

NEA'S PREMIERE

MARCH
2021

Theresa, Kristin,
& Kirkley

WONDER *women*

TENNECO:
SHERRIE GREENE

LEATHERS
TRANSPORTATION:
REBECCA LEATHERS

PLUS:
NEA SENIORS

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Cover Photo: Lindsey Spencer

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NEA'S **PREMIERE**
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Awards

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From the Manager



Women can be strong.
Women can be fearless.
Women can be leaders.

March is Women's History Month and we find it important to acknowledge and celebrate what the work women of the past have done to make what women do today possible, and also what the women of today are doing to make what women do in the future possible.

Highlighted in this issue are women who are excelling in their careers, but more than simply mentioning their achievements, we seek to be cheerleaders for these women and all women in our community.

I personally wrote one of my favorite stories of all time in this issue: Lynn Waterworth, the Assistant Chief of Police for the Jonesboro Police Department, knows that being a woman makes her different, but in the best way because she is able to use different skills to address situations. Sometimes in seeing a different way to do things we find a better way to do them.

I also read one of the most beautiful conclusions to a story: how a young Kirkly can imagine being whatever she wants to be. I realized it's not just her, but many other girls can, too. May we not stop taking strides forward until every young girl can begin to imagine herself in the role she most desires.

Just like in pretty much every aspect of the world, improvement can yet be made. We, as women and a society as a whole, have many steps to take before everyone can stand a chance at cresting their own mountaintop.

Ladies, keep taking steps forward in the fields that call to you. Stride forward with confidence. And please, remember to turn to the other women beside you, in front of you and behind you and cheer them on, too.

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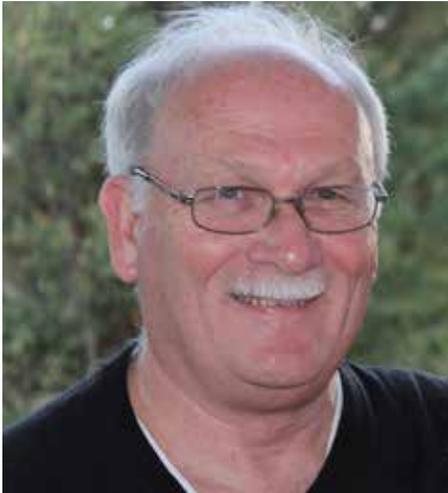
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GET RICH WITH RICHARD BRUMMETT



W e're three months into this new year and I continue to get mail encouraging me to find the "new me" in 2021. I don't know about a whole new me but I wouldn't say "no" to a new right shoulder or left knee.

Those two joints seem to have some sort of competition going, each trying to frustrate me more than the other at impromptu moments. "Watch," the shoulder says, snickering to the knee, then pops out of place when I try to lift my coffee cup so that hot liquid splashes down the side and onto my fingers.

"That's nothing," says the knee. "When he tries to get out of his truck at the grocery store today I'm not gonna work. Soon as he plants that left foot on the parking lot I'm gonna crumble and watch him try to hang on to something before hitting the pavement. It's hilarious."

"Oh, yeah, that's a good one," the shoulder replies. "Now I've got to come up with something bigger. Maybe I won't let him lift his arm and reach the light switch tonight."

I don't think a totally new me would be appropriate, since my life is a lot closer to the bottom of the ninth inning than to the top of the first. The average life expectancy of the white American male is 78.9 years so I have officially

been more than half dead for the last 28. What I think I need, instead of refurbished body parts, is a meaningful quote people will attribute to me even long after I'm gone.

When you hear the initials JFK you immediately think of both the sadness surrounding the news of his assassination and the power of this quote: "Ask not what your country can do for you, ask what you can do for your country."

Dang, wish I'd thought of that but I was only eight years old at the time it was delivered, so my thoughts were probably running more toward, "Mom, do you think our game is canceled because of the snow?" than toward any forms of patriotism or social consciousness.

"When you reach the end of your rope, tie a knot in it and hang on," Franklin D. Roosevelt advised. That's fantastic, even if not as deep as Aristotle's, "It is during our darkest moments that we must focus to see the light."

Where did these guys come up with this stuff? Maybe they have smarter friends than I do, people who converse at a higher level. If I died today the inscription on my headstone would read, "He was basically a ballplayer." That's pretty much it, even though the famous and famously uneducated Babe Ruth came out with, "Never let the fear of striking out keep you from playing the game."

Well, crap, now I've got to say something memorable and all I've been able to come up with to date is this gem I share with anyone trying to learn to play infield under my tutelage: "Practice does not make perfect because if you practice wrong, you don't get any better, you just get more wronger."

I consider that pretty deep because a kid can take 100 ground balls a day but if he or she uses poor technique

and footwork, they are not getting any better, just worse. So far, no one has approached me about using that saying at the bottom of an inspirational poster and paying me some royalties in kind, but I guess I can hold on a while longer. According to statistics, I may have up to a dozen more years to live.

I did once say, "Be a part of something or be apart from it," and I thought that was kind of catchy. I was, again, talking about team sports and the need to either buy into the team goals or quit, if being the star and gaining attention for yourself was your primary goal. Still, no calls wanting to use that one or any of the many other things I have uttered over the years.

For most of my life I've heard imitation is the sincerest form of flattery (why couldn't I have said that?) but something like, "Ask not what your father-in-law can cook for you, ask what you can cook for your father-in-law" still has little zing, although I might get a free meal now or then. I suppose I will just have to keep trying to utter some meaningful phrase in the presence of others, even though I try to avoid people as much as possible. It doesn't have anything to do with Covid; I just like to stay in my house and nap. I mean, read.

There is still hope. Galileo Galilei said, "I have never met a man so ignorant that I couldn't learn something from him" so maybe I will accidentally say something, sometime, somewhere that folks will remember me by, even if it doesn't make me sound more smarter at that precise moment.



LIVING A Better Story

BY JARED PICKNEY

It has been said that we are living in a man's world. Inevitably, this can leave many women feeling mistreated, overlooked and inferior. This is incredibly unfortunate when you consider the way God views women.

A quick glance through the Bible and you will discover the love and esteem God displays toward His daughters: The Hebrew midwives in Exodus 1 deliver Israel from certain death. In Exodus 38 we find the "the ministering women who ministered" in one of the holiest of places. Nehemiah 3 shows women playing an active role in rebuilding the wall around Jerusalem. Mary is chosen to carry the very Son of God in her womb. Acts is filled with women who usher in the kingdom

of God through their lives, leadership and influence. The women God has drawn into His family take part in a magnificent legacy.

Over and over, Jesus goes against the cultural norms of the time and interacts with women in a way that shows love, honor and dignity. Jesus meets the woman at the well marked by abandonment, and she becomes an evangelist in her community. The bleeding woman who touches His garment is declared healed in public, restored in the very realm where she has experienced disgrace. Jesus interrupts our favorite Type A personality, Martha, drawing her in to sit at His feet, a place where women simply were not invited at the time. And a woman with a

poor reputation worships Him in a way that invites disgrace from others, yet she is commended by Jesus Himself.

So as we celebrate women's history month, let's honor the women around us the way Jesus does. To view women as inferior to men is ungodly. From beginning to end, the Bible reassures us that God not only cares deeply for women, but that he also sees them as playing a crucial role in the fulfillment of His Kingdom work throughout the world.

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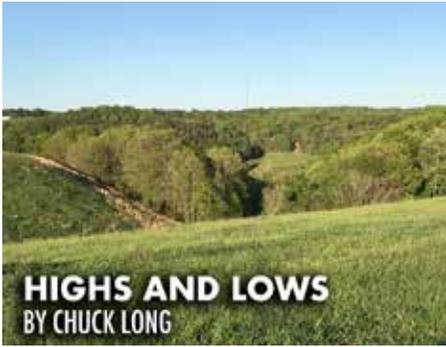


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The eerie silence of the moments just before dawn made the dim logging road seem more like a tunnel. Daniel, Isaac and I carefully and quietly made our way up the road in anticipation of a good day of turkey hunting. Walking with patience, we occasionally stopped to listen as birds began to break the silence that enveloped the forest. Among the crows and other singers of the early serenade, a sleepy gobbler added his voice to the tune. The gobbler sounded muffled, but fairly close, so we eased a little further up the road.

We stopped to listen once again and the next gobbler almost took our hats off. We were close, almost too close to the bird so we had to take action. It was a youth hunt and Isaac was the only one with a shotgun so Daniel positioned his son where he could see the logging road, facing the general direction of the turkeys. I eased out behind them about 25 yards and sat down. As the turkeys welcomed the new day, more gobblers shook the woods and it became evident there were not one, not two, but three gobblers.

I waited patiently and then clucked a few times and scratched in the leaves. The birds flew out of the roost tree and approached the logging road. Daniel carefully directed Isaac in getting his shotgun pointed in the right direction and within minutes the turkeys walked out on the road. Isaac's shot found its mark and he had taken his first turkey. It was a joyous moment for all involved.

Fast forward about a week. I had hunted hard for several days to find a cooperative gobbler. I finally found one in a good position and was able to get close while he was gobbling in the tree. I sat up next to an old road and made a couple of soulful clucks and the turkey answered, flew down and began to meander in my general direction. He decided to skirt the road and came through the woods, catching me just a bit unaware as he



suddenly appeared within gun range. The old gobbler had already decided something was not quite right, but I was able to reposition and eased my gun on target, or so I thought. I fired and the turkey flew off, untouched. I tried to blame the gun, the ammo, the situation and anything else I could think of, but it was apparent I had missed. Just flat out missed. I sat dejectedly for a while and then moved on, ready to find the next bird.

These two situations sum up hunting, fishing, and most outdoor experiences. There are highs and lows. Goods and bads. There are instances, moments and even days we want to remember and recall for years on end for all the good that happened. But there are other memories that cannot be removed from the recesses of our brains, no matter how frustrating they were.

Whether you are a hunter, a fisherman, a birder or just a casual observer of the outdoors, it is easy to see there are many variables and lots of ups and downs in encounters with the outdoor realm. That fact is one of the greatest draws to the outdoors.

Some of the greatest highs in life can happen in the outdoors: Catching a big fish, taking a trophy buck, finding that one bird that has eluded the checklist or just simply seeing something that is new and fresh. These things and many other outdoor experiences can lead to a type of high and excitement that cannot be found anywhere else.

On the other hand, there can be lows. The boat motor does not start, the flashlight goes out, a dog gets lost or a carefully planned shot is missed. Simple things that can go wrong each day can produce some feelings of disappointment. Fortunately, these disappointments tend to pass quickly and become wonderful campfire stories that will bring about friendly ribbing from fellow outdoorsmen.

The outdoors can be one of the warmest, most inviting places to hang out, filled with wonderful smells, beautiful sounds and breathtaking vistas. But the outdoors can also greet us with a brutal, harsh environment that not only takes human pride, but can also extinguish human life.

