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On the cover: Tyner McCullar and Pretty Blue Boon
Photo by: Amber Oxley Photography

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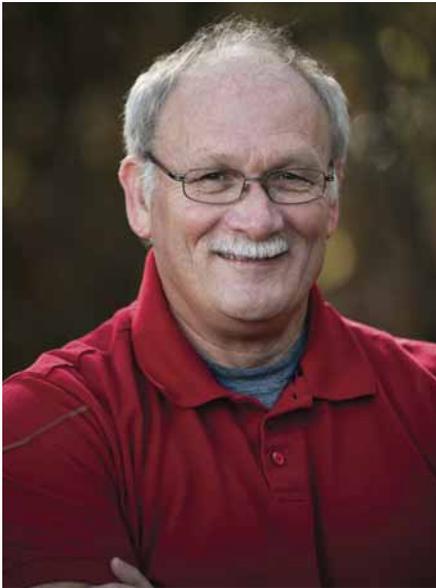
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From the Managing Editor...



Richard Brummett, Managing Editor

There is a Chinese proverb that says, "There is only one pretty child in the world, and every mother has it."

This month we have selected a handful of "amazing kids" as our feature subjects and

we know right up front that someone is bound to look at the list and say, "Hey, my kid is amazing, too!"

And they will be right. There are scores of kids doing outstanding things in and around our community, but there is no way to feature each of them. It will not be necessary for you to call us and suggest we do a story on your loved one -- just appreciate them for who they are and for the wonderful things they do, and sit back and read about these other outstanding kids we've chosen.

We picked a select few who represent what is going on with our young people, kids who are excelling in the classroom, in extracurricular activities, in the world of music and in just making efforts that come straight from the heart. All have connections to the Northeast Arkansas area.

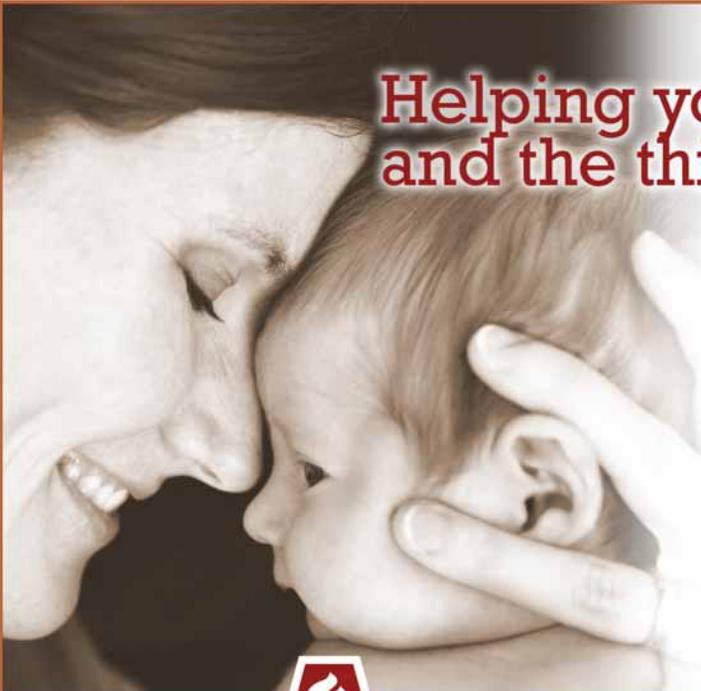
We continue to give ourselves a facelift, trying some new things with layout and design throughout our print version of Premiere Magazine. Along those lines we have also made changes to our electronic edition, continuing to change our focus to

that of a more regional approach. Henceforth, readers wishing to see the online version should visit premiere-magazine.com (instead of paragouldpremiere.com) and may reach the editor via email at editor@premiere-magazine.com.

--

Last month we presented some hidden treasures from our area -- things and places we tend to overlook and forget what assets they are to us. Now we have another we'd like to share. If you are a music lover and have never taken advantage of the Ultimate Oldies Show, you are definitely missing out.

On New's Year Eve the local singers and musicians entertained a packed house at the Collins Theatre in Paragould and I have to say my family and I were extremely impressed with the level of talent exhibited -- excellent musicians, incredible singers, all from right here in our area. The group performs periodically at the Collins (you can check them out on the Ultimate Oldies Facebook page) and the evening will be well worth your time. ♦



Helping you prepare for birth and the things that come after.

Arkansas Methodist Medical Center welcomes Pat Dennis, RN, BSN, IBCLC as Educator for Women's Services.

Pat Dennis will be responsible for prenatal education including childbirth preparation, breastfeeding and infant safety classes as well as lactation services to include inpatient and outpatient consultations. Prior to joining the team at AMMC, Pat worked at Mercy Hospital in Springfield, Missouri for 15 years as the Coordinator for Prenatal Education and Lactation Services.

Pat holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Nursing from Southwest Baptist University in Springfield, MO. She has been an International Board Certified Lactation Consultant for 11 years and a Lamaze Certified Childbirth Educator for 10 years. She is also a certified Child Passenger Safety Technician.

Pat Dennis, RN, BSN, IBCLC
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Arkansas Methodist Medical Center

To learn more about classes and services offered by Pat Dennis, visit our website or Facebook page.
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Craighead Electric's Chili Watts have carved out legendary status when it comes to fundraising for the Area I Special Olympics at the Polar Plunge.

Craighead Electric team sets the bar high in fundraising

When it comes to giving back to your community, there is probably no cooler way than to participate in the Polar Plunge, an event held annually in support of area Special Olympics programs. However, the Polar Plunge is anything but your typical fundraiser.

Numerous organizations around the globe take up donations for willing participants to leap into frigid waters during the winter months as a show of support for a particular group or organization. Locally, the Polar Plunge supports the Area 1 Special Olympics and is put together by Area Directors Vonnie Greer and Audrea King.

Anyone who wishes to participate can do so by signing up on a team, or joining a work-related team, as many employees with the Craighead Electric Cooperative do each year. The co-op has been participating for nine years, and in 2013 raised half of the whopping \$41,103 taken in at the plunge. It was the largest fundraising year for the event to date. Craighead Electric Cooperative managed to raise more than \$21,000 last year alone for the cause. The electric company employees have dubbed themselves the "Chili Watts," the name they plunge under each time.

Craighead Electric CEO Brian Duncan said, "We are focused on this Special Olympics project as one of our main fundraisers. Our employees enjoy participating and we are finding that we are able to get some of our company's vendors on board for this fundraiser as well." Duncan said, in addition to employees forming teams and fundraising, some enjoy challenging each other and making bets to see who will actually get into the water.

Greer said, "We are so blessed to have the 'Chili Watts' to support Special Olympics. There are not enough words to express how grateful we are to have them as a sponsor. Their support and the support of this community is amazing. Audrea and I brag on our community every time we are asked to speak at other Special Olympics meetings and events." ♦

-- Jennifer Thompson

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Your heart's health rests in your hands

Whether it's achy-breaky, left in San Francisco, under a total eclipse or being dragged around by a duo of rock legends, that blood-pumping organ in your chest needs your attention. (Otherwise, there could be a heartache tonight. We don't want that.)

Cardiovascular disease is the nation's number one killer, according to the American Heart Association. And while there are some factors in your health profile that are beyond your control, a great deal of your heart's health rests in your hands.

Here are five ways to put a little love in your heart:

1) Eat right. Pat Malone, RN and Certified Diabetes Educator at Arkansas Methodist Medical Center in Paragould, says this is a combination of making healthier choices and limiting portions (see #3).

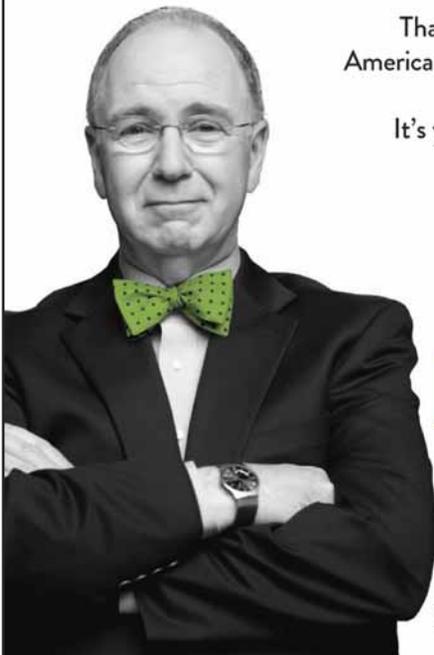
Her recipe for success: Limit fats to 30 grams per day, restricting saturated fats and avoiding trans fats entirely. And get your grains on. They add variety to your menu and help control cholesterol.

"Try grains that you may not have heard of: quinoa, bulgur and buckwheat," she said, and also recommended more familiar standbys like oats, barley and rye.

2) Be active. Nearly 34% of adults in Greene County reported getting no exercise in the previous 30 days. Add a walk or jog to your daily routine. Join a gym, and if you need support, look into group fitness classes. There are several websites and smartphone apps that will help you stay motivated and organized, and also can track your progress in great detail.

3) Manage your weight. Add numbers 1 and 2 to your habits, and this one will likely take care of itself. Unfortunately, obesity is a growing (no pun intended) problem: 38.7% of Greene County's children and 66.9% of its adults are obese. Malone says it's all about the self-discipline of portion control.

