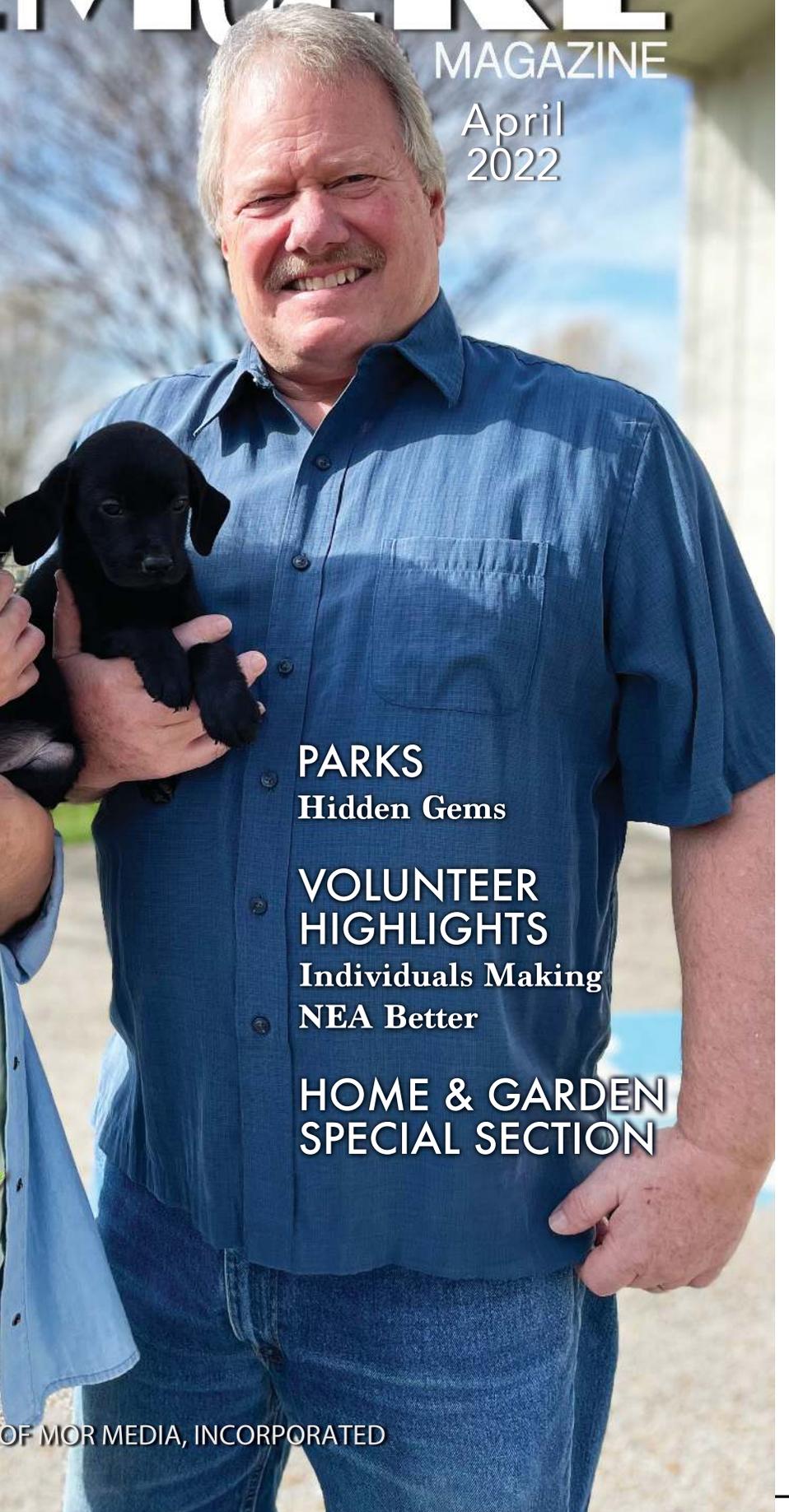


NEA'S

PREMIERE

MAGAZINE

April
2022



*Honoring
Volunteers*

PARKS

Hidden Gems

VOLUNTEER HIGHLIGHTS

Individuals Making
NEA Better

HOME & GARDEN SPECIAL SECTION

A PUBLICATION OF MOR MEDIA, INCORPORATED

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Cover Photo by Lindsey Spencer

A HANDFUL OF REASONS TO OPEN A YOUTH SAVINGS ACCOUNT



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From the Manager



If you've ever listened to me and my co-host, Natalie, on Explore MOR Tuesday on Jill @ 99.3, you know I love every edition of Premiere. Each Tuesday Natalie asks me what's in the current edition of Premiere and each time I get excited and tell her why the latest issue is one of my favorites and each time she teases me and asks if, yet again, the current one has somehow topped the last.

I love each edition of Premiere, because what a pleasure it is to share NEA's good news, but listen... LISTEN: I love this edition of Premiere. It's a really, really great one. And there are a couple of reasons why.

This issue has a Home & Garden Special Section and let me just say that if I didn't have a career I love in the realm of content creation, I think I'd pursue something in interior design. It is so much FUN to look at pictures of homes, gardens, yards, etc. Perhaps the coolest thing is that there are approximately a billion different ways a space can be done, and no way is the wrong way.

You get to make your home YOUR style, and add YOUR flair. And, you can change it anytime you want! I hope you'll flip through the section and find a little inspiration, and remember to support the businesses that help make this publication possible!

The overall theme for this edition is volunteers and, honestly, I don't even have all the right words to describe my awe for those who give of their time so selflessly to serve their community in different ways. Next time you enjoy a park, or an event, or receive a service made possible by volunteers, I hope you will remember what a big impact simple acts can make.

Thank you everyone who creates and supports NEA's good news. Y'all make every issue the best issue.

Lindsey Spencer

Manager of Creative Content

A dark grey Ford Bronco is parked on a rocky path in a forest. The car is the central focus, with the Ford logo in the top right corner. The name 'Glen Sain' is written in a large, white, cursive font in the top left. At the bottom, there is text: 'BEST PRICE BEST SERVICE' on the left, and '870.236.8546 | 1301 US 49 GLENSAINFORD.NET' on the right.

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publisher/advertising sales

Dina Mason |
dina@mormediainc.com

contributing writers

Richard Brummett |
brummettr34@gmail.com
Caitlin LaFarlette |
caitlin_lafarlette@hotmail.com
Chuck Long |
Charles.Long@agfc.ar.gov
Jared Pickney |
jared@fellowshipparagould.com
Linda Lou Moore |
manners@paragould.net
Karoline Risker |
karole17@hotmail.com

content manager/designer

Lindsey Spencer |
lindsey@mormediainc.com

advertising sales team

Dina Mason | dina@mormediainc.com
Perry Mason | perry@mormediainc.com
Brian Osborn | brian@mormediainc.com
Natalie Harrell | natalie@mormediainc.com
Brett Carlile | brett@mormediainc.com



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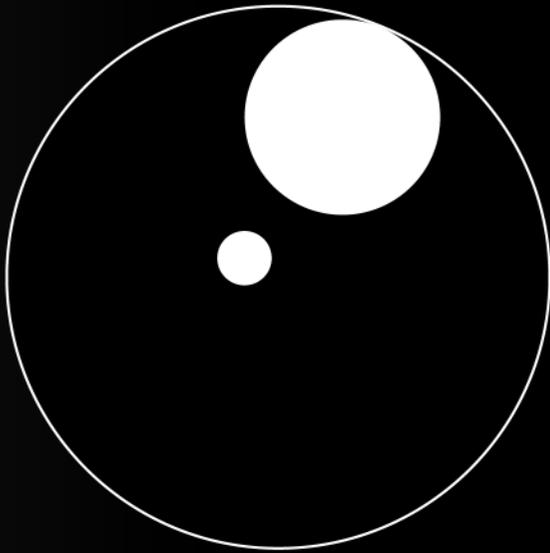
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Northeast Arkansas

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a photo contest

Enter your photo for the chance to see your photo run in the May edition of Premiere Magazine, for the chance to be featured on the cover of the June edition, and for the chance to be featured in the hall at the Bradbury Art Museum. A reception will be held at the end of May to celebrate the photography.

To submit your photo, look for the post on Premiere Magazine OR the Bradbury Art Museum's Facebook post.

*Amateurs only - professional photographers will not be officially entered.

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When I was in high school I made the mistake of acting appropriately around teachers and because of that I got to represent our school at some seminars and functions centering on topics like citizenship, patriotism, community service and some other things I can't remember. None of those were among my top interests at the time; I preferred lunch, basketball and looking at pretty girls, not necessarily in that order.

I guess the lectures worked, however, because up to now I have had no desires to overthrow the government or sell secrets to a foreign nation. While I can't recall too much of what I was being told -- I do vividly remember thinking sitting through a few hours of leadership lectures was much better than trying to translate stories about The Appian Way in Latin class -- there was one guy who in today's terminology would have been a motivational speaker at one of the sessions. The gist of his presentation was to encourage us young people to set goals and let nothing stand in our way until we attained them.