As a society it seems we are becoming more and more disconnected with the outdoors. We like the safety, security and static nature of our inside lives. We want to know and understand possible outcomes, leaving nothing to chance. We want to live in the world of the middle ground where we take no risks or challenges. We want to know we have ultimate control of success or failure.



CHUCK LONG

Regional Education Coordinator Northeast Education Division Arkansas Game and Fish Commission

Yet that is not where we were meant to be. As humans we are designed to be up and going. We are designed for an active life that puts us in situations of quick decisions, frequent stimulation and dealing with the elements. We are designed for great success but also to be able to deal with and grow from failure.

I often think about those two turkey hunts from last year. In Isaac's hunt, things went completely right and it almost seemed it was destined that Isaac would take a turkey. It seemed the hunt was drawn up on a chalkboard.

And then there was my hunt. I can still replay my errant shot and it disappoints me. But then again, so many things did go right. I look at that as a building block for future encounters.

When dealing with the outdoors we have to focus on the positives. A typical fisherman makes over two hundred casts for each fish caught. A dove hunter takes one dove for every five shots. A runner has to start with short distances to build to run a 5k. A kayaker has to learn balance before stroke. Most outdoor activities offer moments of failure that would offer the opportunity to say "I quit" before the goal is met but to succeed, an outdoorsman must keep going.

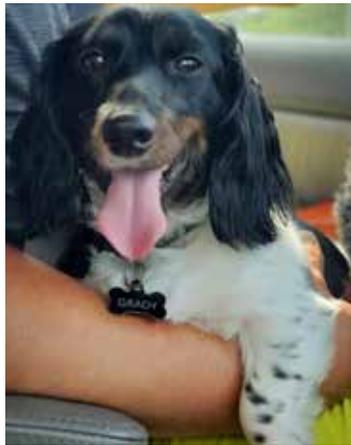
We need to look at it from the perspective that the next cast might produce the big one. The next ridge might produce that special animal. The next mile will increase endurance. The next tree might hold that special bird never seen before. The next seed might grow that big tomato. If we stay positive, those thoughts keep us striving forward. The outdoors can be such a challenge, but also hold great blessings for us both physically and mentally. God's creation can build us in a way that cannot be found inside four walls. Take some time and get outside and I hope to see you out there!



PET *of the* MONTH

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BY ANGELA BAKER



Grady Baker is a long-haired Piebald Dachshund (wiener dog). Grady is two years old – adopted on Christmas day in 2018.

Grady is our very first dog. From the moment we brought him home, he's fit right in. He was definitely the missing piece to our family!

His very favorite things to do are take naps with Mom, play outside, and bark at the cats.

He is also notorious for stealing bites of food when we're not paying attention, escaping every time the door opens, and leaving his toys in the middle of the floor at night for everyone to trip on.

Even though Grady's a mischievous little guy sometimes, we could not love him more.


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Sounds Like...

A playlist for March

BY SARA BROWN

Spring



Spring will be here soon, so turn this playlist up and get ready to welcome back warmer weather and the bright sun!

Rocky Mountain High – John Denver

This tune will make you want to go on a long drive down the scenic route, and as spring starts to peek around the corner, that drive will become all the more beautiful. Give this one a listen and go on a drive through the trees.

Greener Pastures – Brothers Osborne

As winter fades away, we're all hoping our pastures get a little greener, aren't we? Crank this one up loud and dream of green grass, warmer weather, and glowing sunlight – it'll be here before you know it.

River Man – The Last Bandoleros

This is a fun one that rocks from start to finish. It'll get you feeling energized and ready to jump in your car and speed on down to the river for some fun, but you should probably wait for it to get a little warmer outside before you go!

Bird in a Tree – The Brother Brothers

As spring gets closer, more birds will be returning to make their homes in the trees in your yard. Get out there and see if any have already made their way back, and maybe play this tune while you look; it's a calm one that's just beautiful enough to not scare those birds away.

Take Me to the River – Talking Heads

You can groove into spring with this one, and like the other river-tune, you'll be wanting to groove yourself on down to the river with this one too! Turn this one up loud and wait just a little bit longer – it'll be worth it.

Boulder Skies – Pure Prairie League

This song has a peaceful vibe to it, but it still feels bright and happy. There's no better way to welcome spring than to make yourself comfy in a hammock or on your porch and turn this one up.

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HEALTH & THE CITY

WITH DR. BETHANY DAVIS

As a physical therapist I have worked with multiple patients in my short time of practice and my time as a student, improving physical function with exercise, manual techniques, and increasing motivation to change. As a yoga teacher I have taught students for more than four years, guiding them through classes and motivating them to practice mindfulness and meditation outside of that one-hour time period. As an individual, I support my husband, family, and friends through some of the hardest and the best times of their lives, listening and motivating them to push through or to do something challenging.

The common theme here: Change requires motivation, and motivation is often derived from the practicality of the task. The patients I treat are not so different from my friends. My yoga students are not so different than I am. We all require motivation to change habits.

Of course, certain activities require more motivation than others. It is much harder to go to the gym for an hour than it is to watch Bridgeton on Netflix. The former requires stamina and being uncomfortable, while the latter doesn't require

much physical or mental work. After working all day, it's easy to understand why our motivation to choose the harder option falls short. But what if we increased our motivation by making tasks more practical?

The long-term effects of not moving our bodies are detrimental. An object (our bodies) at rest will stay at rest, although we don't need knowledge of basic physics to know that! If you haven't moved your body or exercised in a while, it is much easier to just keep staying at rest. If you haven't moved in a while, an hour at the gym seems almost impossible, and the motivation will be lacking for something that doesn't even seem feasible. Much to our awareness, the long-term benefits of exercise include the reduced risk of numerous chronic diseases and premature death. The short-term benefits of daily movement include improved mood, more energy, and better quality of life.

Sure, sign me up for better quality of life! But how do we increase the motivation to do what we know we need to? Changing habits is extremely difficult, so change needs to be incorporated into our lives in the most practical way, a way that will stick.

A simple answer to this motivational problem is to adopt exercise into your routine in small bouts instead of one long session. Studies are now showing that small bouts of movement throughout the day may be more beneficial long-term than a 60-minute gym session if you don't move the rest of the day. Yes, we've known this, but the neuroplasticity research behind these small shifts is growing stronger each year.

One of my favorite books is "Feel Better in 5," by Dr. Rangan Chatterjee. Dr. Chatterjee formed a practical solution that I take to heart with my patients: Move just a little bit, then build from there. The motivation needed to move for five minutes is much less than the motivation necessary to move for an hour.

Let's break this down: Pick a time of day and set a timer for just five minutes in which you dedicate to moving your body. If this is too much, start with one minute, or any period of time that seems so achievable to you. It helps if you link this habit to something that you already do every single day. For example, move while the coffee brews. Do this every single day for a week, then add just one minute per week moving from five minutes to six, etc. Each week, you gradually snowball the time per day that you will have moved. You are rewiring neural pathways in your brain to make movement become a habit, and habits require much less motivation.

No equipment? No problem. Body weight workouts are effective, free, and you can do them anywhere. Try bodyweight squats, calf raises, modified push-ups, lunges, a walk/jog, or mountain climbers, burpees, or jumping jacks if you need more intensity. I will also shamelessly plug yoga in as a great practice that only requires a mat, or you can simply use your carpet.

These small bouts of movement form habits that lead to lasting change, and once these small bouts of movement become a habit to you, the motivation needed to participate in the tasks goes down tremendously. Then, 10 minutes doesn't seem so bad, 15 minutes, and maybe even 20 minutes. Neuroplasticity is a beautiful thing.



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College Tips by a College Student



BY SARA BROWN

We've made it to the month of March, hopefully relatively unscathed. It's been a bit of a rough go of it, if I do say so myself. We've been challenged, we've struggled, and likely, each of us has experienced a failure or two at this point. This month's tips are about some of the hard truths of college, especially during a pandemic, and how to cope with them.

Tip number one: For newer students (sorry, juniors and seniors!), don't expect to be babied like you were in high school. In high school, faculty members were often concerned with whether or not their students were failing, for the most part. That's not the case in college. Because you're paying for the courses, most professors won't go to the lengths that high school faculty may have to deal with students who are performing poorly. If they do reach out, it's usually simply to inform the student they are in fact failing the course and should perhaps consider dropping it. They'll help you if you put forth the effort to get help, but no one is going to go out of their way to put you on the right track if you don't ask for help. It's a big adjustment for many, but you have to be more self-motivated to make good grades in college, especially with online courses.

Tip number two: Talk to your professors, even if they scare you. So many students won't ask for help when they need it because the professor who teaches the class scares them. It may be nerve-racking, but take the time to go visit them during their office hours and ask them for the help you need. You never know, you may find the professor that scares you the most ends up becoming the best mentor you could have ever hoped for (psst – that's what happened to me!).

Tip number three: Accept that you're probably going to miss a deadline or two. If you're like me, this tip might be freaking you out right

now. Accidents happen, and even if you're a really good student who always turns everything in, you may end up forgetting one day. It's not the end of the world. There's nothing you can do once it happens except work harder to not make the same mistake next time.

Tip number four: Remember why you're there. With the pandemic, college life has slowed down a little bit from its usual hustle-and-bustle of constant campus events, club meetings, fraternity/sorority events, and general meeting-and-greeting, but some of that is still out there. Remember, the money you spend, or your parents spend, or your scholarship covers is technically not for you to spend all your time socializing and partying. That's not to say you shouldn't get to have some fun; in fact, college is one of the best times to meet people and have fun doing things that wouldn't otherwise be available to you, but you're there to learn, study, and ultimately graduate. Make sure you're prioritizing learning and studying above all else, then fit in the fun where you have the time!

And finally, tip number five: Stop being so hard on yourself. You won't be able to accomplish anything if you're constantly beating yourself up over something. So what if you missed a deadline, so what if your productivity has been lower than usual the past few days, so what if you forgot to study for that exam. Accidents are going to happen and life is going to get in the way. Some professors will be more understanding of that than others. These are all things you can't control, but what you can control is how you respond to it. If you get upset and beat yourself up over whatever it is that may have happened, you won't be able to do better next time. If instead you try to accept the situation for what it is and evaluate what it is you need to do next to get back on track, you'll do much better. Relax a little and keep doing the best you can!



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Caring for Puppies

WITH DR. KRISTIN SULLIVAN

March 21st is National Puppy Day! In honor of that, I'd like to go over some helpful tidbits if you are bringing a new puppy into your family. Aside from vaccinations, I'd like to spend this article going over the importance of spaying and neutering your pets, proper nutrition, and how kennel training helps with house training.

First, vaccinations. I cannot say this enough: Vaccinate your pet! I understand we all get busy, but if you get a puppy -- this is a must! Vaccinating your puppy creates an immune response in its body that

helps to fight common diseases, especially viral, which occur in puppies.

