

# PREMIERE



October  
2020

## Maker's Edition

ARTISTS,  
CRAFTSMEN,  
AND CREATORS

### ON THE COVER

Kelly Stevens & her  
incredible welded creations


### BREAKING, HEALING, MAKING

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### ***Serving The Community***

Josh has been a Paragould resident his entire life, working tirelessly, along with his wife, to make it a better place. As a local businessman, City Council Member, husband, and father, Josh is invested in our community and wants the very best for Paragould.

### ***Paragould Comes First***

Josh has been serving Paragould as a City Council Member for the past eight years. In this capacity, Josh has experience with many of the issues Paragould faces and is eager to maximize our city's potential as Paragould's next Mayor.

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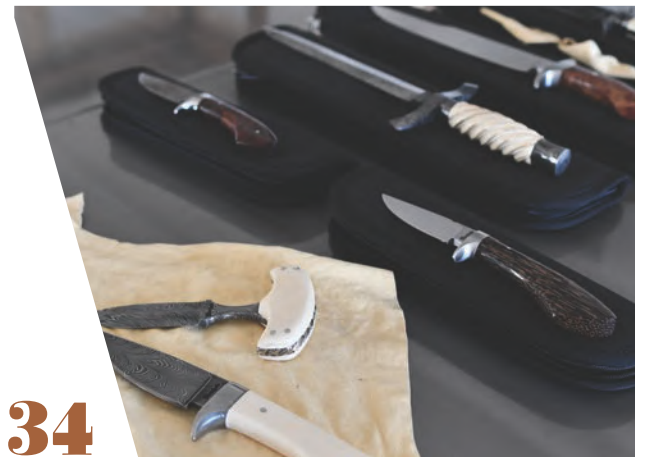
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*Andrew Brown*  
PHOTOGRAPHY

 870-316-1030

 Andrew Brown Photography

 andrewbrown182@gmail.com

 @andrewbrown182



Guest Column

# Debbie Cross - Greene County Treasurer

“

The 2020 General Election will be on Tuesday, November 3, with early voting beginning on Monday, October 19. If you are not registered to vote, you have until October 5. Many folks do not vote for fear of being called for jury duty, but did you know that jurors are also selected from driver's licenses and state identification cards?

If you have not voted in the past few years, your voting status may be "inactive". To check your status (including verifying your current address), go to [www.voterview.ar-nova.org/voterview](http://www.voterview.ar-nova.org/voterview). With your name and birth date, you can verify your information and view YOUR ballot.

There are currently four "questions" on the statewide ballot. Some are still pending in the courts. The Public Policy Center at the UofA System Division of Agriculture (Extension Office) produces a Voter Guide that provides NEUTRAL explanations, pros and cons, of each statewide issue/question on the ballot. You can find unbiased explanations at [www.uaex.edu/ballot](http://www.uaex.edu/ballot).

The first "question" is asking voters whether or not to continue a 1/2 cent sales and use tax for state highways, county roads and city streets. This is NOT A NEW TAX. This is currently set to expire in 2023. Statewide, it brings in almost \$90 million per year. Greene and Craighead counties (including their towns and cities) stand to lose over \$4,000,000 every year! This is a source of revenue that our state, counties and cities cannot afford to lose. A vote yes on Issue 1 will continue the 1/2 cent sales tax for roads.

There is also a "Special Election" for Greene County residents on Ordinance 2020-12. Again, this is NOT A NEW TAX! The Greene County Quorum Court is asking the citizens to "expand the designated use" of the 3/8 cent sales and use tax currently on the books to allow that revenue to be used for law enforcement also. A vote yes on this county-wide issue will allow the Quorum Court to make better use of the current resources our citizens are already paying.

Whichever way you vote, please, please, be informed and VOTE! Visit the County Clerk's office in the Courthouse to get registered before October 5th. God bless us all!

”

*Glen Sain*



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# PREMIERE MAGAZINE

**publisher/advertising sales**

Dina Mason | dina@mormediainc.com

**contributing writers**

Richard Brummett | brummetr34@gmail.com  
 Caitlin LaFarlette | caitlin\_lafarlette@hotmail.com  
 Chuck Long | Charles.Long@agfc.ar.gov  
 Jared Pickney | jared@fellowshipparagould.com  
 Bethany Gallimore | bethanyjseaton@gmail.com  
 Karole Risker | karole17@hotmail.com  
 Debbie Haas | debbie.haas@yahoo.com  
 Jenny Brown | jbrown@paragouldschools.net

**content manager**

Lindsey Mills | lindsey@mormediainc.com

**graphic design (advertising)**

Taylor Dickinson | graphics@mormediainc.com

**advertising sales team**

Dina Mason | dina@mormediainc.com  
 Perry Mason | perry@mormediainc.com  
 Brian Osborn | brian@mormediainc.com  
 Justin Hetler | justin@mormediainc.com

**cover photographer**

Amy Reeves | amyreevesphotography@yahoo.com

# MOR MEDIA INCORPORATED

PREMIERE is a publication of MOR Media, Incorporated. Editorial, advertising and general business information can be obtained by calling (870) 236-7627, faxing to (870) 239-4583 or e-mailing to dina@mormediainc.com. Mailing address: 400 Tower Drive, Paragould, AR 72450.

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# GREENE COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY INTRODUCES

# the Seed Library

BY LINDSEY MILLS

As if the library isn't a magical enough place already, the Greene County Public Library (GCPL) is bringing more charm to visitors with its new edition: The Seed Library.

What is a seed library? Quite simply, it's a collection of seeds that can be borrowed for others to grow their own food, herbs and flowers. How does one borrow seeds? Plant seeds you bring home from the library in your own garden, enjoy the harvest of your hard work and save the seeds to return them for the next hopeful gardener. GCPL card holders can choose from a variety of seeds and check out a few books to help them in their venture.



## SEEDS AVAILABLE

The seeds found in the GCPL are "open-pollinated" heirloom seeds, meaning they've been pollinated by natural means – insects, birds, wind. Like family heirlooms passed down through generations, they have been saved after a harvest and passed along for future gardeners.

To see what varieties are available: Visit [mylibrarynow.org](http://mylibrarynow.org), select "Greene" as the library, search "Seed Library" and scroll down to browse all. Click on each seed to see the varieties available.

## MAKING AN IMPACT

Seed saving is a tradition that benefits many. The return to this tradition, of harvesting and protecting the previous year's seeds, creates a stock that is well-suited to our climate and plants that are more pest-resistant. It also helps create a culture of sharing and community, as the work of many is funneled into a library that will benefit many more.

"It's healthy to grow your own food. It helps our pollinators. It's fun and rewarding!" said Connie Whitman, assistant director at the Greene County Public Library. "It's good for your body, mind and soul."

As the plants grow and their impact is felt by the gardener and the future gardener, so the community grows, too.

In the words of [Marcus Tullius] Cicero, "If you have a garden and a library, you have everything you need."

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[MYLIBRARYNOW.ORG](http://MYLIBRARYNOW.ORG)







# LIVING A Better Story

BY JARED PICKNEY

One of the reasons I planted a church in 2012 is because I wanted to create an environment where people can thrive. As a pastor, I wanted to see a lot of fruit as people were being transformed from the inside out. Eight years in, I now realize, more than ever, that people cannot grow unless planted in a healthy soil. When the soil is healthy, people flourish. When the soil is depleted people fail to mature.

With this in mind, here are four essential ingredients for creating a healthy soil.

The first ingredient is joy. From the time we are born we are looking for joy. Joy is found when we discover that someone else is happy to be with us. To know we are the sparkle of someone else's eye gives us the

strength to grow up. Perhaps this is why the Scriptures teach that, "The joy of the LORD is our strength."

The second ingredient is love. True love is more than a feeling. It is a commitment to be to someone as you should be even if they are not as they should be to you. When we find ourselves in an environment marked by unconditional, loyal love, we set ourselves up to thrive. This is why the Bible says that God is love. It is why Jesus commands us to remain in his love so that we can then bear much fruit.

The third ingredient is group identity. Around the age of twelve, the brain undergoes a structural change that balances individual identity with group identity. From this point on, our group

identity is a key player in the formation of character. Without even realizing it, before every action we are asking this question, "How do my people act in this situation?" This is why healthy relationships and positive influences are vital to our growth.

The final ingredient is correction. Because we cannot accurately see ourselves, we need others to help us see when we are not embracing our true identity. Unlike toxic correction, healthy correction never leaves us alone. It involves a friend who cares enough about us to help us become the person God made us to be.

Take time to do an assessment of your own life. Do you find yourself planted in a healthy soil? If not, what is your next step moving forward?

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- Municipal League Conferences Participant
- Leadership Paragould Graduate
- Paragould Regional Chamber of Commerce Member

Paragould City Council Ward 1 Position 2

Experience is pivotal in the Paragould City Council Election

"Background knowledge is extremely necessary to be an effective leader.

**Proven experience is pivotal in this election**, because three of eight council members will not be seeking re-election.

I have the knowledge and experience to enable a smooth transition for our new mayor and our city!"

**Re-Elect Susan Kueter Williams**

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Paid for by Susan Kueter Williams Campaign



# GET RICH WITH RICHARD BRUMMETT



**W**e've all seen the cartoon with a guy scaling a mountain in some foreign land in order to reach the guru sitting at the top, hoping to learn the key to a happy life. If I made that climb today and asked the bearded soul atop the mountain he would simply say, "Remember your passwords, my child."

That's it; remember your passwords and, maybe, know your User Name as well.

I've known for some time my life is ruled by electronic devices and all the hoopla and mumbo jumbo associated with them but a recent trip out of town served to reinforce the fact I don't really know much of anything on my own; I need phones and computers and passwords and user names in order to navigate life on a daily basis.

My wife and I made a trip to Texas in order for her to spend time with her sister, who is enduring some health-related issues. My plan, which seemed like a good one at the time, was to stay at the hotel and visit the Business Center in order to edit copy for this publication and to perform my daily routine of posting an old photograph on my Facebook page.

On the first morning there I delivered Cindy to the complex housing her sister, then returned to edit copy sent to my email address.

At home, I just sit in front of my computer, click on an icon -- now that I know what an icon is -- and my email account opens up. On this day I tried to do the same but the computer wanted me to enter my user name and password. What? That never happens at home, but I tried typing in all the names and passwords I could ever remember using, all to no avail. Someone once suggested I never use the same password more than once because that would make it too easy for hackers to gain access to all my accounts.

So there I sat, clueless as to the numerous formulas sitting in a folder named "Passwords" on my home computer desktop and trying to think if I knew any hackers who might help me out. It was only weeks ago that I admitted to my daughters that I listened to their conversations about "apps" but didn't actually know what an app was. "You know all those little pictures on your phone?" Kelly said to me, "Those are apps."

Son of a gun.

Under normal circumstances I would have resorted to my cell phone, which also lets me open these all-important information sites with a simple click, but it was sitting at home in Arkansas waiting for my return. Before leaving home I tapped my back pockets to make certain I had my wallet and phone, and felt objects in the correct places. The wallet was there but the phone's roosting place was taken instead by a magnifier, one I needed in order to read a road map because I don't trust those GPS thingys in the vehicle. I want to look at an actual map in an atlas so I can see where I'm headed and what is coming up next.

Young people won't understand, just as they won't understand why I prefer telephones connected to the wall via a long cord. For one thing, you always know where that kind is, and for another, you can actually get away from the phone for a while instead of having your pants ring every few steps.

So, no phone for easy access and I thought, "Well, if I can't work I'll just do the Facebook picture thing." I searched up Facebook on the computer, clicked to open and was greeted with a Log In box, requesting ... you guessed it, User Name and Password.

No idea. No clue. I repeated all those I had tried earlier with the email account and came up snake eyes again. I gave up and returned to the room defeated, but jotted down even more password possibilities to try later in the evening.

Zero. It reminded me of being in school and having the teacher say, "Close your books and take out a pencil and paper" as we were given a pop test over stuff we were supposed to read yesterday but I had scheduled to read maybe later or never.

The questions were as alien to me as having a computer tell me to type in a password and I stared at a blank piece of notebook paper, just as I recently stared at a computer screen, thinking maybe somehow an answer would appear. It didn't, in either situation.

I returned home seriously behind on magazine work because my simple plan turned out not to be so simple. But you can rest assured I will carry a printout of every password known to me in my wallet from now on. I just hope I don't forget the wallet.

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# Sounds Like... the End of Summer!

BY SARA BROWN

A playlist for October

It's October, and you know what that means ... Halloween is coming up at the end of the month, but that doesn't mean you can't get the spooky vibes going all month long! If spooky is your jam, you already know the classic tunes, so consider adding these more off-the-beaten path tracks to your Halloween playlist:

1. I Don't Want to Know – The Last Bandoleros

This song has a spooky, skeletons-and-sugar-skulls vibe (watch the music video if you don't believe me!). Combine that with its mysterious lyrics and its haunting guitar solos and vocal harmonies, and it's a perfect fit for anyone looking to get their spook on.

