawn Fulco shared his thoughts on early life in Greene County when he said, "It sure looked like a bunch of hard work back then."

Assistant Cub Master Lenny Fulco added, "We had a great time and plan to bring more boys back soon."

For their efforts, the Cub Scouts earned their "Go-see-it" badges after taking in all the museum has to offer.

The Greene County Museum, located at 130 South 14th Street in Paragould, is open on Fridays and Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. and by appointment.

To learn more about the museum, go to www.greencountymuseum.com or befriend the Greene County Museum and the Paragould History Trail on the Facebook page.

Admission is always free, but donations are appreciated. ♦

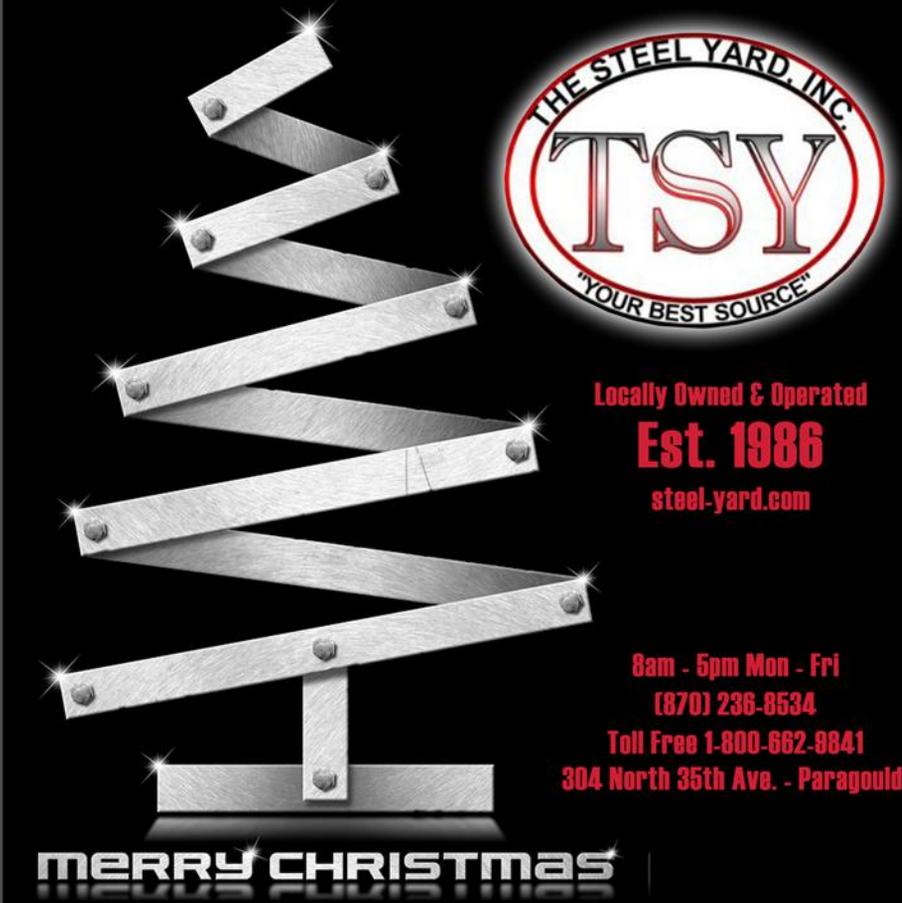
Merry Christmas!

May your loved ones know the joy of independence, and may they experience the blessings of family and friends this holiday season.

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MERRY CHRISTMAS



A sidewalk revitalization project has both added new walkways and repaired old ones throughout the city. Workers shown here are building sidewalks on Rector Road.



Sidewalk project making a difference around town

An "80-20" matching grant from the Arkansas Highway Transportation Department has allowed Paragould to invest some \$320,000 in sidewalk construction and improvements. The city pays 20 percent of the fee, the state of Arkansas 80 percent.

"I applied for twice as much," said Mayor Mike Gaskill, "and we were granted half. We will try to finish up all the sidewalks in town if a grant is available later. I continue to put money in the budget; our goal is to repair all the sidewalks in town. There are too many that are way broken up and some of them have been here a lot longer than I have." ♦



Paragould's new police substation on East Court St. is ready for operation. A complete makeover inside and out will make use of more modern technology and provide updated equipment. Below, Mayor Mike Gaskill and Detective Brian Smith have a discussion in one of the new office spaces.

