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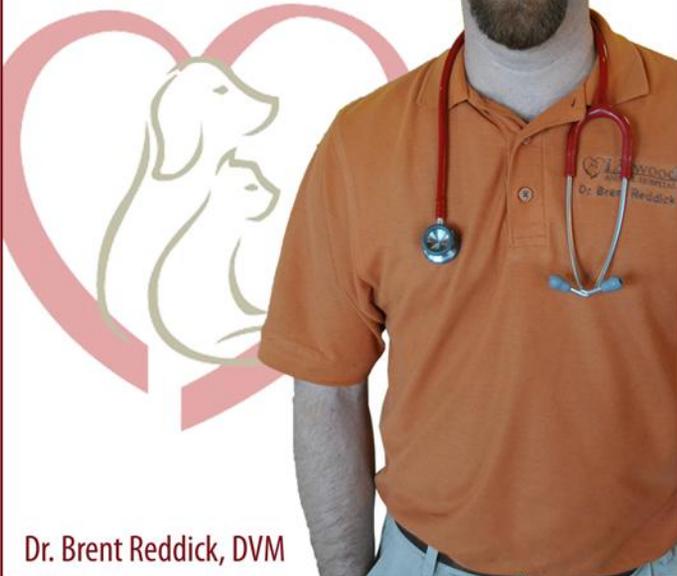
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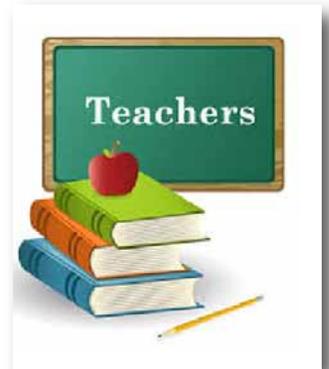
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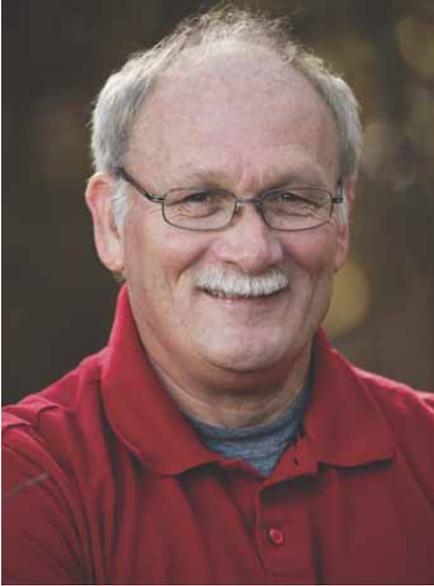
Photo by Tim Rand Photography

# GET BEHIND A **HONDA!**



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## From the Managing Editor...



Richard Brummett

This month's focus has a lot to do with spirit ... the spirit of giving from individuals, businesses and groups ... and the spirit of America with Fourth of July celebrations planned.

For starters, the annual Greene County Relay For Life is all about giving of time and money to help in the fight against cancer. This year's drive raised more than \$84,000 to battle the disease, with more money expected to come in before the late August deadline.

Our recap of the event is found on pages 32 and 33.

Local and area businesses also "give" by contributing quality services and products to our community.

The M.F. Block Insurance Company is celebrating 100 years in business and has been a vital part of Paragould/Greene County life from the very beginning. Whether in a business sense or in community involvement, the Block family and the company employees have always gone the extra mile to make ours a better place to live. See Terry Austin's feature on page 18.

Another firm that always steps to the front is Allen Engineering, which is marking its 50th year in business in the Paragould area. In addition to celebrating its landmark year, the Allen plant also manufactures products that can be purchased and used right here at home

... another focus of this month's magazine.

The business features can be found on pages 26-29, with contributions by Caitlin LaFarlette.

The Fourth of July is about a lot more than fireworks and picnics. The holiday celebrates our nation's independence, and the men and women who over time fought to keep us free. It commemorates the adoption of the Declaration of Independence on July 4, 1776, declaring independence from the Kingdom of Great Britain.

We asked a veteran, Paul Calkin of Jonesboro, just what the flag and the Fourth of July mean to someone who fought for his country and his comments are very much to the point. That feature can be found on page 13.

Readers also can vote for their favorite teacher, with the winner getting to be the cover model for the August issue of Premiere.

Photographs of all the winners of the monthly competition for Premiere's Outstanding Teacher appear on page 14, and instructions on how to help select the Outstanding Teacher of the Year are found there as well. ♦



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# Summer fun for the young ... and young at heart

It's the same old question every summer for moms and dads residing in the Northeast Arkansas area: What am I supposed to do with these kids?

Better yet, what am I supposed to do with myself?

Never fear. There are more options than you can imagine at area parks and recreational facilities, with scheduled activities available to coincide with plans of your own for a day of fun, indoors or out.

## Crowley's Ridge State Park

At Crowley's Ridge State Park in Walcott, you can take part in a course called Personalized Kayak Instruction, a class led by a park interpreter and designed to show how simple it is to operate a flatwater kayak. Guests will get up to one hour of personal instruction and find out more about the history and natural features of the state park.

Up to three people may participate, but all must be at least 10 years old and must be able to paddle a kayak alone.

You can also celebrate the Fourth of July at Crowley's Ridge with nature programs, swimming, pedal boats and games while listening to music provided by a DJ on the beach. Nature programs and games are free; standard fees apply for swimming and boat rentals.

The state park will also host Discovery Day Camp for children ages 10-12 July 22-24, from 9 a.m.-4 p.m.

The educational camp includes programs, games, nature hikes, swimming and crafts. Lunches, snacks and craft supplies are included. Registration is required and must be made by July 8. Call 870-573-6351 or email [elizabeth.bittner@arkansas.gov](mailto:elizabeth.bittner@arkansas.gov) to register.

For information on any of the Crowley's Ridge State Park offerings, call the main office at 870-573-6751.

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## Lake Frierson State Park

Down the road at Lake Frierson, 10 miles north of Jonesboro on Arkansas Highway 141, you can find a peaceful place to relax and enjoy the year-round fishing for bream, catfish, crappie, saugeye, and bass.

Park facilities include campsites (four Class C with water and electric hookups, and three Class D, no hookups) with tables and grills, restrooms, picnic sites, an enclosed climate-controlled pavilion, playground, self-guided trail, launch ramp, barrier-free fishing pier, and visitor center with interpretive exhibits. The park also offers rental fishing boats, kayaks, and pedal boats.

## Paragould Parks and Recreation

The Paragould Parks and Recreation Department also has a plan to help you relax with a number of summer activities, including P.E. In The Park at its Labor Park site.

Held Tuesday through Thursday from 10 a.m. to noon, the program provides physical activities designed to keep children healthy during summer months.

Games like chase and tag are great for cardiovascular work and in the gym kids can play Four Square or volleyball with a low net and a beach ball, or even a modified kickball activity.

Snacks are also provided. The program is open to school-aged children and there is no fee to participate.

Labor Park also has basketball, volleyball and softball areas, and boasts a splash park.