2. Zombie Zoo – Tom Petty

This song starts out with a creepy organ intro that makes you think you're in for a haunted 3-minute experience, but it quickly changes things up by becoming a fun song that you can easily bob your head and tap your foot to. The song doesn't make much sense, admittedly, but it's fun to listen to, and it's about zombies. What more could you ask for?

3. Don't Fear the Reaper – Blue Öyster Cult

This song seems to be a love song about death, and that makes it much spookier than it would be if it were just about death alone. Top it all off with that creepy guitar solo in the middle and you've got the perfect track to creep out all your friends.

4. Every Breath You Take – The Police

If you aren't familiar with this tune, the title certainly makes it seem innocent enough, but with lyrics like "every smile you fake, every claim you stake / I'll be watching you," it's got that creepy vibe every good Halloween playlist needs.

5. Dance Macabre – Ghost

This song is loud, it rocks, and the lyrics have a general creepiness to them that make it perfect for your Halloween festivities. Of course, with a band name like Ghost, how could it not be appropriate for this playlist?

6. Sisters of the Moon – Fleetwood Mac

Stevie Nicks has a way of mesmerizing listeners with her enchanting, witchy vibes, but this song takes that to a new level. After listening, you'll definitely have that spooky feeling that comes from hearing scary stories, and you may even feel like a witch yourself.



## Thank You, Paragould!

**I am humbled and honored that the Patrons of Ward 1 are allowing me to serve another term as their Councilman. I pledge to work hard, listen to your concerns and govern fairly. I am blessed to live and serve in the great city of Paragould.**

**Thank you,  
Mark Rowland**

Paid for by Mark Rowland



# PET OF THE MONTH

SPONSORED BY ARPETS HOSPITAL

BY JESSICA HALL

**K**imber is a working gal! She loves to duck/goose hunt with her dad in the winters. She's very dedicated to hunting with Dad. Cold water and birds are her true passion. She spends the rest of the year inside with her family waiting on us to drop a piece of food.

Kimber is a very loving dog. She loves cuddles, sitting on laps and has big brown eyes that usually keep her out of trouble. Sometimes she is too smart for her own good!

If she could talk, I think she would ask if it was boat ride time yet.

She is the best girl. Kimber also answers to Kimberly, Kimber Dog, and Kimbee.





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OF COMMERCE  
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DEVELOPMENT/ CEO:**

*Allison Hestand*

**T**ELL US A LITTLE ABOUT YOURSELF, AND WHAT HAS LED YOU TO THIS NEW ROLE WITH THE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

I am a Paragould High School graduate and went on to Arkansas State University where I received my Bachelors in Finance with a minor in Economics. I began my career at Block Insurance and have spent the past seven years working in various roles there. Our community has always been very important to me and I have always had the passion to make anything better than the way I found it. I have spent several years volunteering with the Greene County Boys and Girls Club and most recently had the opportunity to help with the Get Downtown Festival put on by the Greene County Future Fund, where I was once again reminded Paragould is very blessed with a wonderful community. When I heard the news that Sue McGowan of the Paragould Chamber announced her retirement I knew this was my dream job. The thought of getting to work every day, with the sole focus of making sure Paragould continues to grow and thrive, quite frankly gives me goosebumps of excitement! I was ready to put my education and passion for our community together and see to it that Paragould continues on the right track.

WHAT DO YOU LOVE ABOUT THE PARAGOULD COMMUNITY?

Paragould is the perfect mix of EVERYTHING you could want in a community. We continue to see economic growth, we have a beautiful state park right out our back door, wonderful public and private school systems, excellent leaders and, most importantly, the people, the heartbeat of every community. Paragould has long been full of people that continue to see the bigger picture, that

have a desire to look ahead and make sure Paragould is still thriving long after their days. Our people being our biggest asset is the hardest to replicate, which in my opinion makes us one of best communities around!

HOW DO YOU HOPE TO USE YOUR ROLE TO MAKE A POSITIVE IMPACT FOR PARAGOULD BUSINESSES?

I hope to be able to continue the growth that Paragould has seen over the past couple of decades and find new innovative ways to help Paragould stand out. I am eager to navigate us out of the current pandemic and put Paragould on the map to stay. No one has a crystal ball but it is becoming more and more evident that certain aspects of a virtual workforce may be here to stay. We need to be thinking of ways to capture those individuals and show them all what Paragould has to offer through our community and quality of life projects. Growth is essential for the future of Paragould and all of the businesses that drive our local economy.

IF YOU COULD OFFER SOME WORDS OF ENCOURAGEMENT TO ALL LOCAL BUSINESS OWNERS, ESPECIALLY RIGHT NOW, WHAT WOULD YOU SAY?

Continue to look ahead. Find ways to reinvent your business amidst the uncertain times. Go back to the drawing board and see if there is any way to make your business more accessible to the consumer or any way to capture sales in another avenue. We will come out of this, albeit, no one knows the very day, and we will be ever the stronger for it. Your continued commitment to serve our community hasn't gone unnoticed and I urge each of us to support you in every way we can.

# College Tips by a College Student

BY SARA BROWN



We're just over a month into the Fall semester and I don't know about you, but I have mixed feelings. All of my classes have gone completely online, and I'm a little relieved that I don't have to be on campus and that I get to do all my coursework in my pajamas without fear of judgment, but there's some downsides to it too. You may find yourself feeling lonely or isolated and you may be struggling with staying motivated and getting all of your work done, but don't worry, I've got some tips for that. This month's tips are going to be geared specifically toward students with online classes, but they can be applied to any situation, so if you have all in-person classes, feel free to read on with us!

Tip number one: Keep track of your due dates. Create calendar alerts on your phone, write things down in a planner or on a marker board, whatever you need to do to keep up with all of your due dates for your various classes. This is especially important for those of us in online classes; those due dates will absolutely sneak up on you if you don't keep track of them, and not all of your professors are likely to send out reminder after reminder. Many will tell you once, then it's up to you to remember and get stuff turned in. Make sure you do that; your grades will thank you!

Tip number two: Stay motivated. Online classes require a level of self-motivation you don't have to have in in-person classes, but every single one of you reading this is capable of getting everything done. It can be hard to stay motivated when you're at home and you've got your phone right next to you, you're all comfy under a blanket and you just want to take a nap, or your new Nintendo Switch is calling your name, but it is possible. My advice is to designate a single spot to work (some place other than where you sleep, play video games, etc.), work on your classes during the time they would normally be meeting, and get your phone out of the room while

doing so. For me, that's the best possible way to avoid distractions, and if you struggle with getting distracted, it'll probably help you too!

Tip number three: Find other people to talk to. For those of us doing most of our learning online, we're not getting as much interaction with others as we're used to getting on a college campus. It can be good to have a group of people to talk to, commiserate with, and swap advice with, so if you find yourself feeling isolated, reach out to others! Try to create a virtual study group or a group that can just meet over Zoom and talk as friends. You may not connect with the first person you reach out to, but you're bound to find someone out there who's feeling the way you do and needs a friend. Connection with others matters now more than ever, so don't be afraid to reach out!

Tip number four: You knew this one was coming, pay attention! I've said it for the past few months, but it still applies. You absolutely need to be checking your email, listening to your professors/instructors, and watching for campus alerts. Doing these things will keep you informed as to what's going on in your classes and on campus. You don't want to be the last one to know about things.

And finally, tip number five: Find the time to take care of yourself, whatever that may mean. Obviously, you need to be eating good meals, getting enough sleep, and bathing regularly, but find the time to incorporate something you enjoy into your daily routine. Watching your favorite show, listening to music, taking a walk, or anything else like that you enjoy doing is great to add in to 30 minutes to an hour of your day. It'll help you to de-stress and relax your mind, and with all the uncertainty in the world right now, you'll be glad to take a little time for yourself. Keep up the good work and keep yourself healthy and happy – you've got this!



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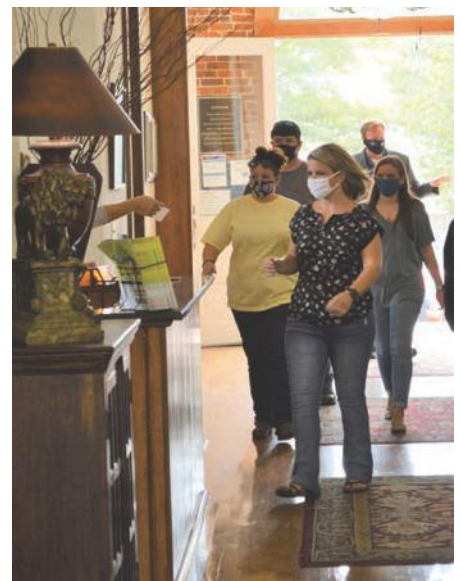
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Will Edwards, a goodwill ambassador for the Jonesboro Chamber of Commerce, passes lunch to Dr. Lillie Fears.

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MAKING SENSE OF INVESTING



David and Luke sat quietly waiting on a whitetail. Luke had practiced to become proficient with the longbow crafted by his granddad and knew he had to sit patiently to allow a deer to get within range. A doe approached, fed into range, and Luke put his practice to work and placed the arrow properly. David enjoyed the moment, not the take of the animal itself, but knowing he had passed on the love and appreciation for the outdoors that had been given to him many years earlier.

David Flanrey got his start chasing squirrels in the St. Francis River bottoms with his dad and granddad. Those hunts involved treks following a squirrel dog and hoping to get a few bushytails for the supper table. At the age of 10, David was able to purchase his first bow. He bought the Ben Pearson recurve at Gibson's in Paragould for \$25, a hefty price for a youngster. He began to practice as well as walk around the yard choosing targets and his skill slowly increased. A bowhunter came alive.

The compound bow craze hit David in his late teens and he purchased a Fred Bear compound, but something did not fit. The weight, accessories and technical aspects of the compound seemed to overshadow the simplicity of traditional archery. As many archers in the area did at the time, David often honed his skills at the Good-E-Barn and noticed a Black Widow recurve that David Summitt had in the shop. David shot the recurve, the fire was stoked, and he ordered a new Bear three piece takedown recurve bow. The compound was discarded and he never looked back.

David shot that recurve for a few years and



then had a bow made by a bowyer in New Mexico. That led to interest in making his own bows. A chance online meeting with Kenny McKenzie from Linneus, Missouri, with Kenny's Custom Archery led to the purchase of a kit to make his own bow and the hobby of making bows was set in motion. Kenny then tutored David through the process and they have become fast friends.

In the last 15 years, David has crafted over 100 bows that have been sent all over the world. In keeping with the ways of traditional archery, he has no real name for his business, nor an internet presence, garnering business by word of mouth through friends and family.

Crafted from a variety of wood, fiberglass, and other materials, a handmade bow is a work of art. Ash, hickory, oak, osage and maple are some of his favorite woods to render into bows and he likes to "see the wood speak for itself" in his creations. The wood comes from a variety of sources, but some of his favorite wood has been obtained locally. One such load came a few years back when David saw the Corps clearing the levees of Eight Mile Creek. He stopped and asked for the wood and was able to get walnut, pecan and hickory that he still uses to produce his craft.

Taking the rough wood from lumber into a bow is a time consuming and somewhat painstaking process. According to David "you must have the imagination to put the puzzle together" in crafting the bow. The wood has to be dried, laminates poured, the bow formed and the bow tuned to get it to shoot as desired. Much of the work is done by hand with files and rasps to create a finished product that is both functional and display worthy. David enjoys that process and said "no piece of wood



## CHUCK LONG

Regional Education Coordinator Northeast Education Division Arkansas Game and Fish Commission

is perfect and there seem to be problems with every bow. Patience and thinking are a part of each build."

Traditional bowyers are a tightknit group and willingly share information with each other in regard to bowmaking. One group, based on the website tradgang.com, is a great resource for advice and also puts together a bow swap for members. Through that, David was able to craft and send a bow to a fellow bowyer in Australia, while David's name was drawn by John Schrifte, who crafted bows for the movie Hunger Games.

Though making bows is a passion for David, when you talk with him, you realize his true feelings fall toward his family and the outdoors in general. Time with family is very important and much of that family time is centered around the outdoors. David and his wife Vanessa enjoy time on the water chasing crappie while his children Noah Flanrey, Amy Austin and Anna Blake each have their own outdoor interests. In reference to his family, David said "the outdoors is our life." Since their acquaintance was formed, a family hunting trip is planned each year to property owned by Kenny McKenzie in Missouri, a special place for David and his family.

It is always uplifting to talk with a fellow outdoorsman and David's family is a great example of the joys that can be found outside. The outdoors has been pushed out of many people's lives by the busyness of everyday life. I would encourage you to take time and get your family outdoors and find the joy that can only be found outside. If you have any questions, please feel free to get in contact with me. Happy fall y'all; I hope to see you out there!