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*Each tax situation is different and not everyone will receive a refund. In a 2013 H&R Block study of tax returns by people who did their own taxes, nearly half had differences, and approximately 40% of people with differences were entitled to a larger refund. OBTP#B13696 ©2013 HRB Tax Group, Inc.

"If Americans could just grasp this concept, many of our chronic diseases would virtually disappear," she said.

A good rule of thumb is actually a rule of fist: Limit portion sizes to roughly the size of your clenched fist. The exceptions, according to the AHA, are meat portions, which should be half the size of your fist, and plain vegetables, which you can eat to your heart's content. (But no dressings, dips, or toppings.)

4) **Control your stress.** If reading this article has stressed you out, AMMC Wellness Center Director Andre Watson is here to help.

"Stress and how you handle or not handle it can be the game changer," Watson said. When he meets with new members of the Wellness Center, Watson said he covers four pointers for managing stress: Keep regular visits with your physician, plan ahead as much as possible (he recommends using a planner to organize your day and tasks), seek supportive relationships (be open about your desire to get healthier), and finally, reward yourself for your lifestyle changes.

Reward yourself?

That's right: "Sleep in an extra 30 minutes on your day off," Watson said. "Take a long overdue trip with your spouse or a close friend. Sneak in a movie you've been wanting to see. Treat yourself with as many non-food rewards as possible."

5) **Stop smoking.** We've known the dangers of smoking for decades -- the AHA calls it "the single most important preventable cause of premature death in the United States." Yet smoking's pull is undeniable. Break the habit one day at a time, and seek out as much help as you need. Your long-term health is worth it, both financially and in quality of life.

After all, you only get one heart -- don't go breakin' it.

Sources: American Heart Association website (www.heart.org) and Aspire Arkansas Report, 2nd edition, compiled and published by the Arkansas Community Foundation (www.arcf.org).

-- Terry Austin

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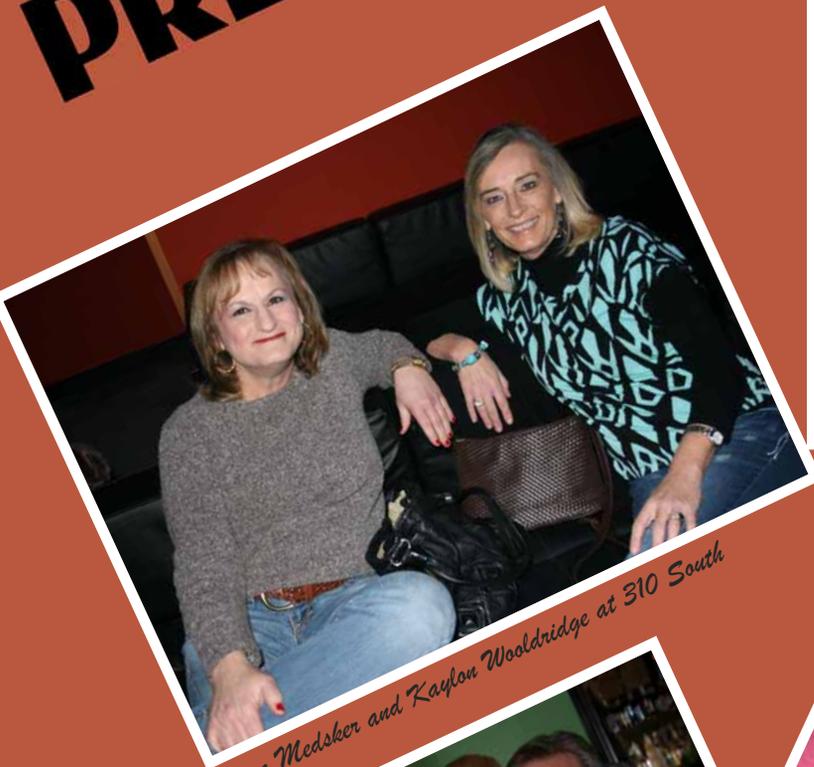
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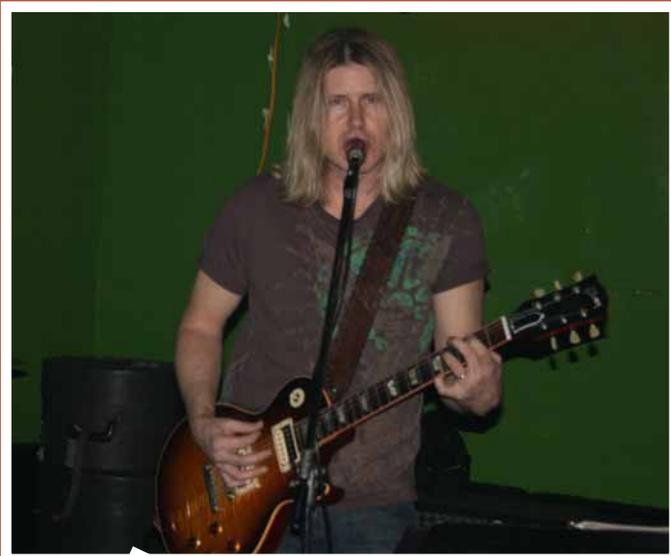
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*As seen on Broadway,
"Always, Patsy Cline,"
starring Vicki Bishop as
Patsy and Carol Belford-
Lewallen as Louise at the
Imperial Dinner Theater in
Pocahontas.*



*Sherry Dunavant, Eddie Dunavant, Misty Dunavant,
Heidy Needham and Rob Needham at Skinny J's*

CASA program can always use more volunteers

CASA of the 2nd Judicial District covers Craighead, Greene, Clay, Poinsett and Mississippi counties in Arkansas.

Team members train and support volunteers who advocate for children who have been neglected or abused and placed into foster care.

In 2012, there were 645 children in the five mentioned counties who were in the foster care system, in need of a CASA volunteer. Of

the 645 children in foster care, 148 are in Greene County. In 2013, Greene County had at least 160 cases of children living in foster care with most court cases having multiple children. CASA served less than one fourth of those children.

In 2013, Greene County had at least 160 cases of children living in foster care with most court cases having multiple children. CASA served less than one fourth of those children.

The Department of Human Services statistical report from 2012 states that in Arkansas there are 13,816 children in foster care; of that, 4,144 were due to neglect and 3,198 due to drug use, with children ages 0-5 being the highest age of abused and/or neglected in the state.

Anyone with a desire to become a voice for abused and neglected children in the court system, or wanting more information, can contact the local Advocate Coordinator, Amanda Frankenberger, at casa2ndgreenecounty@yahoo.com.

“You have never really lived until you have done something for someone who can never repay you.” – Author Unknown ♦



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Outstanding Teachers



Belinda Hampton Marmaduke

Belinda started teaching because "it is something that I love. If it is something you love, and it feels right, then it doesn't seem like a job. Now here I am 20 years later!"

Belinda spent seven years at the School of the 21st Century in Paragould before coming to the Marmaduke Child Development Center, where she has been employed the rest of the time. "I love teaching at Marmaduke," she said, "because of the family atmosphere and the great group of teachers that I work with."

She said she loves to see the faces of students when they master a skill.

"It is also rewarding for me to be able to watch kids as they walk across the stage to receive their high school diploma," Belinda said. "This year will be my first group of kids I had to graduate from Marmaduke High School. We have a unique situation at Marmaduke. We are all under one roof and so I still get to see so many of my former students as I walk through the halls each day."

She has been married to Mickey Hampton for 34 years and they have two daughters: Kalinda is working on her early childhood degree and is currently employed at the child development center in Marmaduke. Micka is married to James Hatley and is a plant specialist at Lowe's. ♦



Cathy Moss Paragould

Cathy says she chose teaching "because I really like working with young people. I want to challenge them to learn more about the world around them. I love teaching students who have hardships and may be perceived as difficult. These students can have special needs. Students excel at learning when they know their teacher cares."

Some of her favorite teaching moments include "dissecting fetal pigs in the science lab classes at Oak Grove Middle School" with the fifth- and sixth-grade students, she said.

Cathy has been teaching for 19 years, including stops in Green Forest, Arkansas, and Joplin, Missouri, before landing with the Paragould School District.

She currently is a Science/ALE instructor at Paragould at both the high school and junior high levels.

Her husband, David, is the engineering department manager at Paragould Light Water and Cable.

"I have two boys in college at ASU," she said, referring to Nathan and Daniel, "and a beautiful 17-year-old daughter, Allison, that is a junior in high school." ♦



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Four more teachers at Greene County Tech earn National Board Certification

Four Greene County Tech teachers recently gained National Board certification, bringing to 47 the number of NBCT instructors in the district.

Alissa Prather teaches math at GCT Jr. High School. She has eight years of teaching experience, all in the GCT School District.

She graduated from Harding Academy High School in Searcy, and graduated college from Harding University in Searcy. She has a BSE in mid level Math/Science.

Alissa and husband Chris have three children, Cayden (5), Calhan (3), and Aylah (9 months).

In her spare time, Alissa enjoys watching football. She also likes to travel and enjoys spending time with her kids and family.

Devon Rogers teaches special education at GCT Elementary School. She has five years of teaching experience, all in the GCT School District.

She graduated from Harrison High School, and graduated college from the University of Arkansas with a BSE in Human Environmental Science and received a BSE in Early Childhood Education and Special Education from Arkansas State University.

Devon is married to Casey Rogers, who works at GCT High School as an Agriculture teacher, and they have a son, Jackson.