Paragould's Community Center is home to the Outdoor Water Park and Indoor Aquatic Center. It also holds two full-sized basketball courts, a walking track with exercise equipment, racquet ball courts and more.

Reynolds Park is another accommodating spot for lovers of the outdoors. It has a fishing lake, pavilions, grills, volleyball and horse-

shoe pitching areas, playground equipment and RV parking with bath house and dump stations provided.

The Paragould Parks Department also has outdoor recreational space and a rental building at Harmon Park, suitable for meetings or reunions.

For information on any parks program, from swimming lessons to summer fun, call the Parks Department at 870-239-7530.

## Just Pretend Play and Party

Located in Downtown Paragould at 206 South Pruett Street, Just Pretend provides an indoor play area where kids can just be kids. They can climb castle walls, be a star on the stage, dig for treasure in the sand, be a pizza chef or shop 'til they drop, all the while being able to

interact with parents and guardians.

They also offer a variety of birthday party packages and special events, like an Art Camp every week during the summer.

The Art Camp's morning sessions (9-12 noon) are for children ages 5 to 8; afternoon sessions (1-4 p.m.) cater to ages 9 to 12, Monday through Friday. The fee is \$99, plus tax, for the week.

Art Camp is an event where children can explore using many different mediums and art styles. Just Pretend will provide a snack while the children are there.

If you have questions or would like to sign your child up for art camp, contact Sandra Holt at 870-240-0211 or email her at [sandra@just-pretend.net](mailto:sandra@just-pretend.net). ♦

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# Jack, Jill and Jaycees staging Big Bang Blowout

**M**OR Media Inc. will again play a big role in bringing a totally free fireworks show to the Paragould community.

For the last three years, MOR Media has teamed up with the Paragould and Jonesboro Jaycees to make the Big Bang Blowout a memorable and enjoyable experience. Thousands gather in and around the Rotary Park Softball Complex in Paragould to watch the spectacular fireworks and to celebrate our nation's freedom.

This year's Big Bang Fireworks Blowout is set for Friday, July 4th, accompanied by a patriotic soundtrack on 107.1 JACK FM and 103.9 Jill Radio for all to hear.

Food, games and more entertainment will be available, so plan to attend. The fireworks display is scheduled to begin at approximately 9:30 p.m. ♦





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“It means ... freedom.”



Paul Calkin, a World War II veteran, has great respect for the American flag.

**W**hen you ask Paul Calkin what the American flag means to him today, his answer is quick and to the point: “It means ... freedom.”

Calkin, 90, was an 18-year-old Army Air Corps gunner on a B-17 bomber, flying missions in Europe during World War II. “There were 10 on a crew and we started bombing on the European continent,” he said. “Our first mission was in November of 1943. We finished our 30th mission on the second of June, 1944.”

On their 13th expedition, Calkin’s plane came under heavy fire and sustained such damage that the pilot and crew had to make the decision to either crash land it in the English Channel or

bail out and risk capture. They chose to land and survived a lengthy rescue operation. Only after it was over did Calkin discover he had been wounded, finding shrapnel in his arm. His actions throughout the war earned him a large cache of medals, including the Purple Heart. So, when he sees Old Glory today, his observations might differ from those of the common man.

“It means freedom,” he reiterated, “freedom that we’re able to live in a free country; freedom to vote; freedom that we elect federal, state and local officials for government, and we’re not under a king or anything like that. I think my generation might have a better sense of what the flag stands for. I salute it because it’s the way I was brought up, to honor the flag that way.”

Describing himself as “18 and scared to death every day” while in the service, Calkin said our country at that time was more unified, especially when considering the war effort.

“This is not the same country,” he said. “That generation, during the war, the whole country was behind the war. Housewives took jobs in factories to build war materials. People sold Savings Bonds and War Bonds; everyone was involved. It’s not that way no more, but we still have plenty of people who love our country.

“I have great pride in our flag. For several years now I take little flags and give them out to kids. I love my flag. I honor it.” ♦

-- Richard Brummett

# Time to cast votes for Outstanding Teacher

Premiere Magazine readers nominated their favorite educators as Outstanding Teacher of the Month when balloting began in October of last year, and now it's time to pick the overall favorite.

Eighteen teachers were selected by parents, students and co-workers, representing all the school districts in Greene County. Votes were submitted by mail and electronic media with monthly winners earning gift certificates and movie passes. Balloting for the overall Outstanding Teacher will continue through July 11, with the winner receiving another nice prize package, a \$100 gift certificate from MOR Media and more.

Support your favorite teacher by emailing your vote to

[editor@premiere-magazine.com](mailto:editor@premiere-magazine.com)

or by mentioning him or her on our Facebook page. All 18 monthly winners are pictured.



April Willis  
Greene County Tech



Tacey Cravens  
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Cindy Wood  
Children's Home



Tammy Schug  
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Debbie Webb  
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Vicki Cook  
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27	28	29	30	31		



What says “summer” more than a boy in a baseball uniform? Justin Hollis, 10, fills the role nicely at Paragould’s Bland Park. Justin is the son of Michael and Jennifer Hollis.

## Ring of Hope Relay raises money for St. Jude

**R**unners took to the highway in late May to participate in the Ring of Hope Relay, a Jonesboro-to-Memphis run to benefit St. Jude Children's Research Hospital.

Organized by Dan Ring of Jonesboro, the relay style race required participants to raise a minimum of \$500 in pledges or donations to the Memphis-based hospital. All the funds raised were targeted for St. Jude.

Nine runners participated. After an early morning breakfast meeting, runners took off from Jonesboro at 6 a.m., escorted by both the Jonesboro Police and Brian Osborn of 107.1 Jack FM.

They reached the Arkansas side of the Mississippi River by 6 p.m. and were transported via escort vehicle to the Tennessee side before finishing the final segment of the run to the St. Jude campus.

The Relay raised just over \$6,000 despite the inclement weather. ♦



Relay runners met at IHOP in Jonesboro for scrambled eggs and pancakes at 5:00 a.m. From there it was over to the Malco Cinema on Parker Road where they were met by Dwight Tosh, above left, for words of encouragement. Tosh was one of the earliest St. Jude patients. At 6:00 a.m. runners braved the rain and cold to hit the highway, left, on their way to Memphis.

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# 100 years and counting **M.F. Block Insurance remains vital part of community**



Maurice F. Block's belief in good business practices and community involvement have been carried on loyally by the father and son team of Bill and Jeff Block.

**I**n July of 1914, hardly anyone noticed when an unknown southpaw made his major league debut as a pitcher for the Boston Red Sox. That same month and year, Paragould's Maurice F. Block quietly purchased a small insurance agency in his home community.

It's fair to say that like the Red Sox, Mr. Block may not have fully realized the significance of his activity that summer. Boston soon sold their pitcher, George Herman "Babe" Ruth, to the New York Yankees. And Mr. Block, who viewed his acquisition as an investment rather than a career choice, could not have known that a full century later, the agency bearing his name would be a thriving fixture in Paragould's commercial profile.

