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# From The PUBLISHER... DINA MASON

“CAN DO” Attitudes ... that is the number one attitude I see in all the stories in this edition on Autism. My favorite saying is, “Don’t let what you can’t do get in the way of what you can,” said to me often when I would complain to my Granny Wright, or as she said, when I was making excuses as to why I was not doing something to get where I wanted to go!

Jeremiah Knight, our cover story subject, and his family did not let their situation stop them from doing what they could in finding a way for him to be productive and have a career that enriches his life and the lives of those he does business with.

Mary Broadaway served her district as State Representative out of passion to help families like the Knights in their pursuit of better lives for their children. Mary’s son, Jack, has been able to pursue an active life with programs she found for him. But she believes the pursuit shouldn’t be so hard and has worked through legislation, started Building Better Futures and is doing what she can to make a difference.

There are several groups and organizations that do what they can, from raising funds at Ag for Autism to activities at the Miracle

League Park with the Autism Association of NEA. We hope this issue inspires those who have loved ones with intellectual/developmental disabilities, or if you know someone who does, to find out what you CAN DO and get out there and DO IT.

Premiere readers are the best in getting our communities on the right track to making our world a better place and we hope our April “Go Green” tips and advice and information on the Great Clean UP give you more fuel to do so.

If green is not so much your color, maybe Pink is. We have lots of information on how to get involved and “Be More Than Pink” with the 2nd annual NEA Komen Race for the Cure on April 28th with several fun activities the night before including our favorite ... “Walk a Mile in Her Shoes,” an event where you will see Arkansas State University Coach Blake Anderson in heels heading up the walk! Join us for all the fun!

All the regulars are here and some have Spring fever, so don’t miss a page or you will have missed out! Enjoy, and thank you for doing your part in spreading the word of the “Good News and the People who are making it happen” by reading and passing around Premiere Magazine.



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# A NEW WALKING TRAIL

The City of Jonesboro dedicated its 3.2-mile multi-use trail in beautiful Craighead Forest Park with a ceremony that honored all whose contributions made the trail a reality.

Leaders of the Arkansas Department of Transportation, the Federal Highway Administration, the Arkansas Department of Parks and Tourism and BlueCross BlueShield's Blue and You Foundation addressed a gathering of Jonesboro-area leaders to christen the new trail.

In thanking the public and private partners who helped build the trail, Mayor Harold Perrin spoke of the long history of donors who have created Jonesboro's crown jewel – 704-acre destination that is one of Arkansas' largest and most-used city-owned parks.

The city had to provide 20 percent of three grants from state and federal governments totaling \$1.1 million to build the trail. Blue and You spent \$145,000 to place 12 workout stations – placed a quarter-mile apart – along the trail.

"Our forefathers created the Young Men's Civic Club in 1937 to create recreational opportunities, and they bought (the initial) 612 acres for \$5 an acre," Perrin said. "Then they turned around and sold it to the city for \$1."

Perrin said all the work done in the 80 years since, including the 110-acre Craighead Forest Lake, could not have been done with taxpayer money, and the spirit of giving from public and private partners has continued to enrich the park.

"I want to thank everyone who contributed," the mayor said. "This could not be possible at all by the City of Jonesboro by itself. You have to have public-private partnerships."

Patrick O'Sullivan of the Blue and You Foundation said its donation of workout stations is evidence of Blue Cross's commitment to more than just insurance.

"We're not only trying to take care of the health insurance needs of thousands of Arkansans, but we're trying to do what

we can with health organizations who are promoting health," O'Sullivan said. "So that's what the Blue and You Foundation is about, and we're proud to be a part of the trail."



## HOUNDS' HIDEAWAY

*Dog of the Month!*

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# BE MORE THAN PINK

## Race Weekend Activities!

Details on these events can be found on [komenarkansas.org](http://komenarkansas.org)

### Friday, April 27

**Pink Pasta Party** • 6 pm - 8 pm  
St. Bernards Auditorium

**Walk a Mile in Her Shoes** • 8:30 pm  
Men's Walk/Run down Main Street  
*Sponsored by Bad Boy Mowers*

**Pink Prowl** • 8 pm - 10 pm  
Happy Hour pricing for people with the Pink Prowl wristband on Main Street at these Downtown Locations: Brickhouse, Eleanor's Pizza, Godsey's, N'awlins, Skinny J's and The Recovery Room

### Saturday, April 28

**Survivor Breakfast** • 7 am  
Woodard McAlister Family Club,  
Centennial Bank Stadium  
*Sponsored by Families, Inc.*

**Survivor Parade** • 8 am  
Centennial Bank Stadium  
*Sponsored by Centennial Bank*

**5K Race/Walk** • 9 am  
Centennial Bank Stadium

**Dine Out for the Cure** • All DAY with numerous restaurants donating 10-15% of their sales that day to the Northeast Arkansas Race for the Cure!

We encourage YOU to walk or run in the **2018 Northeast Arkansas Race for the Cure on April 28 on the A-State campus!**

Registration for individuals and teams is open at [komenarkansas.org](http://komenarkansas.org).

**Team Packet Pick Up** will be Wednesday, April 25th through Friday, April 27th at NEA Baptist Hospital all day.



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# NEA RACE FOR THE CURE

The 2nd Annual Northeast Arkansas Race for the Cure is Saturday, April 28, at the Centennial Bank Stadium on the Arkansas State University campus in Jonesboro. Last year's inaugural race drew more than 4,000 participants. Komen anticipates the momentum to keep growing and would like you to join them for this special event.

The opportunity to host a Race for the Cure in Northeast Arkansas was important to the Arkansas Affiliate of Susan G. Komen because this region of the state has the highest instance of breast cancer and a higher mortality rate than any other area in Arkansas. These staggering statistics led Komen Arkansas to target Northeast Arkansas to receive grant funds for education, mammograms and treatment.

The Race captured the hearts of thousands of men and women last year because breast cancer can happen to anyone, as 1 in 8 women are diagnosed annually. Whether you choose to walk or run or even participate virtually, every step can help change the lives of men and women who have been diagnosed. Make a difference. Be More Than Pink.

Registration and more information is available at [komenarkansas.org](http://komenarkansas.org). You may also register beginning April 25 during packet pickup (Race Space) at NEA Baptist Hospital located at 4800 East Johnson Avenue.





By Caitlin LaFarlette

April of last year became a turning point for Arkansas State University football coach Blake Anderson and his wife, Wendy. She discovered a lump after vacation, and in the middle of spring ball the Andersons learned of her breast cancer diagnosis.

“You don’t think it’s something you’re going to deal with personally,” Anderson said.

For Anderson, shock was the first thought to race through his mind. However, he said they quickly pulled together to find the best way to approach the diagnosis.

Initially, Wendy’s tumor was inoperable. Instead of chemotherapy, she sought immunotherapy in Mexico for two months. Wendy returned to the U.S. and began consultation with other doctors who soon found a positive discovery regarding the tumor.

“At some point this last year as they were looking at it, they said it was something they felt they could operate on,” Anderson

# COACH BLAKE ANDERSON OUR STORY

said. Just before the football season started, Wendy’s tumor was removed.

The family continues to have the support of not just friends, but the Jonesboro community.

“I was really fortunate that my staff was able to cover every need,” Anderson said.



His children were taken care of by the wives on staff, and even his pets were tended to during Wendy’s treatment while Anderson did what he could for her in Mexico. When he wasn’t setting up office in the facility cafeteria, Anderson’s goal was to make her life as easy as possible to allow her to concentrate on getting better.

Their focus now is the Walk a Mile In Her Shoes event, sponsored by Bad Boy Mowers, in coordination with the Race For a Cure. On April 27, men across Northeast Arkansas will throw on a pair of high heels and run 100 yards in support of those battling breast cancer. Anderson was designated as the race starter and said he and Wendy try to be involved in as many events as possible.

“It’s something we want to support,” he said.

Anderson stressed for other men in his situation, it is important to be as supportive as possible.

“You can’t step into their place and do the treatment,” he said. “It’s okay to feel frustrated.”

What helped Anderson the most were those who allowed him to release the hurt and emotion.

“All that helped me be what she needed me to be, when she needed,” he added. “You can’t do it all on your own. You have to ask for help.”

Wendy soon receives her first assessment since her surgery, and they expect all good news. Anderson said there was no indication the cancer had spread but they would leave it in God’s hands. And with the response from the community, Anderson knows they have more than enough people backing them up.

“God has us right where he wanted us to be at this time in our lives,” he said.



# WHAT'S COOKIN'?

## MEALS THAT GET YOU IN THE SPRING MOOD

### APPETIZER

# SPINACH ARTICHOKE CHEESE BALL BITES

#### Ingredients:

12 oz. Cream Cheese, Softened  
1/2 Cup Finely Chopped Spinach  
1/2 Cup Finely Chopped Artichoke Hearts  
1 Cup Shredded Mozzarella  
1 Cup Freshly Grated Parmesan, Divided  
1 Tsp. Garlic Powder  
Salt & Pepper  
1/2 Cup Italian Bread Crumbs  
9 Breadsticks, Sliced into 3" pieces  
(Pretzel sticks may also be used)

#### Directions:

1. Mix together cream cheese, artichokes, spinach, mozzarella, 1/2 cup Parmesan, and garlic powder and season with salt and pepper. Form into 18 small balls and refrigerate until firm, 1 hour.
2. In a shallow bowl, whisk together bread crumbs and remaining 1/2 cup Parmesan. Roll each ball in mixture to coat.
3. Insert breadstick or pretzel stick into each ball and serve. (If not serving immediately, drape plastic wrap around cheese balls and refrigerate until 20 minutes before serving.)



### MAIN COURSE

# BUTTERMILK FRIED RABBIT

#### Ingredients:

1 Rabbit  
2 Cups Buttermilk (enough to cover rabbit in a bowl)  
1 Egg  
1 Cup Milk  
1/2 Cup Canola Oil  
Flour  
Salt & Pepper

#### Directions:

1. Cut up rabbit into serving size pieces, separating legs and back into about 6-8 pieces per rabbit.
2. Soak overnight in buttermilk.
3. Drain rabbit in a colander but leave coated with buttermilk.
4. Heat oil in skillet to a medium heat. About 325 degrees.
5. Mix egg and milk and coat rabbit pieces in liquid.
6. Mix flour and seasoning and dredge rabbit through flour, for extra crispy re-dip in liquid and re-coat with flour.
7. Cook rabbit in oil for about 4-5 minutes per side depending on thickness.
8. For an added bonus after cooking, make milk gravy from the leftover oil.