"Never, never, NEVER give up on your dreams," he said as he walked off the stage waving to a seemingly appreciative audience. I took that powerful sentence to heart and have walked that walk for all these many

years but now I have decided if no major league baseball team calls and offers me a contract by next Friday, I'm moving on to Plan B.

Never is a long time and represents a slippery slope. All my life my elders have advised me to never say never, so I never do. That's because as sure as you blurt out a "never" something happens that makes it a "sometime" and your credibility has evaporated. So, while not absolutely certain I will never do some things, I am pretty sure there are some where you won't find my participation.

I don't see myself ever standing in front of my church's congregation singing a solo. When I was little I assumed I could sing, belting out the *ABC Song* and *Mary Had A Little Lamb* with the best of them. Then one day my sister got a tape recorder and asked me to join her in a duet, and when I heard the playback I was shocked. The female voice sounded like one belonging to someone who could sing; mine sounded like I missed out on the final cut for Hee Haw and was completely off-key.

So now I don't sing. There are times when I'm alone in my truck and I join in with the band on the radio but even then I usually hit a note that makes me look around the truck to see if anyone heard it. I used to attend a church where almost every Sunday someone marched up in front of us all and announced, "The Lord told me to sing this song today," and my first thought was, "Man, the Lord talks to you guys a lot more than he does to me." My second was that if I dared to do such a thing I would have a voicemail on my phone awaiting me with the message: "Richard, this is the Lord. Don't ever do that again."

While I can't prove I will never take a picture of my food, I am pretty certain I won't. I just don't see myself taking a steak off the grill

and pulling out my phone to put a picture on social media as I see so many people do. Similarly, I can't picture myself being served an order in a restaurant and popping off a quick photo, posting it on Facebook and labeling it "Lunch!"

For one thing, I don't consider myself important enough to be navigating my daily passage through life and suddenly thinking, "I bet everybody is wondering what I'm eating. I better take a picture!" Along those same lines, I can't see myself watching a sporting event on TV -- something that takes up about 90 percent of my time -- and pulling out my phone and typing my thoughts about the players, coaches and referees. I'm not certain my opinion about a game being played two time zones away is vital to anyone's existence.

I don't even see myself ever taking what so many folks today call a selfie. In my day, if you wanted your picture made you had to do something newsworthy. You needed to win the county spelling bee or hit the winning shot or grow a really odd-shaped vegetable so that some photographer would think, "I need a picture of him."

Nowadays you don't have to do anything except own a phone and just turn it around and photograph yourself, grinning like a fool. No ballgame heroics, no mastering the spelling of foudroyant, no potato that looks like Batman ... just you and the desire to be seen and the means by which to accomplish the task.

Life is different in this day and age. I get it. But I will never understand it, and I feel pretty safe in making that statement.



LIVING A Better Story

BY JARED PICKNEY

Can I have a future worth getting excited about? In the midst of all the brokenness and times of uncertainty, in a world with Covid, death, divorce, shootings, corrupt politicians and all kinds of dysfunction? The question is, can I, in the midst of the pain and the sorrow and unanswered questions of life, lift up my head and discover hope over the horizon?

The truth is this life is hard. We all sin. We all get sinned against. We hurt others and are hurt by others. We have seasons where we feel as though we have been body slammed by life. Eventually we suffer to the point we are weakened, and then we die. Eat your kale. Cut out your gluten.

Do yoga or cross fit or both. But one day, we are all going to draw our last breaths on Earth.

That's the bad news. The good news is that thanks to Jesus, even our death can be much more like a gardener than executioner, freeing us up to experience the life we have been longing to live. A life where we will no longer find ourselves filled with shame, fear and guilt. A life where all sad things will come untrue.

This is why every year Christians around the world celebrate Easter. It serves as a reminder that just as Jesus experienced a death, burial and resurrection, we too, who hope in him, will experience a death, burial and resurrection.

As a result, we will be just as we are now, but with all the sin and imperfections rinsed out of us.

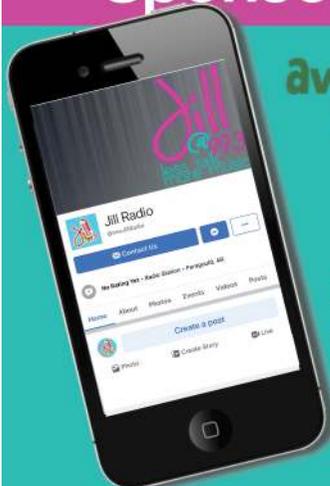
This is why we say, despite what you have been told, that God is not asking you to settle for anything. Rather, He is inviting you to stop settling. He's not offering you some consolation prize. Rather, He is holding out for you, by His grace and mercy through Christ, the future you are longing for. A future that is as durable and rugged and immortal and eternal and glorious as the resurrection of Jesus.

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PET *of the* MONTH

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BY JORDAN AGEЕ

Moose is my two-and-a-half-year-old baby boy. He came into my life when he was around 2 months old, from someone who lived out in the country. I grew up having all kinds of pets, but I have never met an animal like Moose. He is so well-mannered, loves to cuddle, and is amazing with my seven-year-old son who loves to pester him. The only time he is rowdy is when he is playing with our other cat, Louis (two).

I honestly cannot imagine our lives without Moose. His favorite thing to do is sit on the back of the couch and people watch out the window. He is always at the front door waiting to greet me when I get home from work. He also loves to play fetch!





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FISHY STORY
BY CHUCK LONG

There is nothing quite like a good fish story. Fishermen are known for their tales of the big one that got away or a recount of unique experiences that happened on a lake, river or stream. The stories are retold countless times and embellished on occasion to make the fish bigger or the experience more dramatic.

As great as many of those fish stories are, they would have never come to fruition if not for the unique and interesting story of fishing in the Natural State. The story that led to the productive waters of our state is an often overlooked assortment of both great catches and great disappointments.

Arkansas became a state in 1836 and was unofficially coined "The Bear State" due to the prevalence of black bears across the landscape. Deer, turkeys and many small game species were abundant and a wide variety of fish were found in its waters. All of these animals provided food for the explorers who passed through the state or for the early settlers who came to call Arkansas home.

Unfortunately, many folks began to try to capitalize on the wildlife and fish as a business venture. The idea of a quick profit from a bag of animals or a basket of fish took a heavy toll on the populations and a rapid decrease of the resource ensued. By the late 1800s it became evident the resources were in peril.

With fish and wildlife in a dire state, something had to be done. Work began in the late 1800s in the state legislature to save the resources and many laws were geared toward fish. Laws were enacted that banned the use of poisons or explosives to "catch" fish. Laws were also enacted to limit the export of fish, with a focus on protecting the gamefish that remained in the state.



The Arkansas Game and Fish Commission came into existence in 1915 and with that came a governing body to oversee the fish and wildlife of the state. Limits on harvest numbers and license requirements were enacted, but it was evident a much more proactive approach was needed to supplement the remaining populations of fish in the state.

In 1928, the state took a big leap to provide fish for future generations with the construction of a fish hatchery near Lonoke. Production began in 1929 and the hatchery, now known as Joe Hogan Hatchery, is still in operation and is one of five hatcheries operated by the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission. The building of this hatchery provided the first spark to fish culture in Arkansas and the fire continues today for one of the top state fish culture operations in the nation.

Early efforts to replenish fish populations saw some wins and losses for the sportsmen of Arkansas. Trout were originally stocked in the Spring River in the late '20s with minimal success. At the same time a buffalo fish hatchery was attempted on the lower White River, also with little success. These efforts, however, only fueled the desire to find the right answers and that led to some great opportunities for Arkansas anglers. One such instance was the decision to stock trout in the tailwaters of the Norfolk and Bull Shoals dams. This stocking occurred in the early '50s and Arkansas now has several tailwater fisheries teeming with trout, and the trout industry alone generates millions of dollars and thousands of visitors for Arkansas each year.

Another non-native fish that has become a staple to Arkansas fishermen was also first stocked in the 1950s. Striped bass were brought to Arkansas from South Carolina. It soon became evident the fish liked the Arkansas habitats but would not reproduce in sustainable numbers so, over time, a very effective artificial propagation method was developed allowing for more waters to be stocked with stripers.

Arkansas waters are home to well over 200 species of fish and the efforts to restore and improve fish populations and angler opportunities continue across the state. Thousands of acres of lakes, miles and miles of rivers, as well as streams and countless ponds dot the landscape and offer a variety of fishing opportunities. One of the biggest challenges



CHUCK LONG

Regional Education Coordinator Northeast Education
Division Arkansas Game and Fish Commission

is deciding which body of water to try and which species to pursue.

Not only does Arkansas boast a variety of species, there are trophy fish here as well. World record fish have been taken from the state's waters in several species including walleye, brown trout and hybrid striped bass. World class fish are great to talk about but most anglers are happy with a fish supper, and a good fish dinner can be caught from most bodies of water.