M.F. Block Insurance, Inc., located at 216 West Emerson in downtown Paragould, marks its 100th anniversary this month. While the agency enjoys its prominence in the community today, the catalyst for its early growth was something more powerful than any market force: True love.

"When Dad came back from the war (World War I), he wanted to get married and thought he'd better go to work," said Bill Block, Maurice's son. "So he jumped in full-time into the insurance business, and soon became

recognized as one of the state's leading insurance agents."

Shortly after buying the agency, Maurice and his cousin set out for Canada, joined the French Foreign Legion and were quickly dispatched to France, where World War I was raging. When the American Expeditionary Forces arrived in France, Maurice was transferred and became an officer, and soon he met and fell for Constance, a pretty St. Louis native who was in France working to help wounded soldiers.

"She said she wasn't about to be a war bride, so after the war was over and they both came back -- Dad to Paragould and Mother to St. Louis -- he had to ride the train for about six months, until she finally said yes," Bill said.

So Maurice, who likely never intended to work in insurance, threw himself headlong into learning the business so he could support his bride. He was a quick study, and his personal integrity drew customers.

"I think people appreciated Dad because he was a good agent and he was honest," Bill said. "He never tried to sell somebody something they really didn't need, and he took care of his clients, especially in times when they were unfortunate enough to have a loss."

Maurice saw the agency, and its customers,

through tough times, including the Great Depression. Bill recalled his father's telling him about a railroad workers' strike that impacted many of the agency's customers.

"Dad had a lot of friends with the railroad and had written a lot of business for those folks, but when the railroad went on strike, some of those people -- wonderful, fine folks -- just didn't have the money to pay their insurance," Bill said. "Dad offered credit to many of them for a year or two, and later they all came in and paid and told Dad how much they appreciated it. Dad told me later that he never lost a cent on advancing their credit."

Bill joined the agency in 1952, though like his father, it wasn't something he planned on doing. "When I was younger, the only thing I was sure of was that I was not coming back to Paragould and going into the insurance business," he laughed.

But like his father, Bill worked hard to learn both the business and the customer-service aspects of the agency, and the client base grew steadily. By 1965, the agency had outgrown its original one-room office, moving into new offices on Emerson Street. It was a change Maurice didn't exactly embrace, Bill said.

"In the one-room office, he knew everything that was going on," he said. "When we went



M.F. Block, then and now. At left, Maurice Block accepts an award from presenter, Elmer Domkey, President of Millers National Insurance Company. At that time the agency had represented Millers for 25 years. Above is the current building that hosts the Block company, located in Paragould at 216 West Emerson Street.

to the new office, everybody had a private office, and he wasn't too fond of that."

Sadly, just a month or so after the move, Maurice Block died. Bill assumed leadership of the agency, and over the next several decades, it grew exponentially. Agents like Bill Fisher, Alfred Herget, and Stanley Wright, as well as many office employees who served over several decades, helped the agency during that period of growth. In 1974, Jeff Block continued the family tradition and joined the agency, sharing more than a last name.

"I think I realized working for my father how honest he was in looking after his customers," Bill said. "And I think, 'Thank goodness some of that rubbed off on me,' and then I tried to

instill the same principles my dad put into me into Jeff."

It seems to have taken hold. This year will mark Jeff's 40th with the agency, and he -- like father and grandfather before him -- takes care of his clients, but also reaches into the community to give back through volunteerism and community development. As the interviews for this story were taking place, Jeff was preparing for the annual Boy Scouts golf tournament, which would raise \$14,000 for the organization.

It's yet another Block family tradition. Maurice Block was a leader in the effort to land the Ely Walker shirt factory, and he traveled to Washington, D.C., to secure the

Works Progress Administration's help in building what is now Arkansas Methodist Medical Center. Bill Block served on the hospital's board from 1977-2001, was a founding board member of the AMMC Foundation, and currently sits on the board for Chateau on the Ridge Assisted Living.

"Paragould has been good to me and I think everyone should give back," Bill said. "That's one reason that I worked on so many different projects."

MF Block Insurance, now owned by Phillip Greer, celebrates the century of service provided by the Block family and looks forward to many years of service ahead. ♦

-- Terry Austin

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## Seersucker and Linen summer social attracts MOCA supporters

**P**aragould's new Museum Of Contemporary Art (MOCA) held its first fundraiser on the lawn of the All Saints Episcopal Church, featuring lawn games and refreshments.

Several MOCA bracelets, designed especially for the event, were auctioned off as supporters of the arts pitched in to help the museum take another step toward success. ♦



Some passed the time visiting under the tents or with a spirited game of croquet, above, while others, like event chairperson Rebecca Hoskins and Donna Brazil, below left, enjoyed conversation. Immediately below, Vicki McMillan bids on a MOCA bracelet while at right Mandy Maxwell claimed her prize for the winning MOCA Bracelet contest.





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# St. Bernards hosts Triple Swing event

The annual fundraiser known as Triple Swing was held by the St. Bernards Foundation, bringing together a few hundred supporters for an evening of dinner and dancing.

The event, held in the St. Bernards Auditorium, also included opportunities for guests to win prizes and trips. ♦



At left, members of the East Arkansas Broadcasters enjoy the festivities. Groups pictured below from left are Kim Futrell, Brandon Stevens and Jacque Hurd; Mary and Brad Broadway, Brenda Million and Jill Weeks; and Sam Barns, Gene Weeks, Douglas Seglen and Chris Barber.



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Chairperson Selena Barber, Brett Barber

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	7:30 AM Yoga Fusion Becca	7:30 AM Balance Barre' Pump Becca	7:30 AM Yoga Fusion Becca	7:30 AM Balance Barre' Pump Becca	7:30 AM Yoga Fusion Becca
	8:00 AM Hot Yoga Caitlin	8:00 AM Hot Yoga Caitlin	8:00 AM Hot Yoga Caitlin	8:00 AM Hot Yoga Caitlin	8:00 AM Hot Yoga Caitlin
	5:30 PM Kids' Yoga Becca	5:30 PM Kids' Yoga Becca	5:30 PM Hot Yoga Caitlin	5:30 PM Kids' Yoga Becca	5:30 PM Hot Yoga Caitlin
	5:30 PM Hot Yoga Caitlin	5:30 PM Hot Yoga Kim	5:30 PM Balance Barre' Pump Kim	5:30 PM Hot Yoga Kim	
	5:30 PM Balance Barre' Pump Kim	6:30 PM Relax & Restore Kim		6:30 PM Relax & Restore Kim	

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# 50 years as industry leaders



Dewayne and Mary Ann Allen started an operation that has grown to immense proportions and has seen two generations of family management.

*Photos by Tim Rand Photography*

# Allen Engineering: Based here, known worldwide

Like many family businesses, Allen Engineering started small -- with an idea designed to fit an immediate need.

Now, 50 years later, the company continues to be a leader in the concrete industry with a global impact -- but with roots right here in the Paragould/Northeast Arkansas area -- thanks to a standard of excellence that runs through engineering, manufacturing and all the way down to the equipment itself.