# DESSERT

# HOT CROSS BUNS

## Ingredients:

### The Rolls

- 1 Cup Whole Milk, Warmed
- 2 1/4 oz. Active Dry Yeast
- 1/2 Cup Sugar
- 1/3 Cup Butter, Melted
- 1 Large Egg Yolk
- 1 Tsp. Pure Vanilla Extract
- 3 Cup All-Purpose Flour, more for kneading
- 1 Tsp. Salt
- 1/2 Tsp. Ground Cinnamon
- 1/2 Cup Dried Currants, Plumped in hot water then drained
- 1 Tsp. Lemon Zest
- Egg Wash

### The Glaze

- 2 Cup Powdered Sugar
- 2 Tbsp. Whole Milk
- 1/2 Tsp. Lemon Zest

## Directions:

1. In a medium bowl, combine milk, yeast and a pinch of sugar. Let sit, without stirring, until foamy, about 20 minutes.

Whisk butter, egg yolk and vanilla into the yeast mixture.

2. In a large bowl, whisk together the flour, remaining sugar, salt, cinnamon and nutmeg. Make a well in the center of the flour mixture and add the yeast mixture.
3. Stir with a wooden spoon until the mixture is a thick, shaggy dough. Stir in currants.
4. Turn the dough onto a lightly floured surface and knead until the dough is soft and elastic, 8 to 10 minutes. Shape the dough into a large ball.
5. Grease the inside of a large bowl with butter and put the dough in the bowl. Cover with plastic wrap and let rise at room temperature until doubled in size, about 1 1/2 hours.
6. When the dough is ready to form into rolls, butter a 9"-x-12" baking pan. Turn the dough onto a lightly floured surface and pat it into a large rectangle. Divide the dough into 12 portions with a sharp knife or pizza wheel.
7. Shape each piece into a roll, tucking the edges under, and place each roll seam

side-down into the butter pan. Cover with plastic wrap and let rise in a warm place until the rolls have doubled in size, about 45 minutes.

8. After the second rise, preheat oven to 375°. Brush the tops of the buns with egg wash. Bake until the rolls are golden and puffy, 22 to 25 minutes.
9. Make glaze: Whisk together powdered sugar, milk and lemon zest until smooth. Transfer to a medium Ziploc bag and make a small cut in the corner of the bag. Pipe a thick cross shape over each bun. Serve warm or at room temperature.



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Top nominations will be  
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**June Issue** of Premiere



# RECYCLING PROGRAMS IN NE ARKANSAS

By Richard Brummett

Most folks get started with spring cleaning and take a look at all of their extra stuff and wonder, “What am I going to do with all of this?”

Some simply toss it out, some have garage sales and some choose to recycle what they can, and that’s where tips from the experts can come in handy. As Aaron King, Manager and Non-ferrous Specialist at WW Recycling explains it, “We’ll walk you through every step of the way when you come out here. We’re not going to make you just wander around the yard and wonder where you’re supposed to go. We’ll point you in the right direction.”

WW Recycling is located at 8617 Highway 49, just outside of Marmaduke. They market themselves as buyers of copper, brass, cars, aluminum, lead, all metals and catalytic converters, and King said the latter is an item he would like to have plenty more of. When uncertain of what to take to the facility, King said a quick phone call or visit to their Facebook page can answer any questions.

“When most people clean out their garage



or shed or house,” he said, “they’re coming up with old dressers or wood or plastic and glass items, which we don’t take. We do take things like old refrigerators, stoves, old car parts, new car parts. If you have a door off of a car we’ll buy it. Washers, dryers, bed rails, aluminum cans ... people have got that laying around and they can put it in the truck and bring it here, and that way they don’t have to pay someone to pick it up and haul it away to the dump. It can actually be worth a few dollars to them -- gas money or grocery money, maybe.

“Furniture is not something we really want, unless it’s like a futon or foldout bed.

If it’s got metal in it, we’ll buy it. We want to recycle metal in the right way. We buy it, recycle it and send it to mills to turn into new products. We’ve been here 11 years and work hard to give the best customer service we can. We keep the yard as clean and free of metal as we possibly can, so you don’t have to worry about getting metal or screws in a tire when you drive in. When you bring a load of scrap out you go by the guard shack and he’ll point you in the right direction, to non-ferrous or ferrous, and we’ll get you unloaded and you get back on the scales -- and make sure you have your ID with you -- and then you get paid, in cash. We make it pretty simple.”

King said customers need to be aware of business hours. WW opens at 8 a.m. daily but sellers must be on the property no later than 3:45 p.m. Monday through Friday to obtain service. On Saturdays, the cutoff time to be on the property is 11:15 a.m.

They may be reached by phone at 870-597-4444 or on Facebook at WW Recycling.

A lot of that stuff WW doesn’t take is welcomed at the NEA Regional Solid Waste Management facility in Paragould, located at 1810 Greene 890 Road. Assistant Office

Manager Samantha Dalton said folks looking to rid themselves of nonworking computers, printers and newer TVs can bring them to NEA and they'll take care of them. Glass items, plastic bottles and jugs, old newspapers and magazines are also accepted, although the glass recycling will see changes in the near future.

"We can't take the old TVs that are still in a console," Dalton said, "because we can't recycle them. But your bigger electronic items can be handled at the landfill."

Dalton said the habit some NEA residents have of dumping their trash items in the recycle bins is "unfortunately, one of our major dysfunctions" and said simply asking for directions once arriving at the landfill can help solve a lot of problems. "It helps if people separate things correctly," she said, "and if they will bag up things like office paper it makes it a lot easier to bale. When they get here, electronics, paper and plastic go to one building and larger appliances will go somewhere else. But we have people here to help you."

Landfill hours are Monday through Friday from 7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., but final loads need to be on the site no later than 3:45 p.m. Customers may call 870-239-5572 for information.

For those of you who live in Jonesboro, the Jonesboro Recycling Team is where you can take your scrap metal. The JRT will help you unload your items and will weigh them to ensure you get the most profit for your contribution.

JRT performs pickups usually within 24 hours of notice. They have scrap bins to accommodate regular recycling intervals ranging in sizes of 15, 30, 40 and 50 yards when using their roll off bin services. These services have proved to be ideal for the one time, weekly, monthly and on call recycling intervals.

If you have a larger amount of scrap metal, JRT utilizes tractor trailers, end dumps, flat beds or vans. Typically, a 24-hour notice allows for time to do a pickup or drop off, but with larger jobs its best to contact them earlier if at all possible.

For a full list of services and eligible metal objects to sell, visit their website at [www.jonesbororecyclingteam.com](http://www.jonesbororecyclingteam.com).

The JRT can be found on 5403 Vance Drive and contacted by phone at 870-520-6045. The Jonesboro Recycling Team's operating hours are Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

# BBQ FESTIVAL

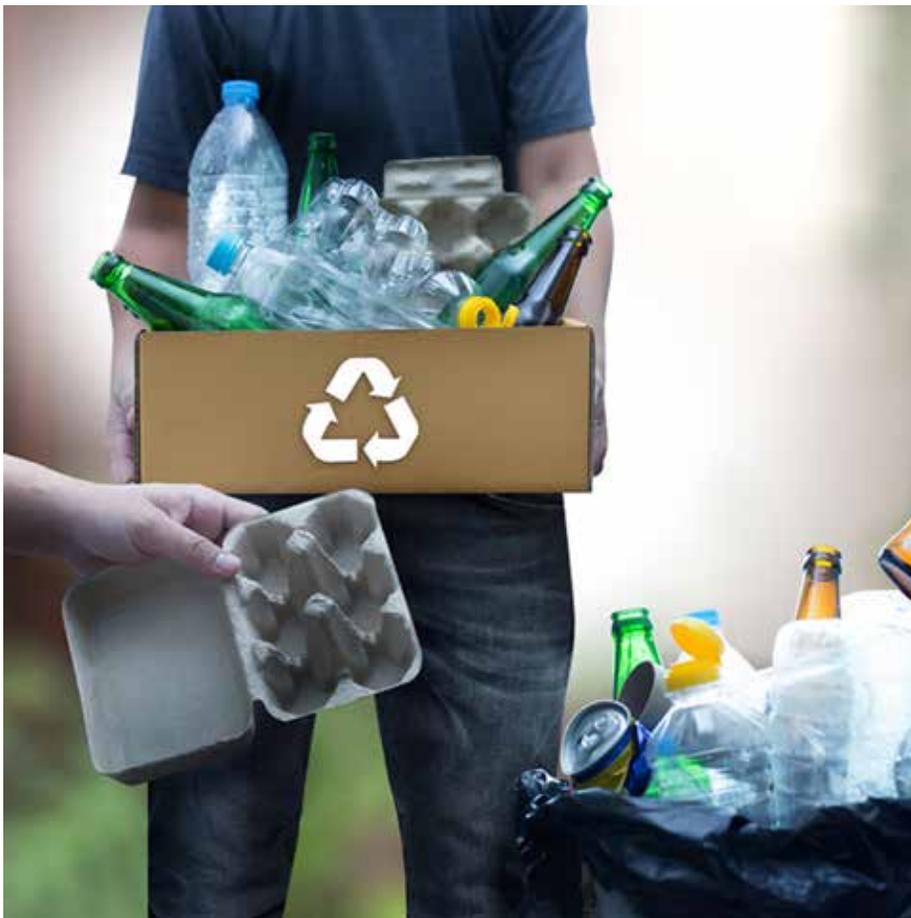


The first annual Manila Fire Department Blazin' BBQ Festival (free to the public) is set for Saturday, April 21, 2018, in downtown Manila, located at South Baltimore Street. Action begins at 9 a.m. and goes until the evening hours, with live music.

Just 40 minutes from Jonesboro and 25 minutes from Blytheville, Manila is a quaint town of about 3,300 ready to show you a good time. BBQ lovers from all around are welcome to participate in the competition judged on ribs, chicken and pork butt. Attendees can taste food from competitors by buying a People's Choice sample card.

The aroma of smoked meats and food truck fixings will greet you in the morning for the official kick off. Bring the full family to enjoy the day's worth of activities including a horseshoe tournament, inflatable jumping area, dunk tank and more. The craft fair hosted by the Manila Business Women will be held from 7 a.m. until 11 a.m. Beginning at 9 a.m. is the Blazin' 5K & 10K race raising money for Parkinson's disease research. Live music will begin at noon and play into the evening. At 1:30, the pepper eating contest commences.

For more information, visit [www.facebook.com/blazinbbqfestival](http://www.facebook.com/blazinbbqfestival).





JEREMIAH KNIGHT

# MASTER OF MAGNETS

By Richard Brummett

Jeremiah Knight is in a sticky situation ... and he's loving every minute of it. As the main man behind a business venture featuring his unique handmade magnets, Jeremiah gets to see his one-of-a-kind artwork displayed all across Northeast Arkansas and, thanks to a Facebook campaign at Shop Jeremiah 29:11, even ships items coast to coast.

Having been diagnosed with Autism at a very early age, Jeremiah and his story are not just about an individual overcoming obstacles but rather one of a family searching, bonding and succeeding. Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) is a neurological developmental disorder often characterized by a preference for isolation rather than social interaction and trouble communicating, along with repetitive behavior patterns.