Police substation ready on east side of Paragould

Paragould's Police Department is moving its Criminal Investigation Division to the new substation at 801 East Court St.

Mayor Mike Gaskill said the facility will have an officer at the desk in the front lobby "in case people need to come by and visit an officer. He may go out on patrol, but then he'll be back. But the CID will be over here full time now."

We saw an opportunity to make use of the building, the old No. 2 Fire Station. The city spent \$188,000 in building construction alone, but added another \$40,000 in technology. The final price tag is somewhere between "\$340,000-\$350,000 total," the mayor said. ♦



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Business Is Good

FNB's Customer Appreciation Day



First National Bank in Paragould hosted its annual Customer Appreciation Day at the downtown branch, treating guests to musical entertainment, a free meal and the chance to win money.

While bank employees acted as servers, customers took advantage of the opportunity to sit back and listen to the music provided by Shannon Freeman and Everyday Life, and hopefully get a shot at entering the Cash Cube to see how much money they could gather. ♦



Lucky customers who had their names drawn were allowed to enter the Cash Cube, like Ryan McBride at far left, to see how many bills they could collect in the prescribed amount of time. Above, the band Everyday Life belts out a tune to the amusement of the crowd. First National Bank employees signed guests up for drawings and also served food and drinks, below left and center, while those in attendance sat back and enjoyed the meal and festivities on an afternoon filled with sunshine, right.

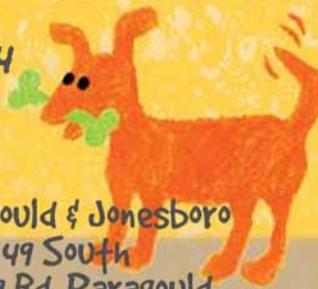


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ZOMBIE WALK



Downtown Paragould hosted its second annual Zombie Walk, sponsored by MOR Media, The Golden Grotto and Main Street Paragould. Hundreds of zombies enjoyed activities ranging from games to a costume contest before walking the streets of Paragould.



Photos by Joy Robinson and Richard Brummett





Jace Dallen King



Brantley Miller



Brooklyn Edwards, Zoe Coker, London King, Aerilyn King and Reece Bruden



Brandon Griffin



Olivia Reeves

HAPPY HALLOWEEN
Kids were out in all sorts of costumes, seeking candy and treats on All Hallow's Eve



Christopher Norman and Channing Norman



London Grace Cooley



Hadyn Cooley



Brooksie Blount and Gabby Blount



Remi Paris Willhite

Happenings



1. Drug-free Teens

The high school basketball teams at Greene County Tech distributed Drug Free Coloring Books to kindergarten and first grade students. They also talked about the importance of staying healthy and drug free -- not only to be an athlete, but to be a good students.

2. FUMC Fall Festival

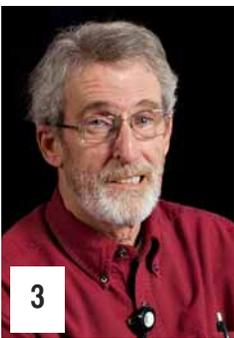
More than 300 people enjoyed the many activities at First United Methodist Church's Fall Festival in October.



People were treated to cake walks, games, trunks, and a live D.J. In the photo: Hannah Risker as the Candy Fairy gives out candy from her vehicle's trunk at the Fall Festival.

3. Chaplain Honored

The Rev. Edward Pruet, chaplain at St. Bernards Hospice, has been named recipient of a Hospice Heart Award from the Hospice and Palliative Care Association of Arkansas, a statewide peer nominated award. ♦