Fishing in Arkansas is a major industry and generates almost \$500 million dollars each year. The waters of Arkansas are a destination for many out of state anglers pursuing trout, crappie, catfish, bass and other species, but the residents of Arkansas really like to fish as is evident by well over 300,000 fishing licenses purchased each year.

Arkansas is truly blessed with some wonderful fishing and that is due in large part to efforts of men and women who have invested their lives in the resource. If you have any questions about fishing in Arkansas, check out agfc.com for licensing requirements, rules and regulations and places to go. If you need more specific info, check in with an Arkansas Game and Fish Commission Regional Office or a local Nature Center.

One of the best resources for the history of fish and wildlife of our great state is "Arkansas Wildlife: A History," edited by Keith Sutton and published in 1998. I use it as a reference on a regular basis and much of the information for this article came from its pages. It is a cover to cover wealth of information on our fish and wildlife history. I look forward to getting on the water and catching some Arkansas fish this spring. I hope to see you out there!





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MOORE on MANNERS

WITH LINDA LOU MOORE

PRACTICING COMMON COURTESIES AT OUR AREA PARKS

This month's April issue of Premiere Magazine highlights the state and local parks of Northeast Arkansas. Tips from the experts encourage us to practice common courtesies at our area parks.

OUR PARKS IN NORTHEAST ARKANSAS

We have two outstanding park systems right here in Greene County:

Crowley's Ridge State Park is a 291-acre Arkansas state park located just north of Paragould. It provides a rustic setting, constructed by the Civilian Conservation Corps in the 1930s. The facilities include cabins for lodging, campsites, picnic areas, hiking trails, pavilions, a fishing lake and a swimming area.

The Paragould Parks and Recreation system includes the Paragould Community Center (with the Aquatic Center and outdoor water park); Labor Park; Reynolds Park; Harmon Play Field; Woodside Glen; Centennial Park; Rotary Softball; Bland and Threlkeld Baseball fields; Rotary Tennis Center and the Senior Citizens' Center.

The Paragould Parks and Recreation Department asks that we enjoy its recreational facilities and show pride and support by helping them take care of all of the parks.

For a broader list of parks in Northeast Arkansas including city and state parks, visit exploremornea.com/play.

PRACTICING COMMON COURTESIES

Please stay on the paths (unless indicated otherwise) and leave trees, shrubs, flowers and wildlife undisturbed, so others may enjoy them too.

Always carry out what you carry in and please dispose of your trash appropriately, including anything left by your pets. (Dog lovers should check out the new dog park at Harmon Play Field.)

Respect the privacy of other visitors.

Be considerate when using your cell phone so as not to disturb others.

Stay on designated roads or parking areas.

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.

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Lessons LEARNED IN Motherhood

BY CAITLIN LAFARLETTE

In his novel “Howards End” E.M. Forster writes, “I am sure that if the mothers of various nations could meet, there would be no more wars.”

It was midnight when I heard the news that Russia had invaded Ukraine. I was snuggled up to my daughter, exhausted and dreading the multiple wakeups I knew were bound to happen. But after reading the headlines, I suddenly realized how small my problems were.

Soon enough, a week had passed and more stories of families separated from each other due to bombings and evacuations filled my newsfeed. There was the story of an 11-year-old boy who crossed the border alone, only a phone number written on a note for whoever found him; a viral photo of empty strollers at a Polish train station, left there by mothers who wanted incoming Ukrainians to use them instead.

Your heart softens when you become a parent. Certain movies become hard to watch and you can't listen to your favorite true

crime podcast without a sick feeling. And hearing stories of laboring women sheltered away in bunkers nearly does you in.

I hesitated before sitting down to write my column for this month. I put it off for days. I knew this was what was important to me, but I tried to think of other topics. After all, we are all about bringing NEA the “good news and the people making it happen.” But I would be a poor journalist, and a poor mother, if I did not acknowledge the great sacrifice the mothers of Ukraine are making as this war rages on. I can only hope that through this destruction, they can show the world that what really matters isn't territory, stock markets or profit, but nurturing and selfless love.

If the world could stop and truly learn from us mothers, I agree: There would be no more wars.

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Strawberry Rhubarb Hyaluronic Body Lotion - Indulge skin with quick-absorbing moisture. Our Botanical Hyaluronic Acid Complex infuses skin with immediate head-to-toe hydration, as panthenol protects the skin barrier to prevent moisture loss. With its delicious scent and creamy feel, this vegan lotion leaves skin with a soft and silky finish. Suitable for all skin types, especially dry.

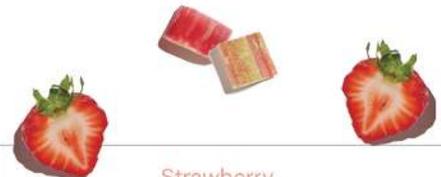
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Pet First Aid Awareness

WITH DR. KRISTIN SULLIVAN

COVID, rapidly rising gas and grocery prices, crisis in Ukraine, unavailability of supplies -- all of this has prepping on the forefront of most people's minds. April is National Pet First Aid Awareness month and with prepping being on the mind, I'd like to discuss steps you can take to best prepare you to care for your pet should a disaster occur.

Start with a Pet First Aid Kit. This kit should include the following:

Pet's Paperwork: This includes Rabies vaccination certificate, medical records including other vaccines and any medications the pet may be taking.

Phone Numbers: A number to call in case

of emergency; your veterinarian's phone number, as well as your own phone number(s), and that of a close relative or family friend.

Hydrogen Peroxide: ALWAYS contact your veterinarian before attempting this, but Hydrogen Peroxide is very useful to help an animal vomit if it has ingested something it shouldn't have. The hydrogen peroxide, when ingested, creates a very dense foam in the stomach, that when an animal cannot belch it up, stimulates a vomit response. Again, never do this unless instructed by a veterinarian, as they can tell you how much to administer and when to do it. There are some toxins and substances that will cause more harm if they are vomited by this mode of action and call for another method. Again, always consult your veterinarian.

Bandage Material: This includes gauze, wrapping material, and bandage tape. Again, always use this under the direction of a veterinarian to ensure the bandage is placed correctly. The most common problem I find in bandages placed at home is that they are too tight and constrict normal blood flow.

Antibiotic ointment: This can be applied to small scratches or abrasions, never to the eyes, out to large open wounds. Always clean the wound first.

Saline flush: This can be used to thoroughly flush wounds and the eyes, if needed.

Flashlight with back-up batteries: This can be very useful in times when the electricity goes out or when you are outside at night.

Leash/Collar/Halter: Just in case the

one you have becomes broken or if you happen upon an injured stray animal.

Medications: If your pet is on lifelong medications, it is always good to have a back-up supply.

Food and Water: A small supply to get you by should a disaster occur, with collapsible bowls. Good can be kept in a Ziplock or other plastic baggie; water bottles for you and your pet. There are even tablets you can drop into found environmental water to make it safe for drinking. See also, LifeStraws.

Towel or Blanket: These can be used in a number of ways. They can comfort the animal, help to move/lift the animal, or be useful in restraining an animal that may be trying to bite because it is injured. Also for comfort, warmth, and support.

Backpack: Having all of these items stored in a temperature and humidity controlled environment in a backpack ensures they are easily accessible and you won't be left in a time of panic to try to gather everything.

After you have your Pet First Aid Kit together, be sure everyone in your household knows where it is and what to do should an emergency occur. I hope this helps to better prepare for any situation. Remember, always best to be prepared for everything and not use it, than to prepare for nothing and be in need of it. [

For any questions related to pet safety, pet first aid kits, or what you should do for your pet should a disaster occur, you can call ARPets Hospital anytime or your local veterinarian to best answer your questions. Be safe!

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Balls of Fury Ping-Pong Tournament



Andrea Dionne Kain (Brenda's Table) & Hillary Starnes (NEA Humane Society)



Left to Right: Tyler Herring (3rd), Zach Beaver (1st), Matt Reid (2nd)



Native Brew Works hosted a Balls of Fury Ping-Pong Tournament on March 6th that raised funds for eight different non-profits in Northeast Arkansas through player entry fees and beer sales throughout the week. Over one thousand dollars in total was given to Habitat for Humanity, The Food Bank of NEA, the NEA Humane Society, Brenda's Table, Hope Found NEA, United Way, NEA Baptist's Center for Good Grief, and the St. Bernards Foundation. The champion, Zach Beaver, chose to donate the pool of entry fees to Habitat for Humanity.

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



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CHARITY BALL 2022



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Junior Auxiliary of Jonesboro hosted its annual Charity Ball on February 19 at the Embassy Suites by Hilton in Jonesboro. This year the theme was “Havana Nights” and raised funds for the organization’s twelve service projects throughout the year that aim to enrich the lives of children in Craighead County.