"We have always tried to be leaders," said Jay Allen, company president and son of the founders, Dewayne and Mary Ann, "and we want to maintain a leading role in the concrete world, and in the community. We are a relatively small player in a global industry dominated by large corporations. We have to be nimble, fast, responsive."

Founded in 1964, Allen Engineering Corp. (AEC) began when Dewayne and a friend started a Redi-Mix Concrete company in Piggott. The transition from Redi-Mix to concrete equipment began in 1969, when a new factory pour in Paragould was in need of truss screed. That piece of equipment would transform the concrete equipment industry, as well as the Allens' own budding business.

In fact, innovation has been one of the key concepts that helped make the business thrive. When customers expressed a need, the Allen family got busy trying to arrive at a solution.

"A lot of what we do is based on feedback from contractors," Jay said, "or it was more so in the beginning. Now, lots of times, the company directly sees a need for an item. Sometimes we identify a product area where we need a presence, and we have to know where the marketplace is in relation to that.

"Having begun small, with just my father and mother, we understand that many of the contributions are field driven. I feel it's important for me to be on the job site. I travel a lot, especially in the summer, to be with customers and dealers and rental centers ... to hear what we're doing well and what we need to do better."

Truss screed became the staple for AEC in the



Jay Allen, now company President, poses with parents Dewayne and Mary Ann, and his brother, John, during the company's 50th anniversary celebration.

1970s but from there, the Allen line of concrete equipment continued to grow. In the late 1980s, AEC began designing, engineering and manufacturing riding trowels for the concrete market and sold thousands worldwide.

The past 20 years have seen AEC continue to add numerous products, including 19 brand new models just recently, such as compaction equipment and mixers.

The growth, however, has not kept the Allen family from remembering and appreciating the value of being situated right where they are.

"We have not moved too far from our roots," Jay said. "We've had opportunities to move or change locations but Paragould and Greene County have been good for our business. We have a good labor pool here to draw from -- people with good work ethic -- and the location is good.



"I grew up whacking weeds and cleaning toilets, being humbled," he said, "working right there in the factory. Then I went through college and came back, and now my son is a third generation of Allens, doing the same stuff" that his father didn't necessarily relish while on the learning trail.

"We know how important this community has been to our success," Jay added. "We're glad to say we're in Paragould and Northeast Arkansas. It's a good fit for us." ♦

-- Richard Brummett

# Made here -- stayed here; products manufactured locally for local consumers

**N**ortheast Arkansas is known for its rich farmland and agriculture business, yet manufacturing facilities exist in the area that provide locally produced items in stores for consumers to purchase.

Shelle Randall, director of workforce development and existing industry of the Jonesboro Chamber of Commerce, explained there is a fairly extensive manufacturing base in Northeast Arkansas. Depending on the time of year the local industries can account for up to 15 percent of the economy in Jonesboro.

Some products from the companies end up in Northeast Arkansas stores. For example, Randall said Post Foods constantly brings in new products, yet also provides a great deal of items to the local food bank.

Nestle produces Stouffer's Lean Cuisines, Unilever makes personal care products such as Dove and St. Ives, and Nice Pak produces baby wipes.

Anchor Packaging in Paragould produces



Anchor Packaging is one of America's largest manufacturers of specialty food packaging used in restaurant and supermarket take-out meals.

plastic food containers and the Marmaduke plant produces clear wrap.

However, other local companies create goods that end up in homes or other manufacturing facilities, as well. The conveyors that Hytrol Conveyor Company builds land in other companies to move along their products.

Camfil Air Pollution Control produces air filters and Apex Tool Group manufactures Delta toolboxes.

Randall said finding industry products not only on store shelves but in other industries to help their production is "one of the beautiful things about this area." She also added she has great respect for what the local manufacturers are doing.

Sue McGowan, director of economic development and CEO of the Paragould Chamber of Commerce, stressed the importance of shopping locally.

"When you buy local product, you're reinvesting in your community," McGowan said. "You're providing a job for your neighbor or friend."

Rusty McMillon with Unico Bank is involved with a "buy local" movement, and in 2012 began pushing for residents to learn what is local. McMillon said supporting the production that takes place in NEA "helps not only your labor, but others you may see working in the grocery store."

For McMillon, making purchases in Paragould is becoming more important.

"It allows the revenue that's made here to go back into the industry," he said. "It's a cycled program. That's extremely important. You want as much of your hard earned tax money to go back into (the community)."

-- Caitlin LaFarlette



## The Hoppers will perform here in charity concert

The Hoppers will be in concert Friday, July 18, in Paragould to help raise money for St. Jude Children's Research Hospital.

Billed as "America's favorite family of Gospel music," the Hoppers will perform at 7 p.m. at East Side Baptist Church, 529 E. Court Street, in Paragould.

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# *Crowley's Ridge State Park*

[ArkansasStateParks.com/CrowleysRidge](http://ArkansasStateParks.com/CrowleysRidge)

# Southern Bank says, "Our treat"



Paragould's Southern Bank treated Sonic customers to free drinks on the last day of the school year. Teaming up with employees of the Sonic Drive-In on Highway 412 West, bank workers paid the tab for customers who ordered drinks only during Happy Hour. Above are Jordan Hedge, Hannah Moore, Whitney Bryant and Michael Eskew of Sonic, customer Anthony Foster, and Heather Ward and Megan Murray from the bank. At left, Ward explains the process to another happy customer. The bank's "takeover" was to thank the Greene County Tech teachers for their hard work and dedication, and for allowing Southern Bank to come into their classrooms to teach a program called Money Island.

# Linen Season



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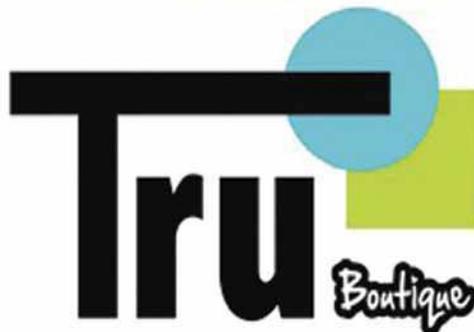


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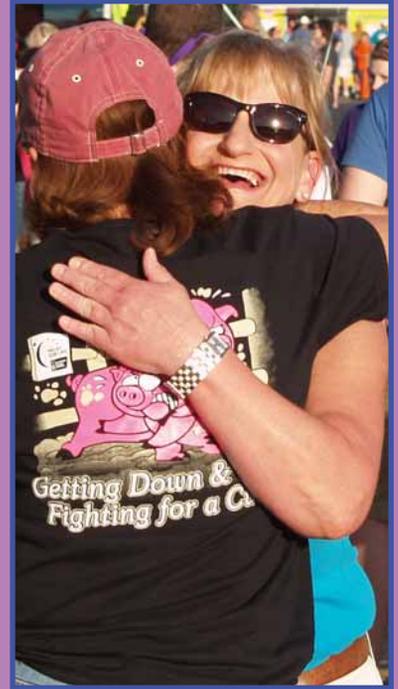
## RELAY FOR LIFE ... fighting back against cancer



As honorary survivors Donna Archer, Whitney Weeks-Miller and Sherry Brown, above, carried the banner, other survivors fell in behind them to walk the opening lap in the 2014 Greene County Relay For Life.