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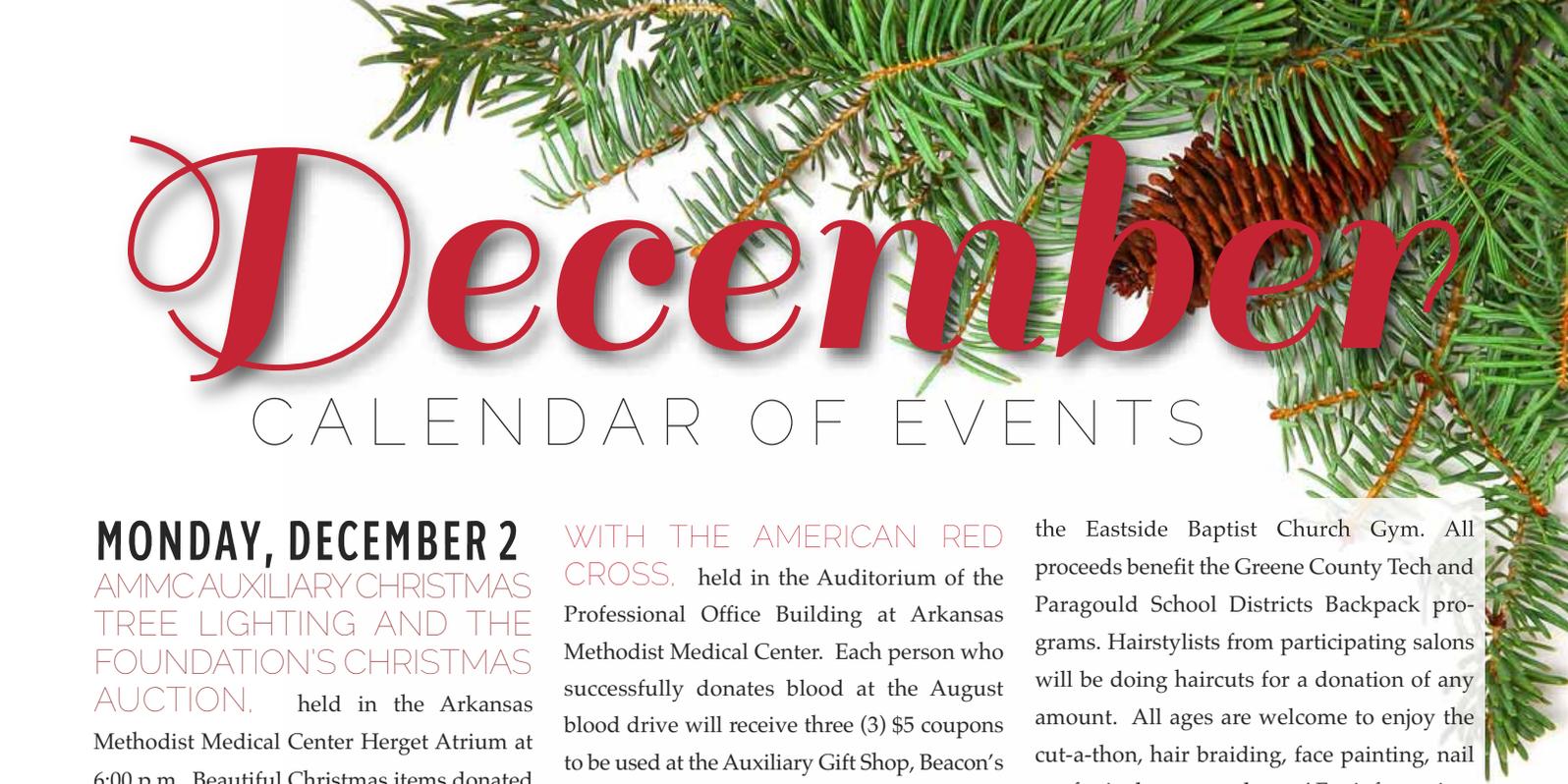
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December

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

MONDAY, DECEMBER 2

AMMC AUXILIARY CHRISTMAS TREE LIGHTING AND THE FOUNDATION'S CHRISTMAS AUCTION.

held in the Arkansas Methodist Medical Center Herget Atrium at 6:00 p.m. Beautiful Christmas items donated by local individuals and organizations will be auctioned off with the proceeds benefitting The Foundation at AMMC. Please join us as we kick off the holiday season with an evening full of fun! For more information, please call The Foundation at (870) 239-7077.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 7

HOLIDAY TRADITIONS. in Downtown Paragould. Featuring horse drawn carriage rides beginning at 10:00 a.m. (\$10) and Santa at Something Sweet from 10:00 am to noon.

ANNUAL PARAGOULD CHRISTMAS PARADE.

themed "Christmas Dreams on Parade" beginning at 3:00 p.m. in Downtown Paragould.

AMMC HOSTS CHILDBIRTH EDUCATION CLASSES.