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## AMMC ANNOUNCES NEW MARKETING COORDINATOR

Arkansas Methodist Medical Center announced that Tiffany Lidisky recently joined the hospital's marketing department as the Marketing Coordinator. In her role, Tiffany will be responsible for coordinating marketing efforts to support AMMC's strategic initiatives through the coordination of events, social media, and communications.

"We are excited to have Tiffany join AMMC," says Tori Thompson, Director of The Foundation and Marketing at AMMC. "She has years of hospital marketing experience and brings tremendous strength to our team."

Tiffany graduated from The University of Wisconsin - Milwaukee where she obtained her Bachelor of Business Administration and Marketing. Tiffany has been an active Board Member of the Kennett Chamber of Commerce since January 2018.



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## JONESBORO PARKS & RECREATION DEPARTMENT BRINGS HOME AWARDS

The City of Jonesboro Parks and Recreation Department won multiple awards at the Arkansas Recreation and Parks Convention in Fort Smith.

Last September's Downtown BBQ Fest was declared Festival of the Year among festivals that have run for 11 or more years, while the inaugural Christmas at the Park won for Festivals of four years or fewer.

The Jonesboro Parks' Target Golf range

won Program of the Year.

"I'm so proud that our city was recognized, and I am especially proud of our Parks Department staff, and the leadership of Danny Kapales," Mayor Harold Perrin said. "They get so much done with not so many resources, and this is a tribute to their achievements."

Kapales was voted President-Elect of the Arkansas Parks Association by the group's membership.

He will serve as president-elect in 2021 and president in 2022.

"I am honored to be part of this great association that guides Arkansas parks to be some of the finest in the country," Kapales said.

Jonesboro Parks and Recreation Director Kapales and Christmas at the Park Director Adam Sartin accepted awards at the annual Arkansas Recreation and Parks Convention in Fort Smith.



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# Making Art

## PHOTOGRAPHER AND PAINTER: KATHY LAMBIE

BY DEBBIE HAAS

**K**athy Lambie, a Bono native, has always been interested in art. She enjoyed drawing at a young age and started taking art lessons at the age of 15. She continued her lessons for the next 10 years.

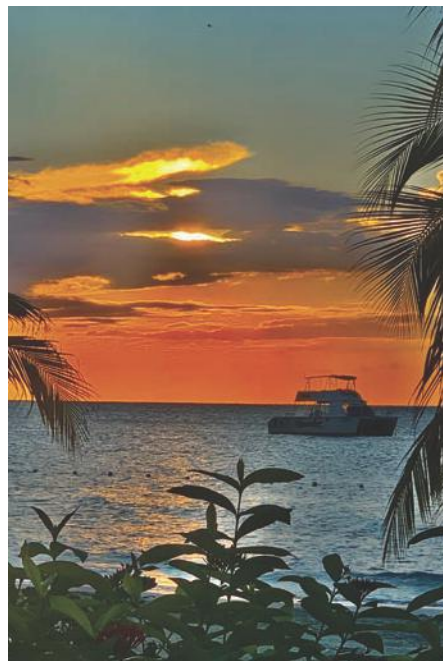
"I stopped taking lessons when I was 25 because my husband and I were building a house, and I had a full-time job. There just wasn't enough time for lessons while building our house, and focusing on having a family," explained Kathy.

Once Kathy's daughter got married, her life slowed down considerably, and she was able to concentrate on art once again. She found time to return to art lessons where she was able to try different medias to see what she liked best.

Kathy spent just shy of 40 years at Arkansas State University. She had several different positions but ended her career as a Student Loan Officer in the Financial Aid Office. She retired in 2018.

During that time, she also discovered her love of photography. She has been able to photograph special moments of her daughter's and granddaughters' lives throughout the years. She has captured some fabulous Jamaican sunsets, ocean scenery, nature, and interesting pictures of people.

When asked what she looks for behind the lens, Kathy explained, "I want to capture the moment and the beauty of nature. It may be something that I want to paint later.



"Since retiring, I can focus on art much more. I've done colored-pencil drawings, oil and acrylic paintings, and recently I started pours. I really enjoy the pours."

Pouring is a fluid painting technique where acrylic paint is poured onto a primed canvas. There are many different techniques that will give the artist different textures and outcomes. The possibilities are endless.

"Painting and drawing are relaxing, and they clear my mind. I get my inspirations from nature and God's creations," she said.

Kathy has belonged to the Northeast Arkansas Visual Arts League for about seven years. Local artists meet monthly to share their love of art with like-minded people. They have workshops throughout the year on different medias.

She has completed several beautiful drawings and paintings. She has given her paintings away as gifts, done paintings by request, and covered the walls in her studio with her artwork. If you want to see some of Kathy's works of art, she has a booth at the Fancy Attic in Jonesboro.

"If I can sell a few pieces here and there, I'll be able to keep creating more art," she said.

- TOP LEFT  
PAINTING A BEACH SCENE
- BOTTOM LEFT  
PHOTO OF KATHY
- BOTTOM RIGHT  
PHOTO TAKEN IN JAMAICA

A MESSAGE  
FROM



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-Cindy and Ivey Jr., General Manager, Randy Ware and Staff



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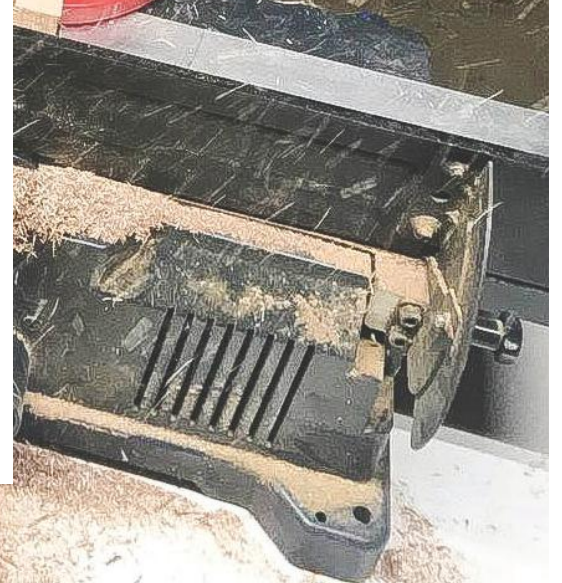
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# *Dusty*

WOODWORKING CRAFTSMAN:  
DUSTIN HUNDLEY

BY BETHANY GALLIMORE





Spending time in the sawdust doesn't bother Dustin Hundley — in fact, it's one of the places he'd rather be. The Jonesboro woodworker has a passion for high-quality furniture and design that shows throughout his home, and it's starting to show up in other people's houses, too.

He started woodworking when he and his wife Ellen moved into their first home. As part of his family's third generation of woodworkers, Hundley knew: "If you want custom furniture, you can make it — it was always in the back of my mind."

One of his first projects, and one that still occupies a primary space in his house, was a full-size kitchen table, complete with an epoxy resin center. "I've been happy with it," Hundley said. While the project did take him nearly three months to complete, the final product helped give Hundley the motivation to continue trying out his woodworking skills to fill furniture needs throughout his home, including side tables, outdoor tables, a record stand, and vanity.

From there, his passion easily transitioned to making pieces for others. "You can only make so much furniture for yourself, and then your house is full!" he laughed. A few recent projects ordered through his business, Dusty Design Co., have included custom bookshelves and cutting boards, as well as built-in mantles, counter tops, and shelves.

Hundley's engineering background has given him experience with digital design

software that he puts to good use planning designs for personal and professional use. Nearly as much work goes into preparation as creation, and he often spends a substantial amount of time designing and refining virtual project plans before even pulling out a tape measure.

He goes for a modern look and enjoys incorporating alternative materials alongside the traditional hardwood base of handmade furniture. He's used epoxy resin in several tables and integrated metal into previous designs as well. "I've learned a lot on YouTube, there's a big group of makers on there who make all kinds of things," he explained. Instagram and Pinterest are also favorite sources of inspiration for Hundley; he appreciates being able to learn from and adjust designs to create just the perfect piece.

His next project is a big one: built-in furniture for the Jonesboro restaurant and microbrewery set to open in 2021: Native.

He's also currently working on a bed frame and headboard for his own home, still finding space in the house to fill after all.



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# Breaking, Healing, Making



## THE HEALING POWER OF ART: MICHELLE GREMARD



BY DEBBIE HAAS

**M**ichelle Gremard is many things: a college graduate, a stay-at-home mother to two young children, a wife, a young artist, a plant whisperer, and an inspiration to others.

"I've always loved the endless possibilities of creativity. I feel as though I see the world differently than most. I find beauty in less than desirable things and situations," stated Michelle.

Michelle began her artistic journey in college but is actually self-taught. She worked at a restaurant in downtown Jonesboro and drew pictures on the pizza boxes as customers waited for their carry-out pizzas. She drew collegiate and sports mascots and soon got requests for her drawings. It branched into drawing on coolers and canvases. This little side hustle helped pay her rent and bills while going to school full time.

Michelle described her artistic journey: "It wasn't until I graduated college in 2010

that I really dove into my art. I started to mix my medias. I sketched portraits and nudes, painted abstracts, and used decoupage on glass windows. I was ready to branch out and explore my creativity. Every art piece was a new adventure. I realized that art was so much more than I allowed myself to believe. Art was endless. From a dot to a 16-foot collage, all of it was relative, and it was a freedom I had needed for a long time.

"However, I still didn't feel like an artist," explained Michelle. "Jonesboro is packed full of extremely talented artists. I did not feel as though my art could or would ever be worthy. The thought of answering confidently to the question of, 'What do you do?' with, 'I'm an artist' seemed a million miles away."

Michelle and her husband, Eric, started a family in 2013 and she continued to work full-time. With the time constraints of working and taking care of her family, her focus shifted away from her art.

When their second child was born in 2017, they decided she should stay home. This gave her a small window of freedom to pick up her brush again.

What inspires Michelle?

"True inspiration came after a car accident," she said. "It shattered my back and my spirit. Being a mother with two young children and laying in a hospital bed for several days, you reflect on your life. Especially when it is so close to being taken from you. It put it all into perspective. I felt broken. I will never forget the day that I tried to paint for the first time after my wreck. I cried for hours. That's when I turned to plants. I couldn't pick up my kids. I couldn't paint. I couldn't do much of anything. But a good friend of mine dove into a dumpster of a business that had thrown away \$5000 worth of plants. They were of no use to anyone and that is how I felt. I was committed to bringing all those dead plants back to life. I sat in my back brace under my carport for hours

pruning and repotting those plants. I was healing physically, but I was struggling psychologically. I was still so broken. In the fall, after watching those plants bloom one by one, I knew it was my turn."

Just like those dead plants, she started blooming.

Today Michelle continues to paint portraits, abstracts, and acrylics on wood. She does stained-glass mosaics, charcoal drawings, decoupage, epoxy and much more. She and Eric do woodworking and furniture restoration. They built a beautiful greenhouse out of old windows. It is a work of art itself. She still works with plants and has starter plants available for sale in the spring in addition to raising chickens, ducks, and goats.

Michelle has donated several pieces to local events and silent auctions. She's given her art away as gifts. She was commissioned to do a huge mosaic for that same downtown restaurant where her art journey began. Her friend, Jett Jones, called and asked her to put her art in the gift area of the Medicine Shoppe.

"I was so excited to put my art into the public eye and to help an old friend build and grow an already amazing business," stated Michelle.

If you get out and about you should check out some of Michelle's works or buy some plants from her in the spring.

I do believe that when asked, "What do you do?" that she can definitely answer, "I am an artist!"



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# Kelly Stevens

## & HER INCREDIBLE WELDED CREATIONS

BY LINDSEY MILLS

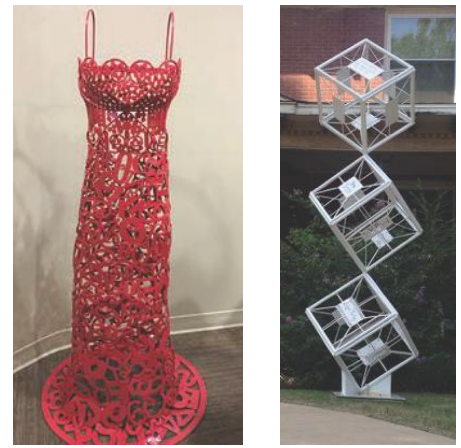


PHOTO BY AMY REEVES PHOTOGRAPHY

For Kelly Stevens welding has been a part of her life for longer than it hasn't. As a professional, her skills are put to work at Camfil, but her creations extend well outside of her day job. Kelly is also a talented artist who makes extravagant and unique works both big and small.

A glance through her portfolio is likely to leave viewers awestruck, but witnessing a work in real life is most certain to dazzle. Spherical fire pits, intricate chess pieces and towering sculptures are just a few of Kelly's pieces. Her art graces individual homes, businesses and parks.

"I've been working as a welder for the last 25 years," Kelly said, though her journey began before her career officially started.