The Greene County Tech School District again graciously served as the host site, entertaining children and adults with games, food, rides and music ... all in the spirit of a community coming together to battle cancer. Whether sharing a hug or displaying a message on a shirt, survivors and their family members delivered their message. ♦





Survivors were applauded as they circled the GCT parking lot in unison, above, while the We Are Family group, below, raised more than \$20,000 for the cause. Some of the faces on display included a smiling Kara Ann Medsker, top right, MOR Media's Brian Osborn, event chairman Wes Dawson, singer Brad Messer and Nikki Winn, who opened the ceremony with a beautiful rendition of our National Anthem. Dawson said the final total for money raised in Greene County this year should approach \$90,000.

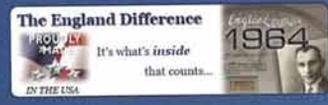




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I am Proud of Paragould! I have been the Mayor of Paragould since 1997. My original purpose for running for this office was to do my part to help improve the City of Paragould. I was born and raised in Paragould, this is my hometown, and I love this community. Everything that has been accomplished is for this community. The citizens have been supportive, and my goal is to continue to improve the services and the "quality of life" for the citizens. My goal has always been to do what is best for Paragould!

We have been fortunate to make progress in the job building sector and I am so proud that so many have contributed to the effort over the years. Paragould pride shows through in the workforce and the commitment of small businesses to invest in Paragould. As we move forward I look forward to continuing to serve the citizens of Paragould and I am thankful for the opportunity to show my Paragould Pride.

I would sincerely appreciate your support in the upcoming general election in November of this year.



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# Rotarians hand out awards at banquet

The Paragould Rotary Club dealt out a number of plaques and certificates at its annual Awards Banquet, held at the Paragould Country Club.

Among winners of the most prestigious awards were Dr. Don Purcell, Lifetime Achievement Award; Dina Mason, Rotarian of the Year; and police Cpl. Jack Hailey, Distinguished Citizen of the Year. ♦



Incoming Rotary Club President Amy Lucius had the honor of presenting awards at the banquet. Above left, she hands Dr. Don Purcell his Lifetime Achievement Award; above right, she and Andrea Dickey, last year's Rotarian of the Year, flank Dina Mason, the winner of this year's award; at left, she hands Jack Hailey the Distinguished Citizen of the Year Award; and at right, shares a smile with outgoing Rotary Club President Malissa Lewis.



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# According to the experts, none of us should still be alive

If I believe the experts, my childhood friends and I should all be dead or, at least, seriously incapacitated.

I can't read much of anything these days without learning about all the things we can't do, can't eat, can't drink, can't touch ... unless we're prepared to get some fatal or debilitating disease. When my pals and I were little, here's what we did:

Early in the morning we hopped on our bicycles -- sometimes, two to a bike -- and we rode on the city streets without a helmet of any sort. In fact, had anyone worn a helmet, or even had one hidden away on the top shelf of his bedroom closet, he would have been laughed out of the neighborhood and permanently removed from the group unceremoniously.

Our destination was the local baseball park, where upon arrival we hopped off our bikes and climbed the chain link fence, often receiving a nice gash on the arm or leg from one of the rusty prongs atop it. We didn't go get tetanus shots or

## Get Rich

By Richard Brummett



stitches; we proceeded to begin playing ball, and if blood happened to be coming out of the wound we might wet some toilet paper from the restroom and daub at it long enough to stem the flow.

None of us died.

I have a permanent scar on the top of my right hand from carefully reaching under a "For Sale" sign in the empty lot next to Kendall Jetton's house in order to fetch a whiffle ball Steve McBride had hit there and, when Kendall shouted, "Hurry!" I pulled my hand up too quickly and stuck the corner of the sign in about a quarter of an inch; I threw the ball back in and just wiped blood on my shirt for the rest of the day. We had a game to play and just because a

little vital fluid was leaking out was no cause to let a run score.

When we took a water break, we headed for a faucet and picked up the water hose, drinking right from it. Some kids actually put their lips around the hose end as if it were a straw; most of us just let the water come streaming out and drank, spitting out the first wave of liquid because it was usually hot and bitter.

We all lived.

If the whiffle ball landed on top of the house and rolled into the gutter, one of us would run around to the carport and climb the ornate corner post far enough to put our elbows on the top, then we'd pull ourselves up, run on the slanted roof to get the ball, toss it down to a friend and return to the carport, jumping from the eight- or nine-foot height to the ground.

We're still alive.

I'm just saying, maybe all these experts don't necessarily know as much as they think. ♦

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# “Perfect gentleman” is winner at local dog show

*Great Dane is named Most Handsome, Top Dog*



Brenda Garner with Fletcher.

**B**renda Garner's four-year-old stands about three feet tall and weighs in at 178 pounds. He plays well with others but is conscious of those smaller than he is. Meet Gandalf Fletcher Garner, a Blue Great Dane.

"I don't realize how big he is," Garner admitted.

Fletcher's looks, however, are what won him Most Handsome in the Paragould Rotary Club's "Paws For A Cause" dog show, as well as the title of Top Dog. Garner said this was the first dog show she placed Fletcher in and that it was an interesting experience, taking

two people to load the Great Dane up to head to the competition.

Despite the large amount of physical space Fletcher takes up, the dog isn't as intimidating as one might think. At the dog show Garner had to lure him up to the stage with a treat, but he also allowed children to take photos with him and run underneath him to play.

Garner said Fletcher is a very calm dog that isn't scared of much. "He is a perfect gentleman," she added.

Fletcher's manners shine through when he waits for people to climb stairs ahead of him, rings a bell to be let out of the house and

keeps an eye out on Garner's two Miniature Pinschers, Minny Jean and Raven. However, Fletcher clearly has a special place in the Garner home. He has his own couch, is allowed to sit in the recliner and sleeps in a King-size bed.