She likes to spend time with her family, though she is very busy with the GCT FFA. She has also served for several years as the Sr. High Dance Team co-sponsor.

Kodie Potter teaches kindergarten at GCT Primary School. She has seven years of teaching experience, all in the GCT School District.

She graduated from Greene County Tech High School and graduated with a BSE in Elementary Education and an MSE in Theory



Kodie Potter, Devon Rogers, Alissa Prather and Amy Sloan are Tech's newest Board Certified instructors.

and Practice from Arkansas State University.

Kodi and husband Clint have two children, a son, Brik, and a daughter, Andi.

In her spare time, Kodie interacts with her children, who are five and two.

Amy Sloan teaches English at GCT Jr. High School. She has nine years of teaching

experience, all in the GCT School District.

She graduated from Valley View High School and graduated with a degree in Journalism and Public Relations from Arkansas State University. She completed the state's non-traditional licensure program in 2004.

She and husband Lance are parents to Rachel, Madeline, Caroline, Ian and Sophie. ♦



Diet, the dreaded four-letter word, is critical factor in healthy lifestyle

“Diet.” Ew. There’s just something about that word. It’s got “die” in it, for one. Thing is, you can’t beat it.

What I mean is, you can’t out-train a crummy diet. People think they can. They can’t. Athletes think they can. They can’t. Okay, maybe Michael Phelps can . . . but you ain’t Michael Phelps. And just think how much more unbeatable Michael Phelps’ world records would be if he ate healthier, not to mention how much better Michael Phelps will feel when he’s 65!

Diet is 80%. (It’s really 85%.) You could sooner get healthy by not exercising and eating right than you could by exercising and eating wrong. Yes, you could sooner allow your diet to take care of your weight loss and those “love

The Get-Fit Guy

By Shannon Beasley



handles” (let’s be honest: they’re hate handles, aren’t they?), than your workouts. In fact, that’s what you want to happen. Allow your diet to take care of your body composition. That will free you to exercise when you want and how you like. Use your workouts to get fitter, to sculpt out your ideal body -- the body you desire; don’t use your workouts to fight your weight, don’t use them to “cover” a crummy diet.

Sadly, we’re stuck 24 hours a day in an environment that promotes crummy diets. Think of this: a heroin

You could sooner get healthy by not exercising and eating right than you could by exercising and eating wrong.

addict, once off the drug, can never have to come into contact with heroin again for the rest of his life. He never has to see it, touch it, smell it, be around it again, if he chooses. How about a “food addict,” someone with an unhealthy relationship with food? (And if you’re overweight, there’s a good chance that’s you -- you’ve shown you can’t be trusted around food.) For a food addict, his “heroin” is on every street corner, on his TV, at his grandma’s, at his work, in his cabinets!

I know from what I speak. For too many years my diet was the saddest thing that’s ever happened in America. If the world’s fittest man was to move in with me, he’d have been dead inside of two weeks. “Diet” was one of those four-letter words you didn’t say in polite company. When I thought of a diet all I saw were cell doors slamming shut . . . an inmate in prison.

But diet doesn’t have to be that way; it doesn’t have to be some scary thing that gives you anxiety. A few lateral moves, a few chips away (pardon the pun) at the edges, a few swaps of insane foods with sane foods and you will get to your goals.

In the coming months we’ll talk about just such moves. A proper, balanced diet is the key to your looking better, feeling better and performing better -- and it’s a get-out-of-jail-free card for obesity!

Exercise is important, don’t get me wrong. But diet? That’s critical.

You are better than you think you are. You can do more than you think you can. Go get fit!

Shannon Beasley is a certified personal trainer. Contact him at shannon.k.beasley@gmail.com.

Disclaimer: Please recognize the fact that it is your responsibility to work directly with your physician before, during, and after seeking fitness and diet consultation. As such, any information provided is not to be followed without the prior approval of your physician. If you choose to use this information without the prior consent of your physician, you are agreeing to accept full responsibility for your decision. ♦

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Civitan Club hosts wheelchair hoops tourney

The 3rd Annual Roll to the Goal 3-on-3 Wheelchair Basketball Tournament, hosted by the Paragould Civitan Club, will be held Saturday, March 1, 2014.

Action will begin at 9:00 a.m. in the Paragould Community Center gymnasium. Entry fee is \$45 per team with entrants separated into Male/Co-Ed, All Women, and Youth divisions. The tournament will follow a double elimination format.

Every participant will receive a t-shirt. Trophies will be awarded for 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place teams in each division. The tournament schedule will be posted on the Paragould Civitan Facebook page, and emailed to each player by February 24.

Registration forms and a check payable to Paragould Civitan must be mailed in by February 13, 2014. Late entries will not be accepted; space is limited.

Sponsorship opportunities are also available.

The cost of a sponsorship is \$100. As an event sponsor, you will receive recognition in all promotional materials, a 1.5 x 2 ft. color sign with your logo on display in the gymnasium during the event, and your logo will be printed on the tournament t-shirt.

The Paragould Civitan Club is a 501(c)4 organization, so event sponsorship is tax deductible. Sponsorship deadline is also February 13, 2014.

Roll to the Goal began in 2012 as a club fundraising effort to build the only handicap accessible public playground for the Paragould community. Because of the generosity of the people and businesses in our community, the playground will become a reality this year. The Civitan Club plans to continue fundraising through Roll to the Goal each year to add to and improve the playground that will be built at Harmon Park.

Contact Mary Crawford at 870-476-7500 or by email at marylyn71@yahoo.com to obtain a registration or sponsorship form. ♦

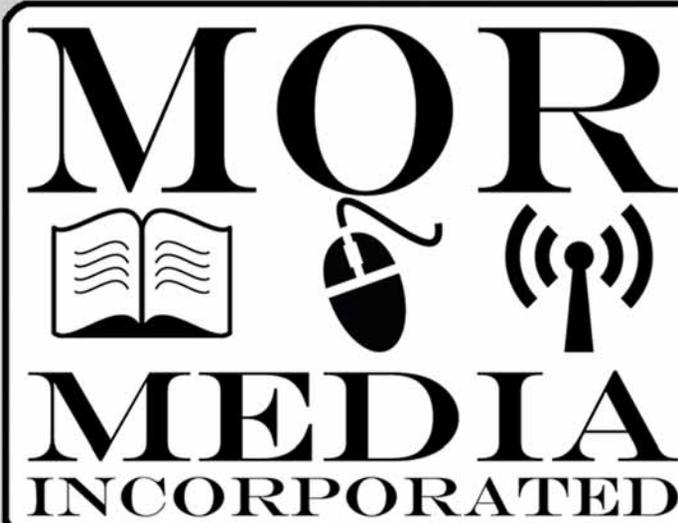
Fightin' Toms banquet is February 22 in Paragould

The 16th Annual National Wild Turkey Federation Scatter Creek Fightin' Toms Chapter of Paragould will have its annual Hunting Heritage Banquet on Saturday, February 22, 2014.

Doors will open at 6:00 p.m. and dinner starts at 7:00 p.m. at the Paragould Community Center on Highway 49 South.

Single tickets are \$45, couples tickets are \$55, Jakes (0-15 years old) are \$15, sponsors couple tickets are \$270 and a corporate sponsor table (gets 8 people in) is \$575.

The meal will be catered by Strawberry's BBQ of Holcomb, Missouri, and there will be multiple raffles and both a live and silent auction. ♦



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		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		

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Miles Clonts, 2, was full of energy while playing near the Paragould Community Center. Miles is the son of Rachael and Lucas Clonts of Paragould.



With the supplies above and a bit of creativity, you can produce the projects at right with little trouble -- and lots of fun for Valentine's Day.



Projects put 'warm and fuzzy feeling' back into Valentine's Day

Possibly, Valentine's Day is anything but romantic. History pens Saint Valentine as a priest well known for his defiance of Emperor Claudius II. Claudius considered marriage an unlawful preoccupation for young soldiers, and Saint Valentine did not comply. His performance of secret marriage ceremonies cost him his head!

An unconventional story is the perfect preface to the unlikely object of my affection this year: My four-year-old and his preschool crush.

His lady love is not Mommy but Emma, and sugar is one key to a girl's heart.

We came up with a few confections to impress a classroom of kiddos and the other blonde in my little boy's life.



By Tiffany Napier

1. Kiss Kabobs: No kissing allowed, of course, but it makes for a cute theme. Spear your favorite gummy candies with a candy stick and seal the cellophane with baker's twine from any craft store.

2. Candy Wreath: Paint a floral wreath a festive color, attach candy with floral pins and add a bow for a little drama.

Tip: Take the wreath to hang on your child's classroom door on the 1st of February and let

the kids take it down and distribute the candy on the 14th. Extended fun for everyone!

3. Love Potion: Take a water bottle and tie on Kool-Aid mix, a straw and a tag with baker's twine. Let your little one apply lettered stickers. It's fun, super easy and magical!

4. Dig it: Add some festive colored candy to a bag with a shovel. A small sand shovel would be ideal, but I couldn't find it in season. Tie it off with some ribbon and themed message, "I DIG you!"

