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February
2017

love stories

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New Year Babies
Midnight on Main
Snow Day Contest

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From The

PUBLISHER...

DINA MASON

What other theme than "Love" could you have for February? We love the opportunity Premiere gives us to tell the stories of Northeast Arkansans and this issue will not disappoint ... especially if you are a sucker for a good love story!

Turn the pages and read of three local love stories to warm your heart, tales ranging from two high school sweetheart stories to a text message to the wrong person that started a long distance relationship between the North and the South and ended with a beautiful family.

If beauty treatments are on your mind we have expert Prom advice from Rouge Salon to get you ready for your big day, and our "Skincare and Make-up Tips" might give you some ideas for that Valentine or just as a way to treat yourself!

We promised new contributing writers in 2017 and this month we bring you Joshua Costner's debut with a "Love" column. He will be talking disaster preparedness in future editions. Josie Bell and Ashley

Berry take our "Love" theme on each of their different paths and they will be bringing new aspects of coverage on the Arts, with Ashley's love of music and poetry and Josie's participation in both Greene County's and Jonesboro's drama organizations.

Each of our new contributors will be writing assignments other than their specific passions, so feel free to email them from our page 7 publishing information if you have ideas or activities you would like them to write about or cover.

Don't miss your chance to vote on the Premiere Awards for the Jonesboro market with the ballot in this edition and on-line at premiere-magazine.com. We will publish the Jonesboro winners in the May edition and the Paragould ballot will be out in April with Paragould winners publishing in July!

You will find our regular features from Jared Pickney, Chuck Long and of course "Get Rich," plus all the Good News happening in Northeast Arkansas in this edition of Premiere Magazine.

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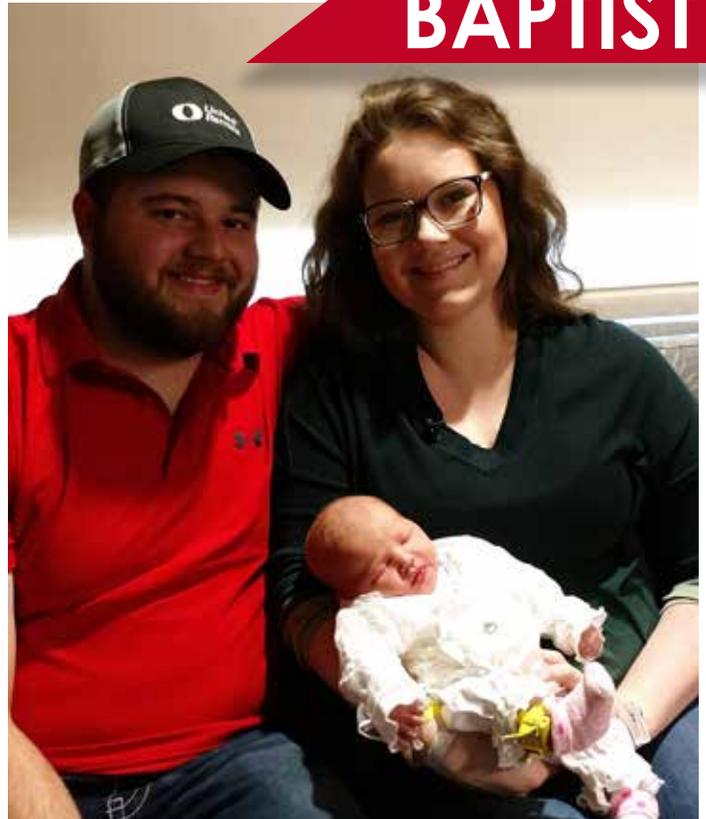
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NEW YEAR BABIES

**NEA
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Edward and Kelsey Evans of Brookland welcomed their new daughter, Lyric Hazel Evans, on January 1, 2017.

Born at 1:15 a.m. at NEA Baptist Memorial Hospital, Lyric Hazel weighed 7 pounds, 13 ounces, and was 20.25 inches long.

ST. BERNARDS



Eleanor Rose Deken was born at St. Bernards at 3:29 a.m. on Sunday, Jan. 1. She is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Deken of Paragould.

AMMC



Arkansas Methodist Medical Center welcomed Reason JC Richardson as the first baby born at the hospital in the New Year. Reason was 8 pounds, 8 ounces and 20.5" long. He arrived at 12:53 a.m. on Monday, January 2, 2017. Proud parents are Rebecca Millsap and Ronnie Richardson of Jonesboro. He joins brothers, Micheal and Andrew Stacy. Reason and his family received several gifts from the hospital as well as from AMMC Auxiliary member Daisy Howard, the AMMC Auxiliary Gift Shop, Alvin Taylor's Flowers, Ballard's Flowers, Details Hair and Nail Studio, First National Bank, Kiss the Cook and Joy Robinson Photography.

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DUCK CLASSIC

The 14th annual Duck Classic was another record breaking year, raising more than \$590,000 for the five free programs of NEA Baptist Charitable Foundation.

Nearly 1,500 people gathered at the Convocation Center the evening of December 8th for the banquet, enjoying a meal from John 3:16 and participating in the many auctions and raffles. Kevin James was the winner of the Grand Classic Raffle Polaris Ranger donated by Barton Powersports. Chad Speer was the winner of the Grand Classic Raffle Duck Truck, donated by Glen Sain and DNW Truck Accessories.

The morning of December 9th, 31 teams participated in a competitive duck hunt with local landowners who donated prime hunting spots. Hunters and landowners gathered for the check-in event at DNW Outdoors to roll the dice and tally the scores that afternoon.

Landowner Chris Bauschlicher and Team NECA 1 took home first place in the hunt.





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ONE WARM COAT

Local retailer Gearhead Outfitters has ended its “Buy One, Give One” campaign with a total donation of 580 coats valued at more than \$50,000. The total greatly exceeds their original goal of 350 coats during the campaign, which lasted from November 1 to December 15.

“Our customers are so giving, and we are so grateful for the loyalty they’ve shown us over the past 20 years,” said owner Ted Herget. “That’s why we created our nonprofit ‘Gearhead Gives.’ We want to practice what we preach, acknowledging the abundance our customers have given us by giving back to those who are truly in need.”

In partnership with “One Warm Coat,” the donation will be distributed to local children’s shelters and communities in desperate need around the country. The local shelters received the donation in time to be distributed for Christmas.

“Our customers care about where their dollars go, and we’ve seen them rally around this campaign,” Herget said. “Some have even bought one coat and given it back to us so they can give two.”

This is the largest one-time donation Gearhead has ever given, and Herget wants to encourage other small businesses and the outdoor industry to follow suit in the coming years.

“We never want to lose our focus. This has been a great campaign to set an example for ourselves and for the outdoor industry as a whole,” Herget said. “I hope that by giving back we can contribute to the health and well-being of these kids, and continue to build trust and loyalty in our local communities.”

Gearhead Outfitters had donated more than \$60,000 by year end to local charities, nonprofits and schools through the nonprofit “Gearhead Gives.” Gearhead Outfitters has nine locations in Arkansas, Missouri and Louisiana. For more information, or to find a Gearhead location near you, visit www.gearheadoutfitters.com. To host your own coat drive, or donate to “One Warm Coat,” visit www.onewarmcoat.org.



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MIDNIGHT ON MAIN

Downtown Jonesboro was the place to be on New Year's Eve when Midnight on Main was staged for anyone looking for a fun entertainment idea to bring in the new year.

The fundraiser ran from 8 p.m. Saturday night until 1:00 a.m. in Studio 402 off of Main Street, with a masquerade ball theme. Tickets cost \$75 per person and included drinks, food, photos, dancing and more. Money raised will go toward the Downtown Jonesboro Association activities.

Spreads of downtown food fares were provided by The Parsonage 322, Skinny J's, N'awlins Arkansas, and Godsey's. DJ Spencer Bounds provided entertainment and Makeup Artist Alexandra Coffman worked her magic with masquerade inspired makeup.

Presenting sponsors were St. Bernards and East Arkansas Broadcasters.

According to Autumn Wilder, Director of Events for the Downtown Jonesboro Association, the event is to be an annual activity and the theme will be different each year.



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SNOW DAY CONTEST

On January 6th, Northeast Arkansas experienced its first snowfall of the year. In order to celebrate, we asked our fans on Facebook to send us their snow day pictures. Congratulations to our winners, Adrianna Boling, Courtney Hollowell, and Kayla McDaniel!



Courtney Hollowell



Adrianna Boling



Kayla McDaniel

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GREENE COUNTY 4-H LIVESTOCK BANQUET

Several members of the Greene County 4-H Livestock youth gathered for an awards banquet in December, representing a large portion of the approximately 75 in the group.

Allen R. Davis of the Greene County Cooperative Extension Service started the evening off with a welcome to everyone there and individuals were recognized for their accomplishments.