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- Board Member and Past President of Mission Outreach
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- Launched Little Free Libraries

Dustin and his wife Amy have been married for 15 years and have 2 children.

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 May 9th

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The Gods of Green County

Book Reading & Signing
 at the Greene County Library



The Greene County Library hosted a book signing with Mary Elizabeth Pope as part of her book tour to celebrate the release of her recent book, *The Gods of Green County*. *The Gods of Green County* follows a murder of a family member of the main character in 1926. The book is historical fiction and though it is named *The Gods of Green County*, it is set in Greene County. Many places mentioned in the book are local.

Coming Up

Green Fest



**Rotary Centennial Plaza
Downtown Jonesboro
355 S. Church Street**

An Earth Day Celebration hosted by Keep Jonesboro Beautiful and the Green Business Committee with the Jonesboro Regional Chamber of Commerce.

8:30 a.m.
Fight Dirty Team T-Shirt Contest

9:00 a.m.
Downtown Trash Dash

11:00 a.m.
Captain Planet vs. Captain Pollution

12:00 p.m.
Green Fest Costume Contest

9am - 2pm
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 **8:30 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.**



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The Fast Glass Corvette Club filled the bowling lanes at Hijinx with teams supporting the Alley Cruise 2022 to raise funds for St. Jude Children's Hospital Foundation.

Sissy's Log Cabin held a "tournament" and awarded trophies and Fast Glass presented winners with plaques.

The 2022 event raised more money than ever, donating over \$5,800 to St. Jude.

Coming Up

▶▶ Volunteer Fair



▶ **L**earn about the many ways to serve your community by visiting with local non-profit and charitable organization representatives at this Volunteer Fair hosted by Native Brew Works on April 2nd.

Organizations expected to be in attendance: Habitat for Humanity, the Food Bank of Northeast Arkansas, CASA, Crowley's Ridge Nature Center, United Way of NEA, Brenda's Table, the Young Professionals for the American Cancer Society, the HUB, the Delta Symphony Orchestra, Keep Jonesboro Beautiful, the Foundation of Arts, West End Neighborhood Association, AR Pet Savers, and Centerstage Productions.

▶ **Native Brew Works**
515 S Gee Street
Jonesboro, AR

🕒 **April 2nd**
11:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.



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BY RICHARD BRUMMETT

Nestled at the end of a dead end street sits one of Paragould's hidden gems, a park many people don't even know exists.

Located at 320 Tech Street in the Center Hill area, Woodside Glen Park is a perfect getaway for outdoor lovers, featuring a walking track, basketball court, picnic tables and playground equipment.

"It's our best kept secret," said James Kashak, the city's Parks and Recreation Director. "Nobody really knows it's there until they drive down there; then they see it's really pretty nice."

Woodside Glen is simply a long, flat stretch of land, situated across the street from a row of houses. R.L. Lemmons sold the land to the city of Center Hill for \$5,000 and once consolidation with Paragould was completed, 10 of the 12 lots making up the plot were sold off. They now have houses on them while the two remaining lots comprise the park.

"There's not a lot of upkeep," Kashak said. "You've got the ball court and the playground ... hopefully, in the near future we will add the building of a pavilion. If you had a nice pavilion you could rent it for birthday parties and things like that. I'd go, especially for a party."

Best Kept Secret

Woodside Glen Park



RE-ELECT

Sheriff Steve Franks

to his 2nd term May 24th

- Paid off jail construction loan 1.5 years early, eliminating 3/4 cent county sales tax
- First sheriff to assign Greene County deputies to the 2nd Judicial Drug Task Force
- Entered office with a -\$400,000 balance – Current operational fund is now \$5 million +
 - Pay raises for all deputies and jail staff
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LOOKING FOR ANOTHER GEM? Try Paragould's oldest park.

Who knows which of the Paragould parks is the oldest?

While many will remember the old swimming pool at Reynolds Park and maybe even an older generation can recall a baseball field at Labor Park, Harmon Playfield is actually the city's oldest.

The 15-acre expanse became a city park in 1925 when Paragould received a grant from the Harmon Foundation of New York for construction of a recreational center. The land was purchased and Harmon Playfield was soon developed.

In earlier times Harmon was home to political rallies and revivals, and as time passed more and more features were added for recreational purposes. Harmon's football field, which for many years was home to the Paragould High School Bulldogs, is adjacent to the current park offerings which got a serious facelift in 2006, thanks to a \$200,000 matching grant. A facelift to the building used for meetings, parties and reunions was undertaken, along with building outdoor restroom facilities, a pavilion, adding playground equipment and, most recently, a Bark Park dog exercise area.

There is a basketball court and the track around the football field -- which is today tended to by the Greene County Boys Club -- is suitable for walking or running. While Harmon may be the granddaddy of all Paragould parks, it still has plenty to offer for visitors of all ages.

"From what I'm aware of it's used mostly by kids in that neighborhood. I like that park. You know, there is a ditch at the back end of it, and what kid doesn't like to play in a ditch? It's just a nice little area. You can just drive up and do your thing, even though we're looking at expanding the parking spaces. Right now you're right up on the basketball court almost when you park. But, like I said, it's a really nice area not many people know about."

All features at Woodside Glen are free to the public and available for use from daylight to dusk. So, if you have the urge to shoot some hoops, walk a few laps around the track, have a cookout or let the kids cut loose on the playground equipment, try a quick trip to Woodside Glen.



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- Tiffany Gramling & Jace Camp: June 16
- Tristan Arquitt & Brady Dowler: June 24
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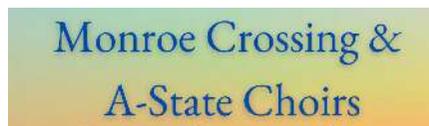
April 8th
 Downtown After Hours
 w/ Sand Creek
 6:30 p.m.



April 9th
 Rockin' Through the Decades
 The Collins Theatre
 7:00 p.m.



April 14th
 Kindersongs!
 The Collins Theatre
 6:00 p.m.



April 25th
 Bluegrass Monday
 The Collins Theatre
 7:00 p.m.



May 13th
 Downtown After Hours
 w/ TRIPP
 6:30 p.m.

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

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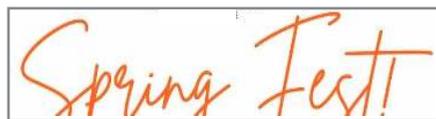
1st & 3rd Thursday
Open Mic
The Recovery Room
7:30 p.m.



April 14th
Dinner Theatre
Production by the FOA
foajonesboro.org



April 23rd
Green Fest
Downtown Jonesboro
TBA



April 30th
DJA Spring Fest
Downtown Jonesboro
9:00 a.m.



May 14th
Oasis Arts & Eats Fest
Downtown Jonesboro
oasisfest.org

Never miss out on the fun happening in NEA; visit exploremornea.com/community-calendar for an up to date listing of events across Northeast Arkansas.

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JULY 16th & 17th
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LOCAL FESTIVAL 2022
IS COMING!

Together

Jonesboro's oldest park sees continued revitalization thanks to neighbors committed to its important role in the West End.

BY LINDSEY SPENCER



It's impressive what we can accomplish when we come together. Residents of the West End Neighborhood in Jonesboro realized this after coming together in 2007 to tackle a concern for the neighborhood, soon forming the West End Neighborhood Association.

One of the first undertakings of the organization that continues to this day, was/is to see Jonesboro's oldest park, that lies within the neighborhood, revitalized and revamped.

"When [The West End Neighborhood Association] became a non-profit, it was one of the first things we took on. We did a survey, and the results of the

survey showed what most people were concerned with and wanted to see were safety and things to do," said Mary Ellen Warner, one of the original members of the West End Neighborhood Association Board who is still serving today.

"The park had one piece of dilapidated - 'vintage' - equipment," Mary Ransone, also a board member, added. "It was one of those merry-go-rounds. That was it, nothing else. So, I started driving to all the parks that had brand new equipment. I took pictures and emailed several people, bringing it to the attention of the grants department. The next thing I knew, I had a phone call saying we had grant money and asking me what I wanted to do."

Glen Sain

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And then the revival began.

The park, which the West End believes has been there since before WWII, has seen many improvements in recent years, with more in store.

Using grant money, the WENH installed new equipment and says they see kids there all the time.

“That was the first thing, and it was major,” Mary said. “It just needed to be brought to attention.”

The next thing to do was build a pavilion, something to match the style of the neighborhood’s old homes. The pavilion has hosted National Night Out (a nationwide observance, though on different days varying by city) and the Roots Music Festival, a partnership with KASU radio. Along with former Mayor Perrin, the WENH worked with a landscape architect to develop a master plan for the park, and soon the parking lot was lessened in order to make room for basketball goals that offer a safer alternative to shooting hoops in the streets.

A lighting safety grant helped turn the lights in to face the park, the fence was updated, and security cameras were installed. The security cameras, installed by the WENH, were turned over to Jonesboro Police Department for them to monitor.