Just a few projects to put the warm and fuzzy back in Valentine's Day. Even if the legend has it, these little sentiments will have the little ones thinking anything but, "Off with his head!" No history repeating itself here -- XOXO. ♦

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JUNE 21, 2014

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OCTOBER 25, 2014



First baby of the year at AMMC

The first baby of the new year was born at Arkansas Methodist Medical Center on Thursday, January 2, 2014. Travis and Pamela Benham of Walnut Ridge welcomed Jackson Lee Benham at 8:19 a.m. Jackson weighed 7 pounds, 4.9 ounces and was 20.1 inches long. He joins sisters Kylie (3) and Carley (4). The family received several gifts including a case of diapers and a case of formula from the AMMC Central Supply Department, two knitted hats from the First United Methodist Church Threads of Faith group, a Kiss the Cook gift certificate, a Kids Savings Account from First National Bank, a floral arrangement from Ballard's Flowers and an Arkansas Methodist Medical Center baby spoon. Pictured left to right are Kylie, Carley, Jackson and Pamela Benham. Not pictured is Travis Benham. ♦

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AMAZING KIDS



Tyner McCullar:

Champion rider gives credit where it's due

Tyner McCullar is a champion but finds it necessary to share the credit.

For one thing, he finished in a first-place tie with his good friend Cade Shepard at the National Cutting Horse Association (NCHA) 2012 Eastern Nationals held in Jackson, Mississippi.

For another, he was riding his sister's horse.

Competing in the Junior Youth Division, McCullar, now 14, guided Pretty Blue Boon, also known as Sally, to the high-point total in the western riding event.

Cutting horses are trained in separating cattle from a herd and McCullar said he lives for the moment, not necessarily for the victories or prize money.

"It doesn't matter if I've had a terrible day," the Paragould eighth-grader said, "it's so much fun to just go out and show a horse. It's not so much about winning as it is showing a horse, just because the horse turned out good at the end of the day. It doesn't even matter what horse. Everything's just okay when I'm showing."

He wound up riding sister Gena's horse during his championship run because she had entered the competition but had to forego it due to her high school basketball team's earning a berth in the state finals.

"She probably has the best horse in Arkansas," McCullar said. "I had shown it



Tyner, above, working Sally during competition. Below is his sister, Gena, who gets much of the credit for his success, by his own admission.



once or twice behind her back and she was at the state finals ... so I hopped on her horse and worked a cow or two. I made it to the finals, and then I won. That was the first time I had won anything, and it sort of jumpstarted me. I'm doing pretty good now. I've won like six or seven thousand dollars since that, and I hadn't won six or seven thousand dollars, total, before.

"I guess I have to give my sister some credit for that."

Actually, he has no problem sharing the spotlight with Gena or anyone else. "I kind of inherited the gene," he said of his initiation to

riding. "My dad and my sister sort of passed it on down. I've been riding since I was born, and showing since I was 4.

"I've had a few different trainers, but I probably never would have gotten on a horse without my dad and my sister teaching me the ins and outs."

He said he doesn't spend as many hours in the saddle as one would imagine in order to stay sharp, concentrating instead on basketball right now. In the summertime, shows are sometimes a week long and "it's almost like practicing when you're showing. You're spending a lot of time on your horse."

When he does train, he works under the tutelage of father/son team Bill and Kevin Miller, who have helped him sharpen his approach to riding and competing.

"I wouldn't be as good without them," he said. "Everything they tell me, I try to work on. It's a very mental game. Even at school, I'm sometimes going over what they have told me in my head. The mental part is super important."

McCullar, the son of Brent and Laura McCullar, said he "might possibly be a trainer some day, I'm not sure. But one thing I am sure of: I will stay around cutting horses all my life." ♦

-- Richard Brummett

AMAZING KIDS

CONNER WEBB, 17
VOLUNTEER

As Crowley's Ridge Academy's Student Council President, Conner Webb is tasked with the responsibility of making life better for his fellow students. And last semester, he launched a project that allowed them to make life better for needy kids in Panama.

Conner, a senior and the son of Darrell and Debbie Webb, asked students at CRA to raise funds to help the residents of Casa Jogar, a children's home on the outskirts of Panama City that Conner and his family have visited while doing mission work. "I had been to the campus three times before this trip," he said. "This trip was mainly to support and encourage the students who were graduating and provide the children with Christmas presents."

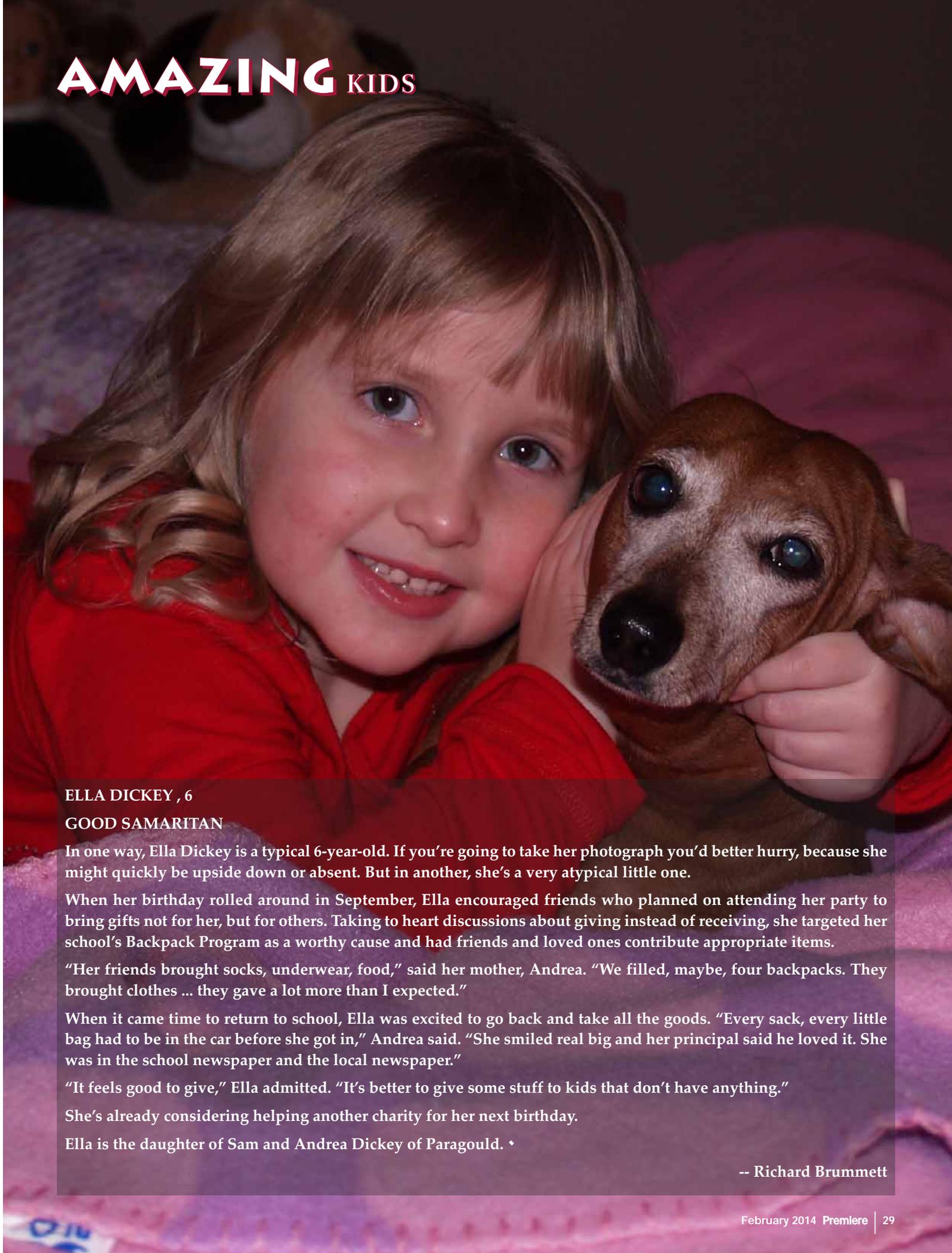
There are 53 students living in Casa Jogar, and Conner hoped to raise enough to give each child an extra \$20 or so to spend on gifts. "I cannot take any of the credit for the work that was accomplished," Conner said. "The CRA students and their families jumped at the opportunity to help. They contributed more than twice the amount of money that I had hoped to raise."

In all, \$1,400 was donated for the children of Casa Jogar, enough to also buy a pair of couches for the home. But the main reason for the trip, which Conner took along with his dad and others, was to provide a brighter Christmas for the children. Mission accomplished: each child had \$60 for himself, plus \$10 to spend on a gift for one of the other children.

"I had the opportunity to help the children shop with their money, but they made their own choices," Conner said. "I did have the opportunity to help purchase and install a lot of batteries for the toys they chose." ♦

-- Terry Austin





ELLA DICKEY , 6

GOOD SAMARITAN

In one way, Ella Dickey is a typical 6-year-old. If you're going to take her photograph you'd better hurry, because she might quickly be upside down or absent. But in another, she's a very atypical little one.

When her birthday rolled around in September, Ella encouraged friends who planned on attending her party to bring gifts not for her, but for others. Taking to heart discussions about giving instead of receiving, she targeted her school's Backpack Program as a worthy cause and had friends and loved ones contribute appropriate items.

"Her friends brought socks, underwear, food," said her mother, Andrea. "We filled, maybe, four backpacks. They brought clothes ... they gave a lot more than I expected."

When it came time to return to school, Ella was excited to go back and take all the goods. "Every sack, every little bag had to be in the car before she got in," Andrea said. "She smiled real big and her principal said he loved it. She was in the school newspaper and the local newspaper."