Pictured below are Emma Kelly and Aaryon Vaughn, the Photography Contest Winners for the night. They were allowed to enter a black and white or color entry pertaining to their livestock projects during the year.





HUNTING SNOW GEESE

By Chuck Long

February is an interesting month. It bridges the gap from winter to spring with weather that can range from blizzard-like conditions to balmy 60 – 70 degree temperatures that prompt the desire to work in the garden. It is known for basketball tournaments and Valentine’s Day but it is often overlooked as a month to spend time outdoors.

Deer hunting with archery equipment is open during February in most parts of the state and many of our small game seasons are open during that time as well, but in recent years February has become the month to hunt snow geese. It is weather dependent, but most years thousands upon thousands of these geese can be found in Northeast Arkansas. Twenty-five years ago a snow goose was a rarity, a novelty that was often seen passing high over NEA in their wavy formations but rarely found in a hunter’s bag. That has changed dramatically as populations of snow geese have exploded. Their numbers have gotten so large the geese are on the brink of wiping out their own nesting habitat in the Arctic. This has led to very liberal hunting opportunities for these vast flocks of waterfowl.

Snow geese tend to travel in huge flocks and that, in itself, makes them very difficult to hunt. Hunters that try to decoy the birds often use decoy spreads that number 500 to over 1,000 to allure these fickle birds into gun range. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

allows electronic callers to be employed to help these hunters decoy the birds but snow goose hunting is still a hit or miss proposition. These e-callers are allowed during the Light Goose Conservation Order hunt that begins after duck season. Regulations are also relaxed that allow unplugged guns and no limits on the snow geese during that time frame. Hunters in Arkansas do not need duck stamps but must have a hunting license, though it can be from any state. Hunters will need to get a free registration permit that can be obtained from either www.agfc.com or by calling 1-800-364-4263 during business hours. The season will run January 30 through February 3 and then resume February 5 until April 25.

Due to the difficulty in decoying these birds, many hunters opt for the “sneak” method of hunting snow geese. This involves finding the geese in a field and then using ditches, fence rows and other cover to get within shotgun range. This is probably the best method to take the large number of geese that need to be removed from the flock each year. Please make sure and follow the rules that include no shooting from a public road and also obtain permission before entering any private property.

One of the best tips for these sneaks is to have a well-trained dog to retrieve the downed birds. These geese like to feed in muck and mire and retrieval of the downed birds is sometimes difficult but it is not only the

ethical thing to do, it is required by law. One of my hunting buddies and I learned this a few years back as we found some geese in a sneakable location. We eased into position and once our shots were fired the work began. Wet, mucky gumbo is a challenge to say the least and a dog picking up those geese is a joy to watch.

Snow geese have been maligned as table fare, but with some effort they can be very tasty. The geese are well insulated to survive their environment so spread the geese out and allow them to cool once they are harvested. The breast meat can be used in a variety of recipes from grilling to fajitas and will provide a great meal.

If you do not hunt, the large flocks of snow geese are very interesting to watch and there is a great chance to see a bald eagle stalking the groups of geese. Get out and enjoy a little outdoor time this month and I hope to see you out there. Happy Valentine’s Day and God bless!



**CHUCK
LONG**
Regional Education
Coordinator Northeast
Education Division
Arkansas Game and
Fish Commission



LIVING A BETTER STORY

By Jared Pickney



I believe in love at first sight, or at least I did on that October morning in 2003 when Meagan Hawley walked into The Buckle.

Like all couples, when we first started dating we found ourselves to be "in love." We never fought. We talked on the phone for hours. We both believed that we were perfect for one another.

However, the longer we dated the more we realized just how different we were. I move quickly. She takes her time. I process things externally, she internally. I can be spontaneous. She likes details. The list goes on and on.

On top of our obvious differences, we also began to notice our obvious flaws. She said I

was anxious, negative, uptight and cut people off. I said she was lazy, sensitive and unable to express her emotions.

Needless to say, our relationship has not always been easy. However, some of the best moments of my life have Meagan at the center. If I were to edit her out of my story it would become flat, shallow and anemic. I love my wife, and in many ways I believe our marriage is better than ever.

Still, our marriage is imperfect because it consists of two imperfect people. However, we are two imperfect people who have made an unconditional commitment for the good of the other for a lifetime.

This is what true love is, and it can't really begin until the "in love" stage is over. True love says: "I see your flaws, I see your issues, and I am choosing to stay anyway. Whether you are rich or poor, young or old, sagging or not sagging, I am not going anywhere. I am committed to you."

True love is not primarily a feeling. It is a choice. A choice to weather the storms of life together rather than abandon ship as soon as the seas begin to rage.

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love YOUR SKIN

Forget about giving others gifts on Valentine's Day. Treat yourself to a facial or amp up your at-home routine and love the skin you're in!

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This oil has also been known to reduce acne scarring and aiding the immune system with its addition of Vitamin C. Try adding a few drops to your moisturizer every day and watch your skin begin to glow.

Pucker Up!

When it comes to treating your skin, you can't forget about your lips!

For soft, kissable lips this Valentine's Day, add exfoliation to your routine. Gently use a toothbrush across your lips or find a soft lip scrub with coconut oil to add in moisture. Follow up with a lip balm that includes SPF.

Don't eat your chocolate ... wear it!

A face mask is a great way to hydrate and exfoliate, but did you know your skin can benefit from a chocolate mask?

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love WITHIN THE STORM DISASTER PREPAREDNESS

By Joshua Costner



When Valentine's Day is mentioned, we often think of red roses, sweet chocolates, and love notes written to our significant other. Roughly one hundred and eighty million Valentine's cards will be exchanged. Nearly two hundred million roses will be cultivated for this very day. Flower and chocolate sales together will reach almost four billion. And yet, for all the consumerism centered around this day, I have heard very little mention of unconditional love.

I think of the parents who used themselves as shields for their children in the Haiti earthquakes. I think of the emergency responders who defy the elements in search of survivors. I think of our brave soldiers who put themselves between the enemy, and those being oppressed.

During this month, let us ponder the deepest meanings of unconditional love. And in doing so, let us think of those who are most precious to us. Let us plan with great care the actions we will take to protect them when disasters strike. Let us be willing to go far above and beyond in lessening the effects of life's storms for them, as much as is humanly possible. Let us live love, always.

Editor's note: Watch for Josh's column as he bring you tips on how to protect your family in the March edition.

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GET THE VALENTINE'S DAY look

Valentine's Day is perhaps the best day of the year to play with makeup and create gorgeous styles to celebrate love. If you have a fun date night on your schedule, prepare to get dolled up!

It's all about the lips on this romantic holiday. Lipstick is potentially the most important part of any Valentine's Day look, so find a red or pink that is perfect for you.

The trick to finding that "just right" red is by determining your skin undertones: warm, cool or neutral. To do this, take a look at the veins on your wrists. If they are more blue, you have cool undertones. If they lean toward a green color, that means warm. Or, if you're somewhere in between, you may be more neutral.

Cool skin tones need to look for red lipstick with a blue or purple undertone. Orange undertones in lipsticks are perfect for warm skin, and neutrals can enjoy picking from both.

When making eyes at your significant other, soft and romantic colors will complete your look. Try for pastels in purple or pink with a dark color in your outer corner, and smudge your under eye liner for a more sultry look. For more drama, look into lash extensions or strip lashes to frame your eyes even better.

To keep it all together so it lasts through date night, finish off with a makeup setting spray.

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love story

JOSH & SAVANNA SMITH

My husband, Josh, and I met the summer of 2005 at the local community center. It was the summer before my 9th grade year, and his 8th grade year in school at Greene County Tech. After we met we became inseparable the rest of that summer and into the school year. We had our first date at the old two-cinema movie theater on June 29th and saw "War of The Worlds." The movie was terrible, but the date was great! Throughout our relationship in high school we had silly breakups a few times, but no matter what happened or who we dated in between, we always had each other's hearts.

In May of 2012, after seven years of dating, Josh broke up with me, leaving me absolutely heartbroken. He dated around, trying to fill the void, and I also tried dating but never could find anyone who made me feel the way Josh did. After our breakup, I had to move out of my mom's house and get my own place because I was haunted by memories. I moved into some apartments which were right up the road from Josh's childhood home. One day in June, after a year of being apart and my thinking we'd never be together again, Josh's sister Mandy told me he had ended up moving back into his childhood home, literally feet away from me. She also told me he had said he wished he knew a year ago how things would be now. So after she told me that, I had this vision he would come running back, knocking on my door, begging me back, but in this case it didn't happen.

You see, Josh was so ashamed and embarrassed about his previous actions and knew he had really broken my heart when he broke up with me that he thought I deserved better and he was just going to try and live without me. That wasn't going to happen ... I am very persistent and determined, and whenever I want something I never give up until I get it, and I wasn't about to give up on Josh. So, once I heard he lived by me I got the courage to drive to his house and have a little chat. I did many pep talks in front of the mirror before I finally drove up his driveway. Sometimes things don't go the way we had imagined, and we have to make the first move.

