

NEA'S

# PREMIERE

## MAGAZINE

JUNE 2024

NEA HUMANE  
SOCIETY

*Emy Schmitt*

LOUIS GOES TO WESTMINSTER  
STELLA: A PET WITH PURPOSE  
SPECIAL SECTION: NEA SENIORS

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# 2024

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# From the Publisher



I have wanted to put Mindy on this page for a while, and June being pet month is the perfect reason!

Mindy is my “designer breed” Morkie – half Yorkie, half Maltese - baby. She does not know she is a dog. I got Mindy after my youngest went to college, so I guess she was an empty nester’s indulgence. It has taken my husband a few years, but he is as attached as I am, he just doesn’t admit it.

Mindy has a big personality and really adds a lot to our lives. She loves to go, and if the camper or a yellow corvette is out, she starts getting antsy to make sure she is not left behind. She barks at dogs on TV and is not fond of the cats that have gathered at the radio station when she visits every other week after her “spa day.”

Pets add so much to the lives they touch, and it is sad to see how many are abandoned or not cared for. The volunteers and supporters that contribute to the care of any animal that is not being taken care of are to be admired and appreciated. Please do what you can to support them in their efforts.

I hope you enjoy the pet stories this month. We attempted to shine a light on all, from the shelter to Westminster and all in between.

Dina Mason  
General Manager & Publisher  
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**May Premiere Magazine Correction**

Cato Pet Hospital’s, Sarah Owens, DVM was voted as the Jonesboro Premiere Veterinarian.



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# MOORE on MANNERS

WITH LINDA LOU MOORE

Father's Day has been established as the third Sunday in June. Many historians attribute Father's Day to Sonora Smart Dodd. It was in 1909, while listening to a Mother's Day sermon, that Mrs. Dodd thought about honoring her father. Mrs. Dodd's father, William Smart, was a Civil War veteran who raised six children after his wife died.

In 1924, President Calvin Coolidge recognized the idea of Father's Day. However, it was not until 1966 that President Lyndon B. Johnson signed the proclamation that declared the third Sunday in June "Father's Day." In 1972 President Nixon issued a Presidential Proclamation assuring annual recognition of Father's Day.

If you are honoring your father this Father's Day with a gift, you may want to take into consideration what he would like. Be creative when thinking about that Father's Day treat. Here are a few things to consider:

- » Is he the outdoor type? Does he enjoy hunting, fishing, hiking, biking, camping, backpacking, swimming, skiing or playing golf?
- » Is he a gourmet chef or a back yard cook? Is he current on the newest gadgets or is he the grand master of the grill? Consider his level of experience and the space for storing equipment.
- » Are sports and/or fitness gifts of interest to him? Is he interested in tennis or golf? What about a gym membership or home gym equipment?
- » Does he enjoy reading? What are his interests? What would he like?
- » Does travel interest him? What would make travel easier for business or pleasure? If he is an armchair traveler, what would he like?
- » What does he need or what would he like in terms of clothing? Don't forget that gift certificates make size, color and style easier for both the buyer and the receiver.
- » Does he love technology? Finding out if he is low-tech or high-tech is the key to finding the right gift.
- » What are his tastes in music or movies? Does he like the classics, the standards or the newest, latest cutting edge releases?
- » Would he enjoy dinner with family and loved ones? What is his favorite meal?
- » Would he simply like to hear from you?



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.

## A Dad's Take on How to Diaper a Baby:

"Spread the diaper in the position of the diamond with you at bat. Then fold second base down to home and set the baby on the pitcher's mound. Put first base and third base together, bring up home plate and pin the three together. Of course, in case of rain, you gotta call the game and start all over again."

~ Jimmy Piersall, Boston Red Sox, Baseball Author

## SHARE YOUR MILESTONES!

Let us celebrate your big events! Every birthday anniversary on the decade or between (50<sup>th</sup>, 65<sup>th</sup>, 70<sup>th</sup>, 75<sup>th</sup>, etc) we want to help celebrate!

Just scan the QR code and fill out the form to see your achievement in the next issue of Premiere Magazine!



# PET

*of the*

# MONTH

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BY KATIE SINGLETON



In the summer of 2012, just after finishing my freshman year of college, I adopted a tiny, playful kitten (named Noodles at the time) who quickly became an irreplaceable part of my life. Now, at 12 years old, he is no longer tiny but still has the most playful spirit.

Throughout his life, Grady has been a constant source of comfort and joy. His curiosity and love for adventure have led to many amusing antics, from chasing headlight beams up my apartment walls and batting at dangling strings to taking many of the kittens we have fostered “under his wing.”

He enjoys the simple pleasures of a good puzzle, a warm box (if he fits, he sits), and any chance to play with his dog or cat siblings. Grady has been by my side through a transformative period of my life, growing, changing, and relocating with me. It was just he and I for a long time. Now our family has grown with more and more pets, but he knows who the king cat is, and will always be, around here!

Want to see your pet featured in Premiere? Submit your pet via our Facebook post each month! Follow NEA Premiere Magazine to stay in the know.

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# GET RICH WITH RICHARD BRUMMETT

Just for fun I recently took part in an online survey designed to help me learn more about myself. I sort of thought I knew enough about me, but I figured it couldn't hurt to discover more of the real Richard buried deep inside.

Eventually I came to a section that instructed me to describe myself in only two words. Two words. How, in only two words, could I accurately capture the wonder of me? After some tossing around of different ideas I finally settled on and submitted "blissfully ignorant." That's because I don't know much of anything about anything, and I'm perfectly happy that way.

I read the news first thing every morning and sometimes the headline is the only thing I understand. For instance, there's quite a TikTok controversy at present and I have to admit I have neither Tikked nor Tokked that I am aware of, and wouldn't know how to begin if instructed to. I do recall my great-grandmother's old clock ticking and tocking loudly when I spent the night with her but that is about the extent of my knowledge on the subject. And I'm perfectly fine remaining blissfully ignorant about it.

There is a lot of space dedicated to talk of AI – which I know stands for Artificial Intelligence – but that's about as far as I can go. All I know is I finished high school and junior college with a lot of Artificial Intelligence because I made good grades but I can't honestly say I learned anything regarding some of the subjects I managed to pass. As a high school student I came out with relatively good grades in both algebra and geometry but today I can readily admit I am unable to carry on an intelligent conversation with you about either.

As for algebra, all I know is that they expected me to add the alphabet and that's just not right. Numbers are for adding and subtracting, letters are for spelling and writing and that is all I need to know. I somehow managed some Bs and Cs on my report card and couldn't leave that class behind quickly enough, until I landed in geometry and longed for some good old plusses and minuses using regular numbers. Only by memorizing some 100-plus steps of The Pythagorean Theorem for my semester final was I able to come out with a C, the most incredible C I ever earned. So today, this is my entire knowledge of the subject: A squared, plus B squared, equals C squared. Unfortunately, I have no idea how to help you prove that, and I'm fine with it.



When I got to college in hopes of furthering my baseball career, my schedule had been filled out for me in advance. I had a math class three days a week but after about five sessions I stayed over and approached the teacher. "I'm not sure I'm supposed to be in this class," I said. "You've got us adding numbers like 12 and 30 and I have, with minor success, already squared some As and Bs."

"No," she said very politely, "this is the class they'll want you in."

"But again," I said, "I've added the alphabet on more than one occasion and put some letters inside parentheses for some unknown reason, so I think I might be wrong for this basic math."

That's when a teammate butted in and said, "They want you in here because it's an easy A. It keeps you eligible. You don't have to learn anything, just make your A" and at the time, I thought that was the greatest idea in the history of ideas. I don't think it occurred to any of us that most of the classes like that wouldn't transfer anywhere, but there was very little studying required and I was always eligible to play.

In the present day, I am having some serious computer issues and don't know what to do other than say some angry words. I Googled the problem and tried to follow some expert information as to how to fix things, but I couldn't get past the first steps. They wanted me to open something in order to click on something and make sure this was open or that was not checked, and I didn't even know how to get to the menu they were directing me to. And I'm okay with that, just as I'm fine with not being able to understand *The Complete Works of William Shakespeare* even though I gave it my best shot. My mom had a two-volume set of the playwright's work and I asked to borrow it in order to know how to answer more *Jeopardy* questions, and she said, "Just keep them" so I did, but very quickly realized I must sayeth I doth not understand ... and I'm fine with that too. Not too much later old William and his two books of wordy words fell victim to a garage sale.

I know enough to enjoy the things I like, things like baseball and basketball and photography and writing, and I can read about or listen to others talk about topics I have little useful knowledge of and still be as happy as I was the day I discovered I had managed that C in geometry. I am blissfully ignorant and immensely happy at the same time.



### Harmon Park

Located at 309 Northend Avenue in Paragould, Harmon Dog Park is a hidden gem for all dog lovers! With separate areas for our smaller and larger pet friends, this park ensures that each pup gets to play and interact with others safely. We love to see our Premiere Pets playing on the various obstacles placed there. With plenty of room for a game of fetch and lots of sun and shade for your pup, Harmon Dog Park in Paragould is one you do not want to miss!