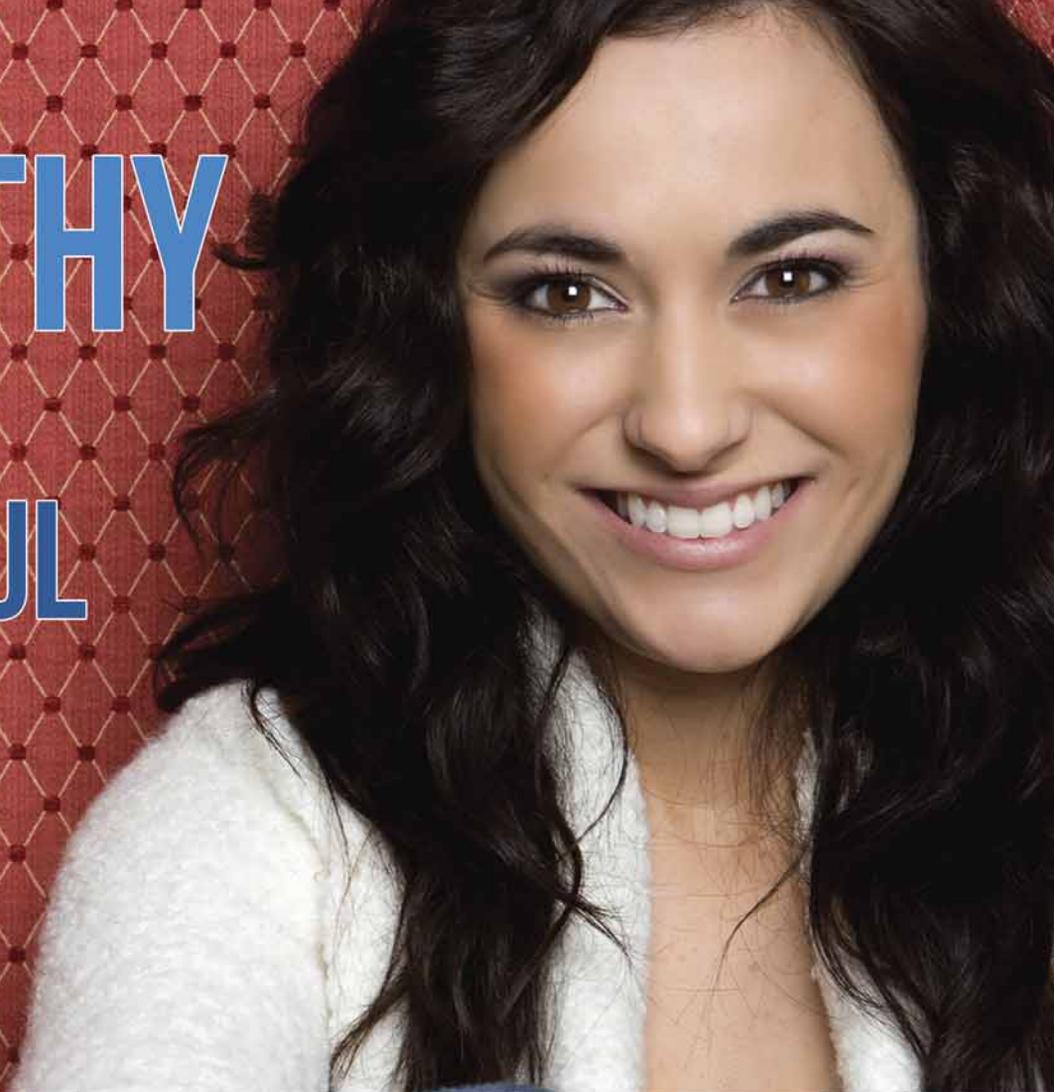
"He's just a big baby," Garner said.

For the future, Garner said she has considered taking Fletcher almost anywhere to more dog shows. She said she views it as a beauty pageant for her "granddog." Until then, Fletcher will spend his time chasing squirrels and lounging on furniture while his Most Handsome and Top Dog trophies sit nearby.

-- Caitlin LaFarlette

An advertisement for Stadium Auto Body Inc. The background is a stylized American flag with red and white stripes and blue stars. The text is arranged as follows: "IT'S YOUR RIGHT TO CHOOSE" in large, bold, black letters; "ACCIDENTS HAPPEN. We happen next." in yellow and black; "Stadium AUTO BODY INC." in a green, cursive font; "Paragould 870-215-0700" and "Jonesboro 870-932-4091" in black; and "www.stadiumautobody.com" in yellow at the bottom.

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 Cliff, Darla, and Elijah  
 Clifton and Margie



Bobby Hoskins of Piggott won the People's Choice trophy with his '57 Chevy Bel-Air at the Greene County Museum Glen Sain Antique Car Show.

## Local museum hosts annual antique car show

**T**he Greene County Museum's Glen Sain Antique Car Show was held in June at the Paragould site.

The purpose of the show was to introduce people to the museum and to give them the opportunity to enjoy seeing vintage cars. An estimated 150 people toured the museum and even more than that viewed the cars and met their owners.

The antique car show began four years ago when the members of the Arkansas Antique Car Club (AACC) stopped to tour the museum. When people saw the cars, the idea of an antique car show was born.

The first year a few local car enthusiasts, as well as the AACC, showed their vehicles but the event grew and in this, the third year, exhibitors from surrounding counties participated.

Museum co-president Doris Hagen said the unstable weather prevented several car enthusiasts from participating in the show.

She said, "We are very pleased with today's turnout. Considering the weather, we have a wonderful attendance. We have

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approximately 25 vintage cars on display and the largest car show attendance we have ever had."

For the first time, the Car Show administrators presented a People's Choice trophy to the vehicle that received the most votes from the attendees. Bobby Hoskins of Piggott won the trophy with his '57 Chevy Bel-Air.

As several of the car enthusiasts left the event, Hagen indicated that they said they would be back in 2015.

Organizers again hope to make the fourth antique car show in 2015 the best yet. ♦





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# Happenings

## 1. State Officer

Greene County Tech FFA Chapter has a State Officer representing the school district. Morgan Faulkner, who just graduated from GCT, was recently elected as the 2014-2015 State Northeast Vice-President. Morgan has already hit the ground running, spending a week with her fellow officers planning curriculum and activities for the 2014 Arkansas Leadership Conference. In July she will travel to the Washington Leadership Conference, and then come back to Arkansas to motivate and instruct FFA members from all over the state during the Arkansas Leadership Conference. Morgan, at far left in the photo, is pictured with her fellow state officers.

## 2. Worthy Summer Project

Three high school seniors who attend First United Methodist Church in Paragould collected outdoor/sport supplies for children at Mission Outreach so that the children there would have outside games and activities. These seniors decided to do this as their Senior Project after they brainstormed ideas on how they could serve and give back to the community. The minister to youth at FUMC is Billy Fly. Pictured in front of the FUMC building are Tyler Grooms, Sarah Yopp and Madeline Cupp.

## 3. Celebrating Success

Fifth grade students at Oak Grove Middle School display medals, plaques, ribbons and certificates they received at the end-of-the-year awards assembly held the last week of school. Blythe Benefield, Cole Edwards, Cam McIlvoy, Blaine Wood, Cord McCormick, Weston Shirley, and Max Hooten are pictured with awards they earned for the 2013-14 school year.

## 4. The Big Red Bin

Jonesboro residents are encouraged to make use of The Big Red Bin, located on the lower parking lot at Cate and Church streets. The Jonesboro Regional Chamber of Commerce's Green Business Committee in partnership with the City of Jonesboro and Abilities Unlimited announced the placement of the first community recycling bin in the downtown area. The bin is suitable for all recyclables: Cardboard, glass, aluminum, tin and plastic. ♦

Email your events to:  
[editor@premiere-magazine.com](mailto:editor@premiere-magazine.com)  
to have them included on the Happenings page.