Jeremiah is not much of a conversationalist around strangers, but compliments regarding his work will elicit a smile or a fist bump. He refers to himself as a claymation artist and has the goods -- and the accompanying income -- to back that statement up. By marketing his magnets, Jeremiah has been able to take trips and purchase items he wants, all with his own money.

His parents, Ben and Shelby, endured the hardships any family with a disabled youngster might expect but having struggled through the school-age years they both sought more for their son than "a life of basically nothing," Shelby said. "The first signs of autism were at 6 months. Any time we took a photo at the park, he wouldn't look at the camera, ever. And there was not much information or help in the early 1990s. We wanted him to be able to fit in better, but school was hard on us. We had a hard time getting him in the car to go, and he was the last one out; he absolutely did not want to do it. Looking back now, it upsets me. We were just trying to get through it. We had two daughters, we had basketball, we had sleepovers, we had other things in life to deal with. We needed help and guidance, but it wasn't there.

"Then finally we're through with his senior year, and it's, 'What now?' There were no adult services to speak of," Shelby said. "He could stay at home, but for adults with disabilities there was nothing. Hot Springs

was the closest place with any real help. I gave him six months, and then I told him he had to get a job -- it was either work or school. He screamed, 'No school! No school!' But I told him he had to do something, and that's kind of how it started."

One positive takeaway from Jeremiah's school days was a ceramic turtle he made in art class when he was a sophomore. When he brought it home, his mother realized it took imagination and vision, along with talent, to create it and she kept it as a symbol of both hope and accomplishment. "I think it's a God thing," she recalled. "I wouldn't have thought about it otherwise. Him bringing home the turtle that he fixed in a kiln. I never knew he could do something like that, but I set it aside for a few months and then it kept creeping into my thoughts when I was trying to figure what in the world he was going to be able to do."

He was able to volunteer for a while at PakMail in Jonesboro, feeding his fascination with UPS trucks. He was shown how to pack boxes and prepare them for loading and he became a welcomed face around the loading dock. But it was in the mail room that Jeremiah made one of his biggest impressions on the PakMail staff.

"We have about three hundred fifty mailboxes, some with just bar codes, no names," said owner Tim Kincade. "The first day he put up the mail, we showed him a few times the list of box holders, and he finished two baskets of mail faster than any employee, sorting mail in the mail room. We'd never seen anything like it. We showed him one time, he watched, and then he'd do it. It was uncanny -- he was fast, and he was perfect. We got him a shirt of his own and everybody loved him."

Still, he needed an income and that's when the memories of that turtle sparked an idea. The parents outfitted him with a stock of clay and guided him through the early stages of making magnets, and Jeremiah, now 28, took it from there. He works the clay in his hands and smooths it out, choosing a design of his liking before baking it, touching it up to perfection and attaching the magnet to the back. He makes images ranging from Disney characters, trains, and Christmas-themed items to one of his current favorites -- and biggest sellers -- the state of Arkansas with a tiny heart cut out to represent the

buyer's part of the state.

Shelby said he loves going to craft shows and stepping away from his booth, watching people admire his work, pleased that they like it and that they will pay him for it. "It's sell-able," Ben said. "It's something people want, not because he's disabled, but because they really want it. She gives him some ideas, but that's basically all. It's amazing, some of the stuff he does."

Shelby is the Executive Director of The Center for Exceptional Families, an organization that advocates for improved educational opportunities for students with disabilities, including students transitioning to adult life beyond high school. "Through my business, I am connected to business oriented individuals who will give us a chance," she said. "We're everywhere, or try to be. We're always on the lookout for another opportunity for places to take him on, to give it a try."

That phrase ... "give it a try" ... might sum up the Knights' approach to life with Jeremiah, and to life in general. "Every parent has to try to improve their children's circumstances, regardless of what their disability is," Ben said.

"It's our job," Shelby said. "You have to find God's grace in your child's disability. Accept every child as a gift and a blessing. Jeremiah's talent gives people hope. Everyone's got something, some kind of talent.

"Find out what that gift is in that child, disabled or not. Lots of families are prisoners of their child's disability. We definitely are not."

You can find Jeremiah's clay creations for sale in Jonesboro at The Parsonage, Noah The Children's Boutique, Hounds' Hideaway and The Center for Exceptional Families; in Paragould at Gracefully Southern Accessories & Gifts and at Southern Roots Boutique; in Little Rock at Bamboo; and the most recently added American Made Store in Pochahontas.

You can also view all of Jeremiah's creations on his Facebook page, Shop Jeremiah 29:11.

# AG FOR AUTISM

More than 370 people attended the 7th Annual Ag For Autism Bash in March, staged at Arkansas State University's Centennial Hall in Jonesboro.

According to co-chairman Selena Barber, around \$67,000 was raised through ticket sales, the purchase of silent auction items, T-shirt sales and chances sold on both a shotgun and a BBQ grill package.

Melissa Cole shared chairman duties with Barber and followed emcee Phil Jamison to the stage in order to welcome guests and thank the many sponsors of the event. Musical entertainment was provided by Barrett Baber of Marion, a country rock singer and former contestant on The Voice.



## BUILDING CHAMPIONS



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# BEGINNING TO BUILD BUILDING BETTER FUTURES

There is a growing segment of our society that live with the challenges of intellectual disabilities and learning differences. We must acknowledge these differences as a society and help these individuals find their place, provide them choice and opportunity, and support their desire to contribute. Transitions for Life and Career does just that, while also addressing a significant problem in the labor and service industries.

Transitions for Life and Career (TLC) is an innovative vocational program that addresses two very compelling societal needs at once by equipping one of the most underemployed segments of the American population, the intellectually and developmentally disabled, with the skills to work in one of the most high demand and fastest growing occupations. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics the two fastest growing occupations in the country are Home Health Aides and Personal Care Aides.

The primary focus of Transitions for Life and Career, a division of Building Better Futures, LLC, is integration of intellectually and developmentally disabled students into mainstream society through competitive employment. This project will address a pressing social need by helping to fill the fastest growing employment niche in the service industry with qualified and dedicated employees.

Mary Broadaway, CEO of Building Better Futures, LLC, served two terms in the Arkansas House of Representatives where she co-authored and sponsored the Building Better Futures legislation.

Building Better Futures, LLC, the parent company of Transitions for Life and Career, is a company created to implement the state legislation that was designed specifically to enable students with intellectual/developmental disabilities to participate in post-secondary educational and vocational programs. The goal is that through these programs, these students could learn employable, marketable, transferrable skills in order to be integrated into mainstream society through competitive employment.



It is important to note the incalculable social and cultural benefit to society as a whole. All individuals are deserving of self-determination, independence, choice and contribution. The opportunity to learn an employable skill and participate in the work force greatly increases the quality of life for those individuals with ID/DD and the people that surround them. When individuals with ID/DD are integrated into

main stream society it improves the lives of all. Our country was founded on the premise that all people are created equal. Inclusion is the only way to truly effectuate the social equality we claim to be seeking.

For more information contact Mary Broadaway @ 870.236.9800 or [mary@marybroadawayarkansas.com](mailto:mary@marybroadawayarkansas.com).

A large graphic for Forbes' Best Bank in America. The text 'FORBES' BEST BANK IN AMERICA' is at the top. Below it is a large, stylized gold star shape containing the text 'CENTENNIAL BANK'. At the bottom right is a blue box with the text 'Forbes 2018 BEST BANKS IN AMERICA RANKED #1'. At the bottom of the graphic are the website addresses 'HOMEBANCSHARES.COM | (NASDAQ: HOMB) | MY100BANK.COM | MEMBER FDIC'.



# BIANCA & STALEY WEBER

By Caitlin LaFarlette

April 7th marks the 11th year for the Autism Association of Northeast Arkansas Family Fun Day, an event designed to raise funds to aid children on the spectrum.

While the silent auction raises these funds that in the past have contributed to a “calm down” room at the Jonesboro Miracle League Park and a family resource center, the day is about much more. AANEA board reporter Bianca Weber said it is a day for kids on the spectrum to just be themselves without worrying about judgment or being different.

“Parents are able to enjoy activities with their children without worrying about safety, due to the large number of volunteers,” Weber said.

Bounce houses, face painting, balloon animals, a photo booth and several more vendors with games and activities will all participate for the AANEA’s biggest fundraiser of the year. The vendors and silent auction all come together to help the association grant scholarships and other services.

“We hold a parent support group every month called Open Arms Support Group, where we provide speakers to help with parents’ needs, which includes childcare,” Weber said. “We have been able to start our own scholarship program for graduating seniors on the spectrum.”

AANEA has also built a grant program for parents and professionals to apply for supplies needed in homes or schools. The group services 14 counties to give presentations on Autism and the organization itself. And all of this work is more than volunteering for Weber, as Autism is a familiar word in her household.

“I had Staley at 19, with no knowledge of Autism,” Weber, now 28, said of her 9-year-old son. “He met every milestone until about 18 months old. He had a 20-word vocabulary, which then turned back into babble and sounds rather than words.”

Weber noticed Staley would not respond when his name was called or make eye contact, and he would flap his arms, walk on his toes and make noises when overstimulated.



“I knew something wasn’t right, so we had him evaluated at the Dennis Development Center at 18 months and then again a month before turning three.”

In 2017 the Center for Disease Control and Prevention reported Autism diagnoses were higher among boys than girls from 2014-2016, and the prevalence of children aged 3-17 years diagnosed with a developmental disability increased from 5.76 to 6.99 percent during that same time period.

After the second evaluation, Weber and her family were told Staley had mild to moderate Autism. She said at that age he had no knowledge of appropriate human interaction and would have meltdowns if he was overwhelmed. But, Weber said, his superpower then came along.



“He has been reading since the age of two. I’m not talking small words either,” she said. “He was able to look at a word and say it without ever hearing it.”

Since then, Weber has made adjustments to her life to help Staley, especially when he goes up to 48 hours without sleep. She and her husband, Nathan, take shifts and keep a structured routine. Weber said several accommodations are also made at school. “We are fortunate that he has such caring teachers and staff at his school that take really good care of him,” she said. “We’re slowly trying to teach him more independence but most of his schooling, he’s monitored very closely and within arm’s reach.”

As for Staley’s future, Weber said it is the scariest thing for her. She has no way of knowing what he will be able to do, what she should expect, and what she should accept. For the time being she has accepted he will not be a straight-A student, but she has no idea if he will go to college or have a family of his own.

“Of course this is every parent’s worry but we have to worry about their care as adults, when we as parents aren’t around anymore,” she said. “If you try to find resources for adults with Autism, you won’t find very many, which is terrifying and needs to change.”

Weber stressed that knowing one child with Autism does not mean knowing them all. Staley was diagnosed as mild to moderate but others are severe, with more health issues.

“If you know parents of children on the spectrum, be kind, be uplifting,” she said. “Life is sometimes difficult and to add to all other issues, they don’t need any negativity about their child.”