Session one of two. Held in the auditorium in the Professional Office Building at AMMC. Free to those delivering at AMMC, otherwise it is \$50. 8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. Participants will have a break for lunch. For more information or to register, call AMMC Lactation Services at (870) 239-7467.

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 12

AMMC HOSTS BLOOD DRIVE

WITH THE AMERICAN RED CROSS.

held in the Auditorium of the Professional Office Building at Arkansas Methodist Medical Center. Each person who successfully donates blood at the August blood drive will receive three (3) \$5 coupons to be used at the Auxiliary Gift Shop, Beacon's Deli, Cafeteria, or The Foundation Station. Held from 11:00 am - 5:30 pm.

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 13

THE COLLINS THEATRE PRESENTS "SANTA CLAUS CONQUERS THE MARTIANS, THE MUSICAL."

playing Friday, December 13th at 7:30 p.m.; Saturday December 14th at 2:30 p.m. and 7:30 p.m.; Sunday, December 15th at 2:30 p.m. at the Collins Theatre. This is full-length musical adaptation written right here in Greene County, with all proceeds benefitting the Collins Theatre. Come watch Santa, Kimar (the King of Mars), Torque (a robot) and all the rest as they sing and dance on the Collins stage.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 14

AMMC HOSTS CHILDBIRTH EDUCATION CLASSES. Session two of two and is a feeding class. Held in the auditorium in the Professional Office Building at AMMC. Free to those delivering at AMMC, otherwise it is \$50. 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. For more information or to register, call AMMC Lactation Services at (870) 239-7467.

ELEMENTS SALON HOSTS BACKPACK FOR KIDS CUT-A-THON.

from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. at

the Eastside Baptist Church Gym. All proceeds benefit the Greene County Tech and Paragould School Districts Backpack programs. Hairstylists from participating salons will be doing haircuts for a donation of any amount. All ages are welcome to enjoy the cut-a-thon, hair braiding, face painting, nail art, festival games and more! For information, call Elements Salon at (870) 240-0668.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 15

"NIGHT OF THE FATHER'S LOVE." a Christmas Cantata presented by choir and orchestra in the First United Methodist Church Sanctuary at 7:00 p.m. A reception in the Welcome Center will follow. For more information, call 870-239-8541.

MONDAY, DECEMBER 16

AMMC HOSTS MOMMY AND ME BREASTFEEDING SUPPORT GROUP AND MEETING.

for new and expectant mothers. Offers a chance to meet other moms and share experiences. Held in the Second Floor conference room in the Professional Office Building at AMMC. 6:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m. For more information, call AMMC Lactation Services at (870) 239-7467 or the Greene County Health Unit at (870) 236-7782.

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 20

"TIS THE SEASON" a Christmas dance variety show, will be held at the Collins Theatre beginning at 7:00 p.m. Tickets are \$8 for adults, \$5 for children 12 and under. All proceeds from ticket sales go to St. Jude's Research Hospital. Includes dances in ballet, jazz, tap, contemporary, and lyrical.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 21

CHRISTMAS WITH FRIENDS.

at The Collins Theatre. Music show featuring local artist Chad Garrett with Randy Aden, Ken Wadley, Kevin King, and Brad Owen. This show will feature special guests Lindsey Ford and Dave Burgess. Tickets are \$7 for adults, \$3 for kids 10 and under. Advance tickets will be on sale at The Treasure House. Showtime is 7:00 p.m.

RECURRING EVENTS

First Monday of every month: Paragould Young Professionals First Monday Lunch, noon.

Every Wednesday: Perking on Prueett, 8:30 a.m.-10:00 a.m. At Something Sweet. Find out what is happening in the One and Only downtown Paragould. Your input is welcome.

Second Tuesday of every month: The Greene County Wildlife Club meets at the Paragould Community Center beginning at 6:00 p.m.

Second Thursday of every month: The Compassionate Friends, 7:00 p.m. Southside Community Church Conference Room, 2211 Jones Road. For parents grieving the loss of a child. tcfofnortheastarkansas@yahoo.com.

Second Wednesday of every month: St. Mary's Spaghetti Dinner, 11 a.m.-1:30 p.m. Admission is \$5 for all you can eat spaghetti, salad, garlic bread, dessert and drink. At St. Mary's Catholic Church in Paragould.

T.O.P.S. (Taking Off Pounds Sensibly) Wednesday mornings at the Paragould Community Center in Room E. Private Weigh in at 8:00 a.m.; support meeting at 8:30 a.m. May attend one meeting as a guest.