### Midtown Dog Park

Midtown Dog Park (Earl Bell Dog Park) is perfectly placed for our city pets! With designated areas for each pup and water available for them after a hard doggy play date, this is the perfect place to bring your pups. Located at 1115 Cobb Street in Jonesboro, it is perfectly placed to sit down and enjoy an afternoon with your pets!

### Craighead Forest Park

This is the perfect park for our water-loving pups! With a dog pier near the boat launch and a semi-enclosed dog park with waterfront access, Craighead Forest Park is a great place to bring your pets! And if you don't want your Premiere Pet to get wet, don't worry! There are miles of trails for you and your leashed pets to explore!

### The Bark Park - Coming Soon!

While The Bark Park is not yet completed, it is worth the mention! Work has been under way on West Highland in Jonesboro to give residents a new area to let their pups roam and play! Be on the lookout for opening day!

### State Parks

State parks are a perfect place to bring your pets for some exercise! While many do not have designated dog parks, your pet is welcome to explore and adventure while leashed. We recommend visiting Crowley's Ridge State Park, Lake Frierson, Lake Charles, and many others for some great memories with your pup!

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# PICKING YOUR Best Pet!

WITH DR. KRISTIN SULLIVAN



When it comes to choosing a pet, the decision may seem super easy, or it may seem incredibly daunting. There are many things to consider when adding to your family unit by means of a pet. In this article, I hope to bring to light some things you may not have considered when thinking of getting a new pet.

The first thing to decide is what type of pet your family needs. There are so many types of pets out there! Dogs, cats, fish that are of the independent type, fish that prefer to be with friends, turtles, snakes, lizards, guinea pigs, hamsters, mice, rats, chinchillas, sugar gliders, birds, rabbits/bunnies, ferrets, a multitude of amphibians, pet farm animals, and so many more!

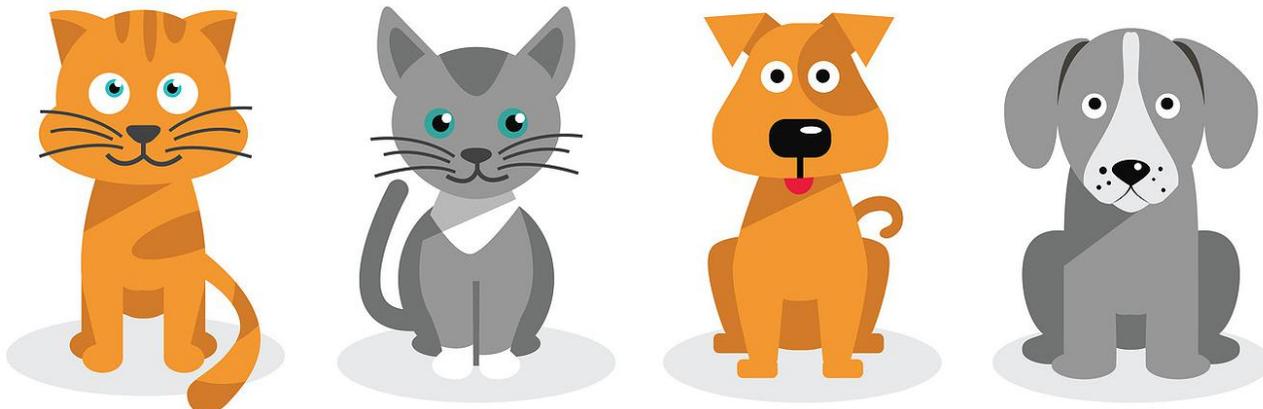
When deciding what type of pet your family needs, always research! You might surprise yourself. Who knows, maybe you think your family wants a dog, but after doing some research, you find that with your lifestyle, maybe a cat fits your style better.

Things to consider:

- Time that you not only can, but will dedicate to taking care of the pet
- Activity level of the pet
- Space the pet will need
- Supplies you will need to care for that pet and the cost of those supplies
- Veterinary care for the pet
- Maintenance for the pet
- Allergies
- What family member will be responsible for caring for the pet and their ability to do so

When considering the time you will have for the pet, it is always best to consider not only your day-to-day schedule, but your yearly schedule. When considering your yearly schedule, then you can better prepare for what time of year it would be best for you to get a pet. Summertime, for instance, many people vacation and have traveling sporting events that keep them away from home for a great length of time. For others, summer may mean staying at home or otherwise no disruption of the normal schedule. By considering what time of year would allow you the most flexibility and the most time to become acquainted with your new pet, then you will be preparing yourself best for a gentler and less stressful adjusting period.

Next on the list is the activity level of the pet. This is very important to consider, as this also relates to your activity level. For example, do you live in an apartment with no access to a walking area or dog park? Probably not the best time to get a dog that is in the working dog group, like a German Shepherd, Belgian Malinois, Siberian Husky, Labrador Retriever, etc. If you prefer staying indoors and do not have an active lifestyle, choosing a pet that does not demand a lot of exercise is very important. Many behavioral issues develop in pets that are not allowed adequate mental stimulation and exercise, most of which can be avoided with increasing the exercise and mental stimulation. If you are not active, but hope to become active, getting a dog to help you do that is not a good option. We cannot expect for a pet to change our lifestyles for us, but we can expect they will change our lives. :) Other things to consider when thinking of a pet's activity level is what time of day is that pet active? Some pets are nocturnal and are very active and making noises at night, such as rats, mice, hamsters, hedgehogs, etc. If you are working during the day and sleep at night, consider this before purchasing a nocturnal pet, especially if you are a light sleeper!



Space the pet will require is another major concern I confront with owners frequently. Betta fish? No problem! A bowl with betta-safe water sitting out of direct sunlight. Cat? Recommend a cat tree for mental stimulation and exercise, but don't forget the area for the cat food and water bowls will go, as well as the litter box! Dog? Consider kennel space, food and water bowl area, outdoor space appropriate for the size of the dog and its exercise requirements. Snake, turtle, lizard, fish? Tank size and location, and don't forget the humidity demands for the reptiles and amphibians! Guinea pig, ferret, hamster, chinchilla, sugar glider, mice, rat? Consider cage size, exercise demands/mental stimulation required that will also fit in the cage, water and food source, and rest space in the cage. Further, with any of these pets, you will also need space to store all of their needs: Food, bedding material, toys, enrichment activities, etc. This is where the cost for those supplies come in. Be sure to consider, when doing your research, how often bedding/litter/gravel will need to be changed out, tank water will need to be changed, the cost of the food the pet will need, and how often you will need to replace certain things. Does your budget allow for the upkeep?

Veterinary care -- does the pet require regular veterinary visits, vaccines, preventives? If purchasing an exotic pet, is there someone in your area who can care for it? Also, consider the cost for veterinary care. Will it need to be spayed or neutered? If it requires vaccines, what does that vaccine schedule consist of?

Maintenance of the pet not only refers to lifestyle, activity level, veterinary care, but also housing/husbandry and grooming requirements. Husbandry just refers to the appropriate care of the animal and appropriate living space. Looking at a Poodle mix? Plan to have grooming done every 4-6 weeks. Looking at a double-coated breed or long-coated breed? Please plan to brush that pet at least weekly to prevent matting. Birds require nail trims and oftentimes beak trims. Fish will need to have their water changed regularly with the appropriate method and water treatment chemical to make the water safe for fish. Caged animals need to have their