Parvovirus, called Parvo, is quite a common viral disease that causes severe diarrhea, vomiting, and lethargy in puppies and can be fatal -- however, if your puppy has been properly immunized by a licensed veterinarian, the chance of contracting this illness is rare, and death is much rarer in vaccinated pets.

Next up: spaying and neutering. Many ask, "Why?" Because it prevents unwanted litters, it prevents certain diseases and cancers, and it helps to manage overpopulation. I have been asked many times if it is better for the pet to have at least one heat cycle, or to have one litter, or to be bred at least once. The answer is no -- it is best for them to be spayed (females) or neutered (males) around the age of 6 months. The reason is because they are mature enough to have developed physically but are still not at sexual maturity.

Proper nutrition in puppies has been made much easier over the years. It's simple: Offer a complete and balanced puppy chow. How do you know if it's complete and balanced? It will say it on the bag. If the bag of puppy food does not say it is, then it is not. If the puppy chow is complete and balanced, then this is all they need to get their nourishment. Puppy vitamin supplements, although very popular,

are not widely needed.

There are some exceptions to this, of course, but generally healthy puppies that receive a complete diet do not require vitamin supplementation. For more information on a diet that is best for your puppy, call your local veterinarian, as all diets are not equal.

Last up is kennel training and its importance for house training. Kennel training takes patience, it's true, but it is the fastest way to house train your puppy. House training is all about helping to train it to use the bathroom in the desired location (typically outside) at the desired times.

If they are kenneled, this helps to prevent them from having accidents. Taking them outside to potty, as soon as they leave the kennel (not even letting them touch the ground) helps to train them to go where they are supposed to. If they do not go potty, simply put them back in the kennel and try to take them out again a few minutes later; repeat this, if needed, until they go potty. Once they go potty, they are free to run around the house. After doing this, they learn quickly they need to potty outside when you take them.

Puppies can be some work, but they are so much fun and bring such joy to our lives. I hope this article is helpful in taking the best care possible for your family's new puppy!

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More info can be found via the Jonesboro Regional Chamber of Commerce's event on Facebook.

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MOORE on MANNERS

WITH LINDA LOU MOORE

THE BUSINESS MEAL – WHO PAYS?

The theme of this month's Premiere Magazine is WOMEN IN BUSINESS.

So, the question often arises: "When a woman hosts a business meal, who pays?" Hosting a business meal can be tricky. Here are some quick tips from the experts to help the meal go more smoothly.

INVITING GUESTS

When inviting guests to a business meal make it clear in advance that you, as the host, will be paying the bill. There is nothing that ruins the mood more than grappling over the check at the end of the meal.

When you issue the invitation, state clearly that you would like for the other person to be your guest. If possible, make arrangements ahead of time to take care of the bill.

If you cannot make arrangements ahead of time, quietly let the wait staff know at the beginning of the meal to bring you the check.

If your plans to handle the check fail, be prepared to pick up the check as soon as the waiter brings it to the table. Don't let your guest wonder about your intentions.

WOMEN AS HOSTS

Many women find themselves inviting male colleagues to a business meal.

The question is often asked: "What is the most diplomatic way to let the server know that you will be taking care of the check?"

As a woman, you will often be asked to order first.

When the server requests your order, simply say, "I'd like my guest to go first."

You will be accomplishing two things with this response:

- (1.) You will let the server know that you, the host, should receive the check.
- (2.) You will put your guest at ease by confirming that this lunch is your treat.

Linda Lou Moore is a certified etiquette consultant. She offers business professionalism and dining seminars for adults, and etiquette and dining programs for children and teens. Contact via Post Office Box 726, Paragould 72451 or at manners@paragould.net.

Polar Plunge 2021



On February 6 Crowley's Ridge State Park played host to the annual Polar Plunge to raise awareness and funds for the Special Olympics Arkansas.

Plungers had a chilly day, but [nearly] fearlessly entered the cold waters of the lake via leap or slide. The event raised more than \$13,000. The support of participants, both plungers and donors, helps provide opportunities to more than 19,000 Special Olympics athletes and young athletes across the state.

To see other Polar Plunge dates and locations for the state of Arkansas or to donate, visit specialolympicsarkansas.org



Natalie Harrell



More photos from this event can be found on Premiere's Facebook page.

A young child is the central focus, standing in a snowy field. The child is wearing a vibrant red, quilted snow suit with a matching hood. The hood is made of grey knit fabric and features two large, fluffy grey pom-poms on top. The child's face is partially visible through a grey mesh opening in the hood. The child has a joyful expression, looking slightly to the right. The background is a vast, soft-focus expanse of white snow, with some faint tracks visible. The overall atmosphere is bright and cheerful.

Snow Day (s)

Pippa Mae Runyan's First Snow Day



When was the last time Arkansas felt like a winter wonderland – and for days?!

We asked NEA folks to share their snow day pics with us via social media and we LOVED seeing how much fun everyone was having in the snow.

Thank you for sharing your snow day photos with us.



Left and Above Submitted by Rachael Isom



Briar and Ellie Mangrum



Pacey Jo Bowen



Briley Poe



Gavin Fields

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Beck Baker



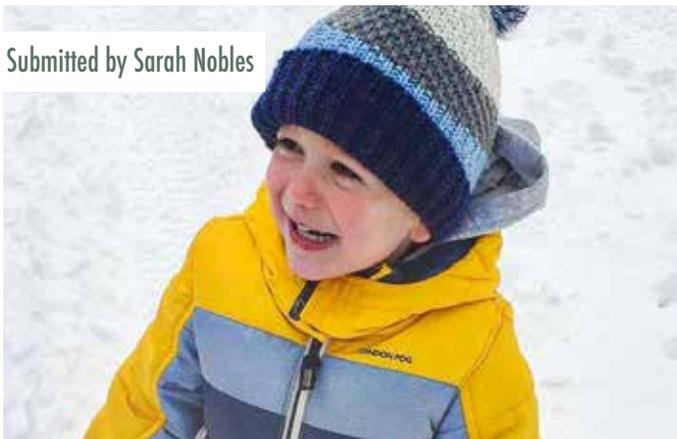
Liam Berry



Submitted by Kayla Mealer



Submitted by Lindsey Ford



Submitted by Sarah Nobles



Tate Holland



Amelia Kate Nutt

A collage of food images featuring various dishes like falafel, hummus, and pita bread. The text "explore MOR" is prominently displayed in a dark circle with a green crosshair. Below it, the text "Eat, shop, play; the local's guide to NEA." is written. The website "exploremornea.com" is also visible. At the bottom, social media handles for Facebook (@exploremORnea) and Instagram (@exploremor_nea) are provided.

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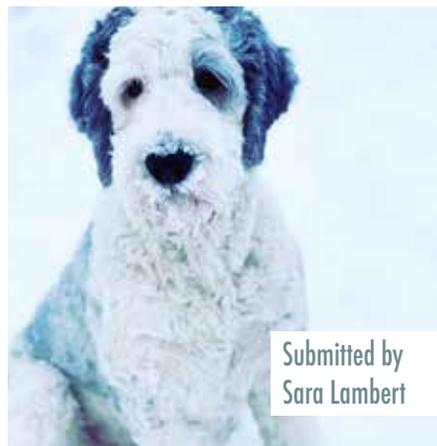
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Photo by James Bickham

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Snowcream



Submitted by
Destiny Wineland



Submitted by Lindsey Bowman

Have you tried this snow day tradition? It's unlikely we'll see snow again this month, but save this recipe for next year!

SNOW ICE CREAM

- 1 Can Condensed Milk
- 1 Tspn Vanilla
- Bowl of Snow

Mix together the condensed milk and vanilla (*evaporated milk will work too, just mix in some sugar to sweeten it up!). Add the snow immediately after gathering. Serve and enjoy.

*Tip: Set a bowl outside when it starts snowing to collect clean snow.

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A-STATE PIC(K)S

The A-State Committee with the Jonesboro Regional Chamber of Commerce is hosting a monthly photo contest in which participants are invited to [pick] their favorite [pic] within a given category and submit via the post found on the Chamber's Facebook page.

February's theme – "Game Day" – yielded this winning photo submitted by Dianna Foucault.

March's theme is "ASU-supporting Businesses." Submit your photo by commenting on the post found on the Jonesboro Regional Chamber of Commerce's Facebook page. The winner will be given a prize sponsored by a local business and will have their photo run in the April edition of Premiere.

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Traveling With a Novelist

BY MARY LEE CUNNINGHAM

In spite of the pandemic and social distancing of 2020, I was privileged to do some traveling last year with Patricia Clark Blake, an author friend from Jonesboro. Our aim was to check out locations of events that would figure into her novel, *'Til Shiloh Come*. The five-volume, historical series was primarily set in Northeast Arkansas beginning in 1857 and ending just after the conclusion of the War Between the States. The books introduced me to a group of ordinary Arkansas folks who lived by their principles and depended on their faith in God during the good times and the bad. For me, each outing to scope out locations for events in the book was a nice break from the imposed isolation of Covid.

Furthermore, I learned much along the way and came to have a greater appreciation of my state as viewed through the eyes of people who lived back in the 1860s, even if they were fictional characters.

Our first excursion was to scope out the tiny community of Oil Trough where a

skirmish between Union and Confederate soldiers took place. We stopped at a picnic area that looked down to where the fast-moving White River made a sharp bend. From the concrete platform where I stood, I had my first -ever sighting of an otter! I pointed it out to Pat and said, "You must mention that in your story!" (I smiled when I later read in her book of soldiers commenting about two otters cavorting in the river!)

From the overlook, we drove around until we found a grassy boat launch area where the river was calmer. Pat walked around, taking note of the tall grass and drooping tree branches. She speculated that a place like this might have been where troops crossed the river since they would have had a little cover to keep them from being easily spotted by the enemy. When I read her description of the skirmish in the book, I recalled that grassy, tree-lined place in my mind. That's what good writers do with their words. They paint pictures their readers can see!

From the river, we made our way back to the town's commemorative marker that told how Oil Trough got its name. Back in the 1800s, bear was plentiful in Arkansas. They were not only hunted for food but also because almost every part of them could be used. For example, bear fat could be turned into oil. The marker told of hunters making troughs from hollowed out logs, filling them with bear grease and oil then floating them downstream to sell to folks in places like New Orleans for all kinds of uses. Thus, the little settlement came to be called Oil Trough.

Another of our research outings was to West Helena to see the replica of Fort Curtis that had played an important role in keeping the Union's supply lines open and those of the Confederacy closed. The real fort was fitted with huge cannons at the corners of the structure, and they were mounted on circular rails. This ingenious design allowed gunners to easily reposition and aim, flinging heavy cannon balls at either the passing riverboats on the Mississippi or down upon troops who might try to capture the fort. As we walked around on the ramparts inside the fort, Pat took pictures and read the signage detailing what had made this place so important during the war. With this gathered information, she was able to match her story's details with actual historical facts.