"It feels good to give," Ella admitted. "It's better to give some stuff to kids that don't have anything."

She's already considering helping another charity for her next birthday.

Ella is the daughter of Sam and Andrea Dickey of Paragould. ♦

-- Richard Brummett



Matthew and Emma Rose Taylor
MUSICIANS

In a small town just south of Knoxville, Tenn., a couple of kids with ties to Paragould are making a fair amount of noise.

Matthew (17) and Emma Rose (10) Taylor, grandchildren of Paragould resident Jack Taylor, form the Chilhowee Mountain Band, a sibling sensation in bluegrass music circles. As the accolades and awards pile up, this talented duo keeps it real by being just that: Real.

"We try to be the best that we can," the Taylors said via email. "This takes a lot of time and energy. During the times we are preparing for an upcoming performance we sacrifice a lot other things that we might enjoy doing. However, it is usually all worth it in the end."

The Taylors have performed twice at Dollywood's Bluegrass and Barbecue Festival, and Matthew was just accepted to the Acoustic Music Seminar at the Savannah (Ga.) Music Festival, a prestigious program that selected only 16 students nationwide this year. (It will be Matthew's second time to participate.) And while his

goals are lofty -- including becoming "a member of a successful professional band" and "winning the Walnut Valley National Flatpick Guitar Championship" -- Matthew is making solid backup plans as well. This fall, he'll enroll at the University of Tennessee, where he'll double-major in electrical engineering and music performance.

Matthew was first and foremost a guitarist, but he's also become an accomplished mandolin player after picking up the instrument within the last couple of years.

For her part, Emma Rose is learning the ukulele even as she takes voice lessons and sings with the Scottie Singers, a choral group at nearby Maryville College.

While they may not be just up the street, you can still watch these talented kids perform.

For a chance to see them in action -- look them up on YouTube: www.youtube.com/user/slowpickr/videos or on their website: <http://chilhoweemountainband.com>. ♦

-- Terry Austin



GEORGE VAUGHAN, 9

TRIATHLETE

It's not every day that a 9-year-old chooses the triathlon over more typical sports, but George -- inspired by his grandfather's participation in Ironman competitions -- settled on the grueling three-event contests about two years ago.

Lining up against others in his age group, the Greene County Tech third grader has been among the top finishers several times in the races that require him to swim, bike ride and run specific distances, all determined by the entrant's age.

"I really enjoy competing," he said. "I like to train here a lot (at the Paragould Community Center pool) and I like to ride a bike and I like to run. I've won third place three times and second place once."

George is the son of Ryan and Jennifer Vaughan and his parents are justifiably pleased with his efforts.

"We're really proud of George," his mom said. "He enjoys what he does and has lots of athletic ability, and uses it in a different way. The triathlon combines the things he likes to do the most. It's fun for us. We already have a basketball player, so we get to see a different side with this."

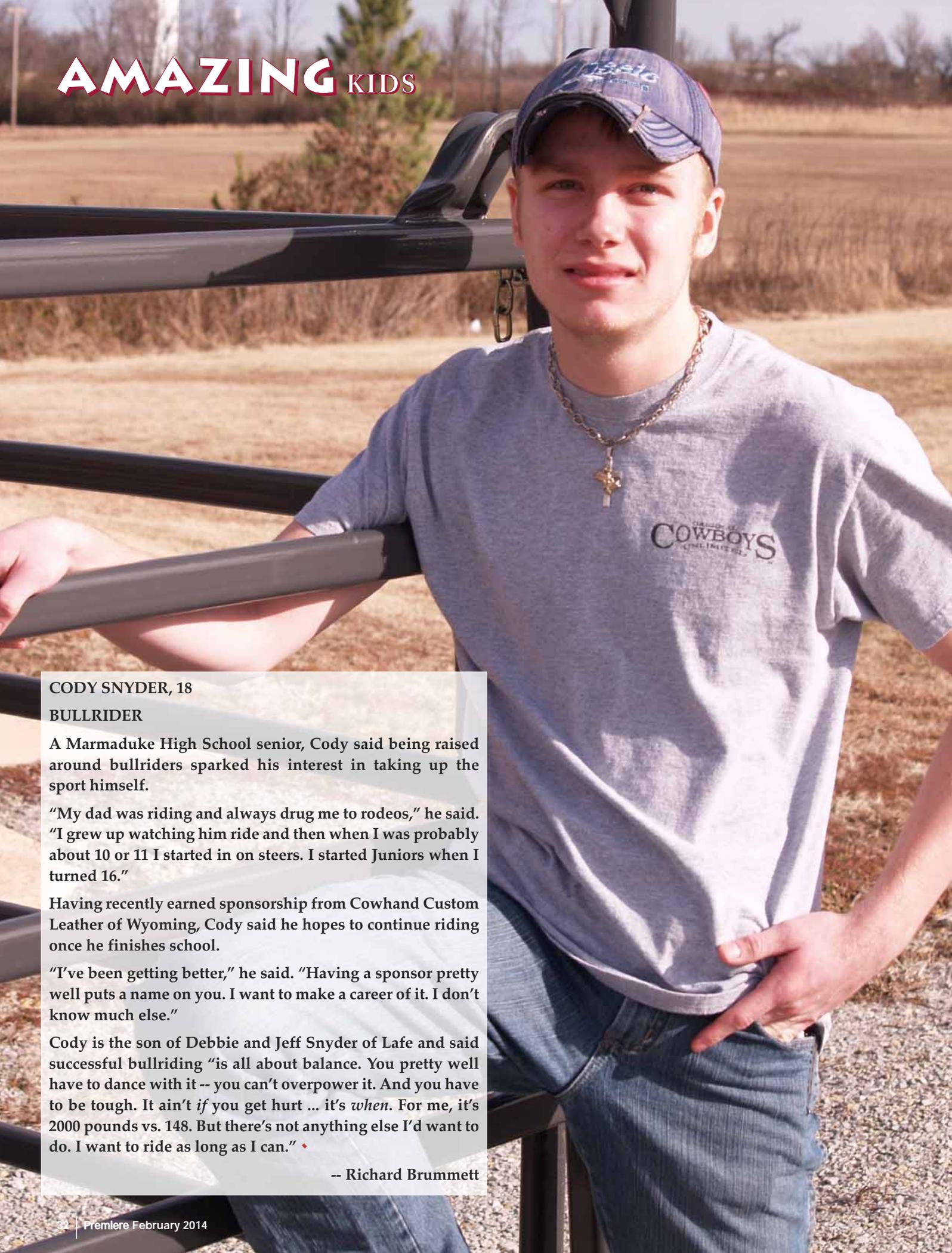
"The triathlon is a very individual competition; you compete against yourself."

A straight-A student, George wants to compete as long as possible.

And then?

"Maybe be an FBI agent," he said. ♦

-- Richard Brummett



CODY SNYDER, 18

BULLRIDER

A Marmaduke High School senior, Cody said being raised around bullriders sparked his interest in taking up the sport himself.

"My dad was riding and always drug me to rodeos," he said. "I grew up watching him ride and then when I was probably about 10 or 11 I started in on steers. I started Juniors when I turned 16."

Having recently earned sponsorship from Cowhand Custom Leather of Wyoming, Cody said he hopes to continue riding once he finishes school.

"I've been getting better," he said. "Having a sponsor pretty well puts a name on you. I want to make a career of it. I don't know much else."

Cody is the son of Debbie and Jeff Snyder of Lafe and said successful bullriding "is all about balance. You pretty well have to dance with it -- you can't overpower it. And you have to be tough. It ain't *if* you get hurt ... it's *when*. For me, it's 2000 pounds vs. 148. But there's not anything else I'd want to do. I want to ride as long as I can." ♦

-- Richard Brummett

LAURA PANKEY, 17

ARTIST

Laura said she tried playing basketball when she was younger, "... but that didn't really work out. And, I was in the band until recently."

What did work out was artwork, particularly a talent in spray painting. She has won some awards for her work and hopes to take it a step beyond the classroom.

"My favorite thing is probably spray painting or graphite drawings," the Paragould High School junior said. "I was interested in art when I was younger; I drew a lot. When I got older and art class was an option I decided to take it. It's fun. I hope to be an art teacher some day."

Her spray paintings depict the galactic and are done on poster board, rather than canvas.

"I haven't done a lot of it," she said of the spray painting. "It originated in, like, Mexico, and I had seen it and thought I'd try it. I spray paint on poster board instead of canvas because I like the texture better. "I'm big on anything as far as the galaxy is concerned. In science, I learned about it and had seen pictures and had seen other people do it, and thought I'd try it. The universe is probably a better term."

While she has no works on display around town, she hopes to start selling things "once summer gets here. I'm hoping to sell some spray paintings. Spray paint needs warmer weather to dry, so maybe later on I can sell some things."

She said her venture into the world of art "was a gradual thing. I'm sort of a homebody ... me and my artwork. My room is super cluttered with art supplies. But my mom is very supportive."

The daughter of Diane Cooper and the late Mario Pankey, Laura plans upon graduation to enroll "at Hendrix to get my teaching degree, then to the Art Institute in Pennsylvania." ♦

-- Richard Brummett



CASEY DEANGELO, 18

PERFORMER

Casey said she has been singing "since I was born" and playing guitar since the age of 12, admitting that she likes being in the spotlight.