She first learned to weld in high school, where her agri teacher, Homer Linderman, encouraged her through her early welding experiences. During that time, Kelly was in classes mostly filled with boys – a ratio that has remained mostly the same throughout the years. "I've been the only female at work for a long time, but I get along just great with everyone," Kelly shared. "I find [welding] an easy thing to do. I think a lot of girls are intimidated by it, but you learn."

Kelly did learn, a lot, and it led to a career and a passion for using her skills to create art. Her creations have been featured in local art shows, in art galleries, and donated to non-profit organizations like NEA Baptist's Duck Classic benefiting the

NEA Baptist Charitable Foundation, the Red Dress Gala, AG for Autism, and the Riding On the Ridge Rally.

Kelly said her passion for art grew out of small projects that "just kind of turned into bigger projects." Such projects include a 30-foot tree and a great big eagle out at Camfil, a sculpture at Miracle League Park, and a creation at the Reclamation House. Big and small, her projects are true works of art spanning a variety of styles.

"Sometimes I can just see things," Kelly said of the process of bringing her creations to life.

Kelly and her husband have three daughters and nine grandkids who are also learning to weld. After the first one turned nine and she recognized his desire to learn, and that he was picking it up as easily as she had, Kelly decided nine would be the age each grandkid could begin learning the craft.

The grandkids have built things such as bottle trees through their agri department for silent auctions and things.

"It's fun, they can say their 'grandma welds better than you,'" Kelly said with a chuckle.

A true maker who is passing down her knowledge to those she holds dearest, Kelly's work and art will live on in its physical state and in the minds of those she teaches for many generations to come.



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**Scarecrow Shuffle**  
**Downtown Paragould**  
**Ongoing**

The public is invited to vote for their favorite scarecrow on the MSP Facebook page.



**October 23rd**  
**An Evening with**  
**The Isaacs**  
**Collins Theatre**  
**7:00 p.m.**



**October 31st**  
**Downtown**  
**Trick-or-Treating**  
**TBD**

Due to current ADH restrictions, it is uncertain at this time if this event will take place. Please check the Facebook page for updates.



**November 11th**  
**Veterans Day Appreciation**  
**Coffee**  
**TBD**

Due to current ADH restrictions, it is uncertain at this time if this event will take place. Please check the Facebook page for updates.



**December 3rd**  
**Glimmering Lights**  
**Tree Lighting Ceremony**  
**Centennial Park**  
**TBD**

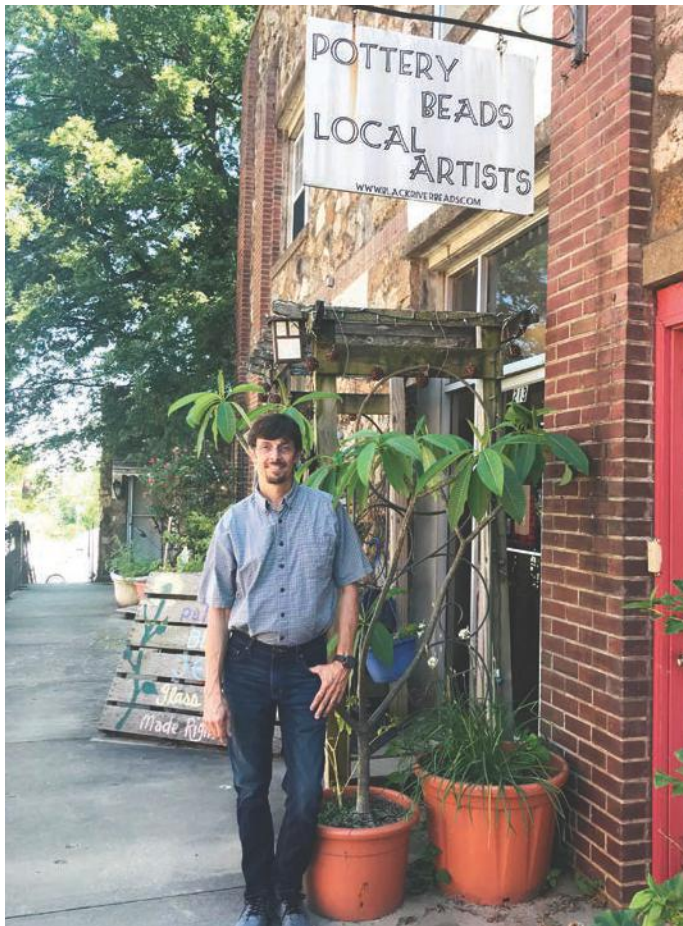
**+ Thursdays in December**  
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**4:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.**

Santa will be at the Waysgooze, at 120 N. 2nd Street, all three Thursdays.

Horse drawn carriages will leave from the corner of Pruett and Poplar. The rides will be free to the public.

Crow's Nest Farm will also have a Christmas tree lot set up at 120 N. Pruett. Christmas shopping hours extended to 8:00p.m.

*A complete listing of all Downtown events can be found under "Events" at [downtownparagould.com](http://downtownparagould.com) or [facebook.com/oneandonlydowntown/events](https://facebook.com/oneandonlydowntown/events).*



# Glasswork, Pottery, Jewelry, & Wood Etchings

WHAT STARTED AS A GIFT  
TURNED INTO A CAREER FOR  
JAMES TINKER

BY BETHANY GALLIMORE



It started as a simple gift: A glass bead-making class offered on the A-State campus that Amanda Tinker thought her then-boyfriend James would enjoy. That gift started a chain of events that would eventually lead the Tinkers to buy a disused city hall and jail, found a business, raise two children, and create an art studio at the heart of the place they call home. Nearly twenty years later, the couple continues the journey through the pottery and glasswork studio Black River Beads.

The Pocahontas shop is lined wall-to-wall with handmade pottery, glasswork, jewelry, and wood etchings, each created by the Tinkers or another local artist. "We both love doing the pottery," James said. "Our specialties in glass are lampwork and beads." After being introduced to glass bead-making through the A-State class, James continued learning glasswork and pottery through personal research and professional art courses. Amanda, meanwhile, completed her bachelor's degree at Arkansas State with emphasis areas in pottery, photography, and business. In 2002, they used their combined expertise to open the retail store

and personal studio that would eventually become Black River Beads.

Their store, located in Pocahontas' historic town square and former city hall and jail, takes advantage of the tourism provided by the county's five rivers as well as the unusual opportunities of repurposing a disused jail. The dampness of the old jail cells helps the pottery dry slowly with less risk of cracking, and the division of the cell walls helped the Tinkers create different rooms for kilns and glass-blowing.

Whether working with glass or clay, the creative process is often time-consuming. "You can have a finished bead in 24 hours, whereas it takes pottery six to eight weeks," James said. The pottery process is one familiar to both James and Amanda. Each piece begins as raw clay shaped by hand or thrown using a wheel, then the piece undergoes rigorous cycles of drying, firing, and glazing before being ready for use. Extensive drying cycles can add weeks to the process, but creating the right balance between moisture and dryness is essential to avoid cracking. Glass bead-making, in contrast, is



relatively quick, though still no easy job. Glass for the beads arrives as small rods, 18 inches long and about the thickness of a pencil, which the Tinkers then shape through torches and fire. The bead or pendant then goes into a kiln which slowly lowers the product's temperature overnight.

The customer base for Black River Beads is varied: The Tinkers have seen their work catch the eyes of NEA travelers heading to the river for the weekend, Florida- and California-based jewelry designers, and local homemakers and business owners. Paula Lowe, chef owner of Roots Restaurant in downtown Jonesboro, knew the Tinkers' pottery would be the right fit for her restaurant as soon as she stepped in their shop. James was able to collaborate with Lowe and her husband Karl to develop custom designs for plates, bowls, cups, and accent dishware for Roots, which Lowe believes adds a level of authenticity and community connection to the restaurant. "Everything for Roots has this perspective of supporting local community," Lowe said. "We think it's a very special touch that we're able to give that in our restaurant. Their work is amazing, and we have used those plates for everything."

It wasn't easy to keep the art-based business up during the Coronavirus shutdowns this spring; business slowed dramatically, and James even looked for temporary work outside the shop. Ultimately, creating is what kept the crafters afloat: A family friend connected James with a company that needed hundreds of masks, and the whole Tinker family quickly took up sewing. Over the course of a few months, the Tinkers made over 5,000 cloth masks, including large numbers for corporate orders, individual requests, and donations for the Arkansas Children's Hospital.

Even with the successes of the mask orders, James looks forward to getting "back to normal." He's eager to get back to the potter's wheel and the glass torches, and he hopes Pocahontas will see an autumn boost in tourism as it has in previous years. For those curious about the jewelry-making or pottery-throwing world, he encourages a quick stop into the studio: "Catch us at the right time and you'll see us making it," he said.

More information about Black River Beads can be found online and on its Facebook page.



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## Works of Art

### JOURNEYMAN SMITH: JAMES CARLYLE

BY LINDSEY MILLS

James Carlyle grew up in DeQueen, Arkansas, but the A-state grad is happy to call NEA home now. Though he received his degree in mathematics and hopes to teach school someday, the young business owner is already in the midst of pursuing a passion and a career as a blacksmith.

DeQueen, where James began his journey, is the knife-making capital of the world –

there are more Master Smiths in the area than any other part of the world.

James is a member of the American Bladesmith Society, a non-profit dedicated to teaching and promoting the art of the forged blade. “I was lucky enough to apprentice under a world-renowned Master Smith, Jerry Fisk. I found a talent and a love for knives,” he said.

When James came to Jonesboro to get his education, he was also fortunate to be able bring his equipment and his craft to Northeast Arkansas. He has showcased his work at local art shows, but his impressive works of art can also be found in some museums including the Arkansas Historic Museum.

Small hunting knives are among his favorite to make, but detail and beauty

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are in every piece. Looking at his work, it's easy to see why it can be called art – though they are, of course, functional too.

When asked about the function of his prized piece, the Quillion Dagger, James quipped, "You can get olives out of jars, spiders out of corners."

Or the bad guys out of your house.

The Quillion Dagger is based off old European designs James shared, and because of its complexity, it is what made and then presented to a panel of judges to receive Master Smith rating. Currently a Journeyman Smith – one of the youngest in the world – James hopes to become a Master Smith next year.

An art form to be sure, James would encourage anyone interested in the craft to start small, but that the most important thing is to find a knife maker to learn from.

"The hands-on is the most important part of this craft," James said. Blacksmithing is a labor-intensive art and doing is the greatest form of learning. To learn more or express your interest in learning, check out Carlyle Knives on Facebook or Instagram, or reach out to James directly.

**MORE INFO**  
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# EAT - SHOP - STAY

## Road Trip Around NEA

BY LINDSEY MILLS

Good food, fun shopping, and adventure can all be found right here in NEA and right down the road in our neighboring towns. Especially now, when traveling longer distances is difficult to say the least, we want to encourage you to explore more of what our area has to offer. A riverside cabin getaway in Arkansas? Less than two hours away. A boutique hotel and a thriving downtown featuring Arkansas' oldest cinemascope theater and the cutest coffee shop where you'll want to spend your entire day?

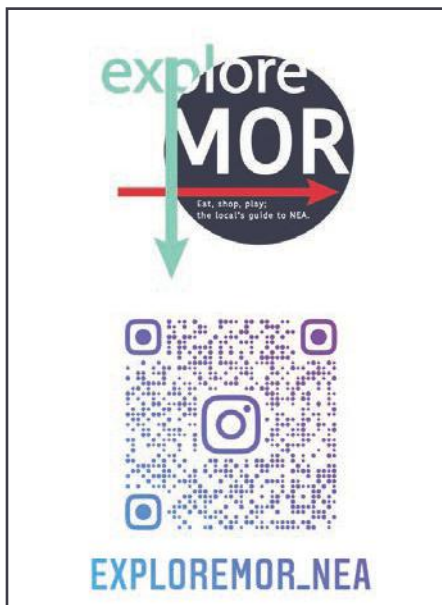
Barely over an hour away from Jonesboro. A classic, "real" bed and breakfast inn in a town full of history – just down the road. And a city teeming with culture, music, food, craft cocktails and good beer; um, it could take forever to truly experience it all and it's a short drive over the Arkansas-Tennessee Border.

So often when wanderlust bites we might feel the need to purchase a plane ticket or start plotting a route across the country, but perhaps a road trip around NEA could

fill us with everything we're looking for.

We thought we'd test it out to see.

We took a road trip in a ring around Northeast Arkansas in search of good food, unique shops, outdoor adventure and night life, and of course, the best places to stay after wandering just far enough away from our own beds. We challenge you to visit these stops or plan your own NEA road trip.



## »»» HARDY, AR

First, we encourage you to head North. Hardy, Arkansas, is perhaps most well-known for its location along the beautiful Spring River. We've made more than a few trips ourselves to this summer destination, but on our road trip to this little town in NEA, we discovered more about the gems within.