A third trip we made was to the Chalk Bluff Battle Site northwest of Piggott. This was truly out in the country and not easy to locate. Once we found it, we walked along a winding asphalt path through the woods that ended at the ledge above the St Francis River. An unpaved path



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led down to the river's edge. Looking across the river it was easy to understand why the place was called Chalk Bluff. The white bluffs looked as if they were made of chalk. In the 1860s this isolated location proved to be an ideal place for soldiers to cross undetected from one side of the river to the other – i.e., from Union territory to Confederate or vice-versa.

Finally, the trip I most enjoyed was the one to Marion where we visited the Sultana

Museum. (How was it that I, who had been born and reared not fifty miles away, knew nothing about this place or the event it commemorated?) Inside the small museum we were schooled about the Sultana by a pleasant, knowledgeable docent. We also viewed a narrated film telling about the beautiful, three-story Sultana riverboat – how she had been constructed to carry both freight and passengers, and how at war's end, she was contracted to carry former Union soldiers home after their release

from Confederate prisons. Although built to carry less than 400 persons, she in fact wound up with over 2,000 on board at the time of the accident. When one of its boilers exploded, the boat caught fire and sank. Eighteen hundred people lost their lives in the incident, making it the worst maritime disaster in American history.

The docent and the displays explained that at the time it occurred few knew about the sinking because the headlines in the newspapers were still writing about the assassination of President Lincoln that occurred just two weeks earlier. (The docent shared with us that soon the Sultana exhibit would be moved into a new museum once the building was constructed. Then perhaps more people would get to know her story.)

I hope this brief story inspires readers to take their own little trips to learn more about our great state and her history. And for a good read, check out the Shiloh Saga. You too may enjoy traveling back in time with an Arkansas novelist.

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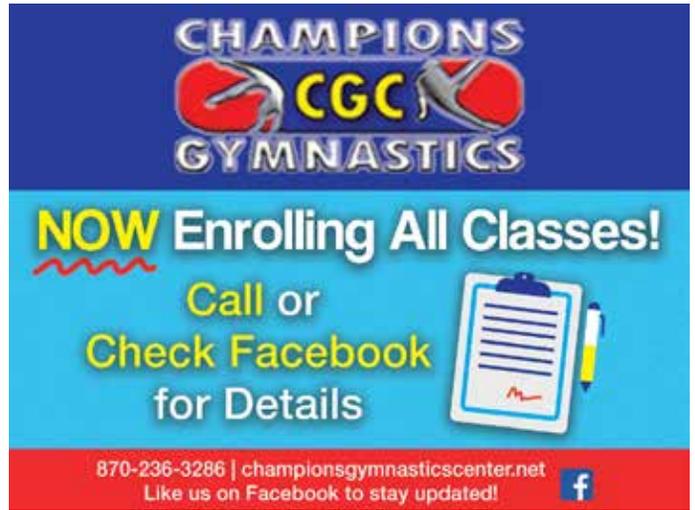


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May 21
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A complete listing of all Downtown events can be found under "Events" at downtownparagould.com or facebook.com/oneandonlydowntown/events.



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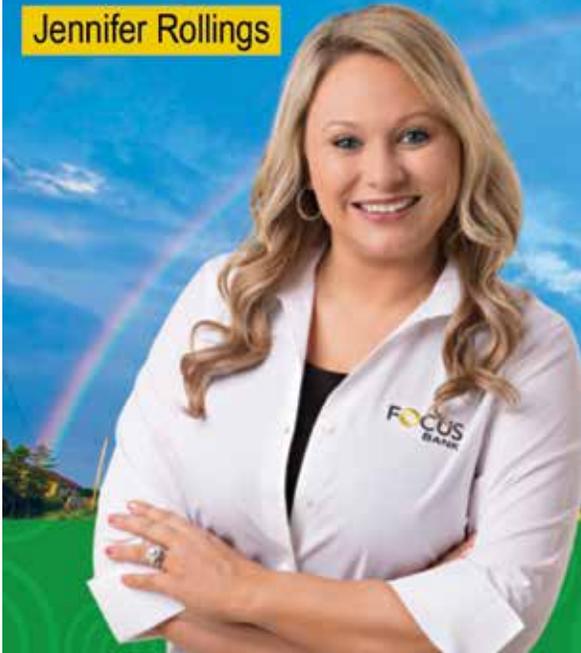
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BY CAITLIN LAFARLETTE

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It has been nearly 30 years since Michelle Rushing received her contractor's license and started her own business. After her first job as a subcontractor in 1992 she now has her own group of subcontractors and Michelle's Excavating is the prime contractor.

Rushing's first contract was for the Arkansas Department of Transportation with B.L. McBride and Sons, Inc., in Piggott and St. Francis.

"I will always be grateful to have had that opportunity to work and build relationships with inspectors that I have to this day," Rushing said.

As luck would have it, Rushing has currently been under contract with ArDOT in Clay County where her journey started all those years ago. The only difference, she said, is this time Michelle's Excavating is the prime contractor and she has her own team of subcontractors to fulfill the federally assisted program part of the jobs. "Life is definitely full circle, it seems," she added.

Before Rushing moved to Arkansas she worked for a worldwide contractor called Potashnick Construction based in Cape Girardeau until she got married

in 1987. Rushing said it was the death of the company's owner and selling of the business that pushed her out on her own.

But having her own business means keeping a balance between work and personal life. Rushing said while it's hard to do, she has to "leave it at the shop" when she punches out. She also tried to keep a weekly routine as much as she could when her two young boys were in school. As her children got older the family enjoyed racing stock cars and riding horses.

"Family dinner time was most important to me," she added, "a time of catching up with each others' day."

Rushing said being a grandmother is the best reward she has been blessed with, and other favorite activities outside of work include gardening, pool time and anything else outdoors.

Over the years of owning her business she has learned to not second guess or wrestle with the "what ifs," and to always diversify. When the industry slowed down due to economic decline, funds for highways and commercial site prep did, too. Rushing said she had tossed around the idea of returning to laying asphalt since weather wasn't a big obstacle.

"So, approximately in 2004 we took another leap of faith and bought out an existing small asphalt business in Brookland," she said. "We kept the owner on to train our crew the first year and it took off. Little did we know that was our best business financial decision yet."

Keeping up with that theme of leaps of faith, Rushing said her business is "hands down" faith-based, and started with a love for family and this line of work.

"And with a dream that one day, some day, we would have something to be proud of and pass down to our boys, and Lord willing, their sons," she added. "In my humble momma's opinion we have built a mansion and our heart and house is full."

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Assistant CHIEF OF POLICE

Lynn Waterworth

BY LINDSEY SPENCER

Years ago, Lynn Waterworth was responding to a call of a drunk man who was causing a disturbance in the street. She was heading that way when some fellow officers suggested she wait for backup.

"But this is my job, and I didn't hesitate," Lynn said, adding that instead of doing what she thought some officers would have done, she said to the man upon arrival, "Have you had lunch?"

The man stopped, stared, and said, "What?" Lynn asked the man if he wanted to go get some lunch with her. He was voluntarily in the back of her car before other officers arrived.

This story is one of many from years working in the Jonesboro Police Department.

Since joining the JPD in 1988, in every position following, Lynn has been the first female to achieve rank at all levels up to her current rank of Assistant Chief. Today, Lynn holds a Senior level officer certification and is a certified instructor who has taught on a number of law enforcement related topics such as crime scene investigation, trauma informed victim response and media relations.

Lynn knows women are different than men, but that does not make her – or any other woman – less-qualified. It simply means doing things differently and, as a society, when we try new tactics to reach

our goals, sometimes we find a better way. "My roommate and I were in a discussion at the academy," Lynn said, "[There were] eight women. We were talking to the male officers – and this was 30 years ago – we made the observation at the time, 'We have to learn to use our negotiation skills' and women do know how to talk to people."

Lynn's skills and her desire to serve community have served her well through the years: She led the department in achieving its first-ever national accreditation through the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement and has been active in, and held office for, a number of professional and civic organizations including the Arkansas Association of Chiefs of Police – where she serves as regional vice president. She also currently is an assessor for the Arkansas Law Enforcement Accreditation Program.

Lynn has an impressive resume, for sure, but perhaps her greatest achievements are proven in the testimonies of those who have worked alongside her for years.

"Lynn is a detail-oriented person. I think the young women of our department have looked up to her as an example and thought, 'Well, I can be that,'" said Chief Rick Elliot, who has worked with Lynn for most of their careers and had no shortage of good things to say about his colleague. He added that more women are currently working for JPD than ever before. "She serves as a great role model."

Assistant Chief Waterworth and Chief Elliot both agree gender is not a hindrance or even an obstacle for serving the community as part of the police department.

"If you have the right mindset and the right heart, you can do this job," Elliot stated.

To other women or young females considering what they want to do in their lives Lynn said she'd tell them: "Don't let anybody tell you [that] you can't. You can. It's not about being rough and tough; it's about being someone who wants to make a difference and is willing to accept a challenge. And doing it. You just have to be pigheaded enough that you're not going to let [being a female] affect whether or not you're going to do it."

Perhaps Lynn's greatest strength when it comes to her job is her love for Jonesboro. "She is one hundred percent dedicated to the police department and the city of Jonesboro," said Elliot. "She enjoys what she does and is passionate about what she does."

Lynn explained that in this line of work, you're dealing with people on their worst days. "You don't see their best side and they don't really see yours either," she said. "This is like preaching or teaching. It's not something you do to have a job. It's something you do because you have a calling. For me it's about community. It's about making our community a better, safer place to live."





TENNECO PLANT MANAGER

*Sherrie
Greene*

BY KAROLINE RISKER

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Get Better.

A plant that sells shocks and struts might not be the place you would expect to find a strong woman in leadership, but Tenneco in Paragould has it. Sherrie Greene, who has been with Tenneco for 32 years, started out with the plant as a payroll accountant right out of college. Her mom and dad both worked at Tenneco, so it was very natural for her to work there, too.

She ended up doing every job in finance, later going to corporate headquarters where she was responsible for more than one plant, eventually becoming the plant manager, a position she has held since July 2020. The job came open and Sherrie realized there wasn't as much travel (her work has taken her to Poland and Mexico) and wanted to stay at the plant that was close to her heart. The job lets her manage approximately 1,200 hourly employees (which was 1,600 at one time) and 60 salaried employees. The plant produces about 70,000 to 75,000 units a day of shocks, struts, and modular assembly kits, so the work is no small feat. The plant, which also serves as a distribution center for North America as well as 40 other countries, is one of Tenneco's largest global facilities in a group that includes 217 manufacturing sites and 41

distribution centers worldwide.