"I like to perform," she said. "I'm a second-year Thespian. In a play, I played a man, actually, which was pretty interesting."

For those who have had the privilege of hearing the Greene County Tech senior sing, it is her voice that captivates them. In November's Veteran's Day Program at GCT, she sang and played the guitar after winning a spot through the audition process. Her performance was memorable, drawing accolades from many in the audience.

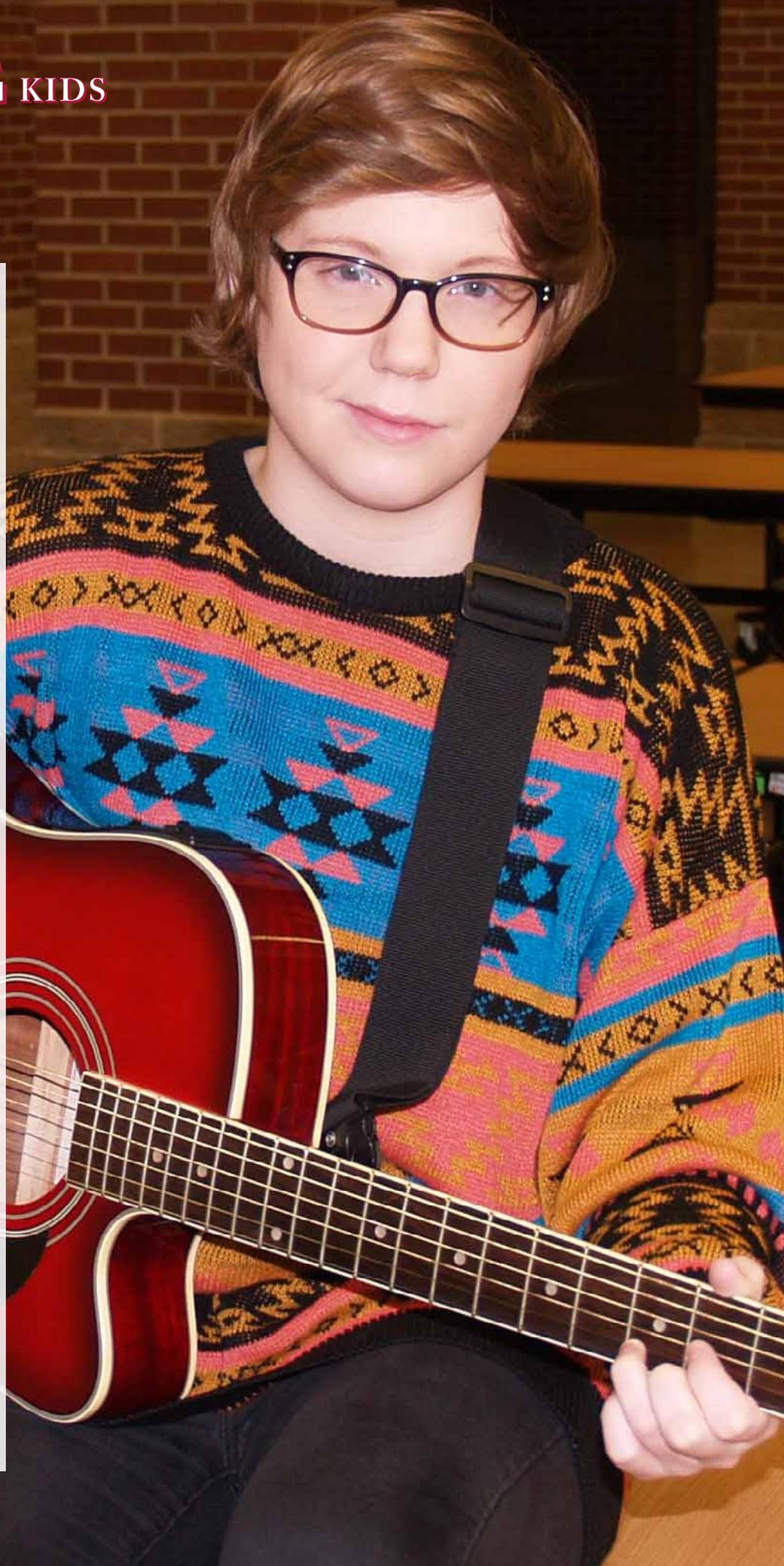
A self-taught guitarist and member of the school choir since the seventh grade, Casey said music is "really more of a hobby, maybe. I've not really written a lot of songs. I don't think it's practical -- maybe about 20; some about graduating, some about depression, some about relationships."

She calls herself "outgoing but introverted. Outgoing with close friends. Music is a way to get things out there."

The daughter of Kelly and Chris DeAngelo, she plans to go to Arkansas Tech University in Russellville to pursue a degree in Graphic Design, and to audition for choir.

"I have nerves," she said. "Like in the Veterans Day Program, I didn't want to mess up. But I practiced enough to know I was going to do good." ♦

-- Richard Brummett



AMAZING KIDS

CHASE GAGE, 18
SCHOLAR/ATHLETE

This Brookland High School senior definitely puts the “student” into the phrase student-athlete.

Carrying close to a 4.0 GPA, Chase was recently awarded the A-State Scholarship, the most prestigious handed out by Arkansas State University. It carries a \$56,000 sum over the course of four years.

After applying for the grant and following all the guidelines, Chase said he still was “in shock” when ASU representatives burst into his classroom one day to make the presentation, because it is “very competitively awarded and sought after.”

He served as the Bearcats’ quarterback during the recently completed football season and said that being a scholar-athlete is important to him.

“Coach always emphasized *student-athlete*, with the *student* coming first,” he said. “Most people have trouble balancing the two, but I wanted to be productive in the classroom and productive on the field.”

The athletic and educational tug-of-war continues as he prepares for next year’s entrance into ASU, leaning on one hand toward a career in journalism and on the other as a coach. “I like writing in general,” he said, “and sportswriting would definitely interest me, being an athlete and all. But I’m also considering going into coaching because I would like to have a positive influence on kids. Football has helped me learn some ‘life lessons’ along the way.”

Chase is the son of Stacey and Kenny Howard and Rick Gage. ♦

-- Richard Brummett



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Happenings



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Happenings

1. First \$100,000 Raffle Winner

Teresa Holder, of Imboden, became the first Arkansas Million Dollar Raffle \$100,000 winner. She purchased her winning ticket at the Price Chopper in Pochahontas. Teresa is pictured with her son, Chadney, and daughter-in-law Caitlyn.

2. Chairs Of Change

East Side Baptist Church hosted the Chairs of Change Cut-A-Thon in December. Eleven Paragould hair salons teamed with Matrix Professional Hair Products to raise money for Back Pack programs in the Greene County Tech and Paragould School districts.

3. Christmas Project

Madison Wood and Sarah Scorfina, 8th graders at Paragould Jr. High, made Christmas gift bags for all the kids at the Paragould Children's Home for their project in EAST. They used some of the money collected from Spay Day to buy gifts for the children. ♦



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Business Milestones

Rogers retiring from post at Greene County Library

After 15 years of assisting avid readers at the Greene County Library, Sandra Rogers is retiring and pursuing hobbies beyond the bookshelves.

"It's been an honor to be at the Greene County Library," she said.

In 1967, Rogers graduated from Arkansas State University with a degree in Early Childhood Education, but after helping her husband through veterinary school, she returned for a degree in Library Science. She soon took a job at Greene County Tech Intermediate as school librarian.

"I had 6,000 books at the school and I practically knew them personally, and knew which shelf they were on," Rogers said.

Twelve years later, Rogers was beginning to



Sandra Rogers plans to travel with her newly-found free time upon retiring from the Greene County Library.

feel under challenged and applied for a position at the Greene County Library.

Rosemary Johnson has worked alongside Rogers for seven years, and said she was not

just bubbly, but happy in the library.

"She enjoyed working with people," Johnson said. "She was very outgoing toward them."

Johnson added Rogers would always show readers around the library and had a great knowledge and love of all the books, fiction and nonfiction alike.

"I enjoy seeing all the patrons come in," Rogers said.

Although she has retired, she won't be leaving the library completely. Rogers plans to come back for volunteering purposes, but is also focused on what's next in her life.

"Travel is one of my great pleasures," she said, adding she will soon take a road trip to San Diego.

Her other hobbies include gardening, completing crossword puzzles and, of course, reading. With the free time on her hands Rogers also has a stack of healthy recipes she wants to cook her way through.

Rogers' passion clearly lies in the stacks of books at the library, however.

"It was never like work," she said. "I never dreaded coming to work. I have a philosophy: If you wake up dreading going to work, you're in the wrong job." ♦



-- Caitlin LaFarlette

Get Rich

By Richard Brummett



Apologies for not knowing all the rules of social media

It came as no surprise to me that when the flu bug bit me severely I didn't bounce back as quickly as I once would have. That's what happens when you officially become an old person.

The one thing that did catch me off guard was that, apparently, being a bona fide member of the social media world, I was supposed to post my every thought on Facebook.

Spending time at home instead of at the office, I checked in with the Facebook crowd frequently and was greeted by messages like:

"I'm so sick! Yuk!!!"

"Can't sleep. May have to go to the doctor."

"Going to bed. Sick."

I sincerely apologize to all my Facebook followers for not knowing the rules. I wasn't aware anyone wanted to know what my temperature was or whether I was stationed on the couch or in the bed.