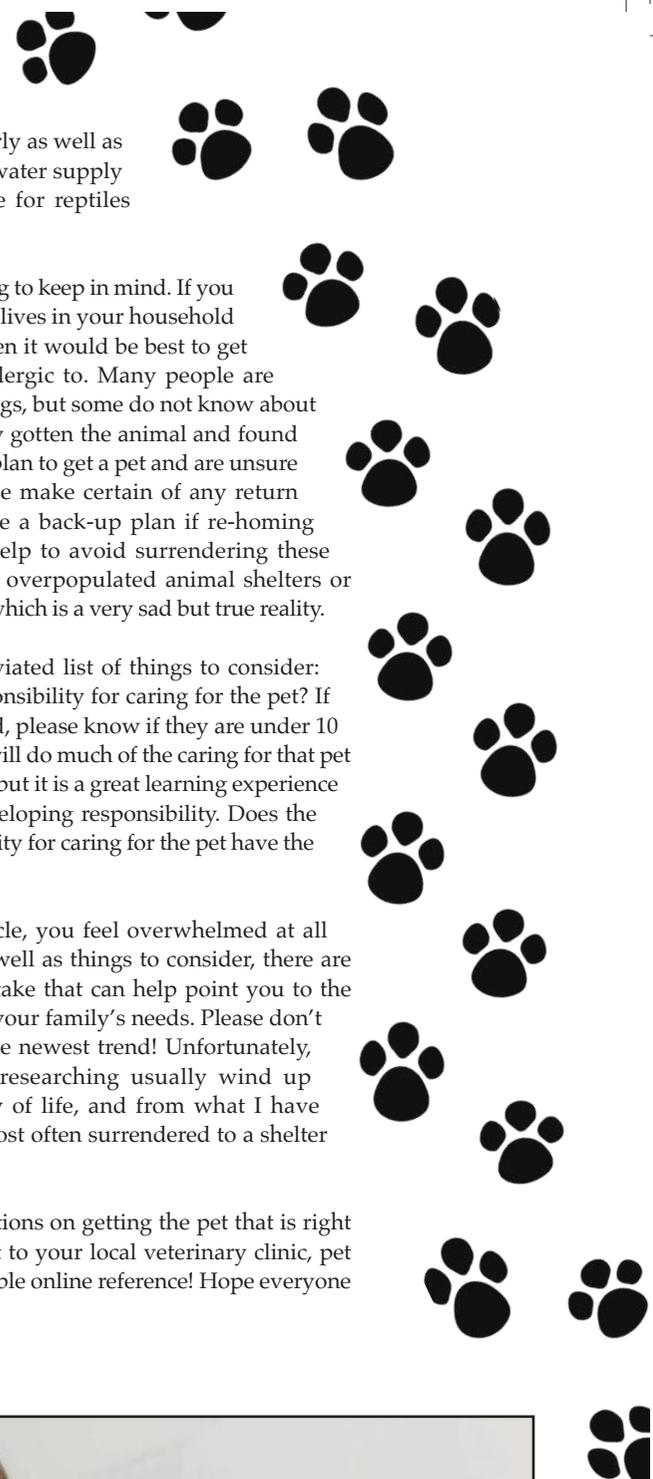
bedding changed regularly as well as cleaning their food and water supply bottles and bowls, same for reptiles and amphibians.

Allergies are another thing to keep in mind. If you or a family member who lives in your household are allergic to the pet, then it would be best to get a kind that no one is allergic to. Many people are allergic to cats and/or dogs, but some do not know about it until they have already gotten the animal and found out the hard way. If you plan to get a pet and are unsure if you are allergic, please make certain of any return policy or otherwise have a back-up plan if re-homing is necessary. This will help to avoid surrendering these furbabies to the already overpopulated animal shelters or abandoning the animal, which is a very sad but true reality.

Last thing on my abbreviated list of things to consider: Who will be taking responsibility for caring for the pet? If your answer is your child, please know if they are under 10 years of age the parents will do much of the caring for that pet while teaching the child, but it is a great learning experience and opportunity for developing responsibility. Does the person taking responsibility for caring for the pet have the time in which to do so?

If after reading this article, you feel overwhelmed at all the different options as well as things to consider, there are quizzes online you can take that can help point you to the pet that most suits you/your family's needs. Please don't get a pet because it is the newest trend! Unfortunately, pets purchased before researching usually wind up with diminished quality of life, and from what I have observed, are the pets most often surrendered to a shelter or abandoned.

If you have further questions on getting the pet that is right for you, please reach out to your local veterinary clinic, pet supply store, or dependable online reference! Hope everyone has a great summer!



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# NEA 1K

## THE SECOND ANNUAL

The second annual NEA 1K was back and better than last year, and there's no telling how big it will grow! This year, over 100 participants registered for the various running events and the 0K (BEER K). And with the numerous added spectators and volunteers, the streets of Downtown Paragould were filled! Runners and walkers gathered together with friends and family to enjoy an evening of racing, music, food, and fun.

Over \$7,000 was raised for Habitat for Humanity of Northeast Arkansas. Together, we can create a better community to live in by supporting groups like this that help build true hope for deserving families.

Congratulations to this year's winners! We can't wait for this event to come back next year!



Eva Kenney crossing the finish line

*We Moved!*

**1395 Highway 412 W Spur, Suite B, Paragould, AR 72450**



Beer K Winners: Brittney Barnes & Brent Davis



Never miss out on what's happening in NEA. Keep up with local events like this and find MOR(e) places to explore at [neapremiere.com](http://neapremiere.com)

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# LET'S CELEBRATE *National Fishing & Boating Week*



I dropped the fishing bait into the clear waters and waited patiently for a bite. I was hoping to feel the tug on the line of a big fish, but nothing happened. My high hopes of success were shattered when my mom came in and said, “Chuck, it’s time to drain the bathtub and go to bed!” I am not sure if it played out exactly like that, but a four-year old’s memory can be a little foggy. I do know I was caught fishing in the bathtub more than once and was also known to drop a line in a Thermos jug, dishpan or anywhere else water was available.

I was fortunate to have family and friends that nurtured my outdoor desires and helped fulfill my thoughts of sitting on a ditch bank as often as possible. That desire is more prevalent in children than we realize and fostering those thoughts can shape a child’s mind in a very positive manner. The lessons learned on a pond bank can be long lasting and life changing.

I asked some friends to recount stories of the impacts of fish and fishing on their memories and their lives and got some great “fishing stories.” Ben Sleeper has memories from his youth of fishing events held at a local Conservation Club in Elma, New York. Families would get to the four-acre lake early to get the best spots in hopes of catching a few fish. Bass and bream would readily gobble up worms, exciting the young anglers and filling stringers for a meal to be enjoyed by family and friends. Those outdoor days inspired Ben to a “fish” career, beginning with a summer job surveying brook trout in Pennsylvania. Ben also worked along the upper Mississippi River surveying fish populations. Oddly enough, his biggest catch may have been Julia Kueter. After they married, they moved back to Paragould and Ben now works at Kueter’s Fish Farms.

Several folks shared stories of introducing their children and how they felt it was important to get their kids on a pond bank. Lucas and Ashley Dixon introduced their three-year old son Owen to fishing in the pond

in their back yard. Owen enjoyed hanging out with the “big kids” while they fished and was soon able to fish on his own. Recent trips in a boat to Big Slough have built on those experiences and Owen will talk fishing with anyone who will listen.

Lee and Karabeth Dunavant have begun the process of introducing their son Miles to fishing and catching fish from a pond. Lee was raised with an outdoor mindset and their reasons for this introduction are very simple – to teach the importance of spending quality time with family and to put food on the table.

Lucas Martin is a new educator with the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission and his career path has roots in fishing. Lucas and his dad enjoyed crappie fishing and trotlining on the Cache River and Lucas is excited to now be able to pass on that enjoyment of the outdoors to others.

One important theme ran through all the stories that were shared; it all came down to spending time with others. It might have been a parent, a friend, a child or some other significant person, the remembrance of who was there was more vivid than what was on the end of the fishing line.

And that, to me, is one of the essential draws of the outdoors and fishing. Spending time with others, building relationships and making memories.

Some people only see the stumbling blocks in the path to fishing, so I want to offer a few tips to help with the experience. The world of fishing seems to be cluttered with equipment recommendations, but I like to keep it simple. All that is needed for a basic fishing rig is a #4 hook, a split shot and a floater. This rig has put more fish on the bank than any other. Attach this rig to a cane pole or Zebco 33, bait the hook

## CHUCK LONG

Avid Outdoorsman  
Retired Outdoor Educator



with a worm or cricket and be ready to watch the floater go under.

Another roadblock to wetting a line might be a place to go. Northeast Arkansas has plenty to offer. Reynolds Lake in Paragould is stocked with catfish in the summer and trout in the winter and is a great local option. Other places include Walcott Lake, Lake Frierson, Craighead Forest Lake, Lake Ashbaugh and Lake Charles. To get a clue of a body of water to try, check the fish stockings page at [agfc.com](http://agfc.com). The local rivers and ditches also provide great opportunities for bank fishing but be careful along the shorelines and make sure to have permission if the access is on private land.

Another great option is a farm pond. These small ponds are most often on private land so permission is key, but these little bodies of water can be very productive and offer great opportunity, especially for a young fisherman.

If you happen to catch this article early in June, there are several fishing events that provide great opportunities for children to feel a tug on the line. June 1 – 9, 2024, has been deemed National Fishing and Boating Week and along with that comes a variety of fishing events. Many local communities and AGFC fish hatcheries, including Paragould (Reynolds Lake) and Corning (Donham Hatchery), offer opportunities for youngsters to fish in stocked ponds. Free Fishing Weekend begins June 7 at noon until midnight June 9 and residents and nonresidents may fish without a license across the Natural State during that time. All limits and other regulations must be followed. For a complete list of dates of fishing derbies and other fishing events, please check [agfc.com](http://agfc.com) or with your local community.

I want to thank each person who shared their fishing story in word or picture. Take a little time to enjoy the outdoors and I hope you catch a few fish. I hope to see you out there!

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# Mini Muffins, Maximum Flavor!