## EAT IN HARDY

The Spring River Draft House and Grill offers TWENTY-FIVE taps, outdoor dining (no indoor seating for now because of COVID), and a simple menu.

"I hate going to places and being overwhelmed by the menu thinking 'there's no way they're good at ALL of this,'" said owner, Rhonda. "We wanted to keep our menu simple so we can focus on being good at a few things."

And good they are. Order the most popular Steak Sandwich and ask for extra cheese with a side of waffle fries – perfectly seasoned and fried to a golden, crispy perfection. Or, opt for the Chef's Salad: crispy chicken, tomatoes, boiled eggs, pickled okra, cucumbers, onion and cheese atop a mountain of lettuce.

Pair your meal with any of a number of craft beers, Black Apple Hibiscus Cider on tap, or a wine cooler – like the Strawberry Pina Colada Wine Slushie.

## ● SPRING RIVER DRAFTHOUSE

SPRINGRIVER-DRAFTHOUSE.BUSINESS.SITE  
4201 US-62 HARDY, AR 72542  
(870) 856-6004

## SHOP IN HARDY

Downtown Hardy is home to, in our opinion, some of the best shopping in Northeast Arkansas. The downtown strip boasts a collection of antique stores, clothing and home décor boutiques, a country store featuring Amish jams and breads, and so much MOR(e).

Visit Kozey's Country Store for a fresh baked loaf of zucchini bread or stock up on an assortment of your favorite sauces and jellies.

For those who love the mid-century modern style, you might be surprised there is a store right here in Northeast Arkansas that caters to this clean, classy look: The Brass Cat on Main Street in Hardy.

For women's style ranging from everyday casual to evening gowns and wedding dresses, check out 128 Boutique Gallery. The consignment store is full of fashion, jewelry and décor.

Gals, visit Jade's Boutique to bring something new to your wardrobe and check out Jade's Home and Décor for a tasteful selection of pottery, candles, glassware, etc.



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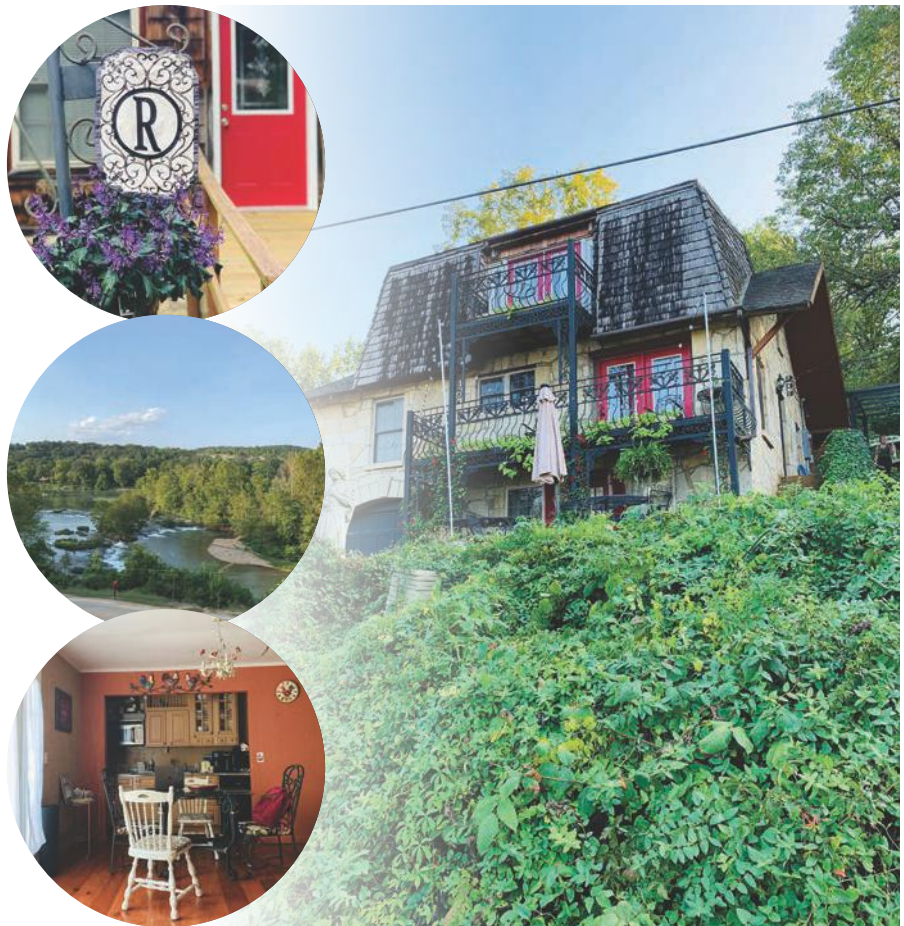
## STAY IN HARDY

The perfect place to stay in Hardy sits just across the river from the bustling downtown: Riverview Falls Resort. The resort overlooks cascading falls and is right down the road from a park with access to the water. Charming décor and multiple spots to enjoy a lovely day outside, Riverview Falls offers the perfect place for a couple's getaway or a family vacation.

Each private suite offers a kitchen or kitchenette and a private balcony overlooking the river, in addition to a unique style. Book the lodge for a family vacation, the Chateau for a weekend with friends, or the River Suite for a romantic getaway. Or, perhaps reserve the whole property for a whimsical setting to an intimate wedding.

### RIVERVIEW FALLS

RIVERVIEWFALLS.COM  
133 EAST RIVER VIEW RD.  
HARDY, AR 72542  
(870) 404-1601



## >>> BATESVILLE, AR

Drive south toward possibly the cutest strip of Downtown eating, shopping, and playing in Northeast Arkansas. In the past several years, this small town has blossomed. We got the full tour: Maxfield Park, a mural walk, and the restored Melba Theater.

Maxfield Park, conveniently located behind the boutique hotel on Main Street, was designed by the talented Danny Dozier and features a playground, green lawn, stage and waterfall. The concept of the stones surrounding the park are the genius of Danny and a traditional stone mason: The excavated stone came from a historic building that once stood on the property.

The land was donated by Anne Strahl (maiden name Maxfield) and had been in the family for over 100 years before it was gifted to the city with the agreement it would be turned into a park.

Look around and you'll see all kinds of salvaged material, like the bricks in the

fence posts and in various other locations that used to be part of the city's public pool. "I've always loved using resources, what I can find, and do something with it," said Danny.

While we talked, a young family hung out in the park and the small children played. What a reward for Danny to see others enjoying what once was only an idea in his head.

The things to do in Downtown Batesville don't stop at Maxfield Park. Take a mural tour using the guide provided by the Batesville Area Arts Council and stroll around the colorful, revitalized area. Visit the Apple Blossom created to honor the Arkansas State Flower and represent the blossoming of Downtown Batesville. Admire the restored Coca-Cola Mural in all its vivid beauty. Stroll past the food truck lot and the "Be the Light" mural on the side of Siloe clothing store. Continue on to see the postcard style Batesville script, the Unity mural painted on the back of the library (by our tour guide and local art professor at Lyon College, Dustyn Bork) and many more.

If visiting Batesville, a must stop for entertainment is The Melba Theatre.



Originally constructed as a mercantile store, The Melba was remodeled in the art deco style and opened in 1940 as one of Arkansas' first cinemascope theaters. Though Downtown Batesville wasn't immune to the decline of downtown districts in the '70s and '80s, in 2015 the theater was bought by its current owners who, with the help of a hardworking community, restored The Melba to its present-day glory.

The entire downtown business district in Batesville is on the National Registry of Historic Places and we encourage you to visit to eat, shop, and stay.

A HUGE shoutout to Main Street Batesville for planning our trip to this incredible town. A group of people saw something worth saving in this historic downtown; they took what could have been forgotten and breathed life, color, and inspiration into it. Many downtowns in our country are being forgotten. But it only takes a little creativity and a lot of hard work to bring them to their full glory and potential. For inspiration, we recommend visiting Downtown Batesville.

## EAT IN BATESVILLE

To start your morning if you do stay the night in Downtown Batesville – or if you just happen to get there bright and early – visit The Pinto Coffee and Comida for a caffeine fix and yummy bites. You're going to need your fuel for exploring the town, so order a coffee to accompany Taco de Papas or the Burnside breakfast sandwich.

Indoor seating is closed (for now, because COVID) but that's okay because this precious local coffee shop has an outdoor patio that is as cozy as it is beautiful. Settle in to work or kick back on the weekend if you take this NEA road trip with friends.

### ● THE PINTO COFFEE AND COMIDA

THEPINTOCOFFEE.COM  
100 E MAIN ST.  
BATESVILLE, AR 72501  
(870) 569-8064



When it's time for lunch or dinner, we suggest visiting Stella's Brick Oven Pizzeria and Bistro. The atmosphere is as perfect as the food at this new restaurant in Downtown Batesville.

Don't hold back – we sure didn't. First order up a few apps for the table, especially if served with their hot honey. Be sure to try their authentic, fresh Neapolitan Pizza. The dough is made in house daily with flour from Italy.

Owners Laurie and Douglas Gottschalk are sure to wow you with their impressive menu of salads, sandwiches and pizza, but don't consider your experience complete until you've tried the beautiful and mouth-watering gelato or a slice of homemade cheesecake.

### ● STELLA'S BRICK OVEN

STELLASBRICKOVEN.COM  
250 E MAIN ST.  
BATESVILLE, AR 72501  
(870) 805-3045

## SHOP IN BATESVILLE

Numerous options to shop are available in Downtown Batesville including The Main Attire, a boutique and salon, on Main Street featuring a bright and airy space directly under The Royal on Main. Stroll around to other shops like Etta's Attic and the new Maxfield's Antiques & Apparel.



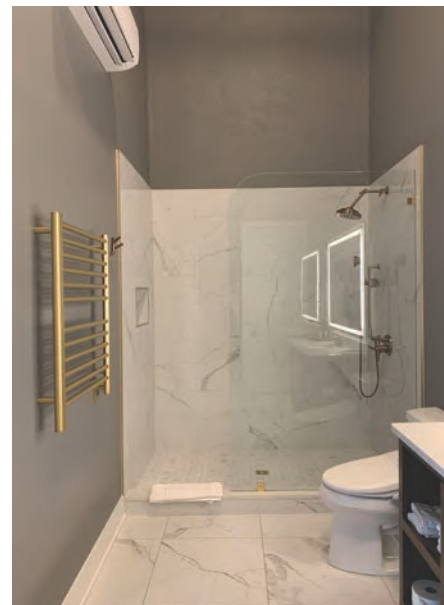
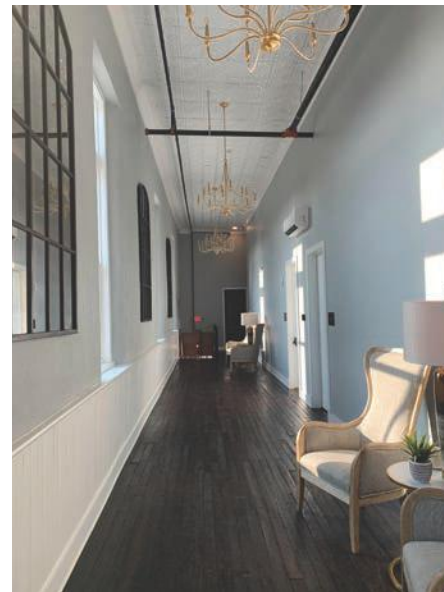
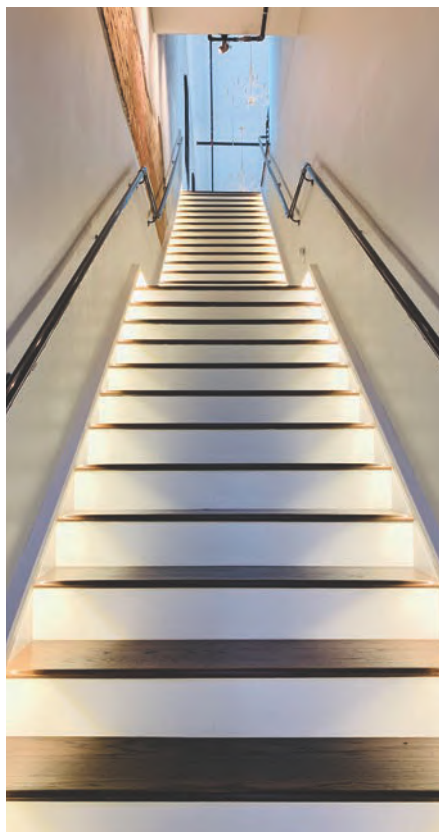
## STAY IN BATESVILLE

Feel big city fancy while staying in a quiet and relaxing small town in NEA? Yes, PLEASE!

Staying at The Royal on Main in Downtown Batesville feels like treating yourself to an expensive getaway – only it's affordable AND more charming than most luxury stays. The building has been restored and remodeled, so it holds its original charm with modern day amenities. The high ceilings and center-of-the-room fireplace are likely to be the first things you notice, but more glamour will surprise you as you explore the space: A towel warmer, tiled shower, and a TV in the mirror are just a few of the things that make The Royal on Main spectacular.