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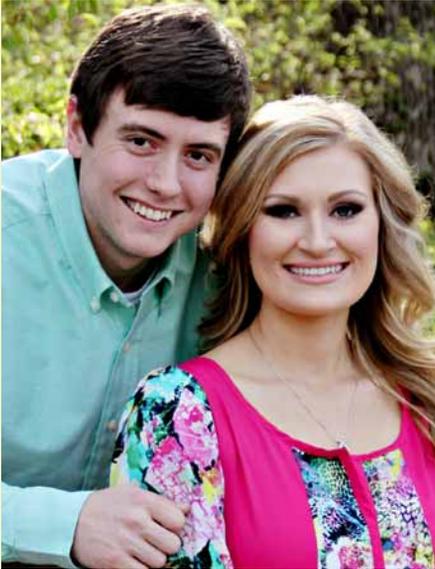
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# Engagement Announcements



Trevor James DeAngelo and Anna Michelle Eason

## *DeAngelo - Eason*

**C**arlos and Mary Ann Eason of Paragould announce the engagement and approaching marriage of their daughter, Anna Michelle, to Trevor James DeAngelo.

Trevor is the son of Chris and Kelly DeAngelo, also of Paragould.

The couple will exchange vows August 9, 2014, at Mt. Zion Baptist Church in Walcott at 4:00 p.m.

All friends and family are invited to attend the ceremony. ♦



Photo by Mitchell Photography

Courtney Mitchell and Aaron King

## *Mitchell - King*

**C**ourtney Mitchell and Aaron King have announced their plans for a July wedding ceremony.

Courtney is the daughter of Tommy and Marie Mitchell of Paragould.

Aaron's parents are Wayne and Virginia King of Trumann.

The wedding will take place July 12, 2014, at the Harrisburg Baptist Church. ♦



Photo by Zoe Weddings, Kim Boyd

Lindsey Gentry and Matthew Davis

## *Gentry - Davis*

**L**indsey Gentry and Matthew Davis have set a July date to exchange their wedding vows.

Lindsey's parents are Mickie and Kim Gentry of Searcy.

Matthew is the son of Keith and Trish Davis of Paragould.

The wedding will take place Saturday, July 26, 2014, at 6 p.m. at Temple Baptist Church in Searcy. ♦

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# Birth Announcements



Photo by Alisa Johnson

Lucian Kale Gramling

*Gramling*

**J**and Heather Gramling of Paragould, currently stationed in Fort Polk, Louisiana, announce the birth of a son, Lucian Kale Gramling.

The baby was born April 25, 2014, at Lake Area Medical Center in Lake Charles, Louisiana, and weighed 3 pounds, 12 ounces and was 16 inches long.

There is one sibling, Kraven.

Grandparents are Gary and Betty Gramling, and Greg and Debbie Stanley. ♦

To have your birth announcements and engagements included in Premiere Magazine, email information to:

[editor@premiere-magazine.com](mailto:editor@premiere-magazine.com)

no later than the 15th of the month prior to publication. For information, call Premiere at 870-236-7627 during regular business hours Monday-Friday.



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# July CALENDAR OF EVENTS

## TUESDAY, JULY 1

**AMMC HOSTS BREAST-FEEDING CLASS**, held in the Second Floor Conference Room in the Professional Office Building at Arkansas Methodist Medical Center from 7:00 pm to 9:00 pm. Call the AMMC Education Department at (870) 239-7016 for pricing and to register.

## FRIDAY, JULY 4

**THE BIG BANG FIREWORKS BLOWOUT**, at the Rotary Softball Complex in Paragould. Enjoy free fireworks at 9:30 pm, accompanied by patriotic soundtrack on 107.1 JACK FM and 103.9 Jill Radio.

**FUN FOR THE FOURTH**, at Crowley's Ridge State Park. Programs begin at 12:45 pm on Friday, July 4th. Saturday, July 5th, a DJ will be playing music on the beach with games and programs starting at 1:00 pm. Sunday, July 6th guests can enjoy more programs starting at 12:45 pm at the swimming beach. For more information, call (870) 573-6751.

## TUESDAY, JULY 8

**AMMC HOSTS INFANT SAFETY CLASS**, held in the Second Floor Conference Room in the Professional Office Building at Arkansas Methodist Medical Center from 7:00 pm to 9:00 pm. Call the AMMC Education Department at (870) 239-7016 for pricing and to register.

## THURSDAY, JULY 10

**MUSIC IN THE PARK**, at Centennial Park in Downtown Paragould. Vicki Bishop Nigro sings the classics from 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm.

## FRIDAY, JULY 11

**EXPLORER DAY CAMP**, at Lake Catherine State Park, from 9:00 am to 12:30 pm. Camp includes hikes, adventures, close-up nature studies, hands-on activities and

crafts. Camp is aimed at children 10-12 years of age. Camp fee is \$50 and includes snacks and supplies. For more information, call (501) 844-4176 or email keith.w.bell@arkansas.gov

**ULTIMATE OLDIES SHOW**, at the Collins Theatre.

**Other show dates:** July 12th

## SATURDAY, JULY 12

**AMMC HOSTS CHILDBIRTH PREPARATION CLASS**, held in the Second Floor Conference Room in the Professional Office Building at Arkansas Methodist Medical Center, from 10:00 am to 3:00 pm with one hour for lunch. Call the AMMC Education Department at (870) 239-7016 for pricing and to register. **Other class dates:** July 19th

## TUESDAY, JULY 15

**CUPCAKES AND COCKTAILS**, from 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm at Something Sweet in Downtown Paragould. Cupcakes, carefree conversation, cocktails and camaraderie --- a Tuesday evening grown-up gathering benefitting Main Street Paragould. A \$10 donation is suggested.

## THURSDAY, JULY 17

**25th ANNUAL PARAGOULD CIVITAN TV AUCTION**, from 6:30 pm to 10:00 pm, also on Friday, July 18th. All proceeds go toward yearly projects to benefit the special needs adults and children of Greene County. Call Blake at (870) 335-8785 or email paragouldcivitan@gmail.com or mail to P.O. Box 1571, Paragould, AR 72451 for more information or to make a donation.

## FRIDAY, JULY 18

**GOSPEL MUSIC CONCERT**, The Hoppers, America's favorite family of Gospel music, will be in concert at 7:00 pm at East Side Baptist Church in Paragould. This

concert benefits St. Jude Children's Research Hospital. For tickets and information, please call (870) 476-5132 or visit thehoppers.com or glorylandsouthernngospel.com

## MONDAY, JULY 21

**MOMMY AND ME BREAST-FEEDING SUPPORT GROUP MEETING**, brought to you by Arkansas Methodist Medical Center and the Greene County Health Unit. This is an opportunity for new and expectant mothers to share experiences. Held in the Second Floor conference room in the Professional Office Building at AMMC. 6:00 pm - 7:30 pm. For more information, call the Greene County Health Unit at (870) 236-7782.

## TUESDAY, JULY 22

**DISCOVERY DAY CAMP**, at Crowley's Ridge State Park from 9:00 am to 4:00 pm. This fun-filled educational day camp includes programs, games, nature hikes, swimming and crafts. Lunches, snacks, and craft supplies are provided. Registration is required. Please call (870) 573-6351 or email elizabeth.bittner@arkansas.gov to register.