**MASQUERADE JEWELRY SALE**

**Thursday, April 5 from 8 AM - 6 PM**

**Friday, April 6 from 7 AM - 3 PM**

*Auditorium at AMMC*

The AMMC Auxiliary hosts the Masquerade Jewelry Sale to benefit the AMMC Auxiliary. Cash, checks and credit cards are accepted.

**BREASTFEEDING CLASS**

**Monday, April 9 from 6 PM - 8 PM**

*Education Computer Lab in*

*Professional Office Building at AMMC*

This class discusses the importance of breastfeeding, breast preparation, feeding techniques and positioning options for mother and baby. This class is offered to moms who plan to breastfeed, dads and other support persons. Registration is required one week in advance of class. Call the AMMC Lactation Services Department at 870-239-7013 or email [baby@arkansasmethodist.org](mailto:baby@arkansasmethodist.org) to register.

**BLOOD DRIVE WITH AMERICAN RED CROSS**

**Thursday, April 12**

**from 11 AM - 5:30 PM**

*Auditorium at AMMC*

Donate blood to help victims of trauma, organ transplants, childbirth complications, and leukemia regain strength and health. In order to donate, you must be at least 17 years old or 16 years old if allowed by state law (includes Arkansas, Illinois, Kentucky, Missouri, and Tennessee). You must weigh at least 110 pounds and not have donated whole blood in the last 8 weeks or double red cells in the last 16 weeks. You must be “healthy,” meaning you are not currently being treated for chronic conditions. Those who successfully donate blood will receive three \$5.00 coupons to be used at the Auxiliary Gift Shop, Beacon’s Deli, Cafeteria or The Foundation Station. For more information, contact The American Red Cross at 1-800-RED-CROSS or [www.redcrossblood.org](http://www.redcrossblood.org).

**INFANT SAFETY CLASS**

**Monday, April 16 from 6 PM - 8 PM**

*Education Computer Lab in*

*Professional Office Building at AMMC*

This class is offered to expectant families and anyone caring for the infant that focuses on topics including car seat safety, childproofing your home and crib safely, as well as infant CPR. Registration is required one week in advance of the class. Call the AMMC Lactation Services Department at 870-239-7013 or e-mail [baby@arkansasmethodist.org](mailto:baby@arkansasmethodist.org) to register.

**CHILDBIRTH PREPARATION CLASS**

**Monday, April 23 & 30 from**

**6 PM - 8 PM**

*Education Computer Lab in*

*Professional Office Building at AMMC*

AMMC sponsors a childbirth preparation class series that provides detailed information about late pregnancy, preparing for labor and birth, comfort measures, importance of early skin-to-skin contact, medications, anesthesia (including cesarean delivery), newborn characteristics and postpartum care while rooming in with your baby. A tour of labor and delivery and the mother/baby unit is included. This three-week class is offered to anyone who is expecting. It is recommended to take the class when you are 5-8 weeks from your due date. Registration is required one week in advance of the class. Call the AMMC Lactation Services Department at 870-239-7013 or e-mail [baby@arkansasmethodist.org](mailto:baby@arkansasmethodist.org) to register.

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**Tones Shoulder Bag**  
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Accessories & Gifts  
Paragould



**Free People Ivory Crops**  
\$98 | Ima's  
Paragould



**Pink Ribbon Hat**  
\$17.50 | Swanky Storks  
Paragould



**Kid's Yellow Flowered Dress**  
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**John Deere Kid's Riding Tractor**  
\$272 | Legacy Equipment  
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**X12 Softball Bat** | \$199.99  
**Softball Catching Mitt** | \$29.99  
All Star Sporting Goods  
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**Scotts® Turf Builder Mini**  
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*Lifestyles*

# GET RICH WITH RICHARD BRUMMETT



I'm often asked how I decided to become a writer, and I have to give my mother credit for that. Mom was a school teacher and I think she could see early on that her knuckleheaded kid needed some help shifting his focus from the baseball field to the more important areas of readin', writin' and 'rithmetic-in'.

One summer day when I was 10, I checked the mail and found an issue of Sport Magazine addressed to me. I rushed back to the house to share the great and unexpected news with Mom, and she told me she purchased a subscription for me because she thought I might like to read about some of the famous players I idolized. For the next couple of years I read every baseball and basketball story therein -- not so much the football, boxing and hockey -- from start to finish and, unbeknownst to me, I began to learn new words and things like sentence structure and story development, because Sport had some pretty good writers on staff.

It was in the early days of high school that Mom asked me what I planned to do with my future and I told her -- as I thought she already knew -- that I was going to be a major league baseball player. She said she certainly hoped I could and would support me every way possible but emphasized that thousands of boys who wanted to do that never could make it, so she suggested I come up with a Plan B and maybe even a Plan C. That's when I decided that if I

couldn't play the game for a living I wanted to write about it, and Mom steered me toward school courses that taught me more about wordalizing, and I was confident I knew how to write a pretty good sports story. I was proud of my readin' and writin' skills, but since Mom never subscribed to Math Digest for me, my 'rithmeticin' always lagged.

That's a long intro into what I have learned might have been my first assigned writing project, a letter to my first grade teacher Marie Butler at Marmaduke Elementary School. Even though Mom has been dead for a few years, I am still sifting through her things and recently I found a yellow envelope with a stick figure boy drawn on it, and above it the words, "Richerd" and "This is me (with an arrow pointing to the boy)," and finally, "Mrs. Butler." Yes, you read that correctly; I misspelled my name on my first big assignment. I am sure that when I asked Mom how to spell it she said, "How do YOU think you spell it?" and I whined and said I didn't know and she told me to "sound it out." Thus, Rich-erd, which is the way it sounded in the first grade and the way it sounds now.



Inside, printed very neatly, is this message: "Dear Mrs. Butler, I have enjoyed being in your room this year. I like to read and write. I wish I kenw which room I am going to be in next year. and I know how long you have been teaching school 20 years I wish I could stay in school with you and learn how to do more things. and most of all I like to make pictures like I did today and yesterday. I wish that everybody did that. I can't think of any thing else. Richerd"

Yes, you read that correctly; I misspelled my name again, but I'm pretty sure I didn't care because my mom made me write the letter in the first place, even though I honestly did love Mrs. Butler as a teacher and appreciated her guidance. Years later I would make six A's in my freshman English class during my first year of college, writing semester-ending essays for myself, my roommate and a girl on the basketball team, because they hated writing and I seemed to like it. And still a couple of years more down the road, when the editor of the local newspaper asked me if I knew of anyone who could write sports stories for the publication, I nominated myself, was given a chance to see what I could do and have been hitting the keyboard ever since.

And thanks to Spell Check, I have learned to spell my name.

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# April

## 2018 Kids' Events

**4, 11, 18, 25**

### Story Time

**When:** Wednesdays, 10:30 AM  
**Where:** Greene County Public Library  
120 North 12th Street, Paragould  
**Info:** [www.mylibrarynow.org](http://www.mylibrarynow.org)

**7, 14, 21, 28**

### Creature Feature

**When:** Saturdays 10:00 AM  
**Where:** Crowley's Ridge Nature Center  
600 E. Lawson Rd., Jonesboro, AR  
**Info:** [www.crowleysridge.org](http://www.crowleysridge.org)

**8**

### Through a Child's Eyes

**When:** Sunday, April 8th at 1 PM - 3 PM  
**Where:** Arkansas State University Museum,  
320 University Loop West  
**Info:** [www. http://www.astate.edu/a/museum/](http://www.astate.edu/a/museum/)

Aurora Jade Wooldridge is ready to welcome spring with a smiling face. Aurora, 3, is the daughter of Hannah and Kerry Wooldridge of Marmaduke.



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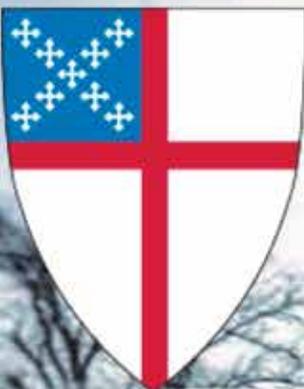
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excerpts from "I am an Episcopalian".  
www.episcopalchurch.org

allsaintsparagould@gmail.com

# April

## EVENTS CALENDAR

### 06

**What:** Oasis Arts Festival  
**When:** Friday, April 6th & 7th  
**Where:** Downtown Jonesboro and A-State Campus

**Info:** OASIS is a celebration of the arts in Northeast Arkansas. Works by local and regional artists will be exhibited in a variety of venues, both in downtown Jonesboro and on the A-State campus. For more information, visit the Oasis Arts Festival Facebook page.

### 14

**What:** Canning Workshop  
**When:** Saturday, April 14th 9 AM - 3 PM  
**Where:** Park Annex at Crowley's Ridge State Park

**Info:** The Department of Parks and Tourism is hosting a canning workshop at Crowley's Ridge State Park. Learn a little about the history, get a hands on experience, and take home recipes to try on your own. Cost for this workshop is \$20 and registration is required. For more information about this activity or any other activities at Crowley's Ridge State Park please call the visitor center at (870) 573-6751.

**What:** Health and Fitness Expo  
**When:** Saturday, April 14th 9 AM - 4 PM  
Sunday, April 15th 11 AM - 4 PM  
**Where:** First National Bank Arena  
**Info:** For more information, visit [www.stbexpo.com](http://www.stbexpo.com).

### 21

**What:** The Great American Cleanup  
**When:** Saturday, April 21st 9:30 AM - 11:30 AM  
**Where:** Pavilion 3 at Crowley's Ridge State Park

**Info:** Volunteers are needed to participate in Crowley's Ridge State Park's annual spring litter pickup April 21st, 2018, from 9:30 a.m.-11:30 a.m. This cleanup is being held in conjunction with the Keep America Beautiful Great American Cleanup in Arkansas, which is an annual spring statewide litter-pickup campaign by Keep Arkansas Beautiful (KAB). If you wish to participate, you must register. The first 30 people to register will receive a free t-shirt and you must register to enjoy the pizza lunch. To register, you can call 870-573-6751 or email [crowleysridge@arkansas.com](mailto:crowleysridge@arkansas.com).

**What:** Manila Fire Department Blazin' BBQ Festival  
**When:** Saturday, April 21st 9 AM  
**Where:** South Baltimore Street, Downtown Manila, AR

**Info:** The first annual Manila Fire Department Blazin' BBQ Festival will have live music, delicious food, a competition for best BBQ, games, a jumping area, a dunk tank and more! There will also be a craft fair from 7 AM - 11 AM and the Blazin' 5K & 10K Race at 9 AM. Attendees can taste food from competitors by buys a People's Choice sample card. The event is free to the public. For more information, visit [www.facebook.com/blazinbbqfestival](http://www.facebook.com/blazinbbqfestival).