Please send all information for upcoming events to editor@paragouldpremiere.com

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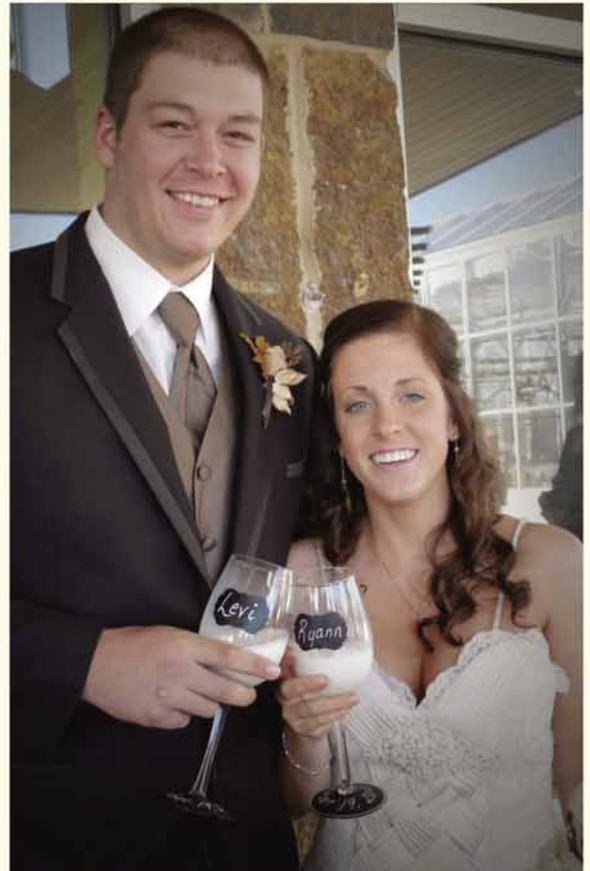
"He's the one!" These were the words my mom said to me the first time she met Levi. His great grandmother Mimah told Levi, "She looks at you the way I still look at great grandpa Charles." Of course, they both were right.

Saturday, October 19, 2013, was the day Ryann Catherine Williams became Levi Whitney Gibson's forever. We met through mutual friends, and we developed a friendship before we started dating. He's my best friend. He accepts me the way I am. We know times may be difficult, but we can weather the storm together, hand in hand.

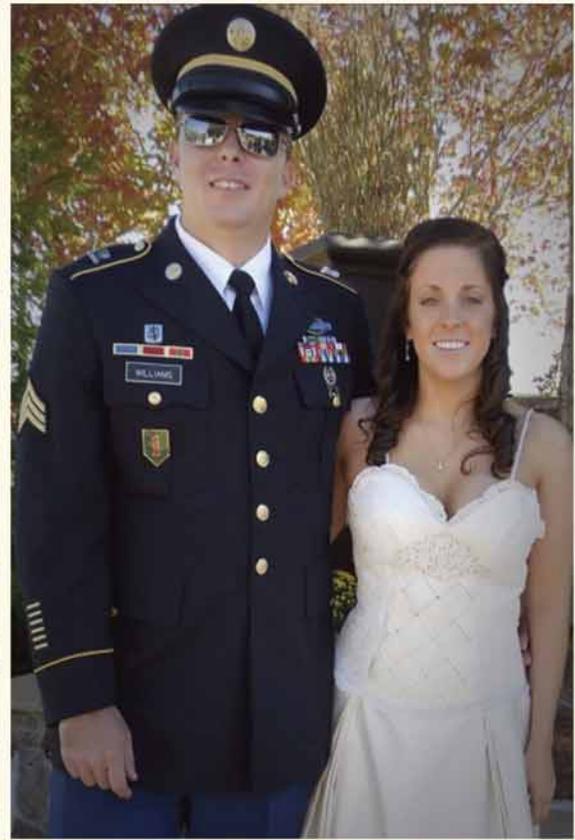
Levi's proposal caught me totally off guard. He said he wanted to surprise me when he asked me to marry him. He drove me to a special place we used to dance, and as we were driving away he said he thought he had a flat. When we got out to check, he dropped to one knee and asked me to marry him. I was so shocked I dropped what I was carrying and said, "Yes!"