BY KATIE COLLINS

**Directions:**  
Preheat oven to 350.  
Whisk brown sugar, flour, and pecans together in a medium bowl.  
In a smaller bowl, beat the eggs together with a fork. Add the eggs and the cooled, melted butter to the dry ingredients and stir together until combined. Your batter will be fairly liquid-y, but

**Ingredients:**  
1 cup packed brown sugar  
½ cup all-purpose flour  
1 cup chopped pecans  
2/3 cup butter, melted (10 tablespoons + 2 teaspoons)  
2 large eggs, beaten

trust the process!  
Grease a mini muffin pan with baking spray and fill each cup with batter. I used a 24-cup pan and the batter filled it pretty precisely.  
Bake for 14-16 minutes. Let cool in the pan for a few minutes, then remove to a wire rack to cool completely. Tastes great warm or room temperature!

**D**o you ever make a new recipe and suddenly become obsessed with it? That's what has happened to me with these Pecan Pie Mini Muffins. The first time I made them, they stuck to my muffin pan. That was incredibly disappointing because I was making them to share with the rest of MOR Media, and they were quite unsightly. I'm so glad I went ahead and tasted the remnants though. They were absolutely delicious! My second attempt turned out intact, and now I fear I may be making these on a weekly basis! I highly recommend using a baking spray with flour in your muffin tin for these – I think that made all the difference the second time.




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# THE ADVENTURES OF

BY VICKI McMILLAN



Hello, all! Lester, here! Can you believe it's June? June was named in honor of Juno, Roman goddess of marriage and childbirth. I guess that's why there are tons of weddings in June AND of course the good weather!

Vicki, Mac, and I have taken some great trips in June -- one of my favorites was just a couple of years ago. Still in the "June is for weddings" theme, we went to Niagara Falls, which to some is the Honeymoon Capital of North America! We boarded the Maid of the Mist boat, donned our blue plastic ponchos and hit the falls! Beautiful scenery, incredible waterfalls and perfect blue skies -- who needs a honeymoon? This is as close to a honeymoon as a scrappy little pound dog from Jonesboro needs! We were all soaking wet -- the ponchos were just for marketing purposes, I think. The captain of the boat can perform weddings, but we didn't see one on our trip. We'll just have to be satisfied with Pam and Jim's nuptials. If you are a fan of *The Office*, you get it. We also learned that several people had died attempting to go over the falls -- one was even a school teacher! Vicki didn't do all that history lecturing, so that made it one of my favorite travel experiences! (Sorry Vic)

Also on that trip we went to Lake Placid. If you've forgotten, Lake Placid hosted the 1980 Winter Olympics, the highlight of which was the Miracle on Ice. The US Olympic Hockey team, rightly consisting of all amateurs and only a few with amateur league experience, beat the Soviet Union team in the medal round 4-3. Of course, since it was the Cold War era, the Soviet team was made up of all professional players. This was quite the win for the good ol' USA. In this case, it truly was the thrill of victory! Now the hockey stadium is a museum that is well worth a look! Wear your red, white, and blue when you go!

We also toured the Olympic ski jump complex where the jumps are as high as 240 meters (about 800 feet) and the skier could fly as far as a football field! I'll tell you, it made my hair stand up and get fuzzy!!

(Don't confuse Lake Placid winter sports with Lake Placid the Betty White crocodile movie -- no similarities.)

While we were in town, we had a late lunch in a Russian restaurant where we were the only patrons. Just like in all the *Godfather* movies. I think the food was good -- I kept my furry head on a swivel!

We can't go anywhere without doing a little history. This trip it was the Underground Railroad, a series of secret routes to help slaves during the Civil War (what an oxymoron!) escape from the South to the North and to Canada. We stopped in Cincinnati to visit the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center, and then we continued North toward Canada, much like some of the escaping slaves did, following the railroad as we went. I was able to run and stretch my legs at the John Brown Historical Site near Lake Placid. He was a famous abolitionist starting way before the war. He built a house and barn on a plot of land granted to him by the state of New York, as he continued his anti-slavery work. It makes this scrappy little dog tear up thinking about enslaved humans -- just like us dogs living life on chain. Celebrate Juneteenth!

Speaking of celebrations, don't forget: June 7th is National Chocolate Ice Cream Day, so hit our Dairy Queen for an extreme choco blizzard!

Enjoy June!  
*Lester*

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# HEALTH *Matters*

The most common type of cancer has nothing to do with what you eat or how much exercise you get. It doesn't have anything to do with harmful chemicals in the air you breathe or whether you consume artificial sweeteners, colors or preservatives. It doesn't even have to do with unhealthy genes from mom or dad.

The most common type of cancer is skin cancer, and it has everything to do with something as familiar in the South as sweet tea and fried okra. The primary cause of skin cancer is unprotected sun exposure. Trying to avoid a sunburn south of the Mason-Dixon Line is about as difficult as dodging telemarketer calls. In an alarmingly short time, often as little as 15 minutes, unprotected skin can redden or blister. Despite its cosmetic appeal, a tan does not indicate good health. A tan is a response to injury. Skin cells signal they have been hurt from exposure to UV rays by producing more pigment or, as we call it, a tan. There are two primary types of skin cancer. Basal cell carcinoma (BCC) and squamous cell carcinoma (SCC) are directly correlated with sun accumulation over many years. The most common locations for BCC and SCC tumors are sun-exposed areas: the face, ears, arms, legs, etc. Melanoma is different. A person's risk for melanoma -- the most serious form of skin cancer -- doubles if he or she has had five or more sunburns. Rather than years of tanning, the sun exposure pattern believed to result in melanoma is that of brief, intense exposure such as blistering sunburns.

Recent FDA labeling rules can help consumers make sense of sunscreen products. The terms "sunblock," "sweatproof," and "waterproof" are prohibited. No product has the ability to totally block all sun rays or be completely sweatproof or waterproof. The FDA does require all

products to state the amount of time they are "water resistant."

"Broad Spectrum" is the most important descriptive word. It means the product has been tested and proven to protect against both UVA and UVB radiation. UVBs are the shorter wavelengths that cause sunburn on the surface of the skin. The longer UVA wavelengths are the ones that penetrate deeper and cause skin cancer, brown spots, wrinkling and tanning.

Look for products with an SPF of 15 to 50. Higher SPF values are misleading and would require ideal conditions to offer substantially greater protection. An SPF of 30 to 40, used as directed, is a good choice for almost everyone. Be careful to note the date of expiration and the recommended time for reapplying. Both of these will impact the effectiveness of the product.

Sunscreens should be applied 15 to 30 minutes before sun exposure, especially when swimming. This gives the product time to soak into the skin and not be diluted by sweat or water.

Because it only takes a few serious sunburns to increase a child's risk for skin cancer later in life, children especially need protection when outside. Hats, sunglasses, shaded play areas, loose clothing and frequent applications of sunscreen are important safeguards.

Indoor tanning beds also expose the consumer to UVA and UVB rays. They can damage the skin and cause cancer. They increase the risk of eye damage, wrinkles and changes in skin texture, especially among the younger population. People who begin tanning before age 35 have

## HEALTHY SUMMER SKIN CARE



Apply sunscreen 15 minutes before going outside. Use at least 15 SPF and reapply often.



Your eyelids have very thin skin. The key is making sure your sunglasses absorb UV rays 99 to 100% of the time.

Stay hydrated. Better skin health and health in general is related to how well your body is hydrated.

Don't forget to apply sunscreen to your ears, nose, neck, lips, even your scalp and every hard to reach spot that gets ignored.



Bug spray can weaken the SPF of your sunscreen. Use a higher SPF when wearing bug spray.



 @BCBSMICHIGAN





**KARAN SUMMITT**

Retired Health Educator  
 25 years educating people of all ages on the benefits of a healthy lifestyle. She teaches and writes with a passion for sharing simple, doable strategies that make better health possible for almost everyone.

a 75 percent higher risk for melanoma.

In addition to sunburns summer is prime time for insect bites. Most bug bites are harmless, but some varieties of mosquitoes and ticks spread viruses and bacteria that can make you sick – and may even be deadly.

Use screens on windows and doors to keep mosquitoes outside. Repair any holes in the screens, and don't leave doors propped open. Mosquitoes breed in open water, so once a week, check any items in or near your home that can hold water -- like planters, wading pools, or trash cans. Empty and scrub, turn over, or cover the items. Ponds and fountains need to be treated with larvicides.

Ticks thrive in areas with woods, bushes, or high grass – so if you have a yard, it's important to keep it well-mowed and clear. Animals like mice, dogs, and deer may also carry ticks in their fur. Remove plants that attract deer and consider putting up a fence to keep deer out of your yard. Another option is to apply tick control products to your yard. You can do this yourself or hire a pest control company.

An FDA approved mosquito and/or tick repellent, when used as directed is another important precaution. Be sure to shower after coming inside to stay, and don't forget to protect pets.

A generous dose of sunscreen combined with some wise precautions will protect you from a painful burn today and lower your future risk for skin cancer. It also will help you avoid premature wrinkles and age spots, and that is a beauty secret everyone can afford. Common sense insect precautions will prevent discomfort and lower the risk for a serious infection. A little effort before going outside will go a long way in making sure your summer fun isn't spoiled by skin irritations.