### 25

**What:** Altrusa's 14th Annual Administrative Professionals Luncheon  
**When:** Wednesday April 25th, 11:30 AM - 1 PM  
**Where:** St. Bernard's Auditorium  
505 E Washington Ave, Jonesboro

**Info:** ALTRUSA International of Jonesboro has made it easier than ever for you to celebrate your valued employees with this luncheon. Lunch sponsored by Outback Steakhouse, a raffle, and a speech from Dr. Nancy Hendricks will be part of the program. Proceeds will benefit The Family Care Home, John 3:17 Ministries and The Family Crisis Center. You can sponsor the event through three levels of sponsorship and purchase tickets for the event by emailing Samantha Risi at [samantha.risi@mail.astate.edu](mailto:samantha.risi@mail.astate.edu) before April 11th. Visit the Altrusa of Jonesboro Facebook page for more information.

### 28

**What:** Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure of Northeast Arkansas  
**When:** Saturday, April 28th 9AM - 12PM  
**Where:** Centennial Bank Stadium  
2180 Aggie Rd, Jonesboro

**Info:** Support Susan Komen's goal to decrease breast cancer mortality by 50% over the next decade by joining survivors, supporters and volunteers from all over the region. Come together for a 5K in Northeast Arkansas to celebrate being MORE THAN PINK. For more information, visit [www.komenarkansas.org](http://www.komenarkansas.org).

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# NEA ARTS

## EASY ROADS WITH ERIK AND ADAM

**E**asy Roads is a local band that consists of Adam Jones and Erik Edwards of Jonesboro. We wanted to ask them about who they were and how they came to be.

**How did you get into playing music?**

*Adam*

My father and grandfather were in a band together. My junior year of high school I asked him to show me some chords on his old guitar. He showed me three and told me I was on my own after that. I pretty much put it down 'til I met Erik several years later.

*Erik*

I remember going through a drive-thru with my dad while he had a mix tape playing and I fell in love with this song. It had this heavy/punchy but melodic guitar riff that I was immediately obsessed with. He told me it was Metallica – Enter Sandman and then I made him play it again...and again.

I was 13 at the time and I had just asked my mom for a guitar a few months before. She was amazing enough to get me an electric that looked like a Fender Strat and a small amp. I spent the next couple years practicing in my room and annoying my sister with my way too loud jams.



**Where did the two of you meet and how did Easy Roads form?**

*Adam*

We met through a mutual friend. It started off me just wanting to learn how to play better so Erik was my mentor/tutor. I would sing along a little to songs and he realized I could sing so we started working on songs. We

finally learned a handful of songs and found out that Skinny J's had an open mic night on Tuesday's. After a lot of encouragement and support from him I decided to do it. They only allowed you to perform like two songs. After we did our first two they wanted us to do another.

We worked our butts off over several months to get prepared for that show and then after we did it, the word started getting out. We were performing by just our names at that point, Adam and Erik. Bars started booking us and one manager was like, "Ya'll need to get a name." After that it just hit and I came up with Easy Roads. I thought it was corny but it worked for a name and grew from that.

**Are you inspired by other musicians? If so, how does it affect how you play?**

*Adam*

Oh yes. I'm inspired by country. What makes us work well together though is that we love music in general. We learn from each other and songs that we're passionate about.





When we get together to practice a song we want to learn it's an open table. I can bring a George Strait song to him that he wouldn't ever listen to and he can bring a Metallica song that I would never listen to and we do it. We know we aren't going to sound just like the person who sings the song so we have fun with them and make it our own.

**Erik**

Oh, gosh, I am inspired by music every day! Metallica was a big motivator for me picking up the guitar in the beginning. Now I like a much wider range of music that helps me find cool little tricks and unique ways of playing/

singing. Bands like NEEDTOBREATHE, the Civil Wars, and Newton Faulkner (the last one's British so not too well known, but check him out!) are probably the big influences for me these days. That's bound to change as music changes and new artists pop up.

**Where do you see yourselves in the future?**

**Adam**

Music is great. It came at a low point in my life and brought me back to life for the better. Erik had a huge hand in that and I'm forever grateful. I'd love to say we were going to be famous musicians but that might not be in

the cards for us. We aren't 20-year-old kids anymore but if something happened I know we both wouldn't waste an opportunity to pursue it but for right now the future is an open book. We enjoy music and want to keep playing as long as people enjoy us back! That's one reason I like our name. The future is an unpredictable road but I'll take the easy one while I'm on it!

**Erik**

I'm enjoying our "Mini Tours" around town. We have been staying pretty booked up, playing shows three or four times a month. As long as we can stay busy and motivated to play, we'll keep doing what we're doing. We are always hungry to get better and to keep moving forward. I think as long as we do that, there's no telling where music can take us!!!

To find future performance locations or watch performance videos, visit the Easy Roads Facebook page.

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## Business to Business

Computer Service & Repair \_\_\_\_\_  
Employment Agency \_\_\_\_\_  
Office Supply/Printing \_\_\_\_\_  
Real Estate Co. \_\_\_\_\_  
Screen Printing/Embroidery \_\_\_\_\_  
Sign Company \_\_\_\_\_

## Construction/New Home Repair

Heat & Air \_\_\_\_\_  
Electrician (List Company) \_\_\_\_\_  
Excavating \_\_\_\_\_  
General Contractor \_\_\_\_\_  
Siding/Brick Stone \_\_\_\_\_  
Other Construction \_\_\_\_\_

## Entertainment/Relaxation

Family Entertainment Venue \_\_\_\_\_  
Live Entertainment Venue \_\_\_\_\_  
Local Festival \_\_\_\_\_  
Night Club/Bar \_\_\_\_\_  
Travel Agency \_\_\_\_\_

## 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 \_\_\_\_\_  
Furniture Store \_\_\_\_\_  
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) \_\_\_\_\_  
Dental Clinic \_\_\_\_\_  
Dentist (List Clinic) \_\_\_\_\_  
Home Health Agency \_\_\_\_\_  
Home Hospice Agency \_\_\_\_\_  
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) PT/OT/ST? \_\_\_\_\_  
Other Medical Specialty \_\_\_\_\_  
Mental Health Professional \_\_\_\_\_  
Nurse Practitioner (List Clinic) \_\_\_\_\_

## Pets

Pet Grooming Service \_\_\_\_\_  
Pet Supplies \_\_\_\_\_  
Veterinary Clinic \_\_\_\_\_  
Boarding \_\_\_\_\_

## 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 \_\_\_\_\_  
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# AMMC IS ACCEPTING SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATIONS

The Arkansas Methodist Medical Center Auxiliary is currently accepting applications for its scholarship program. The awards are available to any individuals in Greene County or AMMC employees living outside Greene County, who are pursuing a career in the medical profession.

To be eligible for the scholarship, applicants must be enrolled in an education program within the medical profession and must be at least in their second year of education in the medical field by August 2018.

Applications may be picked up at the Administration Office or Volunteer Office of AMMC at 900 West Kingshighway and must be returned no later than May 1, with an official copy of the applicant's educational transcript attached to the application. The number of scholarships awarded will depend on available funds and the number of qualified applicants. The scholarship is a one-time award with funds sent directly to the educational institution that the applicant attends at the time of registration.

## AMMC will Celebrate National Donate Life Month

Every April, Donate Life America celebrates National Donate Life Month, focusing national attention on every individual's power to make LIFE possible by registering their decision to be an organ, eye and tissue donor, and learning more about living donation.

AMMC will host a celebration in recognition of National Donate Life Month at AMMC on April 19th at 2:00 p.m. at The Herget Atrium.



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# Downtown Paragould

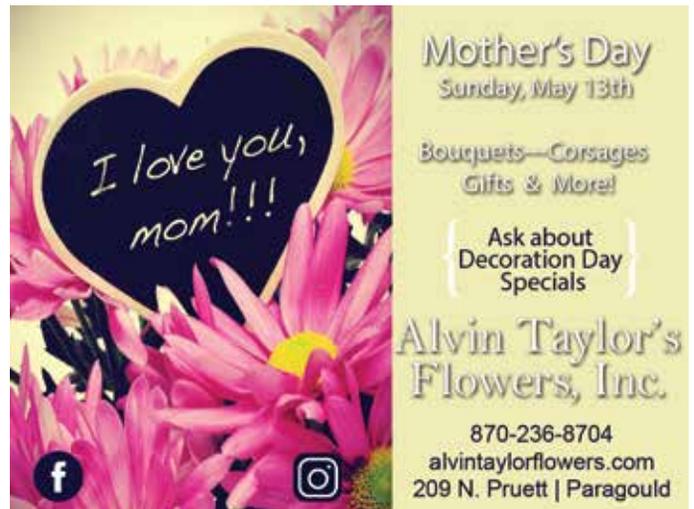
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# NEO PURRITO PREMIERE PET OF THE MONTH -SPONSORED BY HOUNDS' HIDEAWAY-

Neo is a 2-year-old cat who was rescued from a dangerous tom cat who almost took his life. He ended up being paralyzed for almost 2 months due to the altercation. The vet gave him a slim to no chance of walking again. He miraculously started walking again! Neo loves to play with hair ties and eat orange popsicles as a special treat. He is a character who loves to slide out from under the ottoman to scare his brother and sister. Neo loves to bathe in the sun, watch birds go by and take naps throughout the day with his paws covering his eyes.



# A NEW SHOOTING RANGE

Jonesboro celebrated the groundbreaking of its future Shooting Sports Complex with a ground-breaking ceremony Feb. 7, and many who played a key role in acquiring the property and providing the city with a \$2 million grant were in attendance.

"This is a great day in Jonesboro – even the chilly weather feels good to me today," said Jonesboro Mayor Harold Perrin, pointing out that the shooting sports complex will be an entertainment option to attract many visitors to the city as well as serve local enthusiasts.

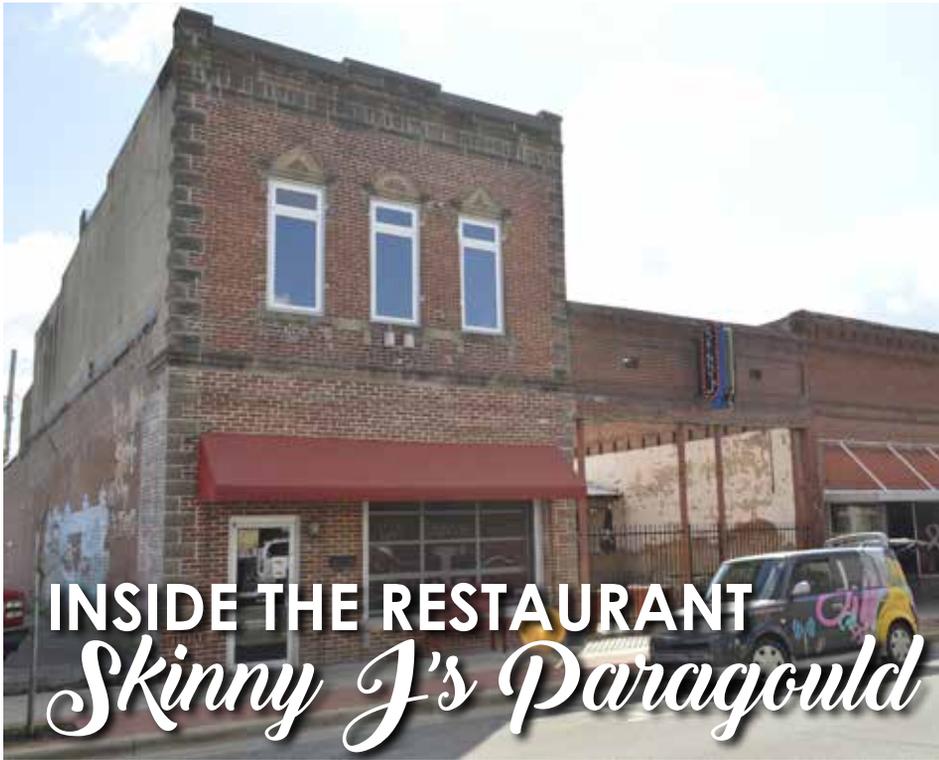
Arkansas Game and Fish Director Pat Fitts said the grant money provided by his department will get the ball rolling on what will become an \$8 million-\$10 million facility. His favorite part of the project is that it will provide education and safety instruction for youth.