### ● THE ROYAL ON MAIN

THEROYALONMAIN.COM  
187 E MAIN ST.  
BATESVILLE, AR 72501  
(662) 775-0412



## >>> HELENA

Continue south, but take your travels east and head toward a small town teeming with history. Helena is home to an abundance of stories, and while we didn't have quite enough time to hear them all, we kept meeting people who shared stories and extended kindness making us want to stick around longer – you probably would want to, too.



## EAT IN HELENA

One of the greatest things about being an adult is forgoing rules like “dessert after dinner.” We hit up Helena’s new ice cream shop, My Sweets Paradise, before heading to dinner because, well, ice cream should be made a priority. The shop serves up Tillamook ice cream all the way from Oregon in the beloved Bailey Mae’s building Downtown Helena. The waffle cones are made fresh daily and in the morning coffee and baked goods will help you start your day right.

“I want people to have an experience,” said co-owner of the sweet shop, Sharon Anthony. “I connect with ice cream because of my childhood. My dad, he was always so big and strong, but he would be eating ice cream out of a bowl with cookies.”

I’m confident that inside all of us – no matter how old, no matter what we look like on the outside, no matter our backgrounds – there is a soft, ice-cream-loving, vulnerable soul. Walking into this space will have you connecting with those who accompany you and those you meet inside this sugary paradise.

### ● MY SWEETS PARADISE

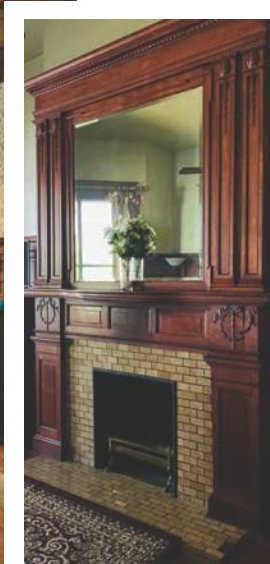
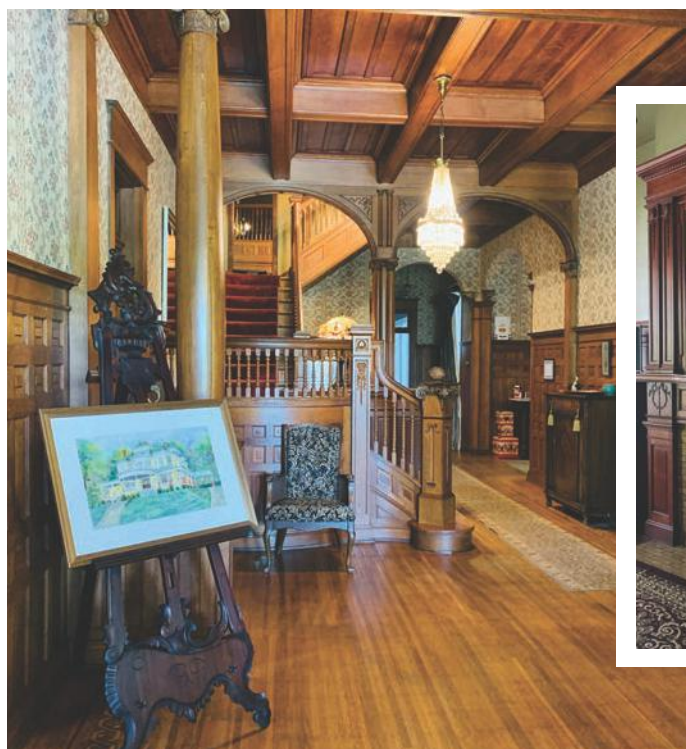
MYSWEETSPARADISE.COM  
209 RIGHTOR ST.  
HELENA, AR THE 72342  
(501) 800-4237

For dinner, we recommend visiting the Helena Tavern owned by Helena local, Emily Cleary, and her husband John. Though the couple has lived in L.A. and Hawaii, something about Emily’s hometown pulled them back to Arkansas. “I said I was never coming back,” Emily laughed. “But once I did, the history here, it’s like reading a really good book.”

One popular piece of Helena’s history is its King Biscuit Blues Festival. The King Biscuit Hour is the longest running radio show ever, and the festival founded by Bubba Sullivan attracts blues lovers from all over every year. Hang out in the Helena Tavern, and you just might run into the legend himself.

### ● HELENA TAVERN

233 CHERRY ST.  
HELENA, AR 72342  
(870) 228-1301



## STAY IN HELENA

The Edwardian Inn might be the most unique stay in all of Arkansas and it is most certain to wow every visitor that walks through its beautiful doors. Built in 1904 and listed on the National Register of Historic Places, the building was renovated as a bed and breakfast in 1983. The current owner, Robert, has kept the inn in good repair – and he makes a delicious Eggs Benedict. Wandering around The Edwardian Inn is nothing short of enchanting; stunning craftsmanship at every turn and elegant furniture to match the sheer beauty of this historic home.

A wrap around porch and three stories make up the structure originally known as the William A. Short House.

### ● EDWARDIAN INN

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## MEMPHIS

### EAT IN MEMPHIS

The Home of the Blues is home to tons of good food, too. Too many options to list in this article, but for those who love the city, nothing beats sneaking away to Memphis for an evening or two. Our top recommendations include the Global Café at the Crosstown Concourse (where you can also shop and play!), the Slider Inn for delicious slider sandwiches (including vegan options), and Hustle & Dough for coffee and brunch.

### SHOP IN MEMPHIS

Whether you're looking to browse or buy, some of the best shopping in Memphis to while away an afternoon can be found in the Cooper-Young area. Shops like the popular Urban Outfitters and a vintage style shop, Fox + Cat Vintage, can be found in the same strip. Book-lovers can spend all day browsing Burke's Books. And soap is a necessity, so why not shop at the local Buff City? All in walking distance of food and drinks.

### STAY IN MEMPHIS

Walking into Hotel Indigo is dazzling: Everything from the jukebox in the lobby to the old school radios behind the check-in desk and the retro style furniture help to make the place exciting and different. The hotel feels clean and fun, and the music theme extends to the rooms.

With spacious tiled showers and comfy beds, it might be tempting to stay in the room – but then you'd miss out on the pool! The colorful touches of this modern hotel extend to the walls that can be seen through floor to ceiling windows on opposite sides of the pool and a panoramic view of the sky.

We recommend a night on the town but when you're ready to call it a night, the hotel has a stocked snack bar – not to mention soft sheets and dark window shades that will make it easy to get the beauty sleep you deserve. We slept a whopping ten hours at Hotel Indigo as we reached the end of our road trip adventure.

### HOTEL INDIGO

IHG.COM  
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MEMPHIS, TN 38103  
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# Family Fall Day Trips

BY DEBBIE HAAS

There is a crisp breeze in the air and the trees have changed into their jackets of amber, orange, yellow and red. It is time to gather the family, jump in the car and head to the country. Go play in a corn maze, ride in a hay wagon, drink some apple cider, pet some farm animals, and pick out the perfect pumpkin. Northeast Arkansas has several options for you to enjoy.

## JACKSON FARM

Located a short drive from Jonesboro at 2798 Highway 117, in Black Rock, there are 40 different activities to do. They have a Candyland Corn Maze, 90-foot Hay Slide, Pig Races, a Jumping Pillow, and a Cow Train as well as favorites like Hayrides, and Pumpkin Picking. You can take home a small souvenir from their general store or grab a snack from the concession stand. They will be open every weekend through November 1.

Bill Jackson said Jackson Farm has grown over the past few years. The Candyland-themed corn maze offers an added adventure where kids can find characters in the maze, take their picture, and earn a prize. Grab your family and head out to Black Rock to visit with Bill and Donna Jackson and their family.

[thejacksonsfarm.com](http://thejacksonsfarm.com)



## SCATTER CREEK BERRIES

Scatter Creek Berries and Produce began in 2012 with a simple idea to grow some berries.

Nestled into the shadow of Crowley's Ridge in Greene County, Scatter Creek offers over two miles of thornless blackberries, seasonal strawberries and a pumpkin patch. With their main goal to provide a family and kid friendly experience to their guests, Scatter Creek focuses on the "pick your own" side of the business, but you can also find them at the ASU Regional Farmers Market – and when back up running, the Paragould Farmers Market.

To pick your own, you'll find Scatter Creek at 44 Greene 145 RD in Paragould.

As of September 26 the farm is open for pumpkin picking.

[scattercreekberries.com](http://scattercreekberries.com)

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## PEEBLES FARM

Named as one of the top five of "The South's Best Pumpkin Patches" by Southern Living, Peebles Farm will be open on weekends through October 31. They have a 20-acre corn maze, Hamster Wheel Races, Kiddie Zip-lines, play areas, sunflower fields, and cotton fields. There is a concession stand and general store if you get hungry. They will be showing outdoor movies and having bonfires on Saturday nights in October.

Katie Peebles said the 60-acre pumpkin patch will be open daily. So, head down to 100 Woodruff 249 between Augusta and McCrory, off of Hwy 64, to choose your pumpkin or plan a weekend day full of fun. [www.peeblesfarm.com](http://www.peeblesfarm.com)



## PUMPKIN HOLLOW

With 50 attractions available to visitors, there is something for everyone to do at Pumpkin Hollow. Located at 671 County Highway 336 in Piggott, Pumpkin Hollow will be open through October 31 for all the daytime family attractions like Pony Rides, the Friendly Forest, Gourd Trellis, Corn Maze, Pig Scramble, Pond Slide, and Country Bumpkin Playground among others.

Ellen Dalton, owner, stated, "Families will enjoy all the many activities that we have, especially the new big tree house in the Friendly Forest."

From now through October 31, Horror in the Hollow, the scary nighttime attraction, will be open for older kids and adults. Misery Manor, Bubba's Butcher Barn, and the Forest of Fright are just a few of the ghastly attractions waiting for you. Head to Piggott for family activities throughout the day or get your scare on after dark at Pumpkin Hollow. [www.pumpkinhollow.com](http://www.pumpkinhollow.com)

com

## MOOTOWN

Conveniently located between Jonesboro and Brookland off Hwy 49, at 498 Craighead 768, you will find Mootown, a farm run by the Jerry Whitten family. It boasts two corn mazes, a u-pick pumpkin patch, scavenger hunts, and a gorgeous sunflower field ready for fall picture opportunities. Family-fun activities abound with face painting, corn maze, carnival games, a corn cannon, petting zoo, outdoor concerts, and good food.

Mootown will be open through Halloween. They can host parties and have bonfires for small groups this fall. Check out their website for more information about booking a party or purchasing tickets for a 2-hour time slot for your group to have the farm activities to yourself. [www.mootown.net](http://www.mootown.net)

These farms are affiliated with the Arkansas Agritourism Association and they are adhering to the CDC guidelines for your safety. To find more family friendly farms around the great state of Arkansas, check out their website. [www.aragritourism.com](http://www.aragritourism.com)



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# IT'S NOT IN YOUR HEAD

BY JENNY BROWN

With the technology, research, and education available in today's society, many have made it a life goal to eliminate the stigma that surrounds mental illness. It is a common misconception that when a person's symptoms can't be seen with the eyes or aren't considered "physical pain" that those symptoms should be overlooked or dealt with alone. Sometimes the mentality of "that's just in your head" isn't necessarily true.

Jeremy Wooldridge, Clinical Supervisor at the Paragould and Piggott Families, Inc. offices, is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker. In his position, he has education and experience observing and treating common mental illnesses in adults and children.

Wooldridge stated that some of the most common diagnoses in adults seen in his office include depression, anxiety, bipolar disorder, and eating disorders. Many local therapists have experience in treating all of the symptoms that are associated with these diagnoses, and St. Bernards Regional Medical Center even has a specialist on staff to help with various eating disorders. So, how do you know if the symptoms you are experiencing might qualify as one of these common diagnoses?

Wooldridge says you can self-screen by asking yourself if any of these symptoms

sound familiar:

- Is your everyday life affected by your symptoms?
- Do you have nervousness, fear, suspicion of others?
- Do you feel disconnected to yourself or your surroundings?
- Are you apathetic; do you have a loss of desire for things that used to matter?
- Do you have problems with your thinking? Maybe you have found yourself to have an inability to concentrate or your thought patterns seem illogical.
- Have you withdrawn from your family or friends?
- Do you have rapid or intense mood changes?
- Have your sleeping patterns or appetite changed?
- Do you have feelings of hopelessness, thoughts that things can't possibly get any better?
- Have you been behaving in risky or uncharacteristic ways that are out of your norm?
- Do you have thoughts of harming yourself or others?

Not everyone is the same, and symptoms can vary from person to person. You don't have to have all of these symptoms in order to have a diagnosis that could be treated with various medicinal or therapeutic interventions. If any of these symptoms are seeming to affect your everyday life,



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How do you get started? What is the first step?