“Next was getting involved with the National Recreation Foundation,” Mary went on. Members of the board met a trustee through Rotary and sent in a proposal that was soon accepted.

Using this grant, the WENH completed Phase One: a walking trail that loops around the park for a quarter of a mile. Included in the concrete work are spots for future workout equipment. This brings the park to Phase Two using the National Recreation Foundation Grant.

“Part of this grant from National Recreation Foundation is geared toward youth, and having classes/clinics has to be part of your component for that grant,” Mary explained. Saturdays starting in May, there will be yoga under the pavilion at CWL Park that will be free to public to attend.

In the summer, when the exercise equipment is up, the WENH will host some kind of youth camp – details to be announced.

A water fountain is in the works via another grant, and many more ideas for activities have been bounced around. With all that has been accomplished and all that is to come, these neighbors have proven much can be accomplished when a few people work together to improve their community. And sometimes getting what you need in order to make something happen, simply comes down to asking for what you need and then putting in the work.

Keep up with what’s happening in the West End Neighborhood and learn more about it by visiting westendneighborhoodassociation.org.



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Get More Than You Give

BY LINDSEY SPENCER

If you ask any of the Master Gardeners who volunteer at area parks why they enjoy spending time volunteering, many will likely give you similar answers. Among the benefits: staying active, learning, meeting new people, serving the community, pure enjoyment.

“There’s always something to learn,” said Ethel Cole, a Craighead Master Gardener since 2007 and current co-chair of the Native Plant Garden at Crowley’s Ridge Nature Center. “Every time I hear a new talk on native plants, I learn something new. Over time, you become familiar with what they are. As you work with the plants, you begin to appreciate them.”

Ethel said she has learned so much during her years volunteering, both from the programs required in order to achieve and maintain Master Gardener status, and from the people she works alongside.



"I have a better understanding of how important plants are to the insect world. I love birds, but you can't have birds unless you have insects. So, they all work together. It's really important that we understand the world around us, so that we can help it instead of hinder what it's trying to do," Ethel shared. "We learn as much from the other people as we do the workshops we attend. You learn a lot from them, and develop good friends."

"I just like it!" said Pat Lynch, a volunteer who achieved quite a feat in 2021 by serving more than 500 hours. "I would never know all these people. Really, that is why I started volunteering at all of the gardens because different people go to different gardens."

Of achieving so many volunteer hours, Pat said it's not that she has that much time on her hands, she just loves what she does.

"I didn't do it for a reward, I did that for myself. My husband was keeping up with them and he said, 'Did you know, that you've got four hundred and eighty something hours?' This was in November, and I thought, 'Where can I get 20 more?' and evidently no one had done that before," Pat explained, of realizing

how close she was to the 500 mark. She mentioned wanting some more hours to a local school and they had a job for her: sorting seeds.

Pat and Ethel both stressed that anyone has what it takes to become a Master Gardener, and they welcome anyone who wants to join them.

"I would encourage anyone who's interested in gardening or done a little bit of gardening. You don't have to KNOW anything about gardening or have any experience to become a Master Gardener," said Ethel. "People tell me, 'Oh I can't work out there, I don't know what plants look like, I'll pull up the wrong thing,' and I always tell them, 'If you pull up one that you shouldn't, there are many, many more available!' It's no big deal to pull up one you think is a weed. There's such a variety of them, too."

Ethel reminds us the plants sold in nurseries started out as native plants somewhere. They were hybridized to become plants people prize for their yards, but they started out all on their own as a native variety.

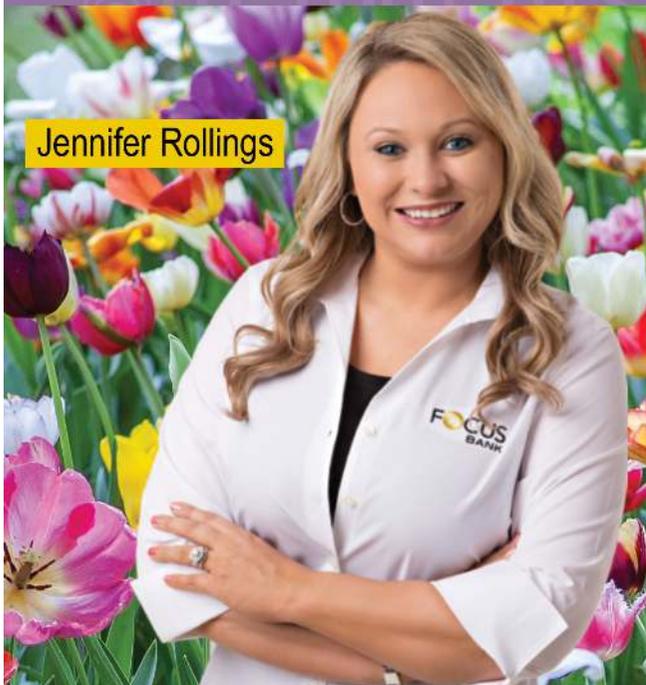
Master Gardeners require hours of training, "work hours" – like what they do at the Native Plant Garden at the Nature Center – and hours of education in order to achieve Master Gardener status, but no prior knowledge or expertise is expected. Each new Master Gardener is paired with a mentor.

To learn more or apply, contact your county's extension office.



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Heroes

BY LINDSEY SPENCER

Tina and Warren Coots aren't afraid to get their hands dirty – especially not when there are so many sweet faces clamoring for their attention.

“Seniors are my soft spot. I’ve got a house full of seniors,” Tina said with a chuckle. She added she has to be careful not to spend too much time at the NEA Humane Society lest she end up bringing another pet home with her. Tina and Warren’s family includes five rescues – three dogs and two cats.

But despite concern for the family growing by too many paws, the couple – who have served on the board for many years – makes it a point to spend time serving.

“I had my vision of things that should be done, that I thought needed to be done,” said Tina of when she started serving at least 17 years ago. “But I tell people this all the time, ‘You can’t be an armchair quarterback and have your opinions, you gotta be involved and know what’s going on before you can really have an opinion.’”



So, Tina served and continues to serve now in order to better understand the needs and operations of the Humane Society. She likes to remind people that before assuming how something should be done, or what could be done to make something better, people should spend their time in the midst of that organization, project, or group – and volunteering is a great way to do just that. Tina said she'd encourage others to volunteer, "to know the real workings of how something is, and then maybe [you will] have some ideas that other people haven't thought of."

Volunteers at the Humane Society help clean pens and socialize with the dogs amongst many other things.

"The staff only has time to do their job, it's hard for them to socialize one on one so that's where the volunteers can step in," Tina said. "Some will have a pet project with one, maybe try to teach it how to walk on a leash. I've found over the years – we try to take the animals to events, like we used to go to the Farmers Market, but if they're not leash trained, people will shy away from them, so things like that will help them get adopted. So, if you can come out and spend time doing things like that."

"Volunteers for us are a huge asset," said Hillary Starnes, the society's executive director. "They not only help us do things we can't normally do on a daily basis, but with little projects we may need help with. They help socialize animals, help with fundraising, make in-kind donations, and help get our name out there."

It doesn't take much to help a lot – the volunteers are the animals' heroes.

"The dogs, they crave affection," Warren said. "And just people making contact with them helps a whole lot."

"I love helping with the animals, knowing they need the help, and trying to help them find a home," Tina said. "Being involved – once you get involved, you know, there's a lot of great people working here, on the board, that you just build a relationship with."

If you're interested in volunteering with the NEA Humane Society, contact the shelter at 870.932.5185 or email them at office@neahs.org.

Happy Easter!



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Uniting Forces

United Way Volunteers help serve through a number of ways - including with other non-profit organizations.



BY CAITLIN LAFARLETTE

Two Jonesboro residents have a combined 26 years of volunteer work for a local non-profit and continue to serve their community through various fundraisers and programs.

Thad West, who works at Frito Lay, has volunteered with United Way for 20 years.

"From an early age I was introduced to volunteering. My dad was involved with the United Way for many years and I remember helping out as much as I could," West said. "Once I moved back to Jonesboro I was able to get involved again with this amazing organization."

A typical day of volunteering actually begins weeks or months in advance for West, to properly set up

for the program being supported. The day of, he averages 4-8 hours of volunteer work.

"Let's use Day of Caring for example," he explained. "You can volunteer for half or full days, and the duties you are assigned could vary. Some examples might be assisting with the Humane Society, cleaning up a local park, or sorting at Second Home Shoppe."

West has worked several events with United Way over the years, and while he has enjoyed them all, the most recent Stuff the Bus program stood out to him.

"I remember this young boy in Walnut Ridge. He saved his allowance and decided to use it to purchase backpacks, paper and miscellaneous supplies for kids. This was so touching and it's a moment that really stands out for me," West said.

Mike Phillips, who manages the Radiation Oncology Clinic at St. Bernards, started his work with United Way six years ago after the hospital asked him to be a Loaned Executive for the organization. Phillips said although he wasn't familiar with United Way at the time, he quickly learned about its mission and programs it supports.