Game & Fish Chief of Staff Caroline Cone said when completed, the range will be the largest in Arkansas. Jonesboro Parks and Recreation Director Wixson Huffstetler said it will include "training classes for shooting sports and archery. We're going to have nine trap/skeet fields, a 200-yard rifle range, a 50-yard pistol range, and 3-D and traditional archery ranges. The main building will have a classroom to hold 80 to 100 people for training/educational purposes."

Jonesboro Police Chief Rick Elliott said hunter education, safety, "even how to shoot trap," will be offered.

While the city pursues sponsors and private partners to raise the rest of the funding to complete the facility, many of its features are expected to open in mid-2019.

"This is a big step toward making our shooting range a reality," Perrin said. "I think we're going to see a lot of people coming to Jonesboro, and this is going to be great not only for sportsmen and women, but for our sales tax income in the city."



## INSIDE THE RESTAURANT *Skinny J's Paragould*



If it's been a long hard day and a beer seems to be the only cure, take an evening at Skinny J's in Downtown Paragould — it's the perfect restaurant for any occasion.

Burgers and beers with the boys, a celebration with the family or even a first date, Skinny J's has an atmosphere that works for any kind of outing.

"We're relaxed and still a place you can count on quality food like you would have to make special plans for," general manager Sarah Reeves said.

Since 2013, Skinny J's has offered great drinks and a menu with something for everybody. Crawfish dip and the steaks are two of the most popular dishes but the cooks like to get creative.

"People enjoy the twist we put on things, like the Reuben egg rolls or the Juicy J," Reeves said.

When it comes to adding new menu items, Reeves said the creative team is good about finding ideas everywhere, including new wings unlike anything she has ever heard of. The current menu hosts everything from salads and sandwiches to steak, pasta, seafood and even a veggie burger for non-meat eaters.



Skinny J's isn't just all about the food. Beginning April 6th, every Friday and Saturday the venue is filled with music by local artists. "We're especially looking forward to summertime so that we can put some live music out on the patio," Reeves added.

The outside seating provides a more intimate dining experience while the bar area has everything needed for a sports night. It's easy to get caught up in hanging out long after the plates have been cleared thanks to this relaxed atmosphere.

A great dining experience can be found at Skinny J's in Downtown Paragould, so when the weekend rolls around, find yourself in good company at the place that has it all.



## Visit All Three Locations

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**North Little Rock**  
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# NEA COOK'S REQUEST

## TRACY'S FAMOUS SHRIMP & CRAWFISH ÉTOUFFÉ



### Ingredients:

- 6 Tbsp. Unsalted Butter
- 1/2 Cup All-Purpose Flour
- 4 Cups Chopped Onion
- 4 Cups Chopped Green Peppers
- 2 Cups Chopped Celery
- 2 Tbsp. Minced Garlic
- 1 14.4 oz Can of Tomatoes, Drained
- 2 Bay Leaves
- 2 Tsp. Salt
- 1/2 Tsp. Cayenne Pepper
- 2 Tbsp. Emeril's Original Essence
- 1 Quart Shrimp Stock (Recipe Below)
- 1/4 Cup Parsley Leaves, Chopped
- 3 Lbs. Medium Shrimp, Peeled and Deveined
- 1 Lb. Crawfish Tails
- Steamed Rice, For Serving

### Shrimp Stock

#### Ingredients and Directions

- 1 Lb Shrimp Shells
- 1 Cup Chopped Yellow Onion
- 1/2 Cup Chopped Celery
- 1/2 Cup Chopped Carrots
- 2 Garlic Cloves, Smashed
- 1 Bay Leaf
- 1 Tsp. Thyme
- 2 Tsp. Salt and Pepper
- 4 Quarts Water

1. Combine all ingredients into a large pot and bring to a boil. Continue boiling for 45 minutes.

2. Skim foam off the top as it forms.
3. Remove from heat, let cool and then strain.
4. Recommended: Use all the end pieces and peels from the celery and onion that you chop for the actual étouffé so there is no waste.

### Directions:

1. Melt butter in a large Dutch oven, set over medium heat.
2. Add the flour and stir continuously to make a roux. Stir the roux over the medium heat until it takes on the color of peanut butter. About 5-7 minutes.
3. Add onions, bell peppers, celery, and garlic to the roux to cook, stirring often for 10 minutes.
4. Add the tomatoes to the pot, then season with bay leaves, salt, cayenne and 1 tbsps. of Emeril's Original Essences.
5. Cook for 2-3 minutes then add the shrimp stock.
6. Bring mixture to a boil then reduce to a simmer.
7. Cook the étouffé, stirring occasionally for 45 minutes.
8. Season the shrimp with 1 tbsps of Essences and add to the pot along with crawfish tails. Stirring to evenly distribute.
9. Cook for an additional 5-7 minutes. Add parsley and stir to combine.
10. Serve immediately over steamed rice. Garnish with green onions.

## ABOUT THE DISH

Traveling with the military, we met many people from a variety of backgrounds and cultures. We became good friends with another family from South Louisiana. We shared many meals together and my love for Creole and Cajun food developed. This recipe is one my favorites. It takes about 3 to 4 hours from start to finish with cleaning the shrimp and chopping the vegetables, but it is worth every minute in the kitchen. It has become a family favorite. I have even made it for our Easter dinner instead of a traditional meal. I hope you enjoy it as much as we do.





**NEA ARcare Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) is serving your community by focusing on HEALTHY FUTURES, DISASTER TRAINING, and OTHER COMMUNITY NEEDS**

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- Encourage healthy futures through education, and providing services
- Train volunteers to run volunteer reception stations during disasters
- Work in short term or specific projects to meet other community needs

**ABOUT RSVP: AN ORGANIZATION LIKE NO OTHER**

The Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) is for people ages 55 and over who are excited about volunteering and giving back to the community. While there are many generous and willing volunteers eager to become involved in community service, often times there's a disconnect between those who need help and those willing to provide it. NEA ARcare RSVP bridges that gap. Our mission is to promote volunteerism throughout a thirteen county area in eastern Arkansas.

**RSVP BENEFITS**

Our volunteers choose how, where, and how often they want to serve. In return for their work within their community, volunteers will enjoy recognition events, group insurance, and multiple health benefits associated with volunteering.

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# UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS PRESENT RESEARCH AT THE CAPITOL



**F**ourteen Arkansas State University students presented their recent work during the 2018 “Undergraduate Research Posters at the Arkansas State Capitol” event in Little Rock.

More than 110 students from 15 institutions throughout the state participated, according to Emily Devereux, director of research development and coordinator of A-State’s participation. The purpose is to promote understanding and participation in the STEM disciplines (science, technology, engineering and mathematics).

Posters were set up in the rotunda of the Arkansas State Capitol. Legislators, constitutional officers and other state officials were invited, along with several high schools and the public. Visitors had opportunities to interact with the student researchers.

A-State students who presented posters, along with their hometowns, academic departments and poster titles, were:

- Parker Knapp of Hot Springs, biological sciences, “Improving the Health Benefits of Muscadine Grapes through Genetic Engineering.”



- Madalyn Weiner of Bryant, biological sciences, “Improving Aquaculture Catfish Health with a Novel Plant-Produced Therapeutic Protein.”

- Haylee Campbell of Bryant, environmental science, “Validation of Insect Control Termination Timing in Arkansas Cotton.”

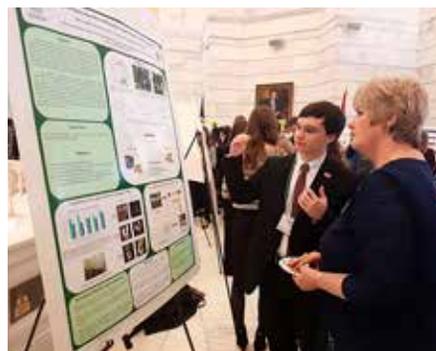
- Kristiana Watson of Conway, chemistry, “Removal of an Endocrine Disrupting Contaminant by Clay-Like Oxides.”

- Robert Rogers of Little Rock, chemistry, “Applying Nano Sensors Using Reduced Graphene Oxide to Detection Phosphate.”

- Anna Anders of Beebe, physics, “Microlens Array Laser-Ablation Spectroscopy for Measuring Elemental Composition of Solid Samples.”

- Amanda Trusty of Jonesboro, biological sciences, “Does Frequently Visiting a Bluebird Nest Increase Predation Risk?”

- Michael Trusty of Jonesboro, biological sciences, “Does Axle Grease Effectively Protect Bluebird Nests from Predators?”



- Kyoosik Kim of South Korea, Jordan Freier of Jonesboro and Phat Nguyen of Vietnam, computer science, “The Analysis of Try-Catch Block Usages in Java Open Source Projects.”

- Patrick Tribbett of Kingman, Ariz., physics, “Observing the 2017 Total Solar Eclipse from the Stratosphere.”

- Krishna Vellanki of Jonesboro and Kenneth Swafford of Beebe, biological sciences, “Peanut Hairy Roots: A Sustainable Production Platform of Bioactive Compounds for Agriculture and Human Health.”





*Please welcome Donovan Cherry as Administrator at Ridgecrest Health and Rehabilitation. Donovan has worked in long term care in Northeast Arkansas since 2013. For more information about our services, please stop by and visit Donovan and take a tour of our beautiful facility.*



*Please welcome Crystal Schwartz as the Director of Nursing at Ridgecrest Health and Rehabilitation. Crystal has worked in the nursing field for 14 years, with a background in acute care, nursing education, as well as long term care.*



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## WANTING WILD ANIMALS AS PETS

BY CHUCK LONG

It is not the words you want to hear in the middle of the night. Lorie shook me from my sleep and whispered excitedly, “I think the alligator is under our bed!” Those words caused me to wake rather quickly and I looked over the side of the bed and there was a two-and-a-half foot gator looking back. I jumped out of bed and the chase was on. Luckily the pursuit was short as he headed for our closet and got tangled in an array of shoes and clothes and I was able to grab him and get him back in his cage. Apparently our youngest daughter, Hannah, had decided to catch a quick peek of the gator before she went to bed and had left the lid slightly ajar and the gator made his escape.