When I knocked on his door, I thought my heart was going to beat out of my chest. He answered and was very surprised to see me. I told him we needed to talk and I wanted a lot of answers. I can't really explain it, but when I went inside and we started talking, it



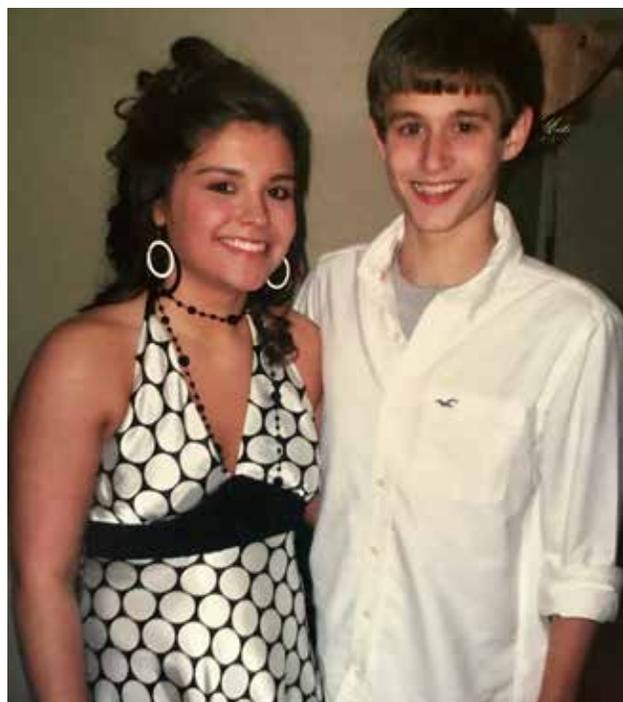
was like we had never broken up and not been together the past year. We caught up, never missing one beat, acting like we would any other day together. We both realized that and knew our relationship was always something special. So after that day we began talking and texting every day for the next week or two. Well, me being me, I wanted things to go a bit faster (I'm also very impatient); after all, we hadn't been with each other in a year. I knew we still loved each other, so I gave Josh two options: either get it together and let's be together, or he wouldn't hear from me again. It wasn't that blunt; I actually wrote a letter to him and read it aloud, as we both ended up crying afterward.

After that day, we were officially "Josh and Savanna" like we had been before. It was the second best summer, and was like we were never apart. We both helped each other heal from the heartache we had experienced with many tears and prayers along the way, and the rest is pretty much history. Later that year, on November 29, 2013, in front of my whole family, Josh got down on one knee and asked me the easiest question I've ever been asked, and I said yes! We were taking a picture just like we always do and he said, "I'm about to throw up." I jokingly said, "You're about to propose, aren't you?" And sure enough, as we looked at my cell phone my mom was holding to make a video, he said he had an announcement to make, and it sure was a big announcement!

We got married on the beach in Topsail Island, North Carolina, on June 20, 2014, surrounded by our family and two best friends. I guess

you could say June is a very unique and special month to us because it has brought so many new beginnings. We are going on three years of a wonderful, loving, sometimes crazy marriage. As cliché as it sounds, we are not only husband and wife, but we truly are best friends. I could not imagine life without him, and I know he feels the same. I'm not me without him, and he's not him without me. We have two fur babies, Mylee and Chloe, that we treat just like humans. We are wanting to have children in the next year or two, but right now are enjoying life, just the two of us with our pups. Our biggest dream is to move to North Carolina sometime in the next year to settle down and raise a family. We were both born and raised in Arkansas, but have loved North Carolina ever since we went there on vacation in the summer of 2010.

We love telling people about our story because we know it's not like many, and it's something so special to us. We are blessed to have been given a second chance to love one another for the rest of our lives. I am proud to say I married my high school sweetheart and best friend. We joke about that year apart and how crazy we were (mainly me, I will admit), but despite it all, it really is one of the



greatest feelings knowing everything we've been through and overcome together. We have learned a lot throughout all these years, and our story, the obstacles, the blessings, everything has shaped us into who we are today, not only as individuals, but as a strong couple as well. The best, and most important thing we've learned is that true love really does conquer all; also, everything always works out just how it is supposed to all in God's time, and when you love someone, time apart does indeed make the heart grow fonder. I'm so glad I drove up Josh's driveway that day, and I know he is, too. He thanks me for that all the time.



love story JOSH & TIFFANY SHARP

I remember being a young girl and praying at night to find long lasting love at a young age so that I could share my whole life with that person, always having him near.

You see, I grew up in a home with split parents and knew it's not what I wanted for my life. I dreamt of a marriage similar to I Love Lucy... you know, a little "black and white boring" but also full of happiness, laughter, mutual trust and acceptance of who each other is. The year I turned 16 in June -- and just one week before leaving for the summer as I always did -- I had preparations to make for cheer camp with my friends, so to town we went on a Saturday night for some shopping. We ended up at the bowling alley at some point and still to this day I don't know why we went there. But my friend saw this cute guy in a truck and honked my car horn at him. He honked back, she honked, and so forth until we were parked next to each other.

As I was listening to her talk and sharing her obvious interest, this guy -- who I had barely made eye contact with -- asked if I would call him later that night. I really didn't have any interest at the time, so I instantly said no. But then all of a sudden he smiled and laughed

at my response and that's all it took! I had never been in a situation like this before, this person that I didn't know asking for my number? He didn't go to my school, I knew nothing about him but oddly I said, "No, but you can call me sometime," and proceeded to write my number on his hand.

He called me that night and after three hours of conversation about each of us, our families and goals for the future, we ended

with a simple and confused "I love you." I left two days later and we fell asleep on the phone many nights while I was away for the summer. When I got back, we dated for two years through high school and he proposed senior year! Many people would remember





us as what they called Ken and Barbie because of our hot pink car we were often seen in together. We enjoyed a good car show, races and the smell of a revving engine.

We married just after high school graduation, went to college pursuing degrees as Physical Therapist Assistants at ASU Jonesboro, graduating in the class of 2007. We worked side by side for eight years and during that time we had a child who is now 5. Willow is the most beautiful, intelligent, compassionate and funny little girl that we could ever have asked for. While I was pregnant with her we decided to venture on to other professional and business ideas, and with that came opening our own business.

We ended up selling our home we had worked so hard for, moved into a rent house and put all of our money toward opening a daycare. Looking back, it was such a scary decision and we could have easily failed. We both worked 60-plus hours a week and

had an infant to care for, we had no business background and really no one to help us learn how to properly run one. I remember staying up reading article after article on child care regulations across the nation, IRS information and learning construction terminology. We had two challenging years during that point, the way of life that we knew changed and we gave so much up to pursue our dreams but continued to use each other as a prime source of motivation.

We had days driving from work in Blytheville to home in Brookland with a breast pump under my shirt, state official or sub-contractor on the phone, and a baby in the back seat who couldn't wait to get home to be cuddled, bathed and read to. When Willow was two, Josh went back to college and graduated with his Master's degree in Occupational Therapy from Belmont University in Tennessee, becoming the first in his family to graduate from college. Our now large daycare, Look What I Can Do Learning Center, here in town

is growing rapidly and doing great and we get to utilize our college degrees in ways we never imagined were intended for us. We get to spend time with Willow in a way that we never could have before. We have grown together in ways that we never knew we would. Through many funny times, odd mistakes, personal growth and unexpected turns in the road, we have continued to build our relationship just as we did that first night -- through constant conversation and a ton of "I Love Lucy" moments.

Do you know the episode where Lucy hires Superman for Ricky Jr.'s birthday party and she gets stuck on the window ledge? Well ... that's my marriage in a nutshell. You see, being 30 years old and married for nearly 13 years can be seen as rare but it happened to us and there is no other explanation than love at first sight.