Our wedding that followed was a labor of love by family and friends. Ours was the first to be held at Harmony Gardens in Jonesboro. My oldest brother Sergeant Brett Williams came from Fort Benning, Georgia, to give me away. Levi's sister, Emily, decorated our delicious cake. My wedding bouquet and flowers were designed by my dearest friend's mom, Mrs. Audra Napp, from Kentucky. My mother's best friends and Levi's uncle helped with the reception. Friends Leah Honnoll and Sherri Broadway photographed our special day. Even our music was mixed by a friend who owns Throw Down Entertainment.

Four generations of family and all our friends gathered to watch Levi and me promise to be each other's FOREVER. We are truly blessed to be loved by so many, so dearly! Levi is a supervisor at ARI in Marmaduke and Ryann is employed as a dental assistant for Dr. John Shannon and Dr. Jodi Shannon in Jonesboro.



Levi Gibson and Ryann Williams



Engagement Announcements

Helen Marie's PERFECT TOUCH

Our Bridal...

Whitney Ryan & Conner Gatewood
December 7

Laura Pollard & Kyle Thompson
December 14

Sarah Gillmore & Mark Hawkins
December 14

Chelsea Drope & Cord Henson
December 21

Crystal Willis & Zac Adkins
March 1, 2014

Chelsea Fife & Seth Holifield
March 15, 2014

Laura Giles & Aaron Meyer
March 22, 2014

Nicki Steele & Jacob Smalling
March 29, 2014

Kathryn Keel & Alex Rountree
May 17, 2014

Fallyn Davemport & Trey Outlaw
June 7, 2014

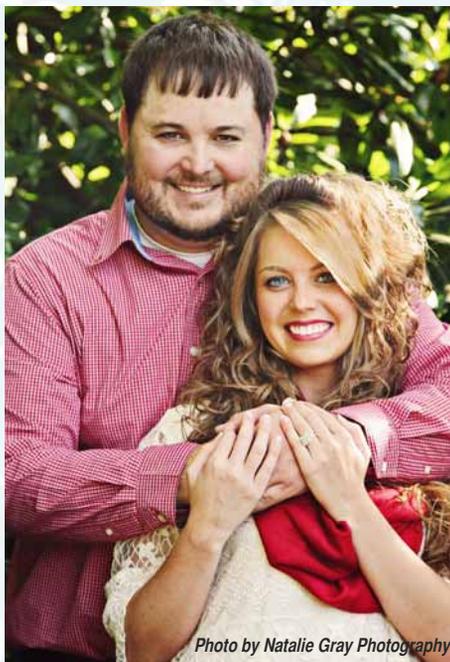
Holly Blankenship & Joshua Small
June 7, 2014

Elisa Diggs & Jordan Owen
June 7, 2014

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Mark Hawkins and Sarah Gillmore

Gillmore-Hawkins

Sarah Gillmore of Paragould and Mark Hawkins of Leachville have announced their plans for a December wedding.

Sarah's parents are Kevin and Marcia Gillmore. Mark is the son of Cole and Kerin Hawkins.

The ceremony will take place on Saturday, December 14, 2013, at the Center Hill Church of Christ in Paragould. ♦

Colley-Bricker

Jordan Colley and Enoch Bricker, both of Paragould, have announced their plans for a December wedding.

Jordan is the daughter of John and Anna Colley.

Enoch's parents are Steve and Debbie Bricker.

The wedding has been set for Saturday, December 28, 2013, at the Red Goose Banquet Hall in Paragould. ♦



Briana Johnson and Tyler Williams

Williams-Johnson

Briana Johnson and Tyler Williams have revealed their plans to be married in a December ceremony.

Briana is the daughter of Brian and Sherry Johnson of Broseley, Missouri. Tyler's parents are Tony and Andrea Williams of Paragould.

The couple will exchange vows at 4 p.m. Saturday, December 14, at Black River Baptist Church in Broseley with a reception to follow. ♦



Jordan Colley and Enoch Bricker

STAY TUNED

What's in Store For Next Month



Cover

We will focus on a rediscovery effort, featuring many of the wonderful treasures we have right here at home, places we often take for granted or possibly overlook ... like Crowley's Ridge State Park, The Collins Theatre, or the Greene County Library.



Events

December will be the time for the Paragould Christmas Parade, and we'll recap the event with plenty of photographs. ♦

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