"It didn't take me long to figure out I wanted to do more with the United Way and build a better relationship," he said. "I believe in their mission and the work they do in our community."

Phillips said his work as a loaned executive includes making phone calls or stuffing envelopes, which may not sound like much, but is helpful for a non-profit with limited resources.

"I have also served in several capacities such as campaign chair, served on sub-committees and have chaired the Day of Caring event. When your values align with the mission of an organization such as the United Way, the time spent helping out doesn't seem like work," Phillips said. "I have met some great people and made some memories while serving the community."

Phillips added he thinks United Way does great work that many people might not be aware of, such as raising money that stays right here in the NEA community. The group also supports other local non-profits that focus on education, health and financial stability.

"There is also oversight when the United Way gives grants to non-profits. This gives me the assurance that the monies raised are going for the intended purpose they requested the support for," he said.

West said volunteering for United Way is an easy process, and Phillips explained the best way to get involved is by connecting through the Facebook page (www.facebook.com/UnitedWayofNortheastArkansas) or website (www.uwnea.org) and contacting the staff.





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It's So Easy TO GIVE *So Much*

BY CAITLIN LAFARLETTE

Arkansas State University senior Kimberly Small might have her hands full working toward a degree in biology and a job with Instacart, but she is still finding time to give back to her community.

ELECT





- * Over 25 years of law enforcement experience
- * Currently holds the rank of Captain with the Paragould Police Department
- * Current duties include Public Information Officer/Media Relations, Freedom of Information Act point of contact, department social media/website administrator, police department technology liaison, and administrator over the Criminal Investigation Division, Street Crimes Unit, and School Resource Officers
- * Holds all five State of Arkansas law enforcement certifications: Basic, General, Intermediate, Advanced, Senior
- * Certified Law Enforcement Instructor, Certified Traffic RADAR Instructor, Certified Field Training Officer, Certified D.A.R.E. Instructor / Mentor
- * Over 1200 hours of law enforcement training
- * 1996 Graduate of Greene County Tech High School
- * Associate of Applied Science in Criminal Justice from Black River Technical College
- * Currently serves as President of the Greene County Tech School District Board of Directors

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Since January, Small has volunteered with the Food Bank of Northeast Arkansas, an organization that not only takes donations, but distributes food throughout the community with various programs like the Food Pantry Network, Senior Food Pantry and Fresh Produce Program.

"My roommate is in an organization on campus, the Black Student Association, and they were volunteering and she invited me to go with her," Small said of her start with the food bank.

"Being able to volunteer with my cousin, who is also my roommate, has been a very fun experience."

So far, Small has assisted with the Acre of Hope event, which provided 210,537 meals to the community, and she also splits her time between office work and packing boxes.

"Mrs. Scarlett (Mullins) lets me sit in her office while I input data for her Oasis project. Most of the time it's just me volunteering that day," Small said.

"When I volunteer with Ms. Jordan (Griffin), it's usually a big group of people and she assigns people to either make boxes or put canned food in the boxes."

Small said one thing people might not know about the organization and its work is "the amount of people in our area that don't know when their next meal is, and how the food bank is able to feed a good amount of people." She added it is very easy to begin volunteering with the organization.

"Everyone I have met at the food bank has been very kind, which makes it very easy to get involved," she said.

To learn more about volunteering or donating, visit www.foodbankofnea.org or call 870-932-3663.

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JUST Because

BY RICHARD BRUMMETT

Volunteers are a large part of what makes a community successful and Paragould has no shortage of people willing to lend a hand regardless of the occasion or need.

While those who help out are often willing to remain in the background there is a common thread running through each: A desire to be helpful, often because they are themselves thankful for the hands that have been extended to them. That attitude can be inherited from many different sources ... a family member, the influence of growing up in church, a role model who lives life accordingly and their kindness toward others -- regardless of how large or small the gesture. They can shape lives in ways they may not even realize. Sometimes simply volunteering to be nice can leave a lasting impression.

As Jay Ussery nears his 76th birthday his opportunities for service are not as easy to enact as in days past, but they're still there -- helping an elderly fellow church member to his vehicle to avoid his falling; spotting an older person trying to unload groceries from a cart and pitching in; daily incidents where simply extending a helping hand voluntarily means something to both giver and receiver.

An early influence for him was his grandfather, Daily Gazaway, who "was my hero," Jay said. "I worshiped that man. I



was the only grandchild and if I could go, and he'd let me, then I was going with him. We'd go to the grocery store at Evening Star and the men there knew how much I loved him, so they'd tease me and say, 'Why, he's no good,' and they knew they would get a reaction out of me. But he was a good man willing to help anyone he could, and he was a good influence on me."

These days Jay spends a lot of time thinking back on the people who showed unsolicited kindness to him and, in his words, helped "a plain old country boy fit in. I was raised at Evening Star and went to school at Stanford." His family moved closer to town in late 1962 and a new group of teens welcomed him in, building lifelong friendships and having a lasting impact. "I've sort of been wanting to thank the people who took me in, so to speak, when I was young and didn't know much of anyone," Jay said. "That has really meant a lot to me."

Shortly after moving to town Jay made friends with Herb Bland, and remembers many weekend basketball games in his back yard. While in those pickup games he battled against Paragould High School's Gary and Manuel Washington, and Charlie Baxter, who all teamed with Herb to bring the Bulldogs PHS' only boys' state championship trophy.

He worked at Johnny's Drive-In alongside

David Mann and said they were "real close; we were carhops, if you can believe that, but he made me feel like I fit in, I guess. David Acuff and I worked at the Collins (then the Capitol) Theatre. Many Saturday nights we were changing the marquee at the Drive In and we got to be real close. Through David and Herb I met some girls and David helped me with my grammar so I didn't sound like such a hick, more than anybody. You remember people who reached out to you, just to be nice for no reason other than to just be nice."

Volunteering compassion, if you will, remembered mightily for seemingly small gestures. One such person was Susie Williams Cook, who accepted Jay's request for a date to an FFA event. "I got up the nerve to ask her and she said yes, though I don't know why," he recalled. "I couldn't dance or anything like that. That day I got home and Mom said, 'You can't go. The car broke down. You don't have any way to go.' I was crushed."

He telephoned the Williams' home to deliver the bad news, that he would have to cancel the date, but Mrs. Williams asked for his phone number and told him to stay close. "She called back in 30 minutes to say, 'Susie will come pick you up,' and she did, in her car, and I walked in to that thing with the prettiest girl around."

Shortly after his high school graduation

Jay joined the Army and stayed for three years, including 14 months in Korea and nine in Germany. He made Sergeant within two years and returned home, feeling the military experience helped him mature.

Upon reflection there are too many people to list when expressing thanks for a lifetime of kindness and Jay apologizes for not being able to name all, then remembers influential folks like Dennis Hammon, Chester Key, Butch Heath and his late father-in-law Sherman Ellington. "I'm going out on a limb to say Dennis Hammon is one of the best people you could ever meet in Paragould," he said. "I worked with him for a couple of years and he will do anything, anytime for anybody."

"Butch Heath gave me a job when I was in college and I worked what they called the night shift as an ambulance driver. So many people have volunteered to help me when they didn't have to ... that's what I think volunteering is. It's just a part of life. Sometimes I worry that I'm overdoing it, with all that's going on in the world. I usually wear my military cap because I want people to know I mean no harm, just trying to help. It doesn't take that much effort to do it."

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Jeana Ray Silver	Cindy Thomas Silver	Lisa Jackson Silver	Kari Rucker Silver
			Clay Rucker Bronze



Big Blue Coming 2022

NEA Baptist Charitable Foundation, the charitable arm of the NEA Baptist Health System, received a donation of \$1.6 million from Kim and Chris Fowler. This gift will fund a comprehensive mobile health unit in Jonesboro that will deliver care to underinsured and uninsured individuals in underserved communities in Northeast Arkansas.

The mobile health unit, nicknamed Big Blue, will be equipped with technology to perform breast cancer screenings, community health screenings, sports physicals and an in-game athletics clinic, wellness and preventative visits, vaccination clinics, pandemic rapid response and interventional resources. It will also have mobile digital x-ray equipment, a mammography unit, lab equipment and a comfortable exam space for patients.

“Since 1912, Baptist’s mission has been to care for the Mid-South communities it serves, including ours here in Northeast Arkansas,” said Sam Lynd, CEO and administrator at NEA Baptist. “The Fowler’s gift to fund our mobile health unit is a major step in fulfilling our vision of bringing an expert system of care to patients wherever they are.”

NEA Baptist is collaborating with Odulair, a leader in the mobile health unit marketplace, to produce Big Blue by the end of October 2022.

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Home & Garden



Decor



BY CAITLIN LAFARLETTE

Did anybody ever tell you, there are no rules?

Current trends may say that neutrals are where it's at, but when it comes to your home, you can really do whatever you want. Some people prefer hard and fast rules such as "don't mix warm and cool colors." But for those who feel trapped by that logic, start to think outside the box!