Jonesboro

PR

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Automotive

- Auto Body Shop _____
- Auto Dealer/New _____
- Auto Dealer/Used _____
- Auto Parts Shop _____
- Carwash _____
- Oil Change & Lube _____
- Repair/Service/Mechanic (List Shop) _____
- Tire Service Center _____
- Wrecker Service _____

Beauty & Fitness

- Beauty Salon _____
- Bootcamp _____
- Cosmetic Studio _____
- Day Spa _____
- Esthetician _____
- Fitness Center _____
- Hair Dresser _____
- Nail Technician _____
- Massage Therapist _____
- Tanning Salon _____

Business to Business

- Computer Service & Repair _____
- Employment Agency _____
- Office Supply/Printing _____
- Real Estate Co. _____
- Screen Printing _____
- Sign Company _____

Construction/New Home Repair

- Heat & Air _____
- Electrician (List Company) _____
- Excavating _____
- General Contractor _____
- Siding _____
- Other Construction _____

Entertainment/Relaxation

- Family Entertainment Venue _____
- Live Entertainment Venue _____
- Local Festival _____
- Movie Theatre _____
- Night Club/Bar _____

Financial

- Accountant (List Company) _____
- Bank _____
- Charitable Organization _____
- Financial Planner (List Company) _____
- Insurance Agency _____
- Mortgage Company _____
- Tax Service _____
- Title Company _____

For the Home

- Appliance Store _____
- Carpet & Rug Cleaning Service _____
- Flooring Dealer _____
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- Interior Design _____
- Landscaping/Nursery _____
- Lawn & Garden Equipment Dealer _____
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Kids

Child Care Center _____
Coach (List School) _____
Dance _____
Gymnastics _____
Martial Arts _____
Park _____
School Administrator (List School) _____
Teacher (List School) _____

Life Events

Caterer _____
Florist _____
Funeral Home _____
Party Rental _____
Photographer _____
Retirement Center _____

Professionals

Attorney (List Firm) _____
Audiologist _____
Chiropractor (List Clinic) _____
Counselor (List Agency) _____
Dental Clinic _____
Dentist (List Clinic) _____
Home Health Agency _____
Home Medical Supply Store _____
Medical Clinic _____
Medical Supplies _____
Nurse (List Clinic) _____
Orthodontist (List Clinic) _____
Ophthalmologist (List Clinic) _____
Optometrist (List Clinic) _____
Pharmacy _____
Physician/General (List Clinic) _____
Plastic/Cosmetic Service _____
Therapist (Clinic) What kind? _____
Other Medical Specialty _____

Pets

Pet Grooming Service _____
Pet Supplies _____
Veterinary Clinic _____

Restaurants

Bakery/Sweet Treats _____
BBQ _____
Breakfast _____
Buffet Style _____
Burger _____
Catfish _____
Chicken _____
Custom Cakes _____
Ethnic _____
Frozen Treats _____
Pizza _____
Steak _____

Shopping

Clothing _____
Consignment Shop _____
Dress Shop/Formal Wear _____
Flea Market _____
Farm Supply Store _____
Grocery Store _____
Hardware/Tool Store _____
Jewelry Store _____
Liquor Store _____
Pawn Shop _____
Shoe Store _____
Sporting Goods _____
Uniform Clothing _____

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PARAGOULD PREMIERE AWARDS!



love story **JEREMY & SHAY WILLIS**

I met Jeremy Willis more than ten years ago because of a wrong phone number. Yes, a wrong phone number.

When I tell people that is how we met, they don't believe me. They say, "No way! How did that happen?" or, "What do you mean, a wrong phone number?" Well, this is how the story goes.

During Thanksgiving 2006, I sent a mass text message to several friends, including some of my classmates from graduate school at Mississippi State University. What I didn't realize was that one of my friends who was working as a meteorologist in Des Moines, Iowa, had moved to Colorado for a different job and had changed his phone number. So, the text message sending Thanksgiving greetings intended for my classmate actually ended up in a perfect stranger's inbox. Needless to say, that perfect stranger waited about a week and then decided to call the number back, but not without some convincing from his friend.

When I received the call, I did not answer because I did not recognize the phone number. A voicemail was left. I listened. I didn't recognize the voice on the other end, nor did they say who they were. For some reason, the next morning, curiosity got the cat and I decided to text the number to see who it was. The person who answered was not someone I knew and it was also not the phone number I had sent the text message to, but the recipient's friend.





Once I sent my message, the friend contacted the perfect stranger and all three of us began to text one another. Eventually the friend fell out of the conversation and the perfect stranger was revealed to be Jeremy Willis. In time, Jeremy asked to call me so we could talk in person and the rest is history, or perhaps fate. I met Jeremy in person for the first time on December 29, 2006. From that point, we dated long distance (18 hours) for five months.

Things were going so well we decided to move closer to one another. Jeremy relocated from Des Moines to Meridian, Mississippi, where I was living and working. We remained there for about three months before I was relocated to Tupelo, Mississippi, with my job. Our time in Tupelo lasted for about two years when an opportunity came up for us to move to Paragould, my home. In March of 2009, we moved again so I could begin a new career in healthcare marketing at Arkansas Methodist Medical Center.

Jeremy proposed in December of 2010, we were married in October 2011, we found out that we were pregnant in December 2013 and had our daughter, Keagan Elizabeth Willis, on August 12, 2014. Jeremy currently works in sales at Allen Engineering. I am the Director of the Foundation and Marketing at AMMC. And Keagan, well, she is the light of our world.





WHAT LOVE *really means*

By Ashley Berry

Love holds different meanings for each person. Love is a passion for living, being strong and giving pieces of yourself to help others. Love isn't just a relationship with that special someone or the little lives you brought into this world. Love is so much more than can be explained on an 8.5x11 inch piece of paper.

Music is a tool that can bring a person back to a particular time of life, a time where one can remember sights, sounds and even smells. It can evoke emotions hidden for years and can serve as a reminder to slow down in moments of chaos, remembering the little things we often forget and love. For my family, it's a simple song about standing the test of time.

Suzie and Ken Cox were married in September of 1972. The love they shared was seen in everything they did and how they lived. Suzie was a homemaker who loved family, quilting and cooking. Ken was a truck driver who enjoyed being a handyman, anything science

fiction related and family. The two shared a mutual love of a song called "Two Sparrows in a Hurricane," by Tanya Tucker and it seemed so fitting. In the 30-plus years they were married their love for each other walked hand in hand with the song. Through happiness, heartbreak and illness they weathered every storm. For their four children and 13 grandchildren, the song rang true in 2005. They died within minutes of each other on November 5, one in the hospital and one at home. It was almost calming that it happened that way, a true test of soulmates. Love transcended this earthly world into the next.

It's been 10-plus years since I've been able to listen to that song. So many times I would try, only to break down. Recently, one of the local stations played it and I felt tears welling in my eyes, but I couldn't turn it off. I felt I needed to hear it that day and was instantly transported to the last phone call I had with my grandma Suzie, her repeating how proud she was of me for just graduating high school and getting

accepted to Arkansas State University. "I love you" rang out so many times during that conversation that I still hold on to. Trying to explain how much love I felt all alone in my car is something I don't know if I can do ... memories of two lives that will forever have a profound effect on me.

2016 was a year of learning new things and listening to my own voice, being patient, trusting others and giving all my fear and doubt to God. So many times I felt the pain of being alone and as if no one cared. It took a leap of faith, a crazy passion and a friend to help me realize the truth about love. The fact that a friend I barely knew would throw so much trust into my broken soul was proof enough. I learned that my friends were like family to me, closer at times. For the first time in a very long time, I wasn't just the one from a broken home. I wasn't just the soul being ripped apart by anxiety and depression. I've learned to give love and forgive those who bring me down. That's what love really means.

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VALENTINE'S DAY *is for the birds*

By Josie Bell

Some historians believe Valentine's Day was founded to correspond with the start of the mating season of birds. Ancient Greeks told singles to venture out on St. Valentine's Day and look for birds. The characteristics of the first fowl you saw would give you hints toward your future mate. I guess ornithomancy could be an exciting option, but bird watching in February is cold – and staying home with a sappy romantic film and a pizza ruins the diet.

I can't go anywhere without hearing, "Hey, Josie, you started that singles group, didn't

you?" Yes, I did! I can tell you one thing for certain. The fact that you are single has nothing to do with your being old, or out of shape, or shy. It does have to do with your having a very small circle of influence. Dating is a numbers game. The more people you meet, the more you talk to, the more likely you are to meet someone that "fits" you.

Maybe you can't figure out how to do that yet, maybe the mere thought scares you and you're doomed to face another bird mating celebration alone. If you're looking for a good starting point, check out NEA Singles. It's a

free group on Facebook. The only requirement is that you are indeed single. Being (virtually) surrounded by 850 like-minded members makes things a bit more tolerable. This group will ask questions, commiserate with you, plan outings and generally have a good time. Don't worry, it's not a dating site. It's a moderated forum for you to get to know people, learn to flirt again, let your guard down and even make some friends.

So, the next step is yours. Celebrate with the birds, or jump out of the nest and fly.

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Prom Season IS COMING!

Prom -- An enchanting evening, a rite of passage, a night that will soon be only a memory. Make sure you look your best for the occasion with some quick beauty tips from the pros.

1. Hollywood Hair

For an up-style, don't come in with freshly shampooed hair; one day old hair would be best. Hate going without a shampoo? Try Kevin Murphy's Doo Over.

Pictures, pictures, pictures!

Have more than one look because all hair is not created equally. What you found in a picture may not be the best for you or your hair -- try to have an open mind.

2. Get the GLOW

Spray tans are a great and safe way to add some quick color to your skin. Be sure not to skip out on quality of your spray tan. We see too many Oompa Loompa's in prom pictures. Be sure to use a high quality product -- like FakeBake spray tans.

And never, ever forget to exfoliate before your tan. You can use a mild exfoliant in the shower. Be sure to focus on palms, elbows, knees and heels. It's also best to shave before your spray tan!