Being in a male-dominated field wasn't always easy, recalling times she was the only woman in a meeting. The men were respectful, she added, but she still felt out of place and like she didn't belong. "But I was respectful as I could be and you get it back," she said. "You earn respect with knowledge and ability." She said she had a good work relationship with her male peers, and never felt superior no matter what position she held. "I know I'm only as good as my employees – our best asset," she said, adding, "No one begrudged me, but prove yourself with ability or knowledge.

"Every female in a managerial role is a coach/mentor for everybody else. There is no glass ceiling for you. Our job as women is letting people know these jobs are available for women." Her advice: Work hard, be true to yourself, be honest and transparent, stand up for yourself but don't be pushy, and do your best.

"No one plans on staying 32 years at a job," Sherrie said. "Initially, I didn't see myself staying here or doing the job. It becomes your blood. It's what I've known my whole life." The only place Sherrie has

ever worked since college is at Tenneco, continuing even after getting her master's degree in business administration.

Sherrie has been married to her husband Jeff for 31 years. They have two children, Jessica, and Josh, and a grandchild who will be 2 in June and who "is the light of my life." Over the years her family was involved in sports, racing cars, and outdoor activities. They still try to maintain relationships by having dinner once a week, playing board games, and spending time at the lake. "The best things in life are when your adult children want to spend time with you," she said.

Sherrie attended East Side Baptist Church, was a member of the board at the Paragould Chamber of Commerce and was active with the children's activities in the Paragould School District.

As far as the future, Sherrie plans to enjoy life. "I'm happy now. It's a different opportunity for me. I can stay here until I retire but I don't mind moving up in my future," she said, noting that she would move back to her hometown eventually. "Paragould is my hometown. I'm very happy to be in the plant that I love. I want to do my part to keep its high status."

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LEGACY EQUIPMENT



BY KAROLINE RISKER

Though these ladies are in a historically male-dominated field, they have excelled for several decades and are paving the way for women everywhere.

Theresa Kirk and daughter Kristin work together at Legacy Equipment, a John Deere tractor and farming equipment company in Paragould. The dealership was purchased by Earl Kirk in 1953 and has been owned by the Kirk family ever since, going next to Earl's son Tom, Theresa's late husband and Kristin's dad, in the late 1960s. The couple worked together for 42 years, complimenting each other in their business lives.

"He and I managed to make it work," Theresa said, "I learned from him, and I think he learned from me." Being in business together the pair lived and

breathed the work. "We talked about business 24/7," Theresa said. "Never a way to get out of it. But if he had a bad day I knew what was going on. I was able to understand. I thought we made a pretty good team."

When Tom passed away in November 2019 it was quite natural for Theresa to remain at Legacy, even expanding her role there, including taking a seat on the board. Theresa also became the dealer principal and is currently one of only four women dealer principals worldwide within the John Deere company. It is very unusual for a woman to hold the position, so it wasn't a given that she would remain at the head but instead had to be vetted by the main company, a stride unheard of even a few years before. "Early on women were never considered for leadership," she said. "But

we are seeing more and more women in the John Deere Corporation. They didn't foresee that a woman would be strong enough to take over. It's changed a lot in the last few years."

That is a change that seems to benefit customers of the corporate giant as more and more women are becoming customers. Kristin adds: "Women see things from a broader perspective. People will talk to us before a male because we are more understanding." In addition, "More and more women are buying equipment and would be more comfortable buying from a woman." Many leadership roles at Legacy are held by women, including Human Resources, marketing, controller and assistant controller. "Mom made it possible for others to be a woman in a head role," said Kristin.

Theresa initially wanted to teach business and taught high school accounting for one year before she decided it wasn't a good fit. With a numbers background, it was easy for Theresa to step in and help her husband. "It was perfect the way it all worked out," she said.

Kristin, too, stepped naturally into her work at the dealership, though it came almost as a matter of fact, being around the business her whole life and even going out to the fields with her dad on Saturdays to check the crops. Initially, Kristin wasn't planning on staying in the business, but wanted to be a business consultant instead. "It's not what I was planning on, but it's a fit."

Kristin uses the things she studied in her undergraduate and graduate degrees in her work, which include pre-med, industrial engineering, psychology, and operations management: "I understood dynamics, and numbers, so I do that every day." She was previously more involved in retail, but has had to evolve into different roles. Sometimes she even finds herself holding dual roles. Her finance, Blake Gray, wanted her to price some equipment for him. She joked that she had to juggle making money for the business while keeping the money at home. "I work in a competing relationship with my future husband," which she says is an interesting perspective, selling the products on one

end and seeing very much how the sale turns out on the other.

Theresa has no plans to retire: "I love what I do and I'll do it as long as I am able to do it. When Tom died we wondered what the future was, but I wanted to continue doing what I was doing. I wanted to keep it in the family."

Kristin agrees and adds that each family that merged to create Legacy Equipment in 2010 has been in the business for at least three generations: Crysler, Riggans, and Bazzells. Today, they agree the family atmosphere is what makes Legacy special, adding that customers become family. "We have the opportunity to get to know our customers and develop a relationship," Theresa said. "We take good care of our customers and all our employees feel this way."

In order to better care for their customers, they have plans to add an 18,000 square foot service department and will remodel the facility. Kristin agrees: "We have fun here. Everybody we work with is family. We are all 100 percent invested and working toward a common goal." Legacy is also proud to be a product sponsor statewide, paying employees to go to school to learn to fix the equipment, a skill in high demand.

Theresa and Kristin are both active members of the community. Theresa is a member of First United Methodist Church, as is Kristin. She has served as past chamber president, was on the ASU Alumni Association board, served on the ASU Homecoming Committee, was an AMMC Ambassador, and has served on various chamber committees.

The role Theresa is most proud of is that of mother: She is also mom to David, and Jody Kirk Horton.

Kristin is also an AMMC Ambassador, a graduate of Leadership Paragould Class 13, president of the Junior Auxiliary, and served as team captain of the chamber membership drive. Kristin has a daughter, Kirkley, who is 3 1/2 and whose favorite color is John Deere green. Kristin loves to dance, read, jazzercise, and do ballet with her daughter at night. Both are natives of Paragould.

Will Kirkley keep the family business going? That's up to her, according to Kristin, but she can because of what her mother and grandmother did before her.



A legacy for Kirkley & whoever else wishes to follow.



Rebecca Leathers

Leathers Transportation

BY CAITLIN LAFARLETTE

Leathers Transportation was born from a family's love of trucking and led to a career change for one local woman.

Rebecca Leathers said her husband's experience in trucking led to the creation of their business in 2004, and they now manage frozen food loads for large food corporations.

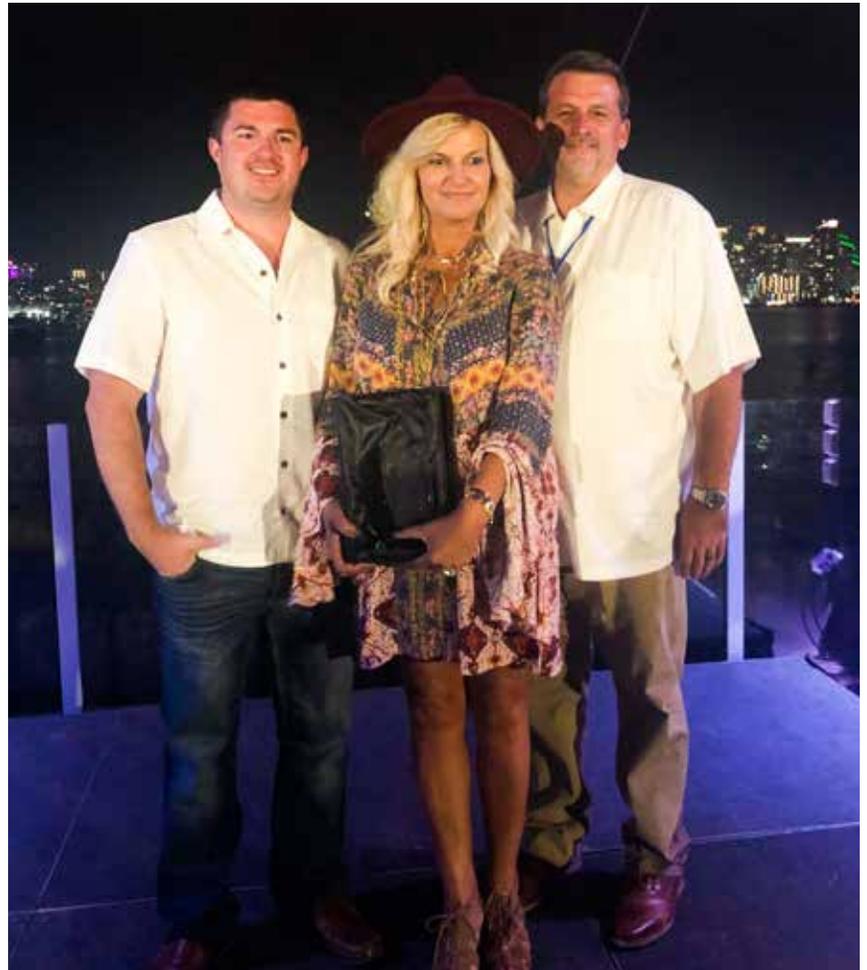
"It has been in his family for several generations and he wanted us to start this business together," she said. "I had been in the insurance industry for 15 years so I had very little knowledge of trucking."

Leathers said there was no training or education required for the career switch, "just a lot of trial and error."

Challenges naturally arise with owning a business and for Leathers, the biggest one is proving herself every single day.

"The pressure to get the job done and meet your customers' expectations is tough, and it is a very competitive industry," she said.

And with Covid hitting in the last year demands have increased dramatically. "I feel that sometimes truckers don't get the respect or recognition they deserve trying to get our essential items distributed across America with the challenges they face with shippers, receivers, weather and breakdowns," Leathers said. "I can't thank our truckers enough for all that they do."



Rebecca, her husband Derrick, and son Josh accepting the President's Club Award last year in California

Despite those obstacles, Leathers said being a freight broker in the trucking industry is very rewarding and enjoyable.

She added that finding a balance between work and life is something she is still working on, as there is no “shutting it off” because all work responsibility falls on the owner at the end of the day.

“I have an amazing team and am very thankful for each of them,” Leathers said. “However, the buck stops with you as the owner.”

Outside of work, however, Leathers said she enjoys cooking, spending time with family, traveling and being on the water, whether that is swimming, going to the beach or even kayaking.

Her favorite part of owning her business is the satisfaction of building a legacy.

“Putting your heart and soul into it when you started with nothing and looking back and seeing you’re building something is pretty amazing,” she said.