Those situations are somewhat commonplace around our home. The alligator that escaped was an education animal that was being housed overnight for use in wildlife programs. Due to the number and variety of animals that have passed through our household, Bethany and Hannah have become accustomed to the menagerie and hardly blink an eye at the animals that spend a night or two in the Long household. They have assisted with the rehab assignments of birds of prey, relocation of nuisance animals and transport of babies, but they realize the place for these animals is almost exclusively in the wild.

Bethany called one day excitedly telling me how they had rescued a rabbit that our dogs had cornered. They had taken the somewhat traumatized, but healthy rabbit from our dogs and carefully placed it in a cardboard box to await my arrival home. They underestimated the jumping ability of the youngster and when I got home there was no rabbit in the box. The search ensued and the cottontail was finally located behind a picture on the floor in the master bathroom. The little guy was uninjured and released in the woods behind our home.

Animals are cute, cuddly and fascinating and springtime leads to lots of encounters with baby animals. People are naturally drawn to them, especially when they appear to be young and defenseless. Unfortunately, this often leads to “wild” animals being brought into the home. Most animals cannot be taken from the wild, but Arkansas Game and Fish Commission regulations do allow certain species to be kept as pets. Please thoroughly review the regulations if that is your desire, but I highly discourage any animal’s being taken with those intentions. In all my years of dealing with wildlife and people, the vast majority of cases of baby animals being brought into the home have ended poorly for the animal.

A baby raccoon, for example, is cute when they fit in the palm of your hand, but with proper care they grow rapidly and soon require lots of space. With age comes the characteristics of being a wild animal and territorial, protective, greedy animals do not make good pets. Can it be done? Yes. But the negatives far outweigh the positives.

So what if a baby animal is found? The best thing to do is leave it where it is. Mommas of wild creatures will often separate from their young when they sense trouble, but return when a threat has passed. Animals can be moved a short distance if immediate danger exists but try to do this with as little disturbance as possible. If the animal appears to be injured there is a list of wildlife rehabilitators at [agfc.com](http://agfc.com) that may be able to help.

It has become a rare occasion when I use a live animal in a program. I am not trained in their care nor do I want to give the impression that it is okay to keep animals as pets. Many of the AGFC Nature Centers and Education Centers do have native wild animals and this provides an opportunity to see these animals up close. The animals housed at our centers have often been injured, confiscated from an illegal holder or have been acclimated by spending much of their life in captivity. The curators at these facilities are trained in keeping the animals, trained in their care and maintain suitable facilities for the animal.

Outside of our centers, there are some very interesting animals that roam the waters, fields and woods of Arkansas. We are blessed with a wide variety of fish, reptiles, birds, amphibians and mammals and with a little work and planning our state offers great opportunities to see them in their natural habitat. If you do run across a young animal, give it some room because momma is probably watching from nearby.

I hope you have a great spring and that you take time to get out and enjoy some of the great things Arkansas has to offer. I hope to see you out there! God bless!



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



# IF WISHES WERE HORSES

By Caitlin LaFarlette

**T**he need of a training program for therapy horses has led one local organization to create its own curriculum that is unavailable anywhere else.

If Wishes Were Horses, led by Susan Boyd, is in the process of designing a program that focuses solely on the horses used in equine therapy and riding lessons.

"We are going to be the premiere company doing this," Boyd said.

She and her team have spent the last two years putting together requirements for the horses and have yet to come across anything else like it. Several organizations exist that train people to work in equine therapy, but nothing concentrates on perhaps the most crucial aspect — the horses.

Boyd herself is certified in multiple equine therapy programs and has visited other organizations that offer these services.

"Most of these facilities take horses that are donated to them," she said.

This is where If Wishes Were Horses will bring something new to the table. Boyd and her team have begun training their horses from birth, and to ensure the animals are truly able to do their job, she is now having them genetically tested.

Through a company called Etalon Diagnostics, Boyd's horses are tested for certain genes, such as a gait gene, or how the horse moves. This is a crucial factor in therapy for disabled clients. The smoother a horse walks, the more comfortable the rider. Along with the gait gene, Boyd breeds for the docile gene, what makes her horses "bomb proof."

Training the horses to become comfortable in any situation includes rubbing objects against them, making loud noises and even walking them near an inflatable tube man, affectionately nicknamed "Scary Gary." Boyd currently has three levels of training for the horses: riding lessons and trail rides, equine psychotherapy and therapeutic riding. Level three horses can only be used for that level, as they are trained to completely ignore the rider, and level ones have to remain as riding horses who respond to cues and commands.

"A kid has to be able to run under our horses or between their legs, because you never know," Boyd said. "Any that don't pass through level 1, they get booted."

If any of the horses show signs of aggression or high energy, they are removed from the program. This doesn't mark them as a bad horse, just as one not suited for the therapy program. Boyd currently has 10 adult horses in training and several foals that will potentially move up.

"Our babies are trained better than most people's trail horses they ride every day," she added.

The next step for Boyd is to gain national recognition for the program and to bring in more therapy clients, as well as those to train to work with horses and riders. She also plans to create video trainings for others who just want to teach their own horses to be safer.

"That's the key to our whole program, is safety," Boyd said.



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# 10TH ANNUAL DELTA VISUAL ARTS SHOW

The Blue Bridge Center for the Delta Arts held the 10th Annual Delta Visual Arts Show on Saturday, February 24, 2018, in downtown Newport, Arkansas. This year's show featured 210 visual artists, 25 authors and 10 musicians from four states and 65 Arkansas communities, highlighting primarily artists who grew up in the Delta, live or have lived in the Delta or who produce Delta themed work. The visual art covered a broad range from pottery to painting and jewelry to sculpture. The literary art featured artists who wrote in a broad range of categories, including fiction, non-fiction, poetry and children's works.

Artists put their work on display, and visitors were able to meet the artists as well as purchase pieces. This was a unique opportunity to own an original piece of art and to understand how the artist produced the piece. Several artists conducted demonstrations at their booths during the show. The show featured well-known artists from throughout the state and young new artists who set up for the very first time.

Pictured are a few artists from the event: Mandy Maxwell Mooneyham, Karen Barker, Amanda Butcher, Jim Porterfield, Jacob McIntosh, Nick Dunning, and Amy Green.





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# ART & STROLL

Main Street Paragould's 2018 Art and Stroll will be Saturday May 5th in the "One and Only" Downtown Paragould starting at 10:00 a.m. Artists of all mediums and artisan crafters are invited to show and sell their work during the day-long event. Art classes, musicians, food trucks, theatrical performances, an "Artist Choice" juried art show for students, and kid activities will be throughout Downtown as well. For more information, contact the Main Street Paragould office at [mainstr@paragould.net](mailto:mainstr@paragould.net) or by calling 870-240-0544.

Art and Stroll started in 2006 as an evening event in the fall, then moved in 2008 to become the best attended 1st Thursday event held on the 1st Thursday in May. The weather always agreed, the artists always showed support, the community always came out. The only criticism heard all those years was, "Why can't Art and Stroll be longer?" and, "Why not have Art and Stroll on the weekend?" Because it's hard to

change a proven winner, it only took eight years to make the change.

2017 Art and Stroll became an all day Saturday celebration of art, crafts, and music Downtown. It was incredible! Thanks to MSP Board member and local music expert Melissa Gander, 30 musical performances were outside on the street. Everything from trombone and woodwind ensembles, to the Memphis based Honky Tonk Beatniks, to local bands were on Pruett Street. Nineteen artists displayed their work. Organizers were fortunate to have use of the wonderfully renovated Crossing

building for canvas artists. Sixteen crafters displayed their work "on the street." Three authors joined in. Two food trucks added to the variety offered by Downtown eateries. Two art classes were given, one for kids, one for adults and in a green space, horses were painted. Vendors from the Paragould Farmer's Market with their home-baked, home canned goodness participated. The merchants moved to the street, too. Four blocks were covered in tents and displays... and people. AND this year they're planning even more, bringing a juried art show for the student artists and adding theatrical performance art. The final music of Art and Stroll is the band Everyday Life. Everyday Life, a local favorite with front man Shannon Freeman, is committed for late afternoon/early evening and will wrap up the day.



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# NATIONAL CERTIFIED NURSES DAY



Arkansas Methodist Medical Center recognized twelve nurses at a reception in March in honor of National Certified Nurses Day.

Certified nurses are Registered Nurses who: chose to gain knowledge and skill in their chosen specialty area, well above their nursing degree, possess a high level of expertise, have worked many hours in their specialty to gain a high level of skill

and competency, have studied and passed a rigorous exam formally validating their advanced level of skill, knowledge and value for their profession, are engaged in their career and dedicated to providing the highest level of care, are dedicated to life-long learning, are mentors for their peers and an example for other nurses aspiring to become certified, and utilize their expertise to provide excellent customer service.

Pictured left to right, back row, are Robin Smith; Ashley Shelton; Amanda Hollis; Heather Fisher; and Lana Williams and front row, Shawna McMinn, Sara Warhurst, Sherry Haertling, Belinda Dillard and Allison Hitt. Not pictured are Katelynn Bruce and Candice Wicker.

Lunch: M-F 11am-2:30pm  
M-T 4pm-9:30pm  
Fri 4pm-10:30pm  
Sat 11am-10:30pm  
Sun 11am-9pm



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# NEW GCMG OFFICERS

Newly Elected Greene County Master Gardener Officers are off to a busy start.

On January 1st a new set of Greene County Master Gardener (GCMG) officers began their duties to lead and represent the Greene County Master Gardener program. One of their main goals is to work as a team to get input from all Greene County Master Gardeners and community leaders, to help guide them in promoting/developing projects (landscape beautification beds and horticulture based educational events) in Greene County.

Pauletta Tobey was elected as the 2018 GCMG President. She leads the group at the regular monthly meetings and also works closely with the group's committee chairs. She is the main contact member for the group.

Tacie Huffman serves as the Vice President. She is there as a backup to represent the group when the President is not available. One of her main tasks is to keep an eye on project work and to work closely with project chairs.

Linda Glickert is the Secretary. She keeps a close record of the monthly meetings for the group as well as for the executive board (officer) meetings. One of her jobs is also to keep contact information for all members.



Jean Crossno was elected as the 2018 GCMG Treasurer. She keeps up with the financial records for the group. She also works closely with the Extension Office to ensure the group follows U of A financial policy guidelines.