**10% of all dog item sales will be donated to the NEA Humane Society in honor of Premiere Pets Month!**

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# THE PERFECT PAIR

## Daron & Louis

STORY BY KAROLINE RISKER  
PICTURES SUBMITTED



Daron Newcomb, a dog groomer and handler, participated in the prestigious Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show on May 13 with a Yorkie (Yorkshire terrier) named Louis (pronounced Louie). Daron is not new to showing dogs, having a successful run with a dog who, according to Daron, is now retired and lies on the couch. But when finding Louis, Daron advised the now-owner to wait for the right dog, a journey that took him to Spain to look at a dog who he felt wasn't right, then waiting two more years until he found another in France. "I found him and said, 'This is it,'" he said of Louis. "We flew into Paris and took a train to the countryside and they dropped us off. So we looked at this guy who raises Yorkies and I said, 'Well, we have to bring him home. He's the one.'" Daron had met the breeder previously and had stayed in contact. When Daron saw the dog, he knew he had something special. "We've got to take a chance," he said of the dog. "I think he's the one. I mean, just his personality. He's beautiful. Really everything about him was exactly what a Yorkshire should be." Daron was even told by another breeder that Louis was the best Yorkie they had seen in 40-50 years. "He's very special," he said.

Daron showed Louis at the Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show in New York where he took the award for best of breed, which Daron thought that Louis had a "relatively" good chance at winning. The club, established in 1877, is America's oldest non-profit organization dedicated to the sport showing of dogs. The dog show is the second-longest continuously held sporting event in the U.S. and is the longest nationally televised live dog show, having been televised since 1948. The purpose of the show dog is "to breed better quality, better companion dogs," said Daron. "When you show dogs there is a written standard that a Yorkie (or any dog) is supposed to be, there are qualities they have. The Yorkie with the most of those qualities is the best." To be in the show, the dogs have to be American Kennel Club Champions. The competition is fierce and is limited to only 2,500 dogs; the top 5 dogs are granted a spot, the rest of the entries are taken by lottery. Daron considered his chances based on earlier wins. Among others, Louis won the breed competition at the National Championship in Orlando last December. The ultimate goal is to finish as the number one Yorkie in the U.S. "That status can change mostly but right now he has a great lead and is maintaining," Daron said. "You have to go to shows and beat a certain amount of dogs and be competitive" to retain the standing, he added.

After all these years, Daron still gets nervous when it comes time to show the dogs. "Yeah, you do," he said. "There is a lot of pressure." Daron is quick to add that the ultimate goal is to have fun. "If it's not fun we just won't do it. He's my little right hand man, my buddy," said Daron of Louis. "He trusts me and he enjoys it."

Daron attributes some of the success to the work they put in. "You do have to work with them," he said. "They have to be socialized. Extra work went into that since he was born during



Covid time. So there is maintenance and care. You work every day, and bathe every week. Louis gets the best care, the best everything," he said. Daron said Louis' favorite treat is filet mignon, a bribe he gets when he competes.

Daron's biggest surprise when it comes to showing Louis is the negative feedback. But, Daron says, the dogs really love it. "You can't get closer to your dog then when you train them and work for that success," Daron said. "It's a relationship you have between each other and dependability. Just keeping dogs in condition is time. Most people don't put in the effort. If the dog doesn't love it, we don't do it. Not all dogs have it in them and some dogs excel at it." What puts Louis over the top, according to Daron, is the dog's personality.

The pair have a special bond. "He's a lovely dog to live with," Daron said of his canine friend who not only lives with him, but goes to work with him, flies on airplanes staying in the cabin with him, and even has his own satin bed to sleep on when they stay at hotels. Louis will be three years old in June.

Daron's favorite dog is a poodle, of which he has three, along with his own Yorkie. He also loves to travel, having been to Europe and Mexico. His favorite place to go is the beach, though his favorite specific place is France. He loves Paris in particular, calling it very whimsical.

Daron works at Vetcare in Jonesboro where he operates the Barking Barber, a grooming service. He is from Lake City but lives in Manila. We offer he and Louis a hearty congratulations!



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# Amy Schmidt

## THE LEAP OF FAITH

STORY BY GABBY POWELL,  
PHOTOGRAPHY BY KNIGHT PRODUCTIONS

**W**hat do you want to be when you grow up? A doctor? A teacher? A farmer? An entrepreneur? Well, who says you have to pick just one and stay? Dr. Amy Schmidt took the leap out of her first love in academia to follow another in the world of serving others and serving pets.

Before we dive into her current role as Administrative Director of the Northeast Arkansas Humane Society, we have to go back in time to see how she got there.

Amy's story begins with her undergraduate degree in English from Lyon College. These foundations led her to gain a master's degree in Southern Studies from the University of Mississippi and go straight on to her doctorate from the University of Arkansas in English.

Through her own academic career and teaching at various institutions of higher education her love for literature grew. Whether that be in the pages of Toni Morrison's novels or the short stories of Flannery O'Connor, William Faulkner, and numerous others, Amy found herself always engulfed in a piece of literature.

It is a major achievement to obtain an academic doctorate. But it does not take long to realize after meeting Dr. Amy Schmidt that she is a woman who will achieve anything she sets her mind to. So, when her heart led her to stay in Northeast Arkansas to be near family, she found careers in Northeast Arkansas institutions that would keep her close.

She has worked in collegiate English departments at Lyon College, Arkansas State University, and Williams Baptist University.

It would be the same heart that kept her home in NEA that would tell Amy there may be something more for her outside of the academic world.

In the summer of 2023, Amy was caring for horses with the Northeast Arkansas Humane Society – a volunteer act she has regularly done since moving to Jonesboro – with chair of the board, Tina Coots. She had asked if she knew of anyone (mostly speaking about recent students) who may be a good fit for the opening Administrative Director position at the Northeast Arkansas Humane Society.

The two finished tending to the horses, but the thought didn't leave her mind. "What about me? Would that be crazy?" And let's think about that situation for a minute. Let's "analyze the text," if you will.

Amy is a woman with a life engulfed in academia and has set herself up for a successful career in the field. She has two dogs of her own, but she did not grow up in a world full of animals. She was only led to NEAHS because she said to herself, "Before I turn 30, I'm going to get over this fear of horses – even if it kills me!" So, she learned and loved to ride and once moving to Jonesboro she wanted to give back by tending to the horses in NEAHS' care.



Photo by Melissa Donner Photography



Would it make sense for her to make this leap of faith out of her comfort zone for a life of adventure and fulfillment?

After seeking wise counsel from those nearest to her, Amy took the leap into the position we see her in today – a position that could not have come at a more perfect time.

After being in the world of academia for so long, burnout was starting to wear on Amy. She loves her students, loves her colleagues, and loves her field of study, but there still seemed to be something missing.

The animals at NEAHS have filled that something and more.

There are two animals that seem to have made a lifelong impact on Amy. The late Boss Lady Sadie and Mr. Hooch. Each of these pooches reminds Amy and each of the volunteers at the shelter about the mission they are working toward each and every day. As the voice to these surrendered and abandoned pets, it is crucial that they remember they are working to give better lives to those without.

When asked what her favorite part of this new adventure has been, her answer was quick and simple: The animals!

“When I get bogged down by work in the office, I just go get an animal,” she said.

That is most likely why when you visit the shelter you see numerous different cats and dogs roaming the halls! The volunteers love to let the animals out of the enclosures and get some extra love.

But even with all the extra animals roaming, Hooch knows he is the man of the house. He has learned from one of his best friends, Boss Lady Sadi, how to keep the “humans” in check and under control in the office.

Whether that is by taking the social media accounts by storm to ask for items needed or by making town trips to pick up supplies, the two always made sure their shelter friends were properly taken care of.

Recently, Boss Lady Sadi has crossed the rainbow bridge. But, with the caring hearts of the NEAHS staff and volunteers, there is no doubt Sadi had the best life of any shelter pup. She was loved beyond measure, and she is the perfect example of why it is essential that we care for our furry friends.

Without the work of NEAHS, dogs like Sadi will not get the love, attention, and care they deserve. If you are interested in volunteering or donating to the Northeast Arkansas Humane Society, you can find them online at [neahs.org](http://neahs.org) or by visiting their Facebook page.

# FABCO MACHINE & ENGINEERING

If Chad Robinson can drive home any one point about FABCO Machining and Engineering in Paragould it is this: “We have grown far beyond being just a machine shop.”

Chad, the Chief Financial Officer and head of HR, says a company that started as a sideline for owner Bob Clark in 1994 has grown immensely in size, staff and productivity in the world of quality manufacturing and machining services. “From Bob starting with one machine on his back porch we now have 70-plus CNC machines today,” he said. “Sometimes customers say they pictured a dark, dank setting with a dirt floor but we have 100,000 square feet of floor space and every kind of machine imaginable.

“We do machining, fabricating, we have an engineer on staff, we can design. We call ourselves manufacturers. We do more than just get you a part welded up. It’s much more than just making a part from a print.”