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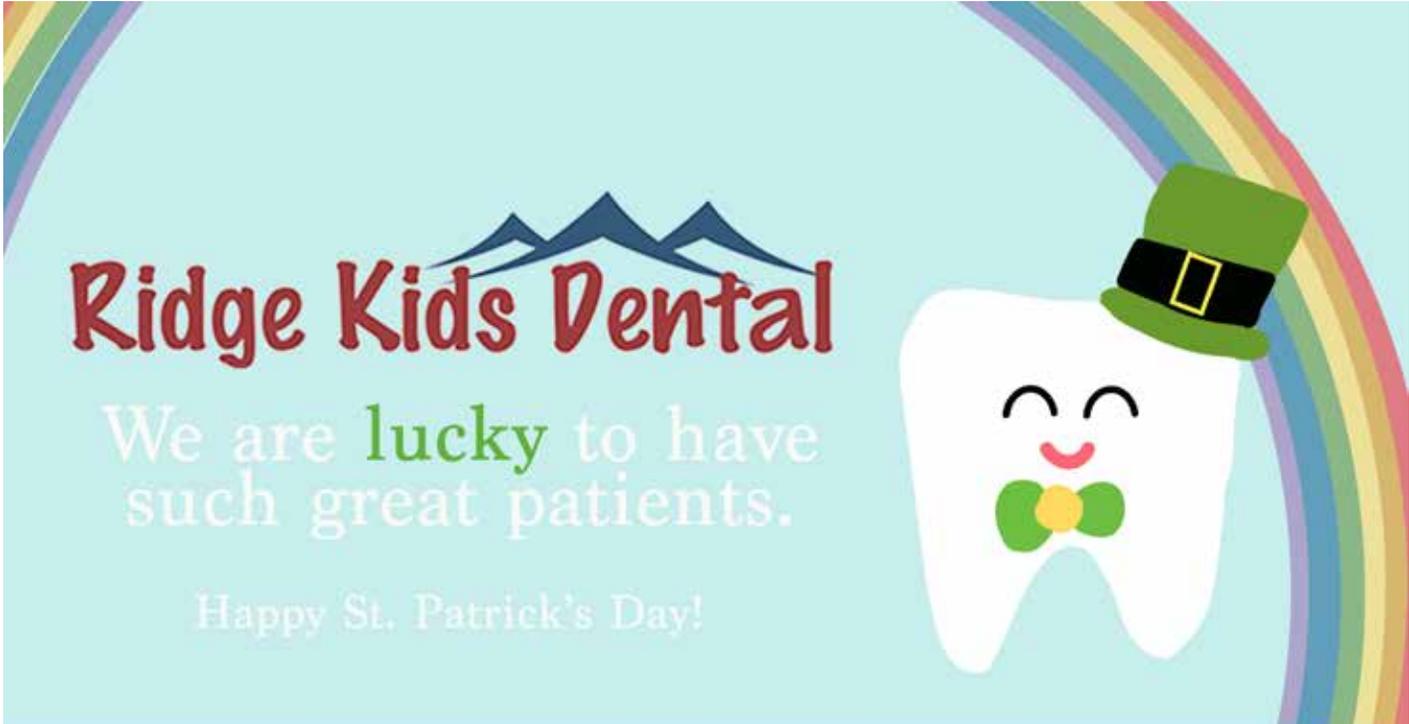
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Serving Community

The Wilson Cooperative Club

BY LINDSEY SPENCER

Filling needs within their community is the heart and soul of the Wilson Cooperative Club. Their mission, to “Promote cordial cooperation among women in our community and the mutual improvement of our members, as well as develop civil and cultural life within the community,” helps guide them in their efforts.

According to Traci Price, current president of the club, the group of women seeks to study the problems of current interest and address them accordingly.

“When we see a need in our community, we figure out what can be done,” Traci explained. “Then we let the community know and try to get everyone involved.” Donations and fundraisers make it possible to address needs like filling backpacks, serving meals to families in need, and collecting blankets for the nursing home.

“Our motto is, ‘We need you; you need us,’” Traci shared of the mutual relationship between the club and the community it serves.

Mary Frances Cullom, Traci Price, and Kittie Palmer





Founded by six women in 1914, it is the oldest of its kind in Mississippi County and one of the oldest in Arkansas. Originally, meetings took place weekly in the homes of the women with the mission to learn “home arts” such as sewing, canning, interior decorating, etc. They officially adopted their name in 1916 and in 1920 the niece of R.E.L. Wilson, fondly referred to as Aunt Dodie, convinced her uncle to allow the use of the local schoolhouse for their meetings. The clubhouse remains the organization’s home today, and in 2015 it was placed on the National Register of Historic Places.

The women’s club strives to better the community in a variety of ways, some of which are meant to serve those in need and some of which are designed to benefit the town as a whole and get others involved.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 42

 A large advertisement for Paragould Animal Clinic. The background is a close-up, high-angle shot of a brown, long-haired dog's face, looking down. The dog's fur is detailed and textured.

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Small festivals, like the Spring Festival and the Halloween Carnival, are free offerings during the year that help promote community. The Yard of the Month Contest during Christmas seeks to motivate people to do small things that make the town as a whole sparkle with cheer. And regular fundraisers help everyone get involved in big and small ways.

"Our club is a strong force in meeting the needs of our community," Traci shared. "We offer scholarships to our local high school, provide help to our local backpack program, as well as support our local library. We help families at Thanksgiving and Christmas with meals and gifts for the children that may not be able to do for themselves.

A little hard work and a few good deeds can go a long, long way. Traci and other members hope their work directly impacts many lives, but there are some indirect positive impacts as well.

"It's always so uplifting to see the pride, and the happy faces," Traci said. "We like to [share our work] with the community in hope it inspires them to do more for the community, too."

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*Bob
Marcotte*

Bob Marcotte



BY RICHARD BRUMMETT

Bob Marcotte has had a hand in building houses large and small ... some really, really small.

With seven daughters in his and his wife Helen's family, the accomplished builder was bound to feel compelled to construct doll houses and play houses and much more, and from there other ideas just sprang up. Now 90, Bob takes pride in some of the displays he has made for all to see.

After returning from active duty in the Korean War, Bob said he needed a job and

finally decided learning a trade was his best option. He worked for a home builder in Illinois as a laborer and after four years was invited to join the carpenters union, at the same time attending night school under the GI Bill and majoring in Business. "After a couple of years I became the part-time apprenticeship instructor for the local union," he said, "and held that position for about 14 years. This led to a full-time job as a building trades instructor in an area career center. I did that for seven years, during which I completed my schooling and received a BA degree. This opened the door to a salaried position with Bank

Building and Equipment Corp. as a project manager.”

Bob retired in 1989 but that didn't mean he could ignore the needs of kids and grandkids. While he was still working full-time the girls were at home and “all needed doll houses. After they moved on and had their own children, I made more houses for the grandchildren. I also made other things for the children and my brother's children. Woodworking sort of became my passion.”

And because of that, lots of visitors to area state parks and museums can see his handiwork. After his retirement, the Marcottes moved to Arkansas and traveled the state and Bob found himself developing “a love for history and old items of interest. This led me to become a volunteer at the ASU Museum, where they asked me to design a platform for the Mastodon skeleton in their main lobby,” he said. “With the help of their maintenance department, we got it completed as it is seen today. Also, I designed the stepped display at the museum for the farm implements, with the removable windows. That occurred about 1998.

“In our travels, I became fascinated with the old log cabin in Norfolk. I'd see it every time I went to the White River to fish. This came to mind whenever I'd build another doll house. Just for fun, I created a little log home with furniture to be raffled off at a church function. It brought a fair price as several had bid on it. I also received an order to build another for an individual. With this interest in these small log cabins, I made up another and took it to the museum at the Old Davidson State Park and asked if they'd be interested in receiving it. They said it was perfect to use to teach children about how people had to live when they landed in this area. Another time when I visited the state park, they indicated that they would like a replica of the old two-story home at Norfolk. It has quite a history. I made it and it is on display behind glass.”

The miniature version of the historic Wolf House displayed at the state park was featured in a summer edition of Union Carpenter Magazine, along with a recap of Bob's efforts on the project, which took more than 100 hours to complete.

His former employer, Bank Building Corp., is a design build architectural firm with a history of over 100 years. It's chief function is to design and build banks,



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yet in his time with the company he also oversaw an addition to a hospital and the construction of a small church, and supervised work on buildings in more than seven states and even Saudi Arabia.

On the home front, in addition to the doll houses Bob also made knick-knack shelves, a child-size sleigh and storage cases for his kids. For others in the family he has constructed headboards, an entertainment center, and "many small projects for our 26 grandchildren. I might add that at last count, I believe we have four great-grandkids."

Bob said he and his wife lived in Cherokee Village for about 10 years before moving to Paragould to be close to good medical facilities. "So we bought a new home from a young home builder, Keith White," Bob said. "We became good friends and, seeing I needed something to do, he put me to work doing cleanup and minor trim work. He also tapped my skills to design custom window trim, shutters, etc. I loved it and was with him for over 10 years."

Today Bob's expertise is on display for all to admire at different points around Northeast Arkansas, maybe even in their own homes.

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Good Nutrition As We Age

BY KARAN SUMMITT

March is National Nutrition Month, a good time for older Americans to step back and take stock of our eating habits. In every stage of life good nutrition is fundamental to good health, especially during later years. Getting older tends to bring on new dietary challenges — challenges that can speed up aging and aggravate chronic diseases.

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FIBROMYALGIA

What is fibromyalgia?

Fibromyalgia is a chronic health condition that causes pain and tenderness in your soft tissue and muscles. It can also lead to generalized exhaustion and mental distress, like depression and anxiety.

Fibromyalgia is often misdiagnosed as an arthritic condition, but it doesn't cause the same joint damage or inflammation as arthritis.

Researchers theorize that people with fibromyalgia are more sensitive to pain because of the way their brains and spinal cords amplify pain signals.

What are the symptoms of fibromyalgia?

Each person reacts differently to fibromyalgia. Though it's similar to arthritis, fibromyalgia affects soft tissue, not the joints. Often, a pain signal misinterpretation in the brain causes pain. The most common symptoms include:
Memory loss
Chronic fatigue syndrome
Chronic inflammatory response syndrome
Morning stiffness
Irritable bowel syndrome (IBS)
Insomnia
Tenderness throughout your body
Muscle pain, twitching, burning, or tightness
Anxiety and depression
Bladder issues

You can develop fibromyalgia at any age, but it's most often diagnosed during middle age. You may be at greater risk of developing fibromyalgia if you have lupus or rheumatoid arthritis.

There's also some evidence of a genetic link to the chronic pain condition, which means your risk of fibromyalgia may be greater if it runs in your family.

NEUROPATHY

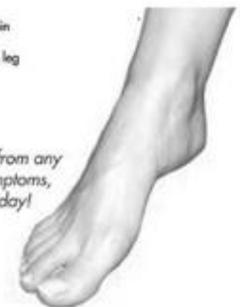
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So, let's talk about good nutrition as we age, beginning with factors that can impact eating patterns in ways we seldom think about when we are younger.