Sue Gilmartin and Debbie Walters were each appointed as Members At Large to serve on the executive board. Their main job is to hear concerns/ideas from the GCMG members and to share them with the officers during board meetings. This in turn, helps the executive board form recommendations to present to the members at their monthly meetings. The new officers and board have been busy

making plans for upcoming projects. A few include the Spring Garden Seminar at the Paragould Community Center, the GCMG plant sale on May 5th, and a series of bee keeping classes this coming fall.

Hats off to these officers for the many volunteer hours they log to provide leadership to the Greene County Master Gardener program. If you would like to become a Master Gardener, call the Greene County Extension Office at (870)-236-6921

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# ARKANSAS DELTA BYWAYS AWARDS

Arkansas Delta Byways, the tourism promotion association for 15 counties in Eastern Arkansas, presented its 18th annual Delta Awards recognizing tourism achievement Friday, Feb. 23, during festivities at the Marianna Civic Center.

The event was sponsored by Arkansas Delta Byways with support from the City of Marianna, Mayor Jimmy Williams, and the Marianna Chamber of Commerce.

Marcel Hanzlik, president of Arkansas Delta Byways, served as master of ceremonies and presented the awards.

The winners of the various tourism awards were:

- “Media Support Award”: Rex Nelson, columnist, Arkansas Democrat-Gazette.

- “Hospitality Award”: Wilson Community Gardens, Mississippi County

- “Entrepreneur Award”: Piggott City Market, Clay County

- “Tourism/Promotional Support Award”: Corning Welcome Center, “The Great American Eclipse Watch Party,” Clay County

- “Festival/Event of the Year Award”: Inaugural Johnny Cash Heritage Festival, Dyess, Mississippi County

- “Boot Strap Award”: Helena Downtown Partnership, Phillips County

- “Cultural Heritage Award”: The Circle, Arkansas State University, Craighead County

ADB presented its “Outstanding Member Award” to Gretchen Sacotnik of Greene

County and the “Tourism Person of the Year” award to videographer Gary Jones, who also is a student in the Heritage Studies Ph.D. program at A-State. A special achievement award was presented to Paula Oliver of Helena.

Arkansas Delta Byways (ADB) is the official tourism promotion association recognized by the Arkansas Department of Parks and Tourism for the region. Member counties are Arkansas, Chicot, Clay, Craighead, Crittenden, Cross, Desha, Drew, Greene, Lee, Mississippi, Monroe, Phillips, Poinsett and St. Francis.

ADB is based on the A-State campus in Jonesboro and receives administrative support through the university’s Arkansas Heritage Sites Office.



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# DELTA WRITING PROJECT

Inquiry, writing, lesson plan idea exchange, and teacher collaboration — that's what occurs in National Writing Project summer institutes.

From July 9-13, the Arkansas Delta Writing Project will host a week-long "Writing Institute for K-12 Teachers and College Instructors." All educators who are interested in improving their strategies for teaching writing are welcome to apply, including teacher educators who will graduate in May.

The institute will meet on the A-State campus daily from 9 a.m.-3 p.m. The selected educators from varying disciplines will gather to engage in writing experiences, demonstration lessons, and discussions of professional readings related to literacy practices. Educators will interact with a community of writers to make a reserve of writing lessons to use with their own students. They will also have opportunities to work on their own writing and to learn more about how to use technology and visual media to enhance their writing practices and pedagogies.

In addition, 30 hours of ADE-approved professional development credit is available for participants who complete the week-long institute.

Beyond their days in the Writing Institute, the Arkansas Delta Writing Project new "Fellows" will belong to the national network of more than 200 National Writing Project (NWP) sites on college campuses in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. They will also be encouraged to participate in state and national conferences and in NWP continuity events, where Fellows share their professional knowledge and expertise and continue to become better teachers of writing by writing themselves.

The National Writing Project is a coordinated effort to improve writing in America. Through its professional development model, NWP develops the leadership, programs and research needed for teachers to help students become successful writers and learners. This year, the Department of Teacher Education and the College of

Education and Behavioral Science will fund the A-State Writing Institute.

Those interested in applying can contact Dr. Karen Kleppe Graham, assistant professor of teacher education, at [kgraham@AState.edu](mailto:kgraham@AState.edu) for the application and for more information. The facilitators will include Dr. Margaret A. Robbins, a middle school English language arts teacher at Mount Vernon Presbyterian School in Atlanta, and Debbie West, a technology coach from Nettleton Public Schools who has been involved with the Arkansas Delta Writing Project for several years.



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# BARIATRIC SUPPORT GROUPS



**B**ariatric weight loss surgery can be an intimidating topic but NEA Baptist is here as your resource for encouragement and support whether you are just beginning your weight loss journey or you are maintaining your weight loss program.

NEA Baptist established a monthly support group which meets the first Tuesday of the month with peers of bariatric surgery for education, encouragement, and socialization. This group is open to anyone who is interested in discussing their weight loss, those who would like to gather information about an approaching surgery or anyone seeking out information, recipes and tips to help aid in their weight loss course. No topic is off limits.

The event is completely free and open to anyone, regardless of where they receive healthcare. Reservations and appointments are not required; for additional information email [neaweightlossurgery@neabc.com](mailto:neaweightlossurgery@neabc.com) or call 870-936-2019.

NEA Baptist Health System comprises NEA Baptist Memorial Hospital, NEA Baptist Fowler Family Center for Cancer Care and NEA Baptist Clinic, Northeast Arkansas' largest physician group. The 228-bed hospital offers cancer care, heart care through the Heart Center, labor and delivery services through the hospital's Women's Center, as well as a number of inpatient and outpatient services, emergency care, and surgical services including weight loss surgery, neurology, respiratory care, and pulmonary rehabilitation. NEA Baptist Clinic's over 100 physicians practice in more than 35 specialties and offer a wealth of services, from pediatrics to orthopedic services.

The next Support Group meeting will be held April 3rd at 6:00 p.m. at the NEA Baptist Memorial Hospital Conference Center Room #4.

For more information about NEA Baptist, please call 870-936-1000 or 870-936-8000 or visit [www.neabaptist.com](http://www.neabaptist.com) or [www.neabaptistclinic.com](http://www.neabaptistclinic.com).



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# HAPPENINGS

## CHURCH GRANT



Paragould First United Methodist Church granted nearly \$6,000 on Sunday to four organizations from their dollar a week offering funds. The offering is amassed from single dollar bills put into the offering plate from January-December; half of the proceeds go to the church's Witt House Food Pantry.

## 2K18 SPRING LEGACY SCHOLARSHIP



The Legacy Scholarship was founded by the May 2015 Practical Nursing class of Black River Technical College. The class had a goal to leave a legacy. They saw the financial struggle by students in their last semester of the program to pay for Arkansas State Board of Nursing licensure and NCLEX-PN test fees which total approximately \$375.

Each graduating class has continued the legacy by fundraising and providing scholarships each semester to help with these costs. The fall 2017 graduates awarded fifteen \$200 scholarships to the May 2018 class. The current Registered Nursing students also contributed this semester in order to offer two additional scholarships allowing all 17 applicants to receive the scholarship.

## BUILD UP FOR PHILLIP



Habitat for Humanity of Greater Jonesboro hosted a groundbreaking for the Build Up for Phillip project that was launched in January of this year. Build Up for Phillip is a new fundraising project that has been organized to honor the late Phillip Evans of Jonesboro. Phillip lived to help others both at home and abroad. He loved to build, so his family and friends are coming together to raise funds to support Habitat for Humanity.

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## PJHS PLACES 3RD



Paragould Jr. High Quiz Bowl placed third at the state tournament at Harding University in Searcy. Ninth grade students Jackson Douglas and Lily Broadway were named to the State All-Star team. Team sponsor is Krystal Hooten.

Front row: Max Hooten, Jackson Douglas, Abby Stevens, Ashton Rodrigues, Devon Jarman, Tyler Brown.

Back row: Matthew Bermea, Lily Broadway, Sarah Sellen, Nevaeh Morse, Secily Eldridge.

## NEW NURSING CLINICAL SITE COORDINATOR



Amanda Junkersfeld of Maynard has accepted the Position of Nursing Clinical Site Coordinator for the Pocahontas site of Black River Technical College.

## BIRTHS



### *Sawyer Blaire Lewis*

On February 28th, proud mother Caitlin Lewis of Paragould welcomed baby Sawyer Blaire Lewis into the world.

Sawyer measured 21 inches long and weighed 8 pounds and 7 ounces and was delivered at NEA Baptist Hospital in Jonesboro. He was welcomed by grandmother Annette along with his late grandfather Jim Lewis' spirit by his grandmother's side.

### *Ella Rye Edgar*

Ella was born January 19, 2018, at NEA Baptist Hospital to Jeremy and Brittany Edgar. She weighed 6 pounds, 5 ounces and was 19 1/2 inches long.

Ella was welcomed into the world by her big brother, Eli, and big sister, Eliah, along with her grandparents Nathan and Lea Edgar, Joe and Carol Fleszar, and Ashley Presson.

Photography by Whitney Vassar Photography.



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## WOMEN'S BUSINESS LEADERSHIP SCHOLARSHIP

Dr. Shane Hunt, R.M. "Bob" Wood Endowed Professor in Sales Leadership and professor of marketing at Arkansas State University, and his wife Jenifer have made a gift commitment to endow a scholarship in the College of Business. The Shane and Jenifer Hunt Women's Business Leadership Scholarship will be awarded annually at A-State's Women's Business Leadership Conference.

"We are thrilled to endow the Shane and Jenifer Hunt Women's Business Leadership Scholarship to help provide educational opportunities to outstanding female business students for generations to come," said Hunt.

"I am so proud to have been part of the creation of the A-State Women's Business Leadership Center and thankful that this scholarship will be part of the incredible mission and transformational impact of the center."

Criteria include the recipient must be a women's business leadership intern with a major in the College of Business. The student must have completed 30 hours, with first priority given to marketing majors. Each recipient will be selected by current and future leaders of the A-State Women's Business Leadership Center and College of Business faculty.

The first scholarship will be awarded at the 2018 conference in Centennial Hall in the Carl R. Reng Student Union.

The annual Women's Business Leadership Conference, which opened in 2016, is intended to cultivate and enrich the academic experience of students, enhance career and mentorship networks for women, and celebrate the remarkable strengths women bring to corporate America. Motivated students, alumni, successful corporate businesswomen and thriving entrepreneurs from all over the country join to connect, discuss and learn more about issues facing women.



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# Stay Tuned

What's in store next month?

Joy Davis, LPC



The founder of Families, Inc., Joy Davis, LPC, will be our feature story for the May issue of Premiere Magazine. Read about her success story as a woman in the business world and her philanthropic services.

## Business Women Focus



In May, we will cover the 2018 Women's Business Leadership Conference to celebrate business women in NE Arkansas.

## Jonesboro Winners!



The Jonesboro Premiere Award winners that YOU voted for will be announced in the May issue of Premiere Magazine!

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