Magazine spreads and big box store advertisements may make you feel like everything in your space needs to perfectly match and be bland colors, and minimalism is still on trend. However, your home should be your safe space, a place to make memories.

Have you always wanted a disco ball to throw beautiful rainbows around in your living room? Go for it! What about a bright yellow entryway with green or purple trim? Nobody can stop you. Thrift stores are the perfect place to find funky, conversation starter pieces that can make your house feel more like a home, like a vintage record player or fine china.



Maximalism is starting to creep into the homes and apartments of millennials who are done with the neutral trends. Think floral wallpapers, orange cabinets, and crazy art pieces ... all in one room! House plants overflowing in every corner, layered rugs and all the other things you thought you would decorate with when you were a child; in fact, that mindset is the drive behind this colorful, flashy new setup: releasing the inner child and letting them play!

I spent over two years trying to make my home a blank canvas: off-white walls, black picture frames, gray furniture. While redoing my daughter's bathroom I decided I wanted bright blue cabinets because, why not? That led to pink walls, fairy lights, a bright floral shower curtain and polka dot wall stickers. I realized I wanted a fun, colorful home my children would remember and love.

I have since stopped trying to make everything look like it jumped off the page of *Better Homes and Garden*. I have plans to paint the kitchen cabinets yellow and make some sort of statement piece with the almost-life size coffin that was handmade for my "funeral for my youth" birthday. I want my home to have a story to go along with my design choices, not just, "I bought it from Amazon."

There are pottery pieces my husband made lining our bookshelf, pieces he thinks are horrible but I love because they were crafted by him and tell the tale of his college years. My great-grandmother's thimble collection sits nearby, a biography of her quilting and sewing that she passed down to me. Items like these are what I want to be surrounded by.

It's easy to get caught up in wanting your home to be picture-perfect. But if you aren't cozy and don't feel like it's actually home, what's the point?

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preparing your garden

BY LINDSEY SPENCER

TOP TIPS

Determine WHERE

The first thing to figure out is where your garden will be. How much light does your yard get? What might disturb your garden? How much room do you have? Is your garden for looks, for food, or both?

Determine WHAT

Your location will play a role in what you are able to plant (or at least, in what you're able to keep alive). Plan your garden based on sunlight, how much time you have to invest in it, and how much space you intend the plants to take up.

Shop LOCAL

Ask questions of the experts! Visit local nurseries and greenhouses and ask the pros for their advice on starting and maintaining a garden. You'll likely find a favorite spot to shop and with it, someone who is always eager to answer your questions.

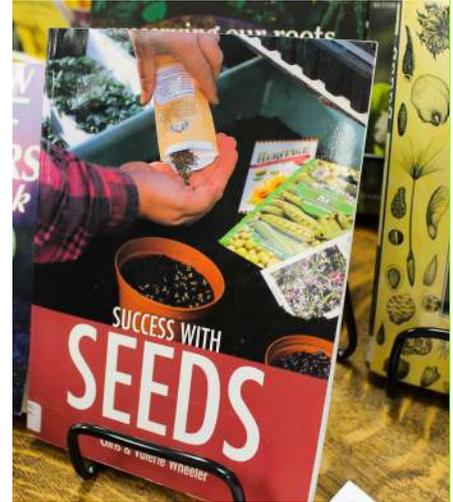
WHERE TO SHOP

Shop local for your garden needs.

Visit exploremorenea.com for a local guide to nurseries in NEA.



Use your phone's camera to scan the QR Code.



NEA Resources for Upping Your Garden Game

• Join the Master Gardeners

Contact the Craighead County Extension Office at (870) 933-4565 or by email at craighead-jonesboro@uada.edu

• Visit your local library

There is so much information available and it's FREE. Check out books, or at the Greene County Library, check out seeds and get to growing!



DESIGN TIPS for Styling any Space

BY CHERYL DAVIS

Interior designers have a natural creative eye, but also must have a “detail oriented” mindset. After 25 years in the commercial interiors marketplace, I have found the following tips in designing and planning a space that meets the needs of all clients, whether commercial or residential.



- Schedule a realistic timeline
- Set Your Budget
- Determine the Scope of the Project
- Utilize Technology
- Be Flexible
- Strive for Comfort
- Determine Your Own Aesthetic Style
- Consider the Scale of the Project
- Utilize Proportion, Balance, Colors, and Finishes
- Use Quality Products
- Search for Stylish Quality Furniture
- Follow Trends in Moderation

Whether planning residential or commercial interiors, I always referred to the Stephen Covey 7 habits of Highly Effective People: Think with the end in mind to achieve the aesthetic goal of your clients.



Cheryl Davis is a retired interior designer whose specialty was office interiors.

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BY LINDSEY SPENCER

Who's excited for spring cleaning?! Isn't it a great feeling to declutter, dust, and just generally tidy around a space? The old clothes get donated, things you'd forgotten were in the fridge get tossed, and piles of paper get sorted, filed, and shredded.

Spring is generally associated with cleaning and perhaps it's because it's also known as a time of new life. As you breathe new life into your living space by getting rid of the old, perhaps you are also seeking to bring in a bit of new.

BOOKSHELVES AND BINS

Cleaning doesn't have to mean throwing things away; organizing a space is a great way to transform it from the junk room to a play room, a work space, or a reading cave. Before purchasing anything, though (and we'll get there, promise), sort through your stuff. You know the drill: Make a throw away, a donate, and a keep pile.

Now to bring some order. Find a bookshelf (or bookshelves) to fit your space (and your amount of books). It's important it can hold everything you want to keep, but not give you an excuse to collect more things you don't need.

One way to help your bookshelf look full but not over-crowded is to add more than just books to its shelves. Alternate sizes, add a unique memento as a bookend, and place favorite photos in open spaces.

Sprucing up for Spring

For all the things you need to keep but want to hide (extra electronic chargers anyone?!), find little bins that fit on the shelf to disguise the cords, instruction manuals, and remotes.

ACCENTS

Sometimes we just want a space to feel new, but we don't have the money in the bank for a full make-over. Small touches can play a big role in bringing personality to a space, and they're things we can change and adjust with the seasons or even just our whims.

The throw pillow that sits in the corner chair, the picture in the frame on the mantel, or the candle on the coffee table; these are all things we can update easily and give a room a whole new feel to go with the change of the weather. Rooms need not be repainted and furniture doesn't necessarily have to be bought. If neutral tones are represented in the items we use year-round, then the little things that tuck away easily can be swapped out as often as our taste changes!

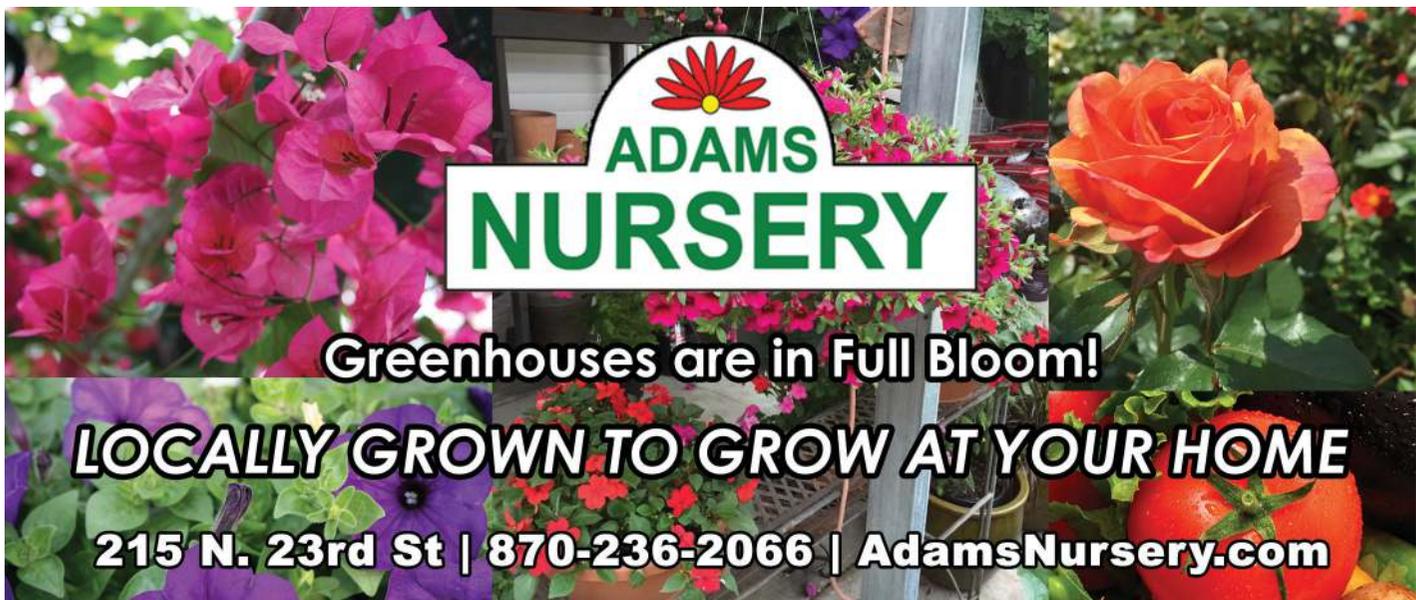
PLANTS

Nature is relaxing. I'm pretty sure that's a fact, or at least a statement many people can agree with, and while we can't all have our own private, expansive gardens, house plants are an easy way to bring a little natural beauty right through the front door.