Dental Health: Loss of teeth and poor fitting dentures are just a few of the dental issues that can impact eating and lead to a vicious cycle of malnutrition. Swallowing can become difficult also.

Loss of Appetite, Taste or Smell: Normal aging, certain illnesses, a lack of activity and some medications may make favorite foods seem bland or even become distasteful.

Loss of Strength and Mobility: It takes time, effort and energy to prepare food. Seniors may simply not feel like preparing healthy meals. The simplest task, like putting a dish in the microwave, can feel like it is not worth the effort when weighed against chronic pain or having to maneuver a walking aid.

Mental Issues: Loneliness and depression, as well as forms of dementia, have an effect on senior eating patterns. All of these may dampen their desire to eat, as well as their ability to choose and prepare a healthy meal.

Financial Hardships: Seniors living on a low fixed income may find themselves lacking the financial resources for a healthy diet. Malnutrition contributes to declines in health, reduced physical and mental abilities and an increased risk for premature death.

These reasons create real dietary challenges for seniors, but there are also practical ways for dealing with the problem. The best first step is to talk to a doctor, who may be able to diagnose an underlying condition or alter a medication that could be contributing to the problem.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 50



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Here are some everyday tips for getting the nutrition we need as we age:

1

Make meals and snacks nutrient dense: Bypass the chips and sweets for vegetable rich meals, soups and choose fruit for snacks. Nut butters, whole grain crackers and reduced-fat dairy foods like string cheese are also good choices.

2

Eat smaller, more frequent meals:

Big meals can lead to indigestion. Long hours alone can lead to boredom. Smaller meals spread 5-6 times throughout the day can be a big help, especially when battling low appetite levels.

3

Season with herbs and spices, plant-based oils and natural sweeteners.

Not only are these options a healthier way for all of us to eat, but they add delicious flavor to our foods, helping offset a reduced sense of taste or smell.

4

Avoid an eating rut. Humans are never more creatures of habit than with the foods we eat.

One of the best ways to boost nutrition is to eat a wide range of healthy foods. Take advantage of seasonal fruits and vegetables, grocery store meat specials and different ethnic dishes. Even the humble potato comes in red, gold and russet and can be prepared endless ways.

5

Talk to your doctor about supplementing with a nutrition drink or multi-purpose vitamins.

6

Eat with others. As much as possible, find opportunities to eat with others. Get with neighbors for a community meal, take advantage of senior centers and accept invitations to eat with family or friends.

7

Explore area meal and food services for seniors.

Many communities have a Meals on Wheels program for home deliveries, serve meals at a senior center, support a local food bank or have churches with food pantries. All of these can help seniors on fixed incomes or with health challenges continue to have access to healthy food.

During the golden years, nutrition is as important as ever in helping us protect our health and have the best quality of life possible. Giving our body the right nutrients can help us stay active and independent. It also means we spend less time and money at the doctor, leaving us with the energy and resources to do the things we love!



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AcuteHealth at Home

St. Bernard's Medical Center received approval from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) recently to begin providing hospital-level care within patients' homes.

The program, St. Bernard's AcuteHealth at Home (SBAH), gives eligible patients the care they need at home, providing time with family and caregivers without visitation restrictions. CMS granted the waiver to St. Bernard's following a rigorous review for protocols, safety and quality assurances. To ensure appropriate at-home hospital care, SBAH care includes daily evaluations from registered nurses, either in person or remotely, and two in-person visits from registered nurses or mobile

integrated health paramedics.

St. Bernard's Healthcare President and CEO Chris Barber said the hospital will begin accepting its first home patients within the coming weeks.

"We anticipate this model resulting in improved patient experiences, outcomes and reduced healthcare costs as individuals receive hospital-level care from the comforts of home," Barber said. "St. Bernard's appreciates CMS granting this waiver and the vision the agency shares with Provider Health Systems to improve patient care throughout Arkansas."

SBAH-eligible patients require admittance from an emergency department or an

inpatient hospital bed. In addition, they receive screenings for both medical and non-medical factors, including the presence of working utilities, an assessment of physical barriers and a review of domestic violence concerns.

As background, SBAH operates within CMS's Acute Hospital Care at Home program and its parent program, Hospital without Walls. Hospital without Walls, launched in March 2020, provides flexibility for hospitals to provide services in locations beyond existing facilities. Meanwhile, the Acute Hospital Care at Home program, launched in November 2020, expands its parent program by allowing health systems to treat eligible patients at home.

CMS Administrator Seema Verma said a new level of crisis response with COVID-19 prompted the agency to leverage innovations and technology so healthcare systems can increase capacity while making sure patients get the care they need.

"With new areas across the country experiencing significant challenges to the capacity of their care systems," Administrator Verma said, "our job is to make sure that CMS regulations are not standing in the way of patient care for COVID-19 and beyond."

To date, 63 acute-care hospitals across the country have applied for and received a waiver from CMS for the Acute Hospital Care at Home program.

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50 Years... And Counting!

BY RICHARD BRUMMETT



If you walk into the Paragould H&R Block tax preparation services office and Sharon Johnston looks familiar to you, that's because she was also there last year. And the year before that. And the year before that and the year before that ...

"This year makes fifty years," the affable Sharon said, "and counting ... they won't let me quit."

"They" could mean everyone from her co-workers to her clients, all drawn to her year after year because of her knack for numbers and conversation. No one is allowed to sit across the desk from Sharon and remain quiet; while she taps away at the computer keyboard she grills customers about how their lives are going, where they've been, what they've done.

"I actually have some third generation clients," Sharon said. "I love my people and they love me. They come to see me when they bring in their returns and tell me what's going on in their lives."

When she was a young person, her mother introduced her to Betty Ring "who

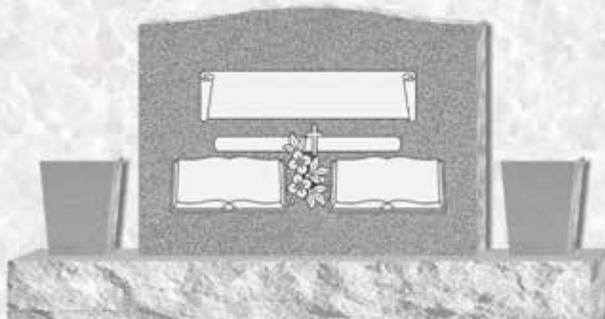


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ran her own tax service for seems like 100 years. She did Mom's taxes and my mother said she thought I could learn to do that. She sent me, for \$50, to tax school and I learned how to do taxes and now I owe it all to Betty Ring. I was just a baby, in my early 20s. I hit the big birthday last year -- I turned 70 -- so I've been doing this most of my life."

During that time Sharon has seen the manner of preparation change drastically, moving from pencils and paper to the current computer-generated returns. "We had a copy machine, like a mimeograph machine like we had when we were in school," she said, thinking back to her earliest days in the business. "We had to use clear paper, like onion skin paper, to make copies on and we had erasers and pencils. I can take you all the way back to

when we had calculators on the desk, and calculators are dinosaurs now. At the end of the day we still had to enter everything into the computer. Once electronic filing started we had to send everything off but we could print checks then. People would line up waiting to get those refund checks, and one guy even chased the UPS truck down the street wanting to know if it had checks for our office. It was so crazy, but we quit printing checks."

Not long after entering the field, Sharon was put in charge of H&R Block's Trumann office. She looks back on those days now as both educational and awe inspiring.

"At first we did everything by hand," she recalled. "I was just a kid but we learned how to do those returns quickly and efficiently. If there were no problems, for

a simple return I could probably do thirty to forty in a day sometimes. We actually used to have a contest to see who could do the most. I could do twenty-five easy, lots of times more. Now, it's a little more complicated with all the changes that come out from one year to the next ... there's still a lot of extra information all the time ... but I can still do twenty-five or thirty and still answer all the questions the customer has."

All while asking questions of her own, learning more about the life of the person sitting across from her. She calls the move to computers the biggest change she has witnessed in the industry, thanking technology for a machine that stores so much information.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 56

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"I think H&R Block has the best system there is," she said. "If you key in a zip code and it knows it does not match that city, it alerts you. The diagnostics say you need to check on that before you go any further. The first year, oh my gosh, we had to key in every little thing. The computer saves it all now; I put in your ID number and it pulls in all your information. It can store so much knowledge and saves us a lot of steps."

Describing herself as "one who likes to get things done and likes to figure out things. This goes here and this goes there and if I figure it out the client doesn't have to deal with the IRS," she admits the last couple of years have tested just about everyone. Even through a pandemic and this year's

immense snow storms, Sharon said the show must go on.

"Taxes still have to be done," she said. "Last year was the strangest year I've lived through. They extended deadlines and a lot of people didn't understand all that the way they needed to and it got to be a mess, and now this year we're in what is our busiest time right now and we had to close because of weather. There are changes every year. We can do virtual filing this year. You can call us up and we can look at you and see that it's really you and go from there. Technology is crazy."

Maybe so, but her favorite part never changes: her people. "The best part is the people," she said. "I'd rather see the

people than have them drop their return off. I get to find out what's going on and they say, 'Did you get to travel this year?' or 'Where are you going next year?' They know I love to travel whenever I can. They're my people, so I love them. I plan to keep doing this as long as I have my faculties and it's not hard and they're not asking complicated questions," she said with a laugh.

"My official title, I guess, is Tax Specialist. I think it's the hierarchy of the years you've worked. I'm not a tax consultant, I'm a tax specialist. It sounds really good, but I still live at Goobertown; I do taxes. I'm just Sharon."

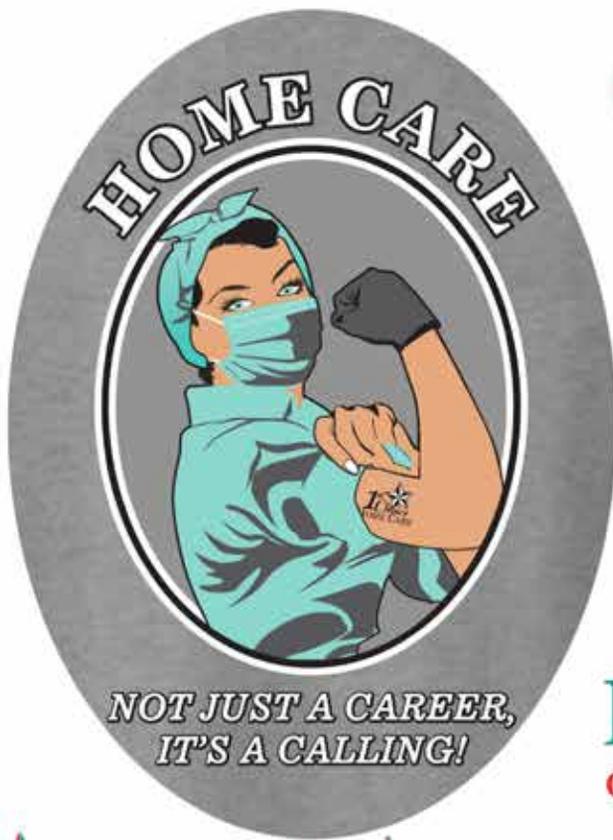
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Seniors & Vaccines

BY RICHARD BRUMMETT

With many seniors in the Northeast Arkansas area having elected to take the COVID-19 vaccination, questions still abound for them and for those straddling the fence in regard to whether or not to participate.