Initially, a great first step is to talk to your doctor. Primary Care Physicians can help you understand some of the reasons you may be experiencing certain symptoms, and interventions they could provide might look like medication or a referral to an outside counseling agency such as Families, Inc.

Mental Health therapy is offered by several local agencies, Families, Inc. being one of many. Wooldridge stated if you were to come to Families, Inc. either by self-referral or by referral from your Primary Care Physician, you would have access to a highly trained treatment team. Every day their treatment team has staff meetings to discuss the best approach for each client to be seen that day. Their treatment team includes psychiatrists, nurse practitioners, therapists, and Qualified Behavioral Health Providers.

What if you are concerned that your child might be exhibiting symptoms that give you cause for concern? Wooldridge and his team see children as well as adults, and he says his experiences and observations with children are in some ways the same and in some ways very different.

The most common diagnoses Wooldridge has seen in children include Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD), Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Oppositional Defiance Disorder (ODD), Anxiety, and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD).

Signs and symptoms of mental illness in children could include:

- problems at school or home - possibly including outbursts and/or anger issues
- hitting/bullying others
- frequent intense mood swings such as fear or anger
- difficulty concentrating
- lack of motivation for school work or chores around the house
- isolation from family or friends
- self-harm such as cutting, hitting oneself, grabbing or pinching their own skin
- changes in eating or sleeping habits
- neglect of appearance and hygiene

In Wooldridge's experiences, many children feel a sense they've lost control, and they don't understand how to regain that control or regulate their feelings and emotions. The first step in getting help for a child is to reach out to the child's Professional School Counselor. Every school in our area has school counselors in grades kindergarten through high school that are educated in helping children with various problems. Once a school counselor has identified certain behaviors in a child, that counselor may discuss their observations with the parent and refer that child for outside counseling services. Once in therapy, a child will receive a diagnosis and, in most offices, such as Families, Inc., they will be treated by the same treatment team that would work with adults. Therefore, children also have access to psychiatrists, nurse practitioners, therapists, and Qualified Behavioral Health Providers.

Wooldridge said the ultimate goal at Families, Inc. is to combat the stigma of

being treated by their treatment team for mental illness. They choose to combat that stigma by treating their clients with the respect they deserve regardless of their situation. They also try to help meet a client's basic needs because they believe that if a person's basic needs are not met, their deeper mental and emotional healing cannot take place. The goal with each individual client is for him or her to reach the highest level of functioning that is possible. This looks different for every person.

Wooldridge also wants the public to know there are some adjustment period diagnoses for things like grief and trauma. This doesn't mean a person would be considered to have a mental illness, but sometimes it is appropriate to be diagnosed with an adjustment period disorder for six months, or approximately six to twelve sessions, to gain coping skills that could help someone deal with loss or change. No one is unsusceptible. Vulnerability is key. A person can only benefit from therapy if they are willing to be honest with themselves and put in the effort to find wellness for themselves and their family members. Wooldridge and his staff want the community to know there is help out there. Don't suffer in silence; it's not just in your head.

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# THERE FOR YOU, *Now and Always*

BY RICHARD BRUMMETT

Before the COVID-19 pandemic hit, Mandy Young and the staff at the NEA Baptist Center for Good Grief had already begun the process of teletherapy sessions -- providing counseling through video conferencing. When the pandemic closed the hospital campus to visitors, NEA was prepared to keep right on going with the much-needed services.

NEA BAPTIST CENTER FOR GOOD GRIEF ADAPTS TO CURRENT CIRCUMSTANCES TO CONTINUE PROVIDING FREE RESOURCES AND COUNSELING TO THOSE IN NEED.

"I had already gotten certified and our goal was to implement the program by the end of the year," said Young, Clinical Director at the Jonesboro-based center which opened in 2017 as an expansion of the Kemmons Wilson Family Center for Good Grief. The NEA Baptist Center



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provides free services under the NEA Baptist Charitable Foundation, including grief counseling, specialized support groups, camps and workshops. And more. "When COVID hit it made us get ready instantly; we were fully up and running in two weeks.

"We have people who travel many, many miles for our services," Young said. "For out of state people, like in parts of Missouri, this is a big help. Mid-America Transplant out of St. Louis covers Northeast Arkansas and partners with us, and donor families still need support after a loss. For people like that or even closer to our area like Salem or Newport or Wynne or Marvell, it's not always feasible to have their counseling sessions in this new era. We can now offer the telesessions and it has been fantastic.

"Sometimes we're meeting people for the first time through them but the phones have been ringing off the wall since we started. Everything is different because of COVID -- funerals, not being able to be bedside for a loved one who is hospitalized ... it has really impacted grief and isolated people in their homes. A lot don't go to church now, have no socialization. This way, we see and hear them and they see

and hear us, without physically touching. But they know they are not alone; they have us."

Young said many of the clients, especially the elderly, are prone to exchanging a hug during or at the end of a session and the personal aspect has disappeared for the moment, but the heartfelt verbal contributions are still possible with the teletherapy. "It allows us to reach out to so many more people, in so many directions," she said. "For the elderly, it's ideal for the ones who physically are not able to get out of the home, and for the ones who have the inability to, or are just scared to, drive.

"We serve people of all ages and it means we have to adapt. For instance, with play therapy for the younger ones we have to be kind of creative. It might become Show and Tell with each other."

Young said being "ahead of the curve" when the pandemic hit kept them from being unprepared, as many centers were, and the growing success of the venture allows them to "reach out in any direction, absolutely. In addition to our Jonesboro campus we have ones in Midtown Memphis and in Collierville and we can now collectively provide services

better than ever before. We can collaborate without driving."

Young said anyone with questions about the new service or anyone wanting to participate should call the main NEA Baptist number at 870-936-7719. "No referral is needed, no insurance," she said. "Everything we do is absolutely free thanks to donations and grants."

The Center for Good Grief is funded through the foundation, memorials, honorariums and generous gifts from the community and NEA Baptist employees.

**MORE INFO**  
[BAPTISTGRIEFCENTERS.ORG](http://BAPTISTGRIEFCENTERS.ORG)

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# PARENTING WITH STEP CHILDREN



BY LAURA HODGES LPC, NCC

Tips and guidance for parenting in a blended family – submitted by Christian Counseling. Read more on their blog: [christiancounselingofarkansas.com](http://christiancounselingofarkansas.com)

**1** Parenting 101 is that you and your spouse are on the same page and give a united front toward your teen or tween. If you disagree with each other attempt to iron out your differences before you present guidelines to your child.

**2** The biological parent should usually give the rules and discipline. The child will always love the natural parent, but will possibly resent, complain, and accuse the step parent who tries to implement rules.

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3 Put the marriage first, not necessarily each of you first. Think about what is best for the marriage rather than what is best for you individually.

4 The biological parent is usually more sensitive to the biological child so listen to his/her ideas because he or she knows the child's heart. That being said, the biological parent can also be more easily manipulated and teens are unbelievably successful in manipulation. Yes, they will lie, and yes, they will say things in order to hurt and/or guilt the parent.

5 Both parents should agree on the rules, but depending upon the situation only the biological parent needs to discuss without wavering to the teen what the rules are.

6 Manipulation is the biggest issue that teens do very well.

7 It is scary to think you may lose the relationship with your teen or tween for a short time, but sticking to what is best for them is really loving them more than you love yourself.

8 Every parent fears their child may commit suicide or hurt themselves if

they don't have the relationship or don't do as the child wants. However, enabling is NOT helping. You are prolonging negative behaviors that will increase vs. decrease.

9 Sometimes kids have to hurt and have the consequences they need. It's more than rules. It's them learning that their actions do have consequences and because you love them you will implement and follow through.

10 Yelling and threatening do not work. Only sticking to the plan and being consistent works.

Every child and every situation is different and the above tools can be tweaked. If you feel like your child/young adult is suicidal in any way or has a plan, please get help right away.

The relationship with your child is important and developing that relationship is a great goal. However, it does not mean you give up consequences or do not follow through on disciplinary actions. Finding ways to connect with your young adult is crucial for a good lasting relationship. Start when they are young.

If you have a specific problem and you would like to set up an appointment, call Christian Counseling of Arkansas at 870-935-4102. Remember these are only guidelines as your situation, age of the child and circumstances may warrant different actions. At CCA we also can help with Marital Issues, Depression, Anxiety, Grief, Stress, Eating Disorders and more.

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# COPING WITH COVID

AND THE ROLE IT MIGHT BE PLAYING ON OUR MENTAL HEALTH

WITH DR. DANA WATSON  
FROM THE FAMILIES, INC. BLOG



A global pandemic has almost certainly added a bit of fear and anxiety to our already busy and sometimes stressful lives -- the worry surrounding catching COVID, the emotional impact associated with less socialization, and not to mention the loss of jobs. Mental health is something we all have to work at, just as we work on our physical health, and during difficult times it can be even harder to put in the effort it takes to keep our mental state in the right place.

Families, Inc. psychologist Dr. Dana Watson contributes to the Families, Inc. Blog and we consulted her wise and professional words for some tips on addressing mental health – especially right now.

“I’ve said this before, and it’s worth reinforcing — people who are already battling depression or anxiety, or trauma-related issues can certainly be more vulnerable because of this stress. In so many cases, these events are triggering the same feelings and experiences they may

have had as children — food insecurity, losing homes and livelihoods, loved ones dying ... It can be much worse for people who have already endured past trauma.

“You know, last week I encouraged everyone who has children in the home to be mindful of what we are modeling for our children. We want to model that you can face adversity and challenges and still find healthy ways to cope through it, that we can find power and hope and relief in what we do. But those who live

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alone or who don't have children should also be mindful of how they're doing and what's going on for them. I still maintain the single best thing all of us can do is to take time every day to consider what we need — emotionally and physically — to get through the day and to allow ourselves to experience and process our emotions as they come. Sometimes it's waves of grief and despair. Sometimes it's full out panic. Sometimes we are just so numb we can't feel. All of it is to be expected, because we are humans and we are in a really difficult time right now."

What are some things that can help us keep our mental state healthy?

"Just like we are not experiencing this in the exact same way, we won't cope through it exactly the same way either. There are definitely common ways we can all feel better and take care of ourselves, like staying emotionally connected to others, good eating, good sleeping and gratitude. But ultimately, we all have to find the combination that works for us.

"And you are so right on when you discuss exercise. And it doesn't have to be power lifting or hardcore training or marathon runs. Even short walks, washing your car,

riding a bike, yoga, exercise videos from YouTube or dancing in your living room — which is one of my personal favorites because I'm about as amazing at it as you would think a 40-year-old lady would be — are super energizing to your mood and your body. Your brain gets bathed in endorphins, blood and oxygen is pumping throughout your body, you have a sense that you've done something fun and healthy for yourself and you can get out of a funk real fast. Research shows that about an hour a few times a week is optimal, but if you've only got time for two 1990s' hair band songs today, then give it your all.

"For a lot of us, we need some small goals and at least a little activity during the day. I spoke before that our family has a daily schedule — because knowing what to expect can reduce chaos and increase safety — and that includes an academic, physical, emotional and creativity goal. Each one takes about 20-30 minutes, but it breaks up the monotony and keeps us moving forward. Now, we have plenty of eat-cereal-for-dinner and watch-a-movie-in-bed days, too. We do a lot of Facetime to stay connected to family. And don't tell my preacher, but I decompress with a glass of wine and friends over Facetime on occasion.

"But in all seriousness, for some people, it's important to remember that survival is the daily goal. Just getting through the day will be a success. We joked about me calling my mom and crying, although I know so many people understand how awesome that can feel. But that's what we want people to do. To develop healthy support networks and to reach out for comfort and reassurance so that then they can reset and get back into their lives."

For those in need of professional help:

"If you are struggling to keep your head above water, it is easier now than it has ever been to get professional help. We do the whole thing from intake to doctor's visits over the phone or by Facetime or one of those other visual platforms. You do not have to continue to suffer or fall further down the rabbit hole of depression. You are not alone in this and people all over the world are dealing with the consequences of this distressing time. Your life and your survival are important and there is help. To me, therapy is one of the most effective and healing types of self-care. It really works."

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# HELPING YOU BE *the Best You*

BY LINDSEY MILLS

There are many ways to take care of one's mental health, and for locally owned and operated therapist office, The Best of You, targeting exactly what will work best for each patient is the end goal.

The private practice clinic has three therapists – Morganne Brown, LCSW, Jessica Richardson, LCSW and Matthew Richardson, LPC. Each has their specialty, and each understands approaching mental health needs an individualized approach – making teamwork the group's core strength.

Matthew is an ordained minister and Jessica is a certified yoga instructor – just a few ways the business tackles different aspects of mental health. Whether it's spiritual, physical, emotional or a combination of factors affecting a patient, the professionals at The Best of You are ready to offer an individualized approach that pinpoints each patient's needs.