"I don't have a green thumb," you might say, but honestly, that's rubbish! At one time in your life you couldn't walk, either, and at one time you didn't know how to talk. But we all had to learn to crawl and we all mispronounced words in ways that made our parents chuckle, so today, I declare, you can learn how to take care of plants, too!

There are many plants that are mostly better off left alone, too, so there's that. Bring literal life into your space: Bring home a plant!

Article originally published on exploremornea.com

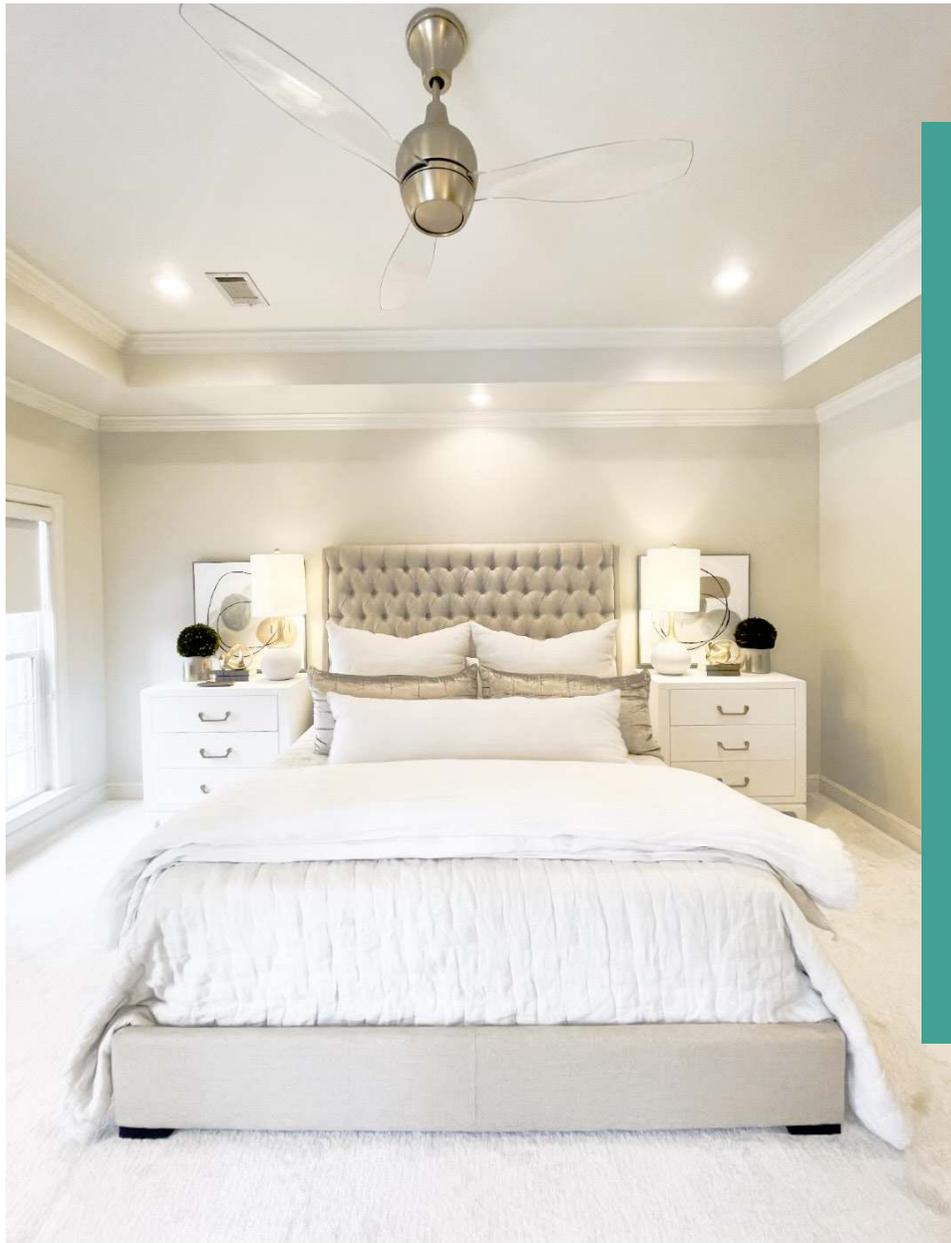


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SIMPLE STEPS TO MAKE YOUR SPACE FEEL NEW

Advice From a Pro

“Let’s take a living area for instance. One of the easiest things to do, and least expensive is to bring in new updated lamps and new pillows on your upholstered pieces. I have several clients that I have done this for and we are amazed each time at what a difference just this little change can make. If you wanted to take it a step further, you could also add or change the area rug in the space. Now, obviously, painting the walls can make the most impact. Painted walls along with the new items we discussed earlier can truly make your “old” room feel brand new!” – Kerri Felts

Kerri Felts is the owner of Interior Design Plus, the 2021 Premiere Award Winner for Best Interior Designer. You can reach Kerri via email at idp.pitterpatter@yahoo.com.

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Paragould Breaks Ground on Community Pavilion



The Paragould Regional Chamber of Commerce held a groundbreaking ceremony for the Community Pavilion on March 11th. Once completed, the Community Pavilion will be home to the Paragould Farmers Market.

Stay tuned for Farmers Market dates! For more information on what's coming up in Downtown Paragould, see page 27.

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The Community Garden was built in 2021 with the help of Paragould Emerging Professionals. PEP built the garden beds and the fence and help to maintain it throughout the season.

Individuals in the community can purchase a bed by calling the Chamber (870-236-7684) and use it for the season. There are still a few beds available for the upcoming growing season.

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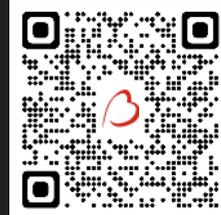
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Student Athlete Physicals will be provided for participating schools on the following day, April 10. Visit stbexpo.com for 2022 consent and authorization forms.

HAPPENINGS



Governor Asa Hutchinson announced at the Jonesboro Chamber of Commerce that The Arkansas Office of Skills Development (OSD), a division of the Department of Commerce, is awarding Black River Technical College a \$1.339 million dollar grant to develop its CDL Training Program. In addition, the OSD will provide the college with the funds needed to purchase another training truck so the Paragould campus can kickstart its program.



Block Insurance utilized new technology to create a virtual tour of Downtown Paragould. A demonstration was held on February 21 at The Crossing.



The Paragould Board of REALTORS® gave out Awards For Excellence for 2021 sales at the March general board meeting.



The Paragould Junior High Quiz Bowl Team placed first in the Northeast Arkansas Educational Cooperative Invitational Tournament and second in both the Trumann Wildcat Invitational Tournament and the 5A East Regional Tournament this year. Front row, from left: Edwin Chen, Lance Garlinghouse, Charlotte Young, Kathryn Cox, Dylan Goodman. Back row, from left: Gracie Stallings, Dalen Burroughs, Sam Hooten, Lily Agee, Sindia Michael, Coach Krystal Hooten.



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Warmer days mean more outside playtime, good for racing miniature cars on the driveway. Brothers Spencer and Jaxon Galczynski of Paragould were happy to engage in some friendly competition one day recently.

explore MOR

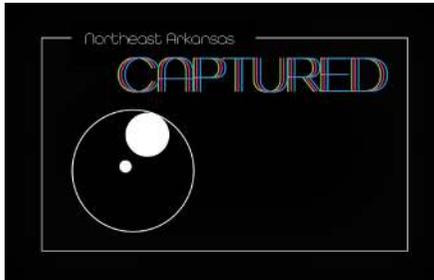
Eat, shop, play:
the local's guide to NEA.

Looking for things to do in NEA with your kids??
Explore MOR NEA is making it easier to keep up with kid-friendly events and adding to our article database stories specifically focused on things to do with your kids.

exploremornea.com/kids

Next Month

Photo Contest



Presented by Premiere Magazine and the Bradbury Art Museum. See page 6 for details.

The 2022 Jonesboro Premiere Awards



Find out who won in the May edition.

REMINDER: Paragould Premiere Awards



Voting for the Paragould Premiere Awards is still open until April 15th! Vote for your favorite local businesses at neapremiere.com

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April 7th -14th is National Dental Hygienist Week and we want to thank Lindsay and Ashley for being part of our team! We appreciate them and all they do.

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