3. Flawless Completion

Any makeup artist will tell you prom is full of emotions. Emotions can run even higher when our prom goddess is suffering from typical teenage breakouts. Our advice is to start on a skin care regimen ASAP -- like Eminence Organic Skin Care. Then on the big night be sure to use a makeup that allows your skin to function properly. This will reduce the amount of oil that you produce through the night. If your skin is suffocating from your makeup, your pictures will show it! Jane Iredale -- the skin care makeup -- provides great coverage for any skin condition and allows you to carelessly dance the night away.

4. Know what you want!

Try uploading a picture into the Jane Iredale Virtual Makeover App. You can show your makeup artist exactly what you're looking for. Rouge Spa and Salon exclusively carries Jane Iredale Cosmetics in Paragould.

5. A Tip for MOM!

While your prom beauty is getting pampered enjoy some pampering of your own. Melt away the stress of the day with a chair massage.



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Meet Shawnda James
Stylist at Rouge.

Shawnda James graduated from Northeast Arkansas School Of Massage three years ago. Since then, she has proudly won Premiere Magazine's award for best massage therapist each year.

She takes pride in expanding her knowledge in all things massage. Shawnda has taken class in essential oil history, acupressure, the essential rain massage, and most popularly the barefoot massage!

Her passion in learning about massage is only equaled by her passion for helping the community. She is a member of Paragould Rotary club, Junior Auxiliary of Paragould, Vice President of the Zeta Tau Alpha Jonesboro alumni chapter, and you can often see her on television for winning the KAIT Gr8 Acts of Kindness award.

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THE INCREDIBLE STORY OF THE *All-American* *Redheads* TAMMY MOORE HARRISON

By Richard Brummett

If ever anyone was qualified to write a book about the All-American Redheads basketball team, it is Tammy Moore Harrison. Her father, Orwell Moore, first coached a couple of versions of the team and later purchased them, leading Harrison to say, "I was born into the Redheads."

"Breaking The Press, The Incredible Story of the All-American Redheads," is now available for purchase at Amazon.com and Harrison said it is both a project she looked forward to tackling as well as the culmination of one of her father's dreams.

"My father started the book," said Harrison, now 57 and a resident of Baton Rouge, Louisiana. "He had so much stuff. But he got older, and he had been working on it about two years when he passed away. He always had a lot of ideas going at one time."

So Harrison took his notes and ideas and ran with them. "People think getting started is an easy process, getting a book together," she said. "It's not."

"I had acquired a lot of his notes and boxes of stuff. I wanted to complete it for him and my mom. It has taken, from start to finish, about two years ... to get it down to size. It was just something that was hanging over me. I finished it for my father and my mom's goals."

The Redheads were one of the first professional women's teams in America, traveling the country to compete against men's teams. They originally recruited the best high school graduates and AAU players

of the day to form an All-Star team loaded with the top basketball talent, and played almost every night of the week from October to April or May.

Moore was a former high school basketball coach and after he purchased the Redheads in the early 1950s, he based them in Caraway, where he lived. Several players from the Northeast Arkansas and Missouri Bootheel areas played for the team over the years.

They had up to three squads on the road at the same time, with their season consisting of about 200 games. The program earned numerous awards and forms of recognition nationwide, and in April of 2012 was granted membership in the Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame. The ladies were inducted in September of that year.

"Getting inducted into the Naismith Hall of Fame was his ultimate dream," Harrison said of her father. "As a kid, I remember they had training camp in Caraway when I was really little. I would always be out there. But they played about every night just about. They

would have training camp in Paragould, Caraway, Jonesboro ... within driving distance, but then they would hit the road."

Harrison said her book starts with a history lesson of how women began playing basketball, how the Redheads were conceived, how they progressed through the '40s, '50s, '60s, '70s and '80s and then "starts with my speech at the Hall of Fame, then looks back and comes forward full circle."

Sales of the book started January 9.



MOVIE REVIEW HIDDEN FIGURES

By Ren Hoggard

Dorothy Vaughan, Mary Jackson, and Katherine G. Johnson ... three math geniuses of NASA who, despite their contributions to the space race, I've never heard of. They worked hours and hours on math formulas which filled blackboards, using methods so ancient no one else had thought to use them, just to send an American into orbit.

So why don't we know who they are? The reason is simple. Black women in the 1960s couldn't be the reason for a national success. Right?

This is the dilemma presented in *Hidden Figures*, the dramatic retelling of the female mathematicians who sent John Glenn into orbit on the Friendship 7 mission. The movie opens with a young Katherine Johnson doing analytical geometry as her parents discuss her academic future with the principals of her all black school in the 1920s. The gifted young girl grows up, becoming a genius widow who lands a job in the Space Task Group, while her coworkers, Dorothy Vaughan and Mary Jackson, pursue careers as a supervisor and aeronautical engineer, respectively. All of this was unheard of for women in general (much less women of color) in the 1960s. We center on Katherine as she struggles with balancing her day job, her duties as a mother, her developing romantic relationship, stressful deadlines, analytical geometry and her own growing frustration at the discrimination she faces.

Throughout the movie, the audience develops both a sense of pride and sympathy for Katherine, sharing her frustrations and dreams. We just want to see the women succeed and prevail over everything they have to go through to get to their dream careers.

All in all, *Hidden Figures* is more than just smart girl power, as some may be led to believe. It's also a scientific adventure. Even though as an audience we know the history, we're in constant fear for the careers of our protagonists. It displays both groups of hidden figures that put John Glenn into orbit with flawless performance, and I would recommend this particular film for any audience.

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NEA FAMILY CRISIS CENTER IT'S NEVER TOO LATE TO GET HELP

By Anthony Childress

It remains one of the most stigmatized and underreported crimes. Sexual assault is a topic that often evokes a pivot to more cheerful subjects, but for victims, there can be no silence or diversion away from a terrifying experience.

The NEA Family Crisis Center in Jonesboro now provides a place of support, nurturing, and other essential services to those who have been raped. The Rape Crisis Center exists out of a pressing need, according to Vicki Crego, director of the FCC. The center's services are only available to adults.

"Victims of rape are traumatized and in need of specialized care by trained sexual assault advocates," she explained. "Hospital emergency departments are extremely busy and chaotic by nature, which is not the best environment for a rape victim. Rape Crisis Centers can offer immediate assistance and eliminate long waiting periods, which are common in emergency departments. The center can also provide privacy and immediate emotional support, resources, and information to the victim concerning her/his options."

For example, the RCC is able to perform a forensic rape examination by a certified sexual assault nurse examiner (SANE). The nurse can also treat minor injuries. Victims suffering

from severe injuries will be transported to the nearest hospital facility.

Only Three

At present, just three RCC facilities operate in Arkansas - the other two are housed in Rogers and Fort Smith. Crego pointed out the invaluable service these centers provide victims because many "have very few resources available to them." One of the biggest challenges, she said, was raising public awareness to the particulars of why centers exist and the need for more of them.

A 24-hour hotline is available (870-933-9449), along with an around-the-clock rape exam facility with a SANE, advocate support, shower facilities, clothing to change into after an exam, legal and other systems advocacy, counseling, and shelter if needed.

"We will also provide testing for sexually transmitted infections and pregnancy, in addition to support groups. Currently, we are still working out policies and procedures in order to be able to get referrals from local hospitals and will begin doing forensic exams when that process is complete. Advocacy, counseling, and other support services are available now. Rape victims should contact us as soon as possible after occurrence so that we can assist in minimizing the long term effects of this type of trauma," Crego said.

Working with Police

The RCC is working with law enforcement to educate officers about its services and how to best help a victim by referring them to the center. Reporting an assault is "always done on a voluntary basis and determined by the wishes of the adult victim," though Crego emphasized the importance of reporting in order to receive medical and mental health services.

In terms of sheer numbers, the Rape, Abuse, and Incest National Network website states that a majority of rape victims are under 30; some 54 percent are 18-34. One of every six women in the United States has been or will be a victim of rape in her lifetime; fully 90 percent of adult rape victims are women, and college-age females are four times more likely to be victimized. And, the majority of victims are assaulted by someone they know. About three percent of American men have reported an attempted or completed assault.

"Getting help is critical and we encourage people who need assistance to contact us even if the rape happened months or years ago," Crego shared. "It is never too late to get help. All of FCC's services are free and confidential to the victim."



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NEA COOK

Chealsey Rhodes

1) Occupation/Family: I am a teller at Centennial Bank and a waitress at Brick Oven. I have a wonderful husband, Bobby, and two rescued fur babies, Tera and Stinky..

2) How did you learn to cook? Mainly my mom and Nana. They still get calls from me often about how much of an ingredient, or how high the temperature needs to be on the oven, and the difference between baking powder and baking soda. Most of the time they're smarter than Google. And a little bit of Pinterest, of course!