Maybe it's because I don't see the need to post such statements in order to arrange a giant pity party, or maybe it's because at my age I could post something just as melodramatic at all points throughout the day, every day:

"Dang! That didn't hurt when I went to bed last night!"

"Ouch! Why am I limping?"

I prefer to use Facebook to keep up with friends and see if their kids or grandkids have done something special, not as a forum for revealing my love of self. I can't relate to people who post new pictures of themselves day after day then, when out of selfies, seem to think, "Surely everyone wants to know what I'm eating" and snap a shot of their noontime meal.

Yuk!!! I'm going to bed. ♦

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Ar Kids staff prepares kids for school days

"Our goal is to prepare children to be successful going to kindergarten," said Vonda Montgomery, Director of Ar Kids Pediatric Day Center in Paragould, "regardless of any developmental delays they may have. We want to reach them as early as possible. The first eight years are so critical to brain development."

The Paragould center offers a variety of services to children with developmental delays and/or medical issues including speech, occupational, physical, psychological and cognitive therapy as well as counseling and case management. Ar Kids is licensed to accommodate up to 115 children, with a staff of 23 employees. In addition to Montgomery, the staff includes experts in the educational, nutritional and medical fields as well as aides and technicians filling specific duties.

For a child to be enrolled, it must first be referred by a physician to address develop-



Vonda Montgomery is the Director of Ar Kids Pediatric Day Center in Paragould.

mental issues. If the child is a good candidate, it undergoes an assessment to see if it qualifies for Ar Kids services. "Maybe a child is not as developed mentally as its peers may be," Montgomery said. "The things we do are

developmentally age appropriate. Some kids need an extra little boost. We want to get them to that level, and some have even graduated in three to six months. We keep in touch with the family after that ... keep open a good line of communication with parents and doctors.

"I feel like we're having success," she added. "We've been open since April 15th of 2013 and we've already had some kids graduate out. We have no TVs on; we try to get the imagination going, instead."

Montgomery said Ar Kids' agenda is "geared toward Better Beginnings (Arkansas' Quality Rating Improvement System for early childhood education programs). We have gotten very high scores on the environmental ratings scales by an outside agency. We will be eligible to try for Level 2 in April."

Ar Kids is located at 6262 Highway 49 South and may be reached by phone at 870-240-0444, by fax at 870-240-0466 or at www.arkidspdc.com.

An advertisement for Revolution Clothing Co. featuring three models in a white brick setting. The models are wearing cream-colored sweatshirts with 'REVOLUTION' printed in red and black. One model is standing with one leg on a wooden barrel, another is standing with hands on hips, and the third is sitting on a wooden barrel. The background is a white brick wall with some graffiti. The text 'Sarah Hyde Photos' is visible in the top right corner of the image area.

Revolution A fashion movement.
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**NEA Baptist
announces birth of first
baby at new hospital**

The first baby born at the new NEA Baptist Memorial Hospital arrived on Sunday, January 12, 2014. Sidney Sr. and Shakelia Smith welcomed a daughter, Sanai Rylee Ann Smith, at 8:22 p.m. She weighed 7 pounds, 4 ounces and was 18 3/4 inches long. She joins a big brother, Sidney Smith Jr. NEA Baptist presented the family with a \$500 educational fund and a gift basket full of goodies. Pictured are Shakelia, Sidney Jr., Sidney Sr. and Sanai Rylee Ann. ♦

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Birth Announcements



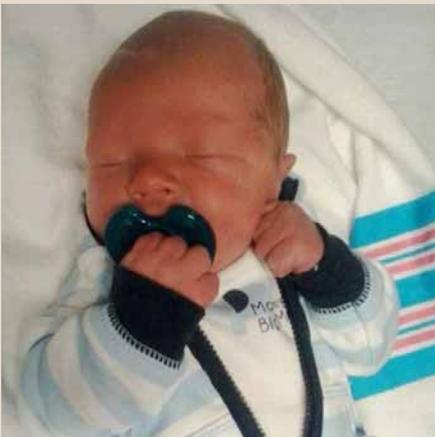
Makayla Dawn Schorn

Dorothy Winklepleck and Jeremiah Schorn of Paragould announce the birth of their daughter, Makayla Dawn Schorn.

Makayla Dawn weighed 6 pounds, 10 ounces, and was 19.5 inches long.

She was born at Arkansas Methodist Medical Center in Paragould.

Carol Smith is the baby's grandmother. ♦



Corbin Andrew Morris

Melanie and Derrick Morris of Beech Grove announce the birth of their son, Corbin Andrew Morris.

The baby weighed 7 pounds, 4 ounces, and was 19.5 inches long.

He was born at Arkansas Methodist Medical Center in Paragould.

Siblings are Noah and Isabellah Morris.

Grandparents are June and Chris Stokes, Sandra Rogers, Bobby and Lisa Williams, and Rodney Morris. ♦



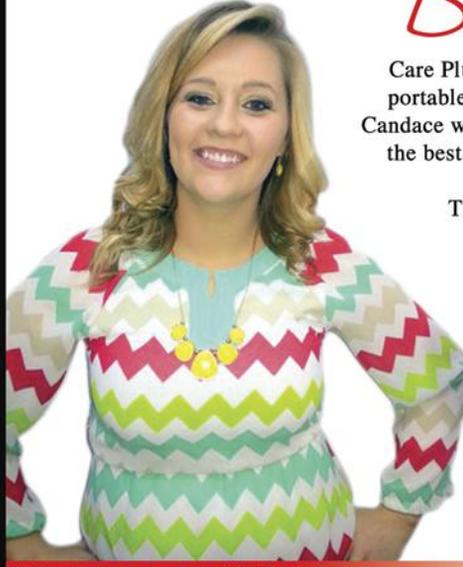
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Engagement Announcements

Duff-Compton

Stefanie Duff and Nathan Compton have announced their plans to be married in March of this year.

Stefanie is the daughter of Rick and Terry Conrad of Paragould, and Quentin and Diana Duff of Poplar Bluff, Missouri.

Nathan's parents are James and Nancy Compton of Delaplaine.

The wedding will take place on Saturday, March 15, 2014, at St. John's Lutheran Church in Lafa. ♦



Stefanie Duff and Nathan Compton

Graves-Lamberth

Cassie Graves and Jeremy Lamberth have announced their plans to be married in a February 1 ceremony at Finch Baptist Church.

Cassie, of Paragould, is the daughter of Debbie Fletcher, Keith and Stefanie Graves and Bob Fletcher.

Jeremy's parents are Dennis and Teresa Lamberth of Brookland. ♦



Jeremy Lamberth and Cassie Graves

To have your engagement announcements included in Premiere Magazine, send information to our new email address at:

editor@premiere-magazine.com

or use the link provided at the new premiere-magazine.com.

Please include first and last names of all individuals and a contact number or address. Items need to be received no later than the 15th of the month to be included in the following month's issue of Premiere Magazine.

Call 870-236-7627 if you need additional information.

Engagement Announcements



Photo by Sherri Anderson

Nathan Anderson and Brittany Reeves

Reeves-Anderson

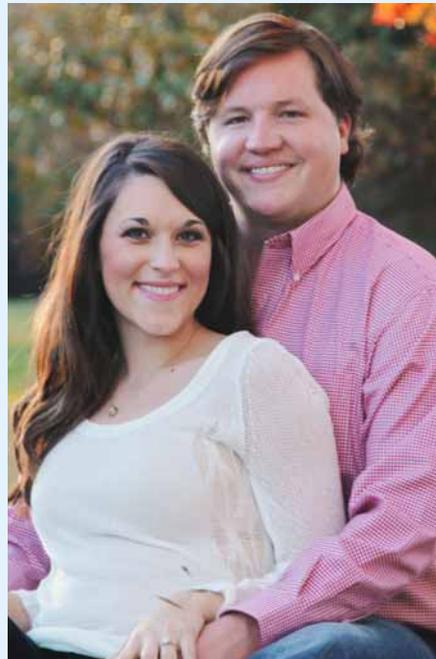
Brittany Reeves and Nathan Anderson announce their plans for a wedding in May of this year.

Brittany is the daughter of Robin and Janet Reeves of Paragould.

Nathan's parents are Renee Hurt, and Brad and Sherri Anderson, also of Paragould.

The couple's wedding will take place May 31, 2014, at East Side Baptist Church in Paragould.

The ceremony will begin at 2 p.m. ♦



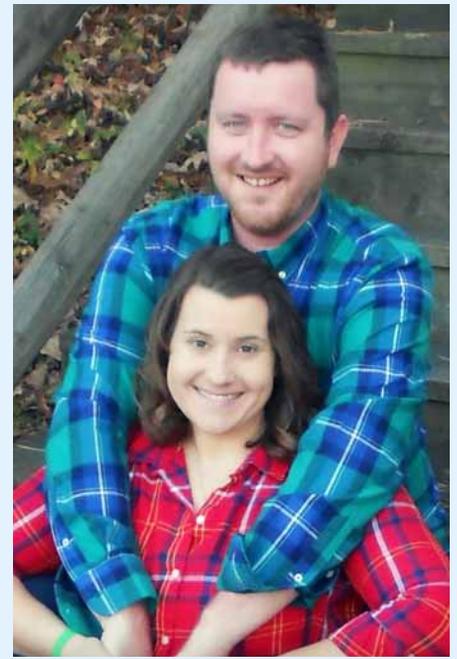
Chelsea Samantha Fife and Seth Tedder Holifield

Fife-Holifield

Chelsea Samantha Fife and Seth Tedder Holifield announce their engagement and approaching marriage.