## THURSDAY, JULY 24

**FUMC VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL**, We invite all children going into kindergarten through entering 6th grade to come to our Vacation Bible School July 21-24 from 9:00 a.m.-11:30 each day. Free, at First United Methodist Church. Contact Wendy McDaniel at (870) 239-8541 for more information.

**"SKINNY DIPPING" COMMUNITY DIABETES PROGRAM**, brought to you by Arkansas Methodist Medical Center and Wal-Mart. Held in the AMMC Professional Office Building Auditorium from 6:00 pm to 7:30 pm. AMMC Certified Diabetes Educator Allison Hitt, RN, will share recipes for those hot summer days and

discuss prevention of diabetes complications. Please RSVP by July 23 by calling (870) 239-7016.

## MONDAY, JULY 28

**AMMC HOSTS HEALTHY PREGNANCY CLASS**, held in the Second Floor Conference Room in the Professional Office Building at Arkansas Methodist Medical Center from 7:00 pm to 9:00 pm. Call the AMMC Education Department at (870) 239-7016 for pricing and to register.

## TUESDAY, JULY 29

**AMMC HOSTS BLOOD DRIVE WITH THE AMERICAN RED CROSS**, held in the Auditorium in the Professional Office Building at Arkansas Methodist Medical Center from 4:30 pm to 8:30 pm. 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

## EVERY TUESDAY IN JULY CRAFTS AT PARKIN ARCHEOLOGICAL STATE PARK

at the Parkin Archeological State Park day-use area (playground area) from 2:00 pm to 3:00 pm. Kids of any age can create art to take home while learning that craft's background information. Meet a park interpreter and spend an hour doing something fun and free! For more information, contact Park Interpreter Mel at (870) 755-2500 or email [mel.harvey@arkansas.gov](mailto:mel.harvey@arkansas.gov).

## EVERY FRIDAY IN JULY PERSONALIZED KAYAK INSTRUCTION

at the Lake Ponder Boat Dock in Crowley's Ridge State Park. All participants must be at least 10 years old and be able to paddle a kayak solo. Please register by 2:00 pm, see the boat dock attendant to register.

## RECURRING EVENTS

- **First Monday of every month:** Paragould Young Professionals First Monday Lunch, noon.
- **Every Wednesday:** Perking on Pruett, 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.
- **Every Saturday:** Paragould's Farmer's Market, 7:00 am to 1:00 pm or until vendors sell out, located in the front parking lot at the Greene County Courthouse.
- **Second Tuesday of every month:** The Greene County Wildlife Club meets at the Paragould Community Center beginning at 6:00 pm.
- 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](mailto:tcfofnortheastarkansas@yahoo.com).

The Memory Cafe, support group for those having memory, dementia or Alzheimer's at 1:00 pm at Swirlz Yogurt and Coffee.

- **Second Wednesday of every month:** St. Mary's Spaghetti Dinner, 11 a.m.-1:30 p.m. Admission is \$6 for all you can eat spaghetti, salad, garlic bread, dessert and drink. At St. Mary's Catholic Church in Paragould.
- **Every Third Tuesday:** Alzheimer's Support Group with the Alzheimer's Arkansas Association and Absolute Care Management, 1:00 pm at the Paragould Library.
- **Fourth Tuesday of every month:** Greene County Master Gardener Meeting, Greene County Library, 6 pm, 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.

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Please send all information for upcoming events to [editor@premiere-magazine.com](mailto:editor@premiere-magazine.com)

**THE BIG BANG FIREWORKS BLOWOUT**  
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Karen Brinkley

**K**aren Brinkley has a great appreciation for the family table. Better still, you don't even have to be in her family to claim a seat.

Brinkley, who moved to Paragould several years ago, knows well the warm power generated by the combination of good food, good conversation and good people. Though she ran a successful catering business in Pocahontas for many years, Brinkley finds more joy in using her kitchen skills to make life better for family and friends. Rather than making a living, she's enriching lives.

For July's NEA Cook feature, Brinkley prepared a dessert that's perfect for summertime in Arkansas. Its patriotic combination of colors (strawberries, blueberries and Cool Whip) is eye-catching, and its cool deliciousness will have you pledging your allegiance.

**Where are you from?**

I am from Arkansas, but spent ten very fun years of my childhood in Idaho.

**Family:**

I am married to my husband, Phil Brinkley. Our family of 15 includes, us, two daughters, one son, two sons-in-law and one daughter-in-law, two granddaughters and five grandsons.

# NEA COOKS



## Berries and Cream Pie

**Crust:**

- 1 1/2 cups flour
- 3 Tablespoons granulated sugar
- 2 Tablespoons milk
- 1/2 cup vegetable oil

Mix crusts well. With fingers, press gently into a 9 inch deep dish pie pan. Prick crust with fork. Bake at 325 for 25 minutes or until golden brown. Cool.

**Filling:**

- 1 (8oz) cream cheese, softened

- 1/4 cup brown sugar, packed firmly

- 1 teaspoon vanilla

- 1 (8oz) cool whip, thawed

Approx. 1 1/2 cup blueberries or sliced strawberries

Beat cream cheese with electric mixer until light and fluffy. Add brown sugar and vanilla, mixing well. Fold in the cool whip. Mix again. Add berries and gently fold into cream cheese mixture. Fill the cooled pie shell. Garnish with extra berries. (Other fruits, such as peaches, can also be used.) ♦

**Occupation:**

My #1 focus has and always will be my home. I also love selling real estate with Paragould Home Source.

**Who taught you to cook?**

My mother, Lillian Johnson, was absolutely the best cook ever. I do remember a few tips from my dad, my Pa Johnson and aunt Ellen Johnson. I gathered cooking skills from many.

**When did you begin cooking?**

I started 4-H in the sixth grade and there developed a love to cook.

**Who do you like to cook for most?**

Without a doubt, my family. One or one hundred of them, extended family included.

**What is the one ingredient you can't do without?**

I was going to answer that question with potatoes, but Phil changed the answer to BUTTER. So potatoes and butter.

**What was your worst cooking disaster?**

Having a catering business for ten years, I learned to deal with problems. We had very few disasters, but one evening we were serving grilled ribeyes to a group of farmers. A pan of 25 steaks got dropped on the floor during the serving time. I quickly called Bonanza and told the manager what had happened. He had 25 ribeyes ready for me almost as quickly as I could get there. The disaster turned into a fun memory. ♦

# STAY TUNED

## What's in Store For Next Month

Cover Story



Premiere readers will have their say when the votes are tallied and our Outstanding Teacher is named. Candidates are featured on page 14 of this month's issue. Voting will run through Friday, July 11. The winner will be featured on the cover of Premiere's August issue.

Events



Attend events with us as Premiere covers local happenings and activities around town. We'll follow local people taking part in all sorts of activities in the Greene County area, like the Big Bang Blowout at Rotary Park. Be sure and contact us to let us know what you or your organization has in store. ♦

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