3) What is your favorite dish to cook? I really don't have a specific dish that is my favorite. I just like to cook for people and as long as they like it, then I'm good. But pecan pie is Bobby's favorite.

4) Funniest/worst cooking disaster? Going back to Pinterest, there was a recipe for the "best potato soup you'll ever have!" So I pull it up, follow the directions step by step and didn't miss anything. After four hours of simmering in the crock pot I scooped everyone out a bowl. This soup tasted like potato water. It was awful. But my dad, being the sweet, supportive man he was, ate more than two bowls and said it was delicious. I, however, had a bologna sandwich.

5) What advice do you have for others wanting to learn to cook? Don't get discouraged if your meal doesn't look exactly like the picture.

I promise it will taste just as good. And don't give up. I've burned countless things and have some terrible recipes under my belt that we just don't repeat.



Taco Stuffed Shells

- 2-3 pounds chicken breasts or 1-2 pounds ground beef
- 1 box jumbo macaroni shells
- 1 can whole kernel corn
- 1 packet taco seasoning
- 1 16 oz. can salsa
- 1 16 oz. bottle of taco sauce
- 1 16 oz. package cream cheese
- 1 bag shredded cheese blend
- Salt and pepper to taste.

Boil chicken with salt and pepper, around 2-3 tsp. of each. Boil noodles. While chicken is cooking, prep a 9x13 baking dish. Layer the bottom with salsa.

After chicken is cooked, combine chicken, cream cheese, drained corn and taco seasoning. Scoop mixture into shells and layer on top of salsa base.

Drizzle taco sauce on top and top with cheese. Bake at 350 until cheese is melted.



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NATIONAL MARGARITA DAY

By Anthony Childress

It may be the tastiest, most celebratory time of year.

No, Christmas isn't on the list. Same goes for Halloween and New Year's Eve. In case anyone is wondering, National Margarita Day can rightly claim this distinction. Falling on February 22 each year, the wildly popular drink takes center stage and calls attention to why margaritas have been and remain one of the most consumed and requested libations in the United States and beyond.

According to www.nationalmargaritaday.com, the annual celebration is an effort to highlight how and why margaritas rank as one of the most cherished adult beverages.

"We pay tribute and honor the margarita on this special day of celebration," the website states. "We so deeply respect and value its place in our history that we have set aside Feb. 22 of every year as National Margarita Day. Loved and consumed by millions, friends and families around the world honor this sacred tequila, triple sec and lime drink."

In terms of how and where the margarita came to be, there is widespread disagreement. It is believed the drink got its start at some point during the 1930s or 1940s, a time when the nation grappled with the Great Depression and World War II. Maybe, just maybe, margaritas gave people a chance to escape the often brutal realities of that time period.

Frozen margaritas claimed their rightful spot in the lexicon of tasty drinks in the 1970s "when an inventive bartender converted a soft serve ice cream unit into a frozen margarita machine," the NMD web site explains.

Taste buds have their own preferences where margaritas are concerned. Some have a clear preference for the classic margarita (whether frozen or on the rocks), but one thing is beyond debate - margaritas stand as the dominant cocktail centered around tequila in America.

Over time, a variety of flavors and mixtures have emerged. Among them - Blackberry Margarita, Raspberry Margarita, Strawberry Margarita, Mango Margarita, Limeade Margarita, Watermelon Margarita, and Pomegranate Margarita. Like many things, these variations enjoy differing levels of popularity depending in which part of the country one lives.

Locally, margaritas of all stripes can be served up at establishments ranging from The Brick House (Jonesboro), Skinny J's (Jonesboro and Paragould), and O'Charley's (Jonesboro) to retail store shelves, where those seeking to scratch their margarita itch can purchase ingredients to make them at home. After all, what dinner party, wedding reception or class reunion would be complete without it?

Last year, On the Border Mexican Food and Cantina served as the official restaurant of National Margarita Day.

Recipes contain a diversity of ingredients, but the classic margarita can be concocted as follows:

1/2 cup sugar
1 cup water, 1 cup fresh squeezed lime juice (8-12 limes)
For each margarita:
2 ounces homemade margarita mix
2 ounces silver tequila
1 ounce orange liqueur
1 tsp agave nectar (optional)
lime wedges/slices for garnish (optional)

To make the margarita mix; heat water and sugar in a small sauce pan until completely dissolved and the water is clear. Let cool. Pour into a pitcher with lime juice. Leftovers will keep 7-10 days in a jar in the fridge.

To make margaritas, combine 2 ounces mix, 2 ounces tequila, 1 ounce orange liqueur, and a teaspoon of agave nectar if you like. Shake well, strain into ice filled margarita glass. Garnish with lime slices and add margarita salt to the rim.

To make frozen margaritas, freeze the lime mix into ice cubes. Blend the ice cubes with chilled tequila and orange liqueur until uniformly slushy.

Other than that, it's a matter of filling glasses and sipping the delicious results.

If you're marking the occasion and want to share it, use #NationalMargaritaDay.



My 12-year-old son, Nathan, loves to cook almost as much as yours enjoys video games. Don't get me wrong, he'll eat a Big Mac like no one's business, but if given the option the kid would choose salmon over chicken nuggets any day. When we were asked to have a monthly "date" and review hidden gems in the area, we looked at it as a great adventure.

Our first trip was to a place called Thai Taste. The owners Kimo and Maryann Sihapanya bring a packed menu of authentic Thai food for you to choose from. The atmosphere is very calm; there are a few TVs playing, but it's not overwhelming or loud. A fireplace is nestled in the center of the restaurant and you can find gorgeous artifacts throughout. The menu offers a rainbow of curry dishes to try but we started simply. Nathan opted for Teriyaki Beef and I went for the Garlic and Pepper Chicken.

The wait staff is excellent. They inform you that every dish is made to order, you can remove or add anything and the spices can be adjusted to your needs. I prefer noodles over rice and traded out Thai rice noodles with my dish. We found out quickly that although we like spicy food, start on the low end of the scale, and work your way up. When they say hot, they mean hot. Our dishes came with the option of a soup or a salad. The soup is a broth based with a few veggies, nothing too scary for a child to try. The salad is a basic lettuce mixture with a sweet mayonnaise type dressing.

Nathan's beef was akin to Teriyaki dishes served at most Asian restaurants and disappeared quickly. His "tip" was to make sure to add or remove the veggies your child will like. My chicken had a garlic cream based sauce with mushrooms and a bit of red pepper flakes. Delicious!

Absolutely try Thai Taste, located at 1906 E. Johnson Avenue in Jonesboro, with your children. The restaurant is open Tuesday through Sunday from 11-9:30 with a break from 3-5 daily. They offer take out, and the staff will help you find the perfect dish. For more information, call 870-932-3333.

Tips:

I know trying to wrangle a child at a new restaurant is sometimes hard. Make it an adventure. Nate and I have always tried new places at lunch time. The prices are better, portions tend to be smaller, and it's normally less crowded. Don't try to overwhelm a child with something too out of the ordinary to start. One last tip: order extra plates and encourage everyone to try some of everything at the table. We have a one bite rule. Try one bite, if you don't like it, you don't have to eat anymore.





OUR WEDDING STORY

Ashlee & Garrett Rawls

Probably the most fun and interesting topic for me to talk about is my relationship with Garrett. Apart from being a devoted Christian, my relationship with Garrett is what I am the proudest of.

We have known each other for years, and we went to school together from kindergarten until we graduated. Garrett had a crush on me for many years, beginning in the 7th grade. Starting in the 8th and 9th grade, he would text me all the time trying to get me to like him. I was never interested, simply because he was shy and I was extremely outgoing. In the 11th grade, I recall having classes with Garrett and our becoming very close friends. He was the only guy I had ever talked to who truly listened to me, and thought I was the funniest person (anyone who knows me knows that I love people who think I'm funny).

We began to make plans to hang out, and one night it happened. The first night we hung out, he instantly became my best friend. I wasn't sure if I wanted him to be my boyfriend, but I definitely wanted to spend more time with him. We ended up spending all of our free time outside of school together, and luckily we had almost every class together in school. In his old truck, we used to go lie in the bed

of it with pillows and comforters and watch the stars. That is where our most memorable talks were held. That is where we learned the most about each other. One night, on March 19th, 2013, to be specific, Garrett said, "If the timing is right, do you wanna be my gf? Which means girlfriend."