The bride-to-be is the daughter of Mrs. Tracie Ballard. The prospective groom's parents are Susan and Keith Holifield, all of Paragould.

The ceremony will take place Saturday, March 15, 2014, at Stan Jones Mallard Lodge in Clover Bend, Arkansas. ♦



Crystal Willis and Zac Adkins

Willis-Adkins

Crystal Willis and Zac Adkins have announced their plans to hold a February wedding ceremony.

Crystal's parents are Larry and Virginia Willis and Judy and Tim Dearn of Lafa.

Zac is the son of Dean and Paula Adkins of Paragould.

The ceremony is set for Saturday, Feb. 1, 2014, at Woods Chapel General Baptist Church. ♦

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February

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 1

AMMC HOSTS BREAST-FEEDING CLASS, held in the Second Floor Conference Room in the Professional Office Building at Arkansas Methodist Medical Center from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. This class is offered to moms who plan to breast feed, for dads and other support persons. If delivering at AMMC, the classes are free of charge, otherwise there is a small fee. Call the AMMC Education Department at (870) 239-7016 for pricing and to register. Registration is required for all classes.

AMMC HOSTS INFANT SAFETY CLASS

held in the Second Floor Conference Room in the Professional Office Building at Arkansas Methodist Medical Center from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. This class is offered to expectant families and anyone caring for the infant. If delivering at AMMC, the classes are free of charge, otherwise there is a small charge. Call the AMMC Education Department at (870) 239-7016 for pricing and to register. Registration is required for all classes.

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 4

AMMC HOSTS CHILDBIRTH PREPARATION CLASS, held in the Second Floor Conference Room in the Professional Office Building at Arkansas Methodist Medical Center, from 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. This four-week class is offered to anyone who is expecting and offers information about late pregnancy, preparing for labor and birth, comfort measures, newborn characteristics, postpartum care and much more. If delivering at AMMC, the classes are free of charge, otherwise there is a small charge. Call the AMMC Education Department at (870) 239-7016 for pricing and to register.

Registration is required for all classes. Other class dates: February 11th, 18th, and 25th.

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 7

DR. SEUSS "CAT IN THE HAT", presented by the Collins Theatre group in Downtown Paragould on February 7 and 8 at 7:30 p.m. and February 9 at 2:00 p.m. You can buy tickets online at www.gcfac.org or at the door. For more information on this show, contact Jer Allen at (870) 565-5056.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 8

MISS ARKANSAS CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL GREENE COUNTY, held at Quality Suites at 2310 West Kingshighway in Paragould. Registration is from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m., pageant begins at 1:00 p.m. Age Divisions: Queens - 0-11 months; 12-23 months; 2-4; 5-6; 7-10; 11-14; 15-18. Kings - 0-11 months; 12-24 months. \$40 entry fee with optional photogenic contest for additional \$10. This is a non-profit event with 100% of funds donated to Arkansas Children's Hospital. Admission: \$5 for adults; \$3 for students and children (one adult per contestant receives free entry.) For more information, call Krista DeRoe (870) 926-4891 or email krista_lavendar14@hotmail.com.

Register online at <https://www.giving.archildrens.org/mrandmissach>

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 13

AMMC HOSTS BLOOD DRIVE WITH THE AMERICAN RED CROSS, held in the Auditorium in the Professional Office Building at Arkansas Methodist Medical Center from 11:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Each person who successfully donates blood at the February blood drive at AMMC will receive three \$5 coupons to be used at the Auxiliary Gift Shop, Beacon's Deli, Cafeteria or The Foundation Station.

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 24

KASU'S BLUEGRASS MONDAY, with Donna Ulisse and the Poor Mountain Boys. The music starts at 7:00 p.m. at the Collins Theatre, 120 West Emerson Street in Downtown Paragould.

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 25

AMMC HOSTS STROKE SUPPORT GROUP MEETING, held in the Arkansas Methodist Medical Center Rehab Dining Room on the Fourth Floor, from 6:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. This meeting is open to stroke survivors, their friends, families and/or caregivers. For more information, call (870) 239-7289.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 27

LIVE UNITED UNDER THE STARS, held at the home of ASU Chancellor Tim and Deidra Hudson, 1503 East Nettleton in Jonesboro from 5:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. Sue Mitchell, Michael Oher's tutor featured in "The Blind Side" will speak at 6:00 with entertainment provided by the ASU Jazz Trio. Tickets are \$50. For more information, contact Jenny Keller at (870) 935-3658

Coming Up

MARCH 1 Annual Kiwanis Pancake Day at St. Mary's Parish hall, 6:30 a.m. - 11:00 a.m. AMMC Foundation Pageant, location TBD

MARCH 6-9 "Young Frankenstein" the musical, presented at the Collins Theatre, March 6-8 at 7:30 p.m.; March 9 at 2:00 p.m.

MARCH 8 Chili Rodeo hosted by Mission Outreach

MARCH 15 The Great Gatsby Gala, 6:00 p.m. at the Paragould Community Center.

MARCH 24 KASU's Bluegrass
Monday at the Collins Theatre.

RECURRING EVENTS

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

Every Wednesday: Perking on Pruetz, 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.

Greene County Master Gardeners present a Brown Bag Lunch Program at the Greene County Library, 2nd Tuesday of the month, from 12-1. Bring a lunch and enjoy a free gardening presentation.

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.

Fourth Tuesday of every month: Greene County Master Gardener Meeting, Greene County Library, 6 p.m., guests welcome.

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@premiere-magazine.com



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NEA COOKS



Lindsey Blakely

Hometown: Bryant

Occupation: Student

How did you learn to cook? My family has Greek and Italian backgrounds. Growing up, my grandmother cooked a lot and always let me help in the kitchen so she always taught me her secrets to cooking. It was great because she always talked about our Greek relatives and put on her fake accent. I loved learning from her, and now that I'm older she lets me cook for her and I let her help.

What is your favorite dish to make? I love to make manicotti. I love being able to mix all of the cheeses together with the perfect amount of seasoning. I also make my own homemade tomato sauce to go with it and in my opinion, it's better than any jar I've used.

What is your favorite cooking memory? My grandmother is a professional photographer, and one thing she lives to take photos of is food! When I was a freshman in college, I went to visit her for a weekend and we spent the entire first night baking cookie dough cupcakes and then photographing them. It was so much fun because we both made a huge mess in the kitchen and ended up with flour and

Strawberry Scones

Ingredients:

- 2 cups Flour
- 1 cup Strawberries
- 1 stick Butter (chilled and cubed)
- 5 tbsp Sugar
- 2 tsp Baking Powder
- 1/2 tsp Baking Soda
- 1 Egg White

Sugar for topping

Directions:

- 1) Preheat oven to 375. Mix 1 tbsp of sugar and chopped strawberries.
- 2) Separately mix flour, baking powder, baking soda and 3 tbsp of sugar. Add butter and mix until blended.



3) Add cream, whisked egg, and strawberries.

4) Stir until dough holds together. Place on floured surface and knead into a circle that is 1/2 inch thick.

5) Slice like pie into 8 pieces.

6) Dust with egg white and sugar. Bake 25 minutes. ♦

Red Velvet Crinkles

Ingredients:

- 1 box Red Velvet Cake Mix
- 6 tbsp Butter, melted and cooled
- 2 Large eggs
- 1/2 cup Powdered Sugar

Directions:

- 1) Preheat oven to 375 and grease two cookie sheets.
- 2) In large bowl, mix together butter, eggs and cake mix until smooth.



3) Roll dough into one inch balls (about 1 tbsp of dough) and coat in powdered sugar. Place on cookie sheet two inches apart.

4) Bake 8-10 minutes, or until tops have cracked. The centers will be gooey.

5) Serve warm, and with ice cream for an extra treat! ♦

powdered sugar everywhere. Luckily we were able to hide that and the photos, and cupcakes, were awesome.

What advice do you have for other cooks? Always try something new. I've always loved learning about food from other cultures, and found a love for French food. Each culture has its own methods, and you may take something away from a cultural dish that you can use with a classic.

Worst disaster in the kitchen? When I was younger, before I understood the basics of cooking, I was helping my mom cook for Thanksgiving. Well, this year she didn't want to go through the trouble of making sweet potato casserole, so she decided to use an instant packet of sweet potatoes. I told my mother that I would salt the water so it would boil faster. My mom was so busy that she didn't really hear me. It wasn't until all of our guests arrived and we began to eat that I realized what I had done wrong. Everyone took bites of the sweet potatoes and had to spit them out because they were so disgusting. Needless to say, I learned my lesson.

What is the easiest thing to cook being on a student budget? It sounds cliché, but ramen noodles, of course. ♦

STAY TUNED

What's in Store For Next Month

Cover



For our cover story in March we will take a look at some of the people who help make the Greene County Boys and Girls Club so successful, providing numerous opportunities for the young people in our area.

Prom



Also in the March issue of Premiere, we'll try to fill you in on everything you need to know about getting ready for the high school prom ... what to wear, where to get it and how to look your absolute best for that big evening. Be sure to check us out for these stories and much, much more in Premiere Magazine. ♦

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