"Our goal is to address everything that affects our mental health," said Morganne. "We offer true integrative care."

The friends and co-workers making up the business have each worked (and still do) in community care, but decided they wanted to create something a little different. The Best of You is essentially a smaller, more private setting that focuses on everything that makes you, you. The clinic then individualizes the steps for taking care of you and your mental health.

From the very first meeting, the therapists work to figure out what the patient needs and how they can help them get access to that – whether it's a specific team member, a combination of services, or even referring the patient elsewhere.

"It's like any relationship," said Morganne. "Sometimes it's just not a good match and that's okay. It's okay if you don't mesh with the first therapist you meet."

Whatever you or a loved one might be struggling with, The Best of You wants to help fill the gaps so you can be the best version of you there is.

"I tell so many people this but it's just as important as other aspects [of health]," Morganne explained. "Despite the stigma, it is not any different than going to the doctor when you're sick and having someone address your needs. And sometimes having someone outside of the situation is helpful."

The Best of You is open to helping anyone and everyone. Morganne hopes they can eventually focus on moms and those dealing with postpartum. The clinic is LGBTQ allied and friendly.

For more information visit [bestofyounea.com](http://bestofyounea.com) or give them a call at (870) 573-8037.

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Morganne Brown, LCSW, PMH-C



Matthew Richardson, LPC



Jessica Richardson, LPC

*"What mental health needs is more sunlight, more candor, and more unashamed conversation."  
-Glenn Close*

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# A-STATE ALUMNI RECOGNIZED

The Arkansas State University Alumni Association and Student Philanthropy Council teamed up to announce the latest recipients of the Emerging Young Alumni Award. Individuals designated as Emerging Young Alumni are those who, through their personal participation, have made significant contributions to A-State, their profession or their community.

A few of the recipients include:

## GRAYCEN COLBERT BIGGER

Bigger, an economic developer and communications specialist, serves as Executive Director of the Northeast Arkansas Regional Intermodal Authority (NEARIA) and assistant vice president

of community development for Farmers and Merchants Bank. Through NEARIA, she provides technical assistance to communities, businesses and non-profit organizations, helps build mutually beneficial public-private partnerships, and leverages arts and culture to spur economic growth and improve quality of life in a multi-county area.

She is a White Riley Peterson Fellow and was recently named to the Arkansas Business' 40 under 40 recognition program. Bigger holds a Master of Arts in art business from Sotheby's Institute of Art in New York as well as bachelor's degrees in photojournalism and the history of art from Arkansas State in 2009. Bigger and her husband, A-State alumnus Alex Bigger, reside in Pocahontas.



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## AUSTIN SANDY

Sandy, who earned a Bachelor of Fine Arts in graphic design in 2016, began his career as digital marketing manager at KAIT-TV. Selected for Raycom Media's marketing leadership program, he became audience development and brand manager at KLTN 7 in Tyler, Texas, where he has overseen news promotions since 2018. He also is vice president of marketing for Tyler Civic Theatre Center, a board member for the East Texas chapter of the American Advertising Federation, and a member of the Lone Star EMMY chapter.

Earlier, Sandy was on the boards of Camp Quality AR and the NEA chapter of American Advertising Federation, and was involved in the Foundation of Arts. He has received advertising recognitions from the Arkansas Broadcasters Association and American Advertising Federation. A member of The Sound of the Natural State marching band for five seasons, he was drum major for four. He served as a Chancellor's Ambassador and was in the Honors College.



SANDY



WATKINS

## ADAM WATKINS

A 2006 A-State graduate with a Bachelor of Social Work degree, Watkins advanced his career preparation with a Master of Social Work degree in 2011. He currently serves as Executive Director of the Northeast Arkansas Regional AIDS Network (NARAN), with which he has been associated for 15 years. Through this organization he has worked for several years with A-State's Department of Social Work to make arrangements for a student internship opportunity. He also serves on the department's Community Advisory Board, and is board chair for the campus Wesley Foundation.

In his spare time the native of Jonesboro plays percussion instruments with his church's praise band, and he is an avid fan of Red Wolves sports. His wife Laura and his parents, Jeffrey and Gay Watkins, are all A-State alumni.



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When Lauren Kitchen was barely more than a year old, her mother began noticing a regression in her daughter's skills. At Lauren's two-year checkup, the Jonesboro family received a diagnosis of Rett syndrome.

"She began wringing her hands constantly and was no longer able to play with toys, feed herself, or use them for any purposeful mobility," La-Konya, Lauren's mother, said.

By the time Lauren was two years old, she had lost all of her words.

La-Konya said at Lauren's two-year checkup, the doctor immediately gave a diagnosis of Rett syndrome, a rare genetic neurological disorder that occurs mostly in girls, affecting one in 10,000. According to [rettsyndrome.org](http://rettsyndrome.org), the disorder displays itself in missed milestones or regressions between six and 18 months of age, and affects the ability to speak, walk, eat and even breathe.

"Cognitive assessment in children with Rett syndrome is complicated, but we know that they understand far more than they can communicate to us, evidenced by their bright and attentive eyes, and

their ability to express a wide spectrum of moods and emotions," the website states.

After the initial checkup, an appointment with a neurologist and a blood test confirmed the diagnosis for Lauren within the following two weeks.

"Many families go months, even years, before they get the correct diagnosis, so we were very fortunate," La-Konya said. "I immediately got her started in OT, PT and speech therapy."

Caring for her 14-year-old can be a guessing game at times. La-Konya said Lauren doesn't sleep through the night and will wake up four or five times, or other nights, just once.

"No two days are the same," La-Konya said.

In the mornings La-Konya prepares Lauren for school before picking her up later in the afternoon, bringing her home to relax and have a snack.

Lauren was recently able to receive a Tobii eye gaze computer with the help of a special needs team and iCan, the Arkansas statewide Assistive Technology program.

La-Konya said the computer is the latest in this technology and it says whatever Lauren focuses on.

"So she's learning to communicate with us," La-Konya added. "It is literally life changing. It's a process that doesn't happen overnight but she is always making progress daily."

October is Rett Syndrome Awareness Month and La-Konya said she just wants others to know about the disorder.

"These girls are people just like you and I," she said, "and just want to be included and accepted."

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# Fire Safety Week

OCTOBER 4-10

There's never a bad time to consider safety and what your business is doing to ensure it, but with Fire Prevention Week happening October 4-10, there's not a better time for discussing being prepared in case of a fire emergency.

For most businesses, thinking of fire safety, extinguishers, and employee preparedness is just another thing on the long "To-Do" list.

Besides, you may think, "My business doesn't use anything flammable." Is your office space connected to another business? What do they store or use?

And what about the customer who pulls up to the building and its car starts smoking? Fire extinguishers have saved damage to store fronts, as well as cars in the parking lot.

Or, there is a story of a salon where a little boy went to the bathroom, set the contents of the trash can on fire, shut

the door behind him, and waited to watch the action as smoke emerged from underneath the door!

Hopefully none of these experiences will happen to you, but as much as we take precautions, some situations are just out of our control. Having operational fire extinguishers is a cost effective "insurance" that can be easily resolved. Statistics show that when a fire is extinguished at an early stage with a portable fire extinguisher, deaths, injuries, and property damage are significantly minimized. It's your first line of defense that can make you proactive until the fire department arrives.

First of all, a scheduled inspection of your fire extinguishers is essential. Ask to be put on a yearly rotation with a local fire protection company. It's an automatic check each year that you don't have to think about! With each

inspection, a current tag will be placed on the extinguisher, which lets the fire department know you are taking action to be compliant with federal/state regulations and providing a safe environment for your employees and customers. Let your insurance company know that it's on your radar as well — sometimes this improves your policy rate.

For businesses, it's important for your employees to know where the fire extinguishers are and that they are readily available. Avoid placing them near a fire hazard, but rather, near a clear exit for easy escape. In a moment of crisis, clear recollection and quick access is a must.

Review with your employees on how to use them. "PASS" technique instructions are on the front of the extinguisher, but that doesn't always mean everyone is familiar and

comfortable with using one. That tamper seal that holds the pull pin in place seems daunting to some, but should not be a problem to break in dire situations. Aim the nozzle at the base of the fire (not on smoke) and squeeze the handle to attempt to extinguish it. It's a sweeping motion, much like washing grass off of the concrete with a water hose. One misconception that most people have is that once they stop, the fire extinguisher will not "start" again. As long as there is more nitrogen in the cylinder, it will continue to operate for you. Fire protection companies can also provide hands-on employee training if you feel it would be beneficial for your staff.

Let your employees know when it's time to go. If they feel the need to hold their breath, then it's time to exit the building. The value of human life always presides over structures and contents that can be replaced.

Designate specific times that you review over the protocol, especially as new employees join your team.

As we near the end of 2020, in all aspects, be safe!

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# SEG BRIDAL SHOW RECAP



On September 20 the SEG Bridal Expo took place at the Cooper Alumni Center on the Arkansas State University campus. Attendees were scheduled different times to visit to keep in line with social distancing guidelines and masks were required.

If you're planning a wedding, check out our February 2020 issue of Premiere online at [premiere-magazine.com](http://premiere-magazine.com) for our wedding planning guide and information regarding local vendors and/or reach out to Steiner Event Group to help get you started!

Keep an eye out for the SEG Spring Bridal expo in 2021.

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Coming Up  
**BUTTERFLY  
 RELEASE**



**S**t. Bernards Advocates invite you to join them for a day of celebration and remembrance.

This year will be different, but the mission remains the same.

Butterflies are \$15 each or ten for \$135.

Release will take place on October 18 – pick-up will take place from 1 p.m. to 2 p.m. at the St. Bernards Imaging Center.

At 2 p.m., participants are invited to join the Butterfly Release program on the St. Bernards Healthcare Facebook page.

For more information or to purchase a butterfly, visit [stbernardsfoundation.org](http://stbernardsfoundation.org) or call (870) 207-2500.

Deadline is October 9, 2020.

Proceeds to benefit the Flo and Phil Jones Hospice House.

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# HAPPENINGS



Black River Technical College is excited to announce that Arkansas Methodist Medical Center (AMMC) has become an instructional site for BRTC's new registered nursing (RN) traditional pathway. Classes began meeting in the new facility on Tuesday, September 1st.



Jeremy Baltz of Pocahontas has been appointed by Arkansas Governor Asa Hutchinson to a 7-year term on the Board of Trustees for Black River Technical College.



A record number of high school students are enrolled in BRTC's Career and Technical Center this fall with the welding program at maximum capacity.

Eighty-seven high school students from Walnut Ridge, Hoxie, Corning, Sloan-Hendrix, Pocahontas, Hillcrest, Maynard, Marmaduke, Paragould, Greene County Tech, Brookland and Rector are earning their high school diplomas as well as BRTC certificates. Students completing one of BRTC's certificates will be workforce ready upon high school graduation.



The Serendipity project of BRTC kicks off at a luncheon meeting on Friday, October 2, with the historical novel, "In My Father's House." The work of fiction follows the lives of four young soldiers returning home in 1918 after their time in the foxholes of France in the "war to end all wars."

Project facilitator Dr. Jan Ziegler said she is especially excited to open the year with this work of historical fiction because it is "not only a great read, but it is surprisingly modern and relevant though it is set 100 years ago."



# BIRTHS

## *Mariah Lynette West*

Caden Lynette Cooper of Paragould welcomed newborn, Mariah Lynette West, into the world on July 29, 2020.

Mariah was delivered at Arkansas Methodist Medical Center, weighed 4 pounds, 4.4 ounces and measured 17.5 inches long.

Mariah is also welcomed by grandparents Lynette and Kent West and Brandi and Ronald Hardin.



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## 2020 Kids' Events

# October

### Every Weekday

#### Storytime

**When:** Every Weekday at 10:00 a.m.

**Where:** Craighead County Jonesboro  
Public Library's Facebook Page

**Info:** [libraryinjonesboro.org](http://libraryinjonesboro.org)

### Every Tuesday

#### Virtual Story Hour


**When:** Every Tuesday at 10:00 a.m.

**Where:** Greene County Public Library's  
Facebook and Instagram pages

**Info:** (870) 236-8711

### Stay Tuned

As events continue to be rescheduled, canceled, and altered, please check Premiere's Facebook page for updates as we do our best to keep you updated!



Lots of things about the school year are very different this time around, but recess is still recess when the playground comes calling.

# Stay Tuned

Food Bank of Northeast  
Arkansas Volunteer  
Spotlight



Shining a light on those giving back to their community in big and beautiful ways.

Family Owned Businesses



Special section featuring family owned and operated businesses in NEA. To learn about featuring your business, email [sales@mormediainc.com](mailto:sales@mormediainc.com)

Gift Guide



It's almost holiday season – can you believe it?! Look for our gift guide in the November issue for ideas on what and where to buy your loved ones something that will make them smile.

On The Cover: Kelly Stevens  
Photo By: Amy Reeves Photography

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