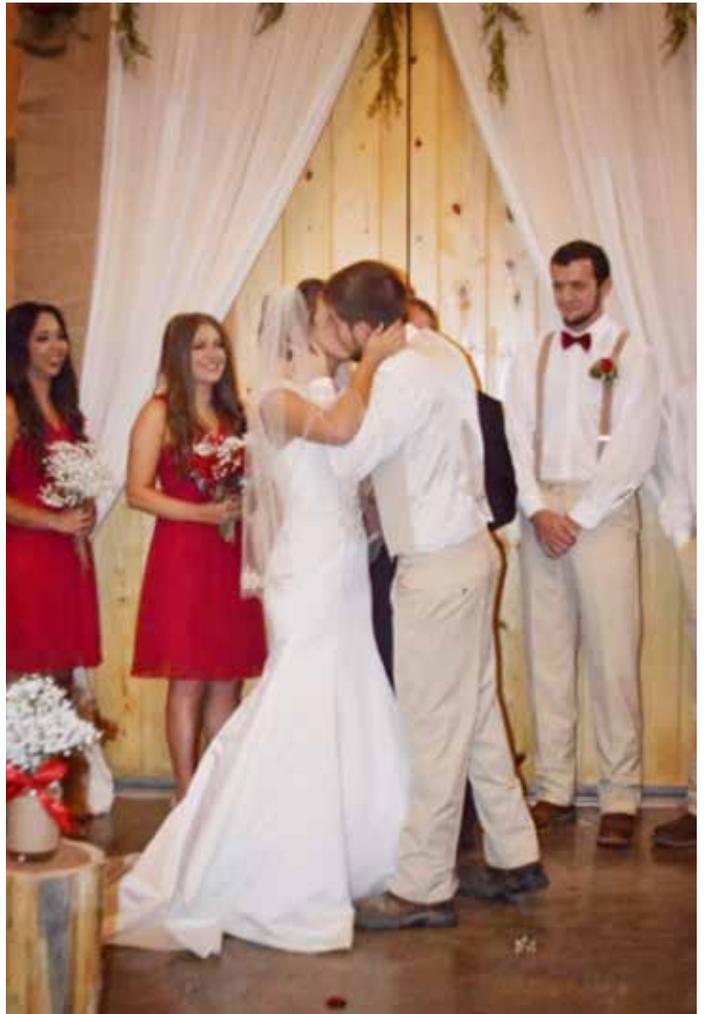
Of course, I said yes. I remember before we were even together, I told him that I'm not a flower person and if he ever wants to surprise me with anything, just to simply get me a cheeseburger. Obviously, Garrett remembered what I said because he asked me to our junior prom with 16 cheeseburgers from Wendy's. My mom told me she knew right then and there that I was going to marry him one day. As time went on, we spent every day together and they were by far the best days of my life. Garrett quickly became my entire life. He was there for me and my family through some extremely difficult times. He constantly went out of his way to make me feel like a complete princess.

On August 16th, 2013, we went out to the pasture behind his house and laid in the bed of his truck and looked at the stars. Garrett began to tell me everything he loved about me, ending it with, "Ashlee, I love you." It

was the best day of my life, up to that point. Garrett and I went through our senior year together, graduated together, then began our first year of college at two different schools. It was hard because we were so used to being at school together, even before we were together. But we adjusted, and we became even closer, which I never thought was possible.

After we started our second year of college, we started talking more and more about our future together. Garrett proposed to me on October 11th, 2015. He graduated college in May of 2016. On August 14th, 2016, I married the love of my life, and became Ashlee Rawls. Being married to my best friend has taught me so many things. I have grown up in many ways, but we make sure to still act like kids here and there.

God has blessed our marriage since August, and still continues to do so. None of this would have been possible without God. Garrett makes it so easy on me to go to college and work part time. He is there for support and encouragement, and always makes me feel so safe. Our love story is a story I could tell over and over, and I might even have the chance to tell our own children one day.





GET RICH

with Richard Brummett

Basketball season was winding down my senior year in high school, bringing with it a mixed bag of emotions. While our team had managed a pretty miserable record -- only nine wins as we entered the last week of the schedule -- we were to serve as hosts of the district tournament and if we could somehow manage two more victories we would stumble into the state tourney, unimpressive as we were.

That should give you a picture of what our team was like as we headed into those final days, but hope was still there when I awoke Monday morning of district tournament week. My mom had come into my room as she did every weekday and roused me to consciousness, and I shuffled to the bathroom to take my shower and prepare for the school day. My eyes were not exactly cooperating that day and as I squinted to get a good view of the image in the mirror it seemed as if I were deep in the hunting woods, trying to locate some game while peering through dense tree branches.

I shook it off, blaming it on a night of heavy sleep and showered before returning to the mirror to start the morning shave. That's when I noticed that where my eyes used to be, where these two round objects generally peered back at me, on this day I had two little slits and a lot of swelling. I looked like an extra in a Charlie Chan movie or, possibly, like Rocky Balboa when he collapsed on the stool

in his corner, eyes all puffy and bloated as he yelled, "Cut me, Mick!"

Down the hallway I went to show Mom, and she determined that I should stay home from school and set up a doctor's appointment. The earliest I could get was for the following morning, so I passed the rest of the day trying to watch TV through these two narrow openings that had begun homesteading the site that belonged to my eyeballs. That evening, my basketball coach called to see what was going on. School rules dictated that if you didn't attend at least half a day of classes you couldn't play ball that night, and he wanted to make sure I would be at school the next day, when our tournament opener was scheduled. I assured him that as soon as my doctor's appointment was over I would be in class.

We went to see Dr. Williams and he determined that my facial rearrangement was due to an allergic reaction of some sort. He began to question my mom about a possible change in the type of soap we used or in any substances that might regularly come into contact with my eyes. She assured him everything was the same this week as the last, and then he turned his attention to me. Had I made any changes in things like shampoo, hair spray, cologne or after shave, he wondered.

I said I hadn't and then he asked if I had a girlfriend. I said I did, a sweetheart named Vanita, and the doc encouraged me to ask her the same questions in order to find out if she had changed anything about her beauty

routine. I thought that was a reach, but when I returned to school and found her later in the day I asked, and she admitted she had changed her brand of makeup just a few days before.

And, so, there it was. I was allergic to my girlfriend.

Word spread pretty quickly as the days passed, and guys seemed to delight in pointing at me and laughing as I walked the halls in between classes. What sort of comeback can you possibly have when everyone knows your girlfriend is making you go blind? Fortunately, she was willing to go back to the old makeup and we were eventually able to see our way through it.

Months later, when I was certain I was falling deeply in love and was in no way prepared for such serious emotions, I gathered my courage and sat Vanita down and broke up with her because "love" scared me to death. We remained friends from that day forward and even dated some, but many times in later years when we would bump into each other at a local store she would introduce me to whomever she was with by saying, "Do you know Richard? The guy who loved me so much he broke up with me?"

I would nod my head accordingly, and then she would add, "And did I mention, he was allergic to me?"

True love, that's what it was.

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HAPPENINGS



MASTER GARDENERS

On January 10 the Greene County Master Gardeners held a brown bag lunch at the Paragould Library, featuring speaker Neva Shewmaker from the Craighead Master Gardeners. Her talk was on the Cornwall and Wales Master Gardeners trip, and included a slide show of her trip abroad. She finished the talk with a question and answer session. The next brown bag lunch will be on the second Tuesday in February and is from Patti Erwin, a state arborist.



FRATERNAL ORDER OF POLICE

On December 20 the Paragould Fraternal Order of Police Lodge #87 had its first Christmas party for its members and Paragould Police Department personnel and their families.

Awards were given out for the 2016 FOP Officer of the Year, Tron Beesley, and 2016 FOP Member of the Year, Stephen Pace.

The evening was capped off by a visit from the "Man in Red" himself.

The Paragould FOP chapter was started earlier in 2016 by local members of the Paragould Police Department. The FOP is a national organization set up for police officers to give back to their communities. Anyone needing to contact the FOP for assistance with community events may contact Blake Williams or James Williams.



GCT RECEIVES AWARD

Pictured from left are AMMC Director of Physical Therapy and Sports Medicine Jon Tripod, AMMC Certified athletic trainers for the Greene County Tech School District Chad Sturkie and Heather Martin, and Greene County Tech School District Athletic Director Ted Cunningham. This is the second consecutive time that GCT has received this award. Only 922 schools in the country are designated as Safe Sports Schools. Of the 288 schools in the state of Arkansas recognized by the Arkansas Activities Association, less than 5% have received this award.

February

2017 Kids' Events

1, 8, 15, 22

Story Time

When: Wednesdays, 10:30 AM

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

Info: www.mylibrarynow.org

7, 14, 21, 28

Legos!

When: Tuesdays, 4:00 PM

Where: Jonesboro Public Library

Info: www.libraryinjonesboro.com

4

Make a Valentines Photo Box

When: Saturday, 9:00 AM

Where: Home Depot
711 E Parker, Jonesboro, AR 72404

Info: www.workshops.homedepot.com

Kamryn Anderson and her snuggly bear are all ready for Valentine's Day later this month. Kamryn, 4, is a preschooler at Marmaduke and is the daughter of Jeremy and Lauren Anderson of Paragould.



February

EVENTS CALENDAR

04

What: Miss AMMC Pageant

When: Saturday, February 4, 6:00 p.m.