One of the things Chad takes great satisfaction in is FABCO’s ability to keep area manufacturers up and running. One of its biggest clients is Nucor-Yamato Steel and the Paragould business has been able to help get the steel mill’s machinery back in gear after brief setbacks, situations that cost money. “Nucor, for example,” he said, “right now we’re making them a machine to use in the production process. It’s a big job. The normal mom-and-pop machine shop doesn’t do that kind of work.

“We primarily deal with business manufacturers. Our bread and butter is the steel industry but we do work for almost all the factories around. We specialize in anything big, heavy and complicated. We have parts up to 60,000 pounds, we have a lathe 43 feet long. Our niche ... big, heavy, complex. We have repaired parts or made parts for several of the factories in our area.”

He said the FABCO staff takes great pride in being of service when “someone like Nucor needs help and we can get them back to work. Anchor Packaging had a machine go down and they never close, they run around the clock. A shaft broke and caused a production line to be sent home. Well, those people are home, getting no pay. Within 48 hours we had them back up and running. We look at



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it as we're not only providing income for our families, but for families all over Northeast Arkansas. We help support the economy of Northeast Arkansas. I like to know we can do this for the local industry."

FABCO serves on the advisory boards for Black River Technical College, Northeast Arkansas Career and Technical Center, and Arkansas State University - Newport. "We hope to create potential employees," Chad said. "We want to educate. We go to job fairs. Right now we employ 37. We're looking to continue to grow, looking to ramp up production and machining at the new location we have added. When we expand the new building, we will be creating more jobs."

Currently, FABCO runs only one shift, 7-5,

Monday through Thursday. Workers get a three-day weekend because "we believe in a work-life balance," Chad said. "I could see us someday possibly going to a second shift or a split shift. Ten years ago we had about 12 employees and a 50,000 square foot building. Now we have 37 employees and 100,000 square feet. We have quadrupled our sales and will possibly double last year's sales. These are all very positive things."

Specializing in heavy machining, fabrication and engineering, FABCO is located at 1200 Greene 628 Road in Paragould and may be reached by phone at (870) 240-7379. The company also has a new powder coating facility on Highway 49 South, with plans to add production machining capabilities there, soon.



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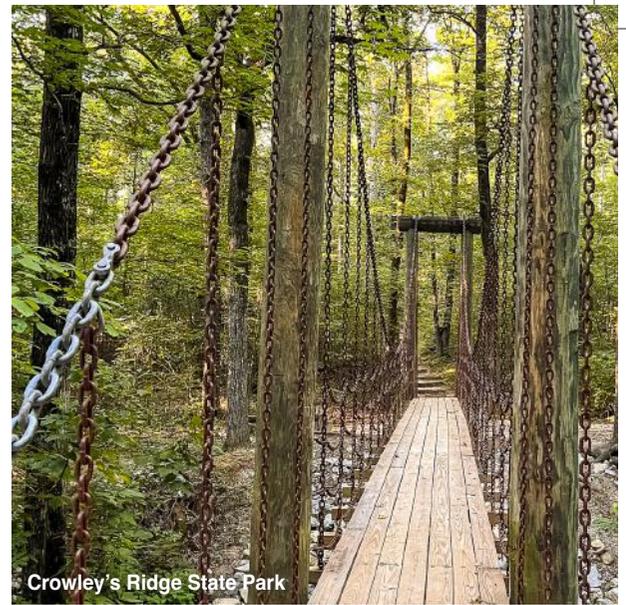
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# ARKANSAS STATE PARKS

*Beauty in Our Back Yard*

BY KARAN SUMMITT



Crowley's Ridge State Park



Petit Jean State Park

In January of 2023 I retired from full-time employment without the typical bucket list of things to do. About that same time a Facebook post caught my eye. In 2023 The Arkansas State Park system celebrated its 100th anniversary by introducing Club 52, a challenge to visit all 52 Arkansas State Parks during the upcoming year.

My husband David and I love to take long drives, so Club 52 seemed a perfect fit! On a cold, but beautiful snow-covered February day we got out of the house and headed to Walcott and Lake Frierson state parks. We picked up our passport books with all 52 parks very conveniently arranged into six geographical regions. This made it easy to plan trips so we could take in more than one park when time allowed. Each time we visited a park, our passport was stamped with an emblem unique to that park. Twelve different parks earned us a decal and 25 parks netted us a deck of playing cards. At our last stop we filled out the paperwork to receive a t-shirt. The gifts were nice, but the journey was an eye-opening adventure.

In the mind of many outsiders, Arkansas has a reputation for poverty, ignorance and backwoods hillbilly living. We are much more, but stereotypes can be hard to change. On the other hand, one truth is indisputable: Arkansas more than measures up to its motto as "The Natural State." From our own Crowley's Ridge to the Ozark and Ouachita mountains, across the flatlands of the Delta and the timber covered forests that pepper the southern part of the state, Arkansas abounds in breath-taking outdoor beauty.

If state parks bring up visions of lakes, hiking trails and camping, you are in for a surprise. In addition to these typical park offerings, the Arkansas park system includes museums, Civil War battlefields and places of historic interest, several of them just a short drive from our

area. Even if you aren't interested in visiting all 52 parks, these in our own back yard are worth a day trip.

Old Davidsonville State Park just outside Pochahontas recreates the life of trappers and pioneers who lived along the Black River. Davidsonville was home to Arkansas' first post office. In Manila, the Herman Davis State Park honors a WW1 hero who used his sharpshooter duck hunting skills to scout out the enemy and protect his platoon from ambush. Parkin and Hampson state parks tell the story of Indian villages that were in Arkansas long before white settlers, and just outside Newport the Jacksonport State Park combines White River steamboat history with the growth and impact of agriculture in Arkansas.

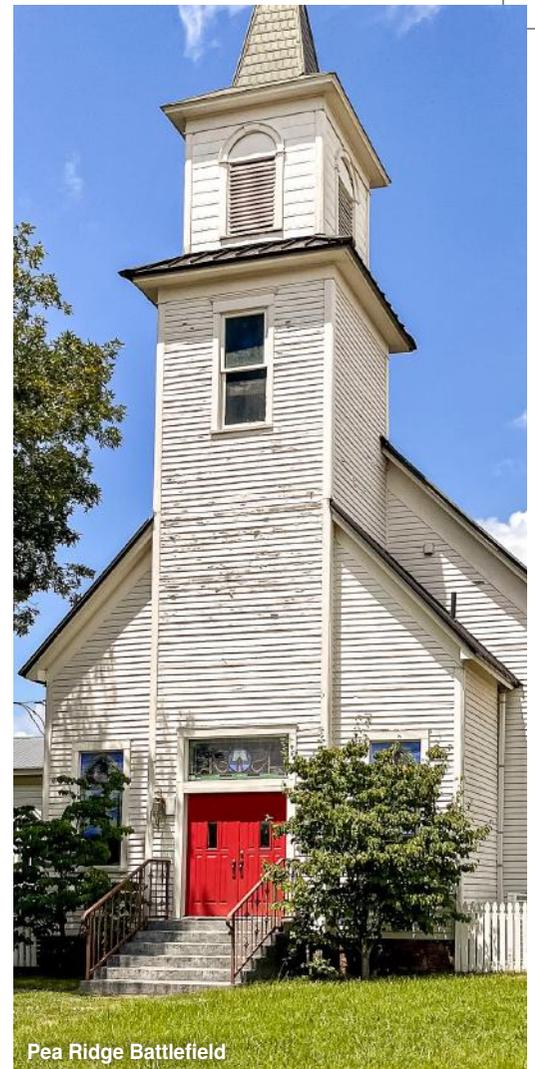
Other state park museums include Arkansas Natural Resources Museum in Smackover, Arkansas Post Museum, Plantation Agricultural Museum and Historic Washington State Park, an entire community preserved as it might have been in the early 1800s. The latter boasts a magnificent magnolia tree first planted in 1839.

Four Civil War battle sites are included in the state park system, as is the family cemetery of Arkansas' first governor, James Conway, and the world renowned Crater of Diamonds. For campers, hikers, bicyclists and those who love water sports, so much of Arkansas remains in an unspoiled state. From the depths of Devil's Den State Park to Mount Magazine, Arkansas' highest point, we found the fresh aroma of a woodland trail to be more relaxing than the best massage. The clean air of mountain peaks went a long way in clearing our minds of everyday stresses.

Along the way I chose some favorite places, and we picked up a new



Pinnacle Mountain with the Grands!



Pea Ridge Battlefield



hobby. Our walks on the park trails led to hiking boots, walking sticks and lightweight backpacks. We visited the waterfalls at Petit Jean State Park, hiked Pinnacle Mountain with our grandchildren and trekked to the highest point overlooking Lake Catherine. The South Arkansas Arboretum State Park in El Dorado was an unexpected joy as we meandered through a crisscross of easy trails and native plants all within the city limits.