Local doctors and pharmacists have fielded numerous calls and queries about the process and its side effects, and then Mother Nature stepped in to complicate matters further by hampering travel plans to and from vaccination sites. If those phone lines are busy when seniors need information quickly, the Arkansas Department of Health can provide answers on its website.

According to the ADH, some of the most often-asked questions are:

1. What if my vaccine appointment is postponed because of weather?

Inclement weather in Arkansas may cause COVID-19 vaccination appointments to be postponed. Seniors are advised to reach out to the pharmacy or clinic to reschedule. If it delays their second dose, there will still be time to get it. Second doses can be administered up to six weeks after the first dose for both the Pfizer and the Moderna vaccines. The second dose should not be administered before the minimum interval – 21 days after the first Pfizer dose and 28 days after the first Moderna dose.

2. When will the COVID-19 vaccine be available to me?

Arkansas is in the early stages of Phase 1-B, which means those 70 or older and those who work in education -- including K-12, child care and higher ed -- can get vaccinated. There is a limited supply of vaccine in the state and it will take time before there is enough for everyone who wishes to be vaccinated. Additional supplies arrive each week, and will be made available as quickly as possible.



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3. Why should I get the COVID-19 vaccine?

Rigorous studies have found the Moderna and Pfizer COVID-19 vaccines to be safe and effective. Getting the vaccine will keep you healthy, and it represents the best option for returning to normal.

4. Are the COVID-19 vaccines safe?

The vaccines have been found to be safe and effective and have been authorized for emergency use in the United States. COVID-19 vaccines have been tested in large clinical trials to make sure they meet safety standards. The FDA reviews all safety data from the clinical trials and authorizes emergency vaccines use. Next, ACIP, a CDC advisory committee, reviews all safety data before recommending any COVID-19 vaccine for use. Both FDA and CDC continue to monitor safety of COVID-19 vaccines.

5. What are the side effects of COVID-19 vaccines?

Your arm may be sore, red or warm to touch after COVID-19 vaccine as with any vaccine. Fever, headache (sign that your immune system is building up protection to COVID-19 disease) and muscle aches are common side effects of the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine. What about long-term side effects? FDA and CDC are continuing to monitor for safety, to make sure even long-term side effects are identified. If a safety issue is detected, immediate action will take place to determine if the issue is related to the COVID-19 vaccine and determine the best course of action.

6. If I have had 2 doses of COVID-19 vaccine and have close contact with a positive case, do I need to quarantine?

Yes. While experts learn more about the protection that COVID-19 vaccines provide under real-life conditions, it will be important for everyone to continue using all the tools available to help stop this pandemic, like covering your mouth and nose with a mask, washing hands often, staying at least 6 feet away from others and quarantining if you have close contact with a positive case. Together, COVID-19 vaccination and following CDC's recommendations for how to protect yourself and others will offer the best protection from getting and spreading COVID-19.

7. Can the COVID-19 vaccine give someone COVID-19 disease?

No, COVID-19 vaccines cannot give someone COVID-19 disease. They do not contain the virus that causes COVID-19.

8. When can I stop wearing a mask after I receive the COVID-19 vaccine?

During a pandemic people should continue to wear a mask that covers their nose and mouth when in contact with others outside your household, when at healthcare facilities and when receiving any vaccine including COVID-19 vaccine. People who have been vaccinated should continue to wear their masks and social distance until we know whether people who get the vaccine can be carriers that can still spread the virus.

9. Do I have to pay for the COVID-19 vaccine?

COVID-19 vaccine doses will be given to the American people with no cost. However, vaccine providers will be able to bill insurance companies for administration fees for giving or administering the shot to someone.

10. What if I receive a COVID-19 vaccine and then have close contact with a positive COVID-19 case before I get my second COVID-19 vaccine, should I quarantine?

Yes, stay home for 14 days after your last contact with a person who has COVID-19. Watch for fever (100.4°F), cough, shortness of breath, or other symptoms of COVID-19. Stay away from others, especially people who are at higher risk for getting very sick from COVID-19. Continue to wear a mask, stay at least 6 feet from others, wash your hands, avoid crowds, and take other steps to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

It is highly recommended that seniors stay in touch with their local doctors and pharmacists for specific treatment options. Additional educational material is available, as are more common questions and answers on the COVID-19 vaccines, on the Department of Health website, or viewers may use the search box to find specific information. The FAQ sections will be updated often as new information becomes available.

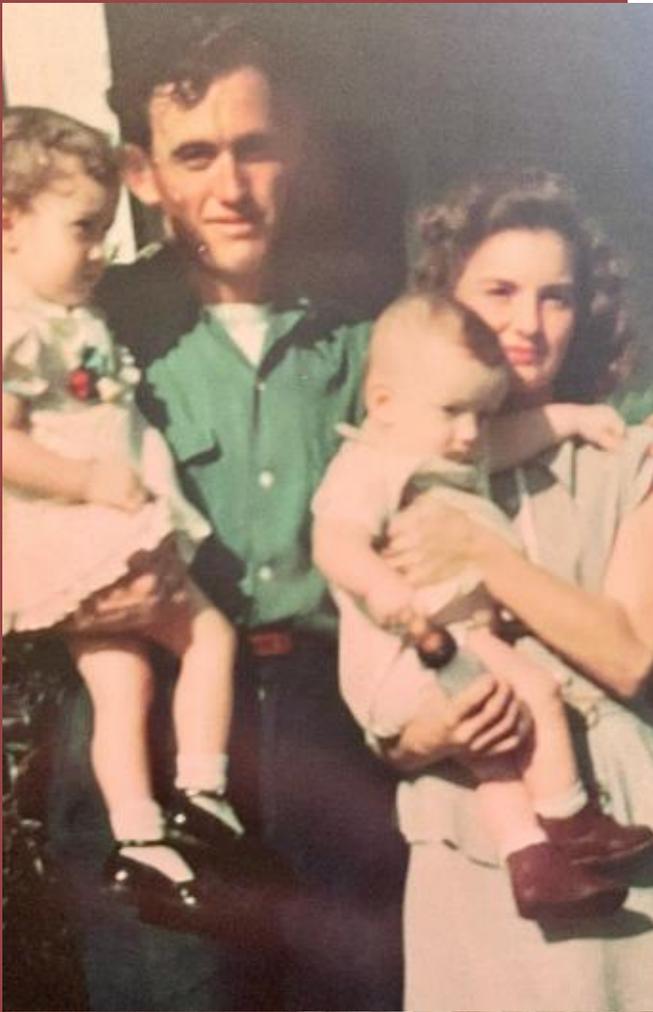


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Love Story



Dierksen Hospice would like to introduce Mr. Milton and Mrs. Dean Cooper. Milton and Dean have been married for 73 years. They were wed on January 11, 1948, at the Baptist Church in Trumann, Arkansas. Amber Nolen, Licensed Social Worker for Dierksen Hospice, asked a few questions many would like to know including, "What is your secret?" They smiled and said, "There is no secret to a lasting marriage – it takes pushing through the hard times and compassion for one another." Milton added, "And never go to bed mad."

Question: How did you meet?

Answer: Milton was driving down the road and saw Dean walking with a friend and he had to stop. He added, "I told her I loved her first."

Question: How old were you when you got married?

Answer: Dean – 15!

Question: Who is the better driver?

Answer: Dean – "He used to be, but now I am."

Question: How does Milton like his steak cooked?

Answer: Dean – "By himself, he cooks his own steaks."

Question: What was the first meal your wife cooked for you?

Answer: Milton – "Beans."

Question: What is some good advice to share with newlyweds?

Answer: "You've got to push to make it in this world from start to finish."

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HAPPENINGS



On January, 19, representatives from Frito Lay, Winston Payne and Casey Grissom, spoke to BRTC's Industrial Maintenance students on both campuses about an upcoming internship opportunity with the company. The internship program will give BRTC students an opportunity to expand their technical and career skills while applying concepts taught in the classroom to real-world experiences. The representatives stated that Frito Lay hopes this partnership with BRTC will develop a strong pipeline of local technical talent for them.

Glendall Floyd and Ray Maynard, President and Vice President of the Lawrence County Amateur Club, were guest speakers for the Law Enforcement Training Academy at Black River Technical College. Floyd and Maynard discussed the uses of Amateur Radio – emphasizing that it can be used for public service. Floyd explained that amateur radio has been used during national emergencies and during local emergencies when other forms of communication were not possible, which is where amateur radio got its motto, "When All Else Fails."

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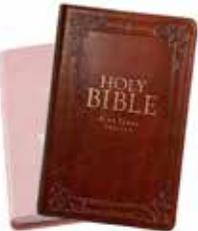


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Info: @ccjpl on Facebook

April 3

Green Fest

When: April 3rd from 8 a.m. - 12 p.m.

Where: Downtown Jonesboro

Info: Jonesboro Regional Chamber of Commerce on Facebook

Stay Tuned

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

Gavin Fields prepares to hurl a snowball after a winter storm left Northeast Arkansas covered in snow mid-February.



BIRTHS



Tripp Adkerson

Proud parents Cameron and Baylee Adkerson of Paragould welcomed newborn, Tripp Adkerson, into the world on January 22, 2021.

Tripp was delivered at NEA Baptist Memorial Hospital, weighed 7 pounds, 8 ounces and measured 20 inches long.

Photo by Hailey and Alan Photography

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Brittany Murray is a co-owner and lead esthetician at Rouge Spa & Salon.

She completed school at Cosmetology School

of Designing Arts and has several hours accumulated in continuing education.

Brittany is a past president Rotary Club of Paragould and a graduate of Leadership Paragould. Brittany was named a Paul Harris Fellow in 2016. She has also been voted Paragould's Best Esthetician for the last 4 years in a row.

Brittany is married to Jake Murray. They have a beautiful daughter, Zalie Murray and handsome son, Tripp Murray.



Meet our co-owner and lead massage therapist, Shawnda Weaver. Shawnda graduated from Northeast Arkansas School of Massage. She has numerous hours in continuing education courses and a real passion as a wellness therapist.

Shawnda was voted "Best Massage Therapist" for Premiere Magazine in 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, and 2020. She was voted "Best Massage" in 2020 by Best Of NEA.

Shawnda married Grant Weaver in April of 2018. They are expecting a baby boy in August 2021. We are proud to have Shawnda Weaver, Master Massage Therapist, on our team!

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Next Month

Volunteers



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Babies



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