Where: Greene County Tech Auditorium

Info: Show your support by attending the Miss AMMC Pageant. This pageant is open to all ages from newborn through 12th grade. A scholarship will be given to the winner of the Miss AMMC (12th grade) competition, and that winner will serve as an official ambassador for The AMMC Foundation for the following year. All proceeds from this event will benefit The AMMC Foundation.

05

What: St. Jude S'Travaganza

When: Sunday, February 5, 3:30 p.m.

Where: Ridgepointe Country Club

2510 Ridgepointe Dr., Jonesboro, AR 72404

Info: Purchase a ticket for this fundraiser and view The Big Game on 35, large flat screen TVs. There will also be fantastic food! Proceeds from this event go to St. Jude Children's Research Hospital. Tickets are \$150 each and can be purchased by stjudestravaganza.org or calling 870-932-6440.

06

What: Childbirth Preparation Classes

When: Monday, February 6, 13, 20, 27, 6-8 PM

Where: Professional Office Building at Arkansas Methodist Medical Center

Info: If delivering at AMMC, the classes are free. Otherwise, there is a small fee. All participants have to pay a \$10 materials fee. Call the AMMC Education Department at 870-239-7016 or email baby@arkansasmethodist.org for pricing, class location or to register. Registration is required for all classes.

11

What: Russian String Orchestra

When: Saturday, February 11, 7:30 p.m.

Where: The Fowler Center

Info: The Fowler Center will present the Russian String Orchestra at 7:30 p.m., sponsored by the Jonesboro Regional Chamber of Commerce. The Russian String Orchestra is comprised of some of Russia's finest young string players and is directed by Misha Rachlevsky. Info: 870-972-2781 or yourfowlercenter.com.

16

What: AMMC/American Red Cross Blood Drive

When: Thursday, February 16, 11:00 a.m.-5:30 p.m.

Where: Professional Office Building Auditorium

Info: Join the American Red Cross and AMMC in their first blood drive of 2017. For more information or to schedule an appointment, call 1-800-RED-CROSS or visit www.redcrossblood.org

16

What: Garden Bros. Circus

When: Thursday, February 16, 4:30 p.m.

Where: ASU Convocation Center

Info: Ticket prices for this event are \$27 for adults and \$10 for children 12 and under. The first 200 tickets sold will be sold at discounted price. This offer will end when 200 tickets are sold or at 10:30 a.m. the day of the show. There will be live animal rides, food, and face painting in the Kids Fun Zone one hour before each show.

16

What: Special Olympics Arkansas Area Polar Plunge for ASU

When: February 16, Registration-6 p.m.; Plunge-7 p.m.

Where: Wolf Creek Apartments, 500 N. Caraway, in Jonesboro

Info: Participants must be at least 12 years of age and raise a minimum of \$50 per person. Have FUN! Form a team, create a fun name and crazy costumes with friends, coworkers, or classmates. All plunges can be found at Firstgiving.com/soar. This is an easy way to raise money online and reach your fundraising goal in no time!

18

What: Special Olympics Arkansas Area Polar Plunge for Jonesboro

When: February 18, Registration-12 p.m.; Plunge-2 p.m.

Where: Elk's Lodge BPOE #498 Washington Ave.

Info: Participants must be at least 12 years of age and raise a minimum of \$50 per person. Have FUN! Form a team, create a fun name and crazy costumes with friends, coworkers, or classmates. All plunges can be found at Firstgiving.com/soar. This is an easy way to raise money online and reach your fundraising goal in no time!

19

What: Snow White: Surviving the Looking Glass

When: Monday, February 19, 20, 25, 26, 27 7:30 p.m.

Where: Collins Theatre, 120 West Emerson Street, Paragould

Info: The Greene County Fine Arts Council will present, "Snow White: Surviving the Looking Glass," adapted and directed by Jer Allen. Tickets are available online at www.gcfac.org and at the door. For more information check out the organization's Facebook page.

25

What: Wild Game Dinner

When: Saturday, February, 25, 5 p.m.

Where: Forest Home Church of the Nazarene, 2403 Ritter Dr.

Info: Forest Home Church of the Nazarene's Annual Wild Game Dinner will take place Saturday, Feb. 25 at 5 p.m. in the church's Family Life Center. Admission is free and the event is open to men and boys of all ages. The Wild Game Dinner will feature guest speaker Steve Chapman. For more information call 870-932-9069 or email mail@foresthomenaz.com

26

What: Delta National Small Prints Exhibition

When: January 26 - February 26; Tuesday - Saturday: Noon - 5 p.m.; Sunday: 2 p.m. - 5 p.m.

Where: Bradbury Gallery, Fowler Center, Arkansas State University, 201 Olympic Drive, Jonesboro

Info: Founded in 1996, the Delta National Small Prints Exhibition has received great acclaim as it has grown to be one of the country's foremost annual competitions for prints. Each year a nationally known expert in the field of printmaking is invited to select the works of art for that exhibition, and determine which works will receive awards, including purchase prizes. Free. For more information call 870-972-2367.

To have your calendar items included in Premiere Magazine, email information to:

graphics@premiere-magazine.com

Recurring EVENTS

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

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

Second & Fourth Tuesday of every month: The Paragould American Legion Post 17 meets at 7:00 PM at the corner of Court and Hwy. 49. The second Tuesday is a business meeting and the fourth is a Pot Luck Dinner with spouses and friends.

Second Wednesday of every month: St. Mary's Spaghetti Dinner, 11 AM-1:00 PM Admission is \$6 for all you can eat spaghetti, salad, garlic bread, dessert and drink. At St. Mary's Catholic Church in Paragould.

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

Second Thursday of every month: The Memory Cafe, support group for those having memory, dementia or Alzheimer's at 1:00 PM at the Senior B.E.E.S. Center, North 12th St. in Paragould.

Second Thursday of every month: Alzheimer's Support Group with the Alzheimer's Arkansas Association and Home Helpers Senior Care, 1:00 PM at Chateau on the Ridge.

Third Monday of every month: Greene County Retired Teachers Meeting, 11:30 a.m. at Grecian Steak House. All retired Greene County school personnel are invited.

Third Thursday of every month: Alive After Five, Downtown street market in Downtown Jonesboro.

Third Friday of every month: Paragould Young Professionals Lunch, noon, at rotating sites

Every Thursday: Alcoholics Anonymous, meets at noon in the Welcome Center classroom at Paragould First United Methodist Church. The group is open; but court slips will not be signed. Meetings are free. For information contact Lynn at 419-350-1275 or the church at 870-239-8541. The church is located at 404 West Main Street.



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ENGAGEMENTS/WEDDINGS

Wilder-Dineen

Autumn Wilder and Kyle Dineen of Little Rock exchanged vows in an October wedding ceremony.

Autumn is the daughter of Ronald and Brenna Jordan, and Allen Wilder.

Kyle's parents are Steve and Lynn Dineen.

The two were married October 22 in Benton, and now reside in Jonesboro.

Photo courtesy of B. Matthews Creative



BIRTHS



Maxim Kincaid Clark

Jay and Stephanie Clark of Paragould have announced the birth of their baby boy, Maxim Kincaid Clark.

Born at Arkansas Methodist Medical Center on January 4, Maxim Kincaid weighed 7 pounds, 4 ounces and was 20 inches long.

Siblings are Jayden and Remmy Clark. Grandparents are William and Jeannie Rock, Michael Clark, and Monica Hall.



Lynden August Johnson

Seth and Amanda Johnson of Paragould have announced the birth of a son, Lynden August Johnson.

Born December 16, 2016, at Arkansas Methodist Medical Center, Lynden August weighed 8 pounds, 6 ounces and was 20.25 inches long.

Siblings are Foster and Oliver Johnson. Grandparents are Rhonda Johnson and Kenney and Rhonda Phillips.

Stay Tuned

What's in store next month

Kids



The March issue will be all about kids! Learn about all the fun activities available over Spring Break for you and your kids.

Polar Plunge



Check out the next edition of Premiere to learn about this year's Polar Plunges. From Jonesboro to Paragould, we've got you covered!

Disaster Preparedness



Tornado season is upon us! Don't miss Josh Costner's next Disaster Preparedness column. Learn what to do to protect you and your family when a tornado touches down.

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March 23rd - May 25th - July 27th

September 28th - November 16th

Diabetes Self-Management

(Patients must be referred by their physician for the self-management classes.)

Multiple classes in each month throughout the year



COMMUNITY Awareness
RACE FOR THE CURE ON MAY 6TH

Join our team February 21st, 4-7 PM
at Skinny J's in Downtown Paragould

Beautiful **BEGINNINGS**
PRENATAL EDUCATION

Infant Safety Class

Breastfeeding Class

Healthy Pregnancy Class

Childbirth Preparation Class

Classes scheduled every month!



COMMUNITY HEALTH MEN & WOMEN *Fairs*

Men & Women's Health Fair will be held on 9/7 and 10/5 respectively.

Fairs will be from 6 AM-2PM
in the Professional Office Building.