Louisiana Purchase State Park was another sweet pleasure. We followed a paved two-lane road as far as it would go. A sign pointed toward a winding boardwalk, elevated several feet above swampy bottomlands. The boardwalk took us deep into the trees, finally ending at a stone marker, engraved with the words, "This stone marks the base established November 10, 1815, from which the lands of the Louisiana Purchase were surveyed by United States engineers." From this point among a dense forest of giant cypress trees the baseline was established for determining the boundaries of 12 of the 13 states formed from the Louisiana Purchase. I will never forget the quietness and peace in those deep swamps and the seeming impossibility that states like Kansas, Iowa and others could be mapped out from where we were standing.

Getting to the parks was its own fun. We discovered most state highways and roads to be in excellent driving condition. Along the way we stopped at sites that are not state parks, but worth the visit. In August we went to War Eagle Mills and Pivot Rock near Eureka Springs. In October, we drove to Harrison and saw Maplewood Cemetery, headed down to Jasper and walked along the Buffalo River, then ended up at the Arkansas Grand Canyon. We witnessed firsthand the extreme poverty of the Delta, one dying community after another hanging on to the life that was left with a single gas station, a cotton gin and a Dollar General store. Between the once vibrant towns were

miles and miles and miles of row crops and rice fields. In the hills we passed cattle grazing on gently rolling pastures and hundreds of poultry houses, many of them abandoned. Huge old barns had the look of a neglected cathedral, each one telling a story of bygone days and the rural roots of many native Arkansans.

We shared the roads of south Arkansas with 18-wheelers loaded down with timber. In the blistering heat of August we drove under the cool canopy of ancient hardwoods in the Boston Mountains and navigated the hairpin curves of Mounts Magazine and Nebo. In the fall we counted cotton bales, smelled burning rice fields and witnessed the breathtaking colors of changing leaves. In every season we drove by white framed churches with names like Ebenezer, Antioch, Lebanon, Shiloh and Mt. Pisgah. We stopped to eat at mom-and-pop diners that smelled of country cooking, fresh barbeque, homemade pies and flat-grill burgers.

Our trips were good marriage therapy, helping us enjoy the slower pace of retirement and the blessing of each other's company. I navigated and David drove, each of us learning new depths in the art of spousal patience. Through family group texts, we shared photos and interesting discoveries with our children.

We marked off our last park just before the holidays last year. For some years, I've purchased Christmas ornaments as souvenirs of our travels. Hanging each Club 52 ornament brought back a sweet memory and the desire to revisit our favorite spots. In addition to hiking gear, we purchased a small camper and plan to spend some extended time soaking up Arkansas' natural beauty. The Arkansas State Parks are a hidden treasure in our own back yard!

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# GREENE COUNTY 4-H 2024 AWARDS & RECOGNITION BANQUET

## PHOTOS FROM GREENE COUNTY 4-H

The Greene County 4-H 2024 Awards and Recognition Banquet took place on May 9 at The Crossing in Downtown Paragould. Over a dinner catered by The Main Dish, various 4-H members were recognized for their dedication and service to community through 4-H initiatives.

Special speakers included State Representative Jeremy Wooldridge and Fran Cavenaugh, active supporters of the organization. The 4-H Record Book Awards and Graduating Seniors Recognition were present by special guest, Greene County Quorum Court Justice of the Peace Ronnie Roberts.

Congratulations to all who received awards and, more importantly, thank you for your dedication to the 4-H principles of head, heart, hands, and health, that have improved our community.



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# Stella

## A PET WITH A PURPOSE

BY KARAN SUMMITT

There are times when seemingly unrelated things come together with perfect timing. For Angie McBride that happened over the course of a few years. Within a short time, her two boys graduated from high school, she was approached with an offer to take on the role of CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocates) Advocate Coordinator of Greene County and Stella, a golden retriever, joined their family.

The job offer, which allowed Angie the flexibility of working remotely, gave her the opportunity to help people and was a perfect solution to the extra time on her hands with the boys no longer in high school. Involvement and experience with that work led to the idea of having Stella trained as a support dog that could be used to ease a child's uncertainty when meeting with their CASA volunteer.

Like its national affiliate, CASA of the 2nd Judicial District is a non-profit organization that serves abused and neglected children in Craighead, Greene, Clay, Poinsett and Mississippi counties. The organization's goal is to ensure every abused and neglected child has a voice in court, a friend by their side and the opportunity to thrive in a safe and loving home. CASA does this by recruiting, training and supporting volunteers who serve as advocates for the children. These volunteers continue advocating for the child until they have reached safe and permanent homes.

Angie loves her job. She oversees an average of 16-20 volunteers, working to find the "best fit" between adult volunteers and each child, a fit that will allow the child to speak honestly and without fear. The CASA volunteer's sole focus is to represent and speak on behalf of the child. Volunteers meet with their assigned child at least once every two weeks over a period that ranges from three to eighteen months.

Early into her role as Coordinator, Angie realized a support dog could be a valuable asset in the initial visits between volunteers and children. Having a trained support dog provided a safe distraction for both parties and helped bridge the awkwardness and fears a child might experience with an unfamiliar adult.

Angie also knew Stella had the temperament to be a support dog. Golden Retrievers are known for their gentle nature, especially around children. The training took place over an 18-month period during which Angie and Stella were assigned homework to practice until the next meeting. Eventually Stella and Angie engaged in supervised visits to see how she handled actual encounters. Stella passed with flying colors and is currently registered as a support dog with the Alliance of Therapy Dogs.

To clarify, therapy and support dogs are not trained to perform specific tasks like service dogs. Their role is to provide comfort, emotional stability and unconditional love for individuals suffering from various



mental or emotional conditions. Each dog receives obedience training and is screened for its ability to interact favorably with humans. Unlike therapy dogs who live permanently with their owners, support dogs are privately owned and used for short visits, and are especially effective in hospital settings and with nursing home residents and children.

Despite her calm demeanor, Stella is playful and loves to interact with children. She enjoys playing hide-and-go-seek, a game of chase and hearing the children laugh. She is patient, allowing the children to scratch her back, crawl or lie on her belly and give loving hugs.

Angie worded the value of service dogs like Stella in these words: "She is a buffer that helps initial visits go easier. With Stella we can get a strong foot in the door when things tend to be awkward. The child will attach to the dog first, and that lays a common foundation for us to build trust and relationship with the child. I love the joy Stella brings to hard situations."

Angie hopes to involve Stella at the local Foster Care Visitor Center when biological parents meet with their children who are in foster care. She believes Stella can ease the tension of these visits and help parents and their children reconnect just as she does in visits with CASA volunteers.

(If you want to know more about becoming a CASA volunteer, information is available at [www.neacasa.org](http://www.neacasa.org))

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# THE 2024 ANNUAL UNITED WAY LUNCHEON

## REMEMBERING & LOOKING FORWARD

PHOTOS FROM UNITED WAY OF NORTHEAST ARKANSAS

At the 2024 Annual United Way of Northeast Arkansas Luncheon, companies that have partnered with United Way were honored, and awards were given to those who went above and beyond this past calendar year. The luncheon also honored many volunteers who made United Way's work possible in 2023.

Award winners include the 2023 Campaign Champion, Kim Hauge, the 2023 Michael Nunnally Loaned Executive of the Year, AnnaLisa Meredith, the 2023 Community Above Self Award winner, Liz Ivener, and many more.

United Way thanks each and every partner and supporter that has

shown their kindness this past year. The United Way Luncheon is a celebration of work that has been accomplished and a push to keep working in the future.

At the luncheon, the new Volunteer United initiative was announced. Volunteer United allows community members to stay connected and up to date with the missions and work of United Way. Volunteers will be given an inside look into United Way's work through volunteering their time at annual events and as needed throughout the year.

For more information, United Way can be found at 407 Union Street, by calling 870-935-3658, or by visiting [www.uwnea.org](http://www.uwnea.org).



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There has been some buzz around the Jonesboro Kindergarten Center lately, and we think we know why! Mrs. Hanne Pelletier, Art Teacher and Teacher of the Year at JKC, recently shared a pet adoption partnership that soared with the imagination and creative skills of her students.

Mrs. Hanne reached out to Amy Schmidt, Administrative Director at the NEA Humane Society, to tell her of the idea she had seen on other art teacher social media pages.

"I thought to myself that my kids could do it and it would be even cuter since they're kindergarten. So, I decided to try it out with my Art Club," she said.

NEAHS was thrilled to help, so they gathered images of 15 animals (dogs, cats, a horse, and a pony) to let the kids create portraits of. Amy even brought a sweet dog by the JKC classroom to help foster imagination and motivate the kids!

Once the portraits were made, Mrs. Pelletier matted the artwork and hung them with the original photo and the artist's name. Next, the photos were posted onto the JKC Facebook page, and they were shared numerous times from there. As each animal was adopted, the artwork gained an "I'm Adopted" ribbon.

"The students fell in love with the animal that they were in charge of drawing. They all wanted to run out and adopt the pet themselves," Mrs. Pelletier said.

The students not only learned the value of helping pets in need by helping get them adopted, but they also learned the value of committing and taking care of their animals. For Mrs. Pelletier, she learned just how big a five-year-old's heart can be.

So far, over half of the pets have been adopted. If you are interested in adopting or fostering a pet from the Northeast Arkansas Humane Society, visit [neahs.org](http://neahs.org) or call 870-932-5185.

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6/22 - Saturday at 7:00pm, The Cleverlys, [showpass.com/theclerverlys](http://showpass.com/theclerverlys)  
6/24 - Monday at 7:00pm, Bluegrass Monday, [kasu.org/tickets](http://kasu.org/tickets)  
6/28 - Friday at 7:00pm, Railway Rhythm, [showpass.com/railway](http://showpass.com/railway)  
6/29 - Saturday at 7:00pm, Johnny Wicoff, [showpass.com/johnnywicoff](http://showpass.com/johnnywicoff)

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*Saturdays in June*

8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

Paragould Farmers Market  
Paragould Community Pavilion



*June 1st*

7:30 a.m.

Running on the Ridge 5K & 10K  
Greene County Fairgrounds



*June 7th-9th*

Times Vary

Legally Blonde  
[act2performingarts.org](http://act2performingarts.org)  
Downtown Collins Theatre



*June 7th*

6:00 p.m.

Singo Bingo  
1812 Pizza

Main Street Paragould Event



*June 14th*

7:30 p.m.

Downtown After Hours  
The Colburn Brothers

Paragould Community Pavilion  
Main Street Paragould Event



*June 29th*

7:00 p.m.

Johnny Wicoff  
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Downtown Collins Theatre

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

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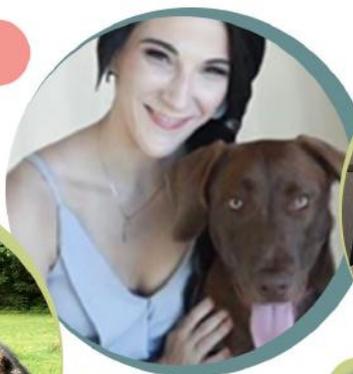
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SUMMER 2024

# Shannon Smithee

## KEEPING NEA SENIORS ACTIVE WITH EAAAA

BY RICHARD BRUMMETT

If you're wanting to see Shannon Smithee, look real fast. She might be here, or there, or over there in her role as Community Support Specialist at East Arkansas Area Agency On Aging (EAAAA).

"All the programs I do are to get people out and stay active," she said, preparing at that moment for a Geri-fit Class at the Jonesboro office. "We're affiliated with many Senior centers ... the Pocahontas Community Center and the Paragould B.E.E.S. and others. We may be conducting classes in your area at any time if you just check to see. The EAAAA does so much to help seniors. We have lots of different programs."

Serving Clay, Craighead, Crittenden, Cross, Greene, Lawrence, Lee, Mississippi, Phillips, Poinsett, Randolph, and St. Francis counties, the EAAAA has advocated for seniors and delivered quality care and family focused services "while maintaining a servant's heart" since 1978, according to its website.

Shannon said her major goal is to help senior citizens stay active and healthy through a number of programs and exercises she directs. "I'm trying to increase sections I can offer," she said, "ease into different things. We've got Bean Bag Baseball, the Geri-fit Strength Training, and Tai Chi, for example. I'd like to get back to some things like art, which is where my background is, and some other things, but I need to create some more volunteer leaders to be able to make that happen."

Rounding out her fifth year with EAAAA, Shannon said she wants to see "overall improvement from people in these classes we provide. People benefit from attending. If you're active, you have better overall wellbeing. I actually had a fall myself. It gave me a great perspective to

be walking along one minute and to have put me into a deep lunge the next. I can tell you what we do is of benefit to people. They are not just sitting around. There are many things you can do; we have options."

She called the Geri-fit program "a more advanced class but we do offer beginners classes. We have something for everyone at any ability level. Attendance kind of ebbs and flows due to having so many schedules from the individual members. It might be a doctor's appointment or a family thing. But if you will register with us and let me know if you are coming, we'll adjust."

Shannon said individuals come to the classes for a variety of reasons, some following an injury and seeking renewed freedom of movement, some for strength training, and some for socialization. "We work on different strategies to get down and back up," she explained. "We try different methods so in any given situation you can feel confident. Practicing moves are available to you. The insight I gained is that people who maintain activities like gardening or participating in church have a higher quality of life. Use it or lose it, so to speak. You have to maintain if you want to work in the garden."

"After an injury we can always make a modification. The Monday/Wednesday Senior Fitness, PACE/Geri-fit, Beanbag Baseball for 30 minutes for those a little bit older, things for those with some more mobility. Issues like knee and hip replacements ... the programs are good for those with mobility issues."

For those participants Shannon said she can do one-on-one sessions with beginners by appointment. "We can do different classes at different times and find modifications, if necessary," she said. "A lot



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is getting used to it: It is never too late, you are never too old. Even if never in your life have you exercised, it's not too late. You don't have to wait a long period of time to see results."

Concessions are made for holiday breaks but Shannon emphasized that consistency is vital to improvement. "Holidays we had to squeeze some classes in," she said, "but the year before we had no classes for a month and so many people said, 'I miss it.' Consistency of classes is very important. If you are steadily attending, you might be due for a day off every once in a while, but being here is a big deal.

"Some have been in the class since I started here. Some moved away, some's schedule changed. And, honestly, we haven't really bounced back from the pandemic. In the pandemic we met at Craighead Forest Park -- rain or shine -- and I became very familiar with wind speed. They were very, very dedicated during that time. We did some Zoom. We have done art. We had classes before the pandemic. I'm making efforts to rebuild the programming to pre-pandemic."

With that idea in mind, Shannon again expressed the need for additional volunteers. She would like to get more men involved in the various classes and expand into different areas. "A new section can be developed," she said, "but I really would like to create more volunteer leaders. Training would be provided. It would open up things for me."

EAAAA encourages active older people to stay fit, healthy and involved. The current Wellness Schedule includes:

**Monday and Wednesday**

- » 9:30AM-11AM PACE and Bean Bag Baseball
- » 1:00PM-2:00PM Geri-fit Strength Training
- » 2:00PM-3:00PM Tai Chi

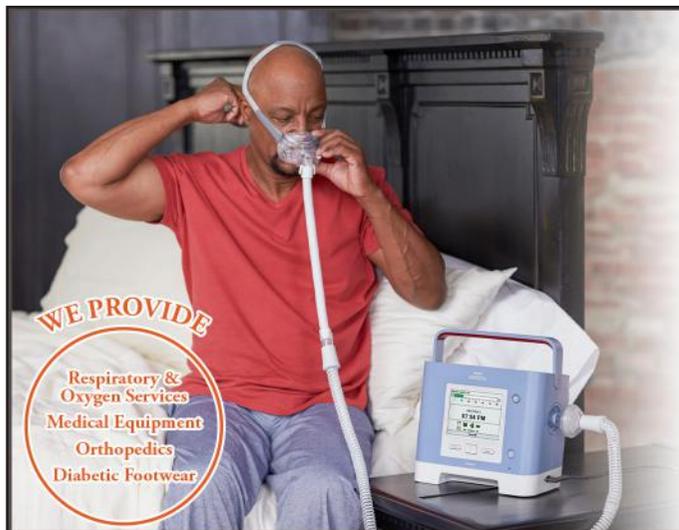
**Tuesday and Thursday**

- » 9:30AM-10:30AM Tai Chi
- » TBA: HealthRhythms Empowerment Drumming

Beginner Tai Chi is set up by appointment to go over the basics. After at least two sessions, the participant is ready to join either Tai Chi class listed above. Also by appointment: one-on-one Geri-Fit session to go over proper form and modifications.

For information, contact Shannon at 870-930-2222 or ssmith@eaaaa.org. Classes are subject to change, so please contact Shannon to register.

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# A DAD'S DREAM COME TRUE

BY KARAN SUMMITT

On the day of his birth Alfred Henson's dad walked in and said, "That's my little Colonel," and the name stuck. Colonel tells the story of sitting at a country café with a group of other farmers. A stranger walked in and asked if anyone knew Alfred Henson. Folks glanced around and when no one answered, the man left. Colonel looked back at the farmers as he left the café and with a grin said, "That was me!"

He was born into a farming family that included six sons and a daughter, and everyone worked the land. "It was all I ever knew or knew how to do," Colonel said, sharing his first personal investment in farming came at age 10 when he borrowed the money to buy a power unit for an irrigation well. His dad originally owned land east of Paragould and traded that land for 140 acres and a house on Friendship Road north of Paragould. For a time Colonel, his brother Gary and their dad farmed the new plot of land together.

Today, some 50-plus years later, Colonel continues farming with his son Dustin, son-in-law Kory Randleman (also the product of a farm family) and four fulltime employees. Gary retired from full-time farming some years ago due to health issues but continues to help out when needed. Kory and Colonel's daughter Mandy live on the farm with their two daughters, Avery and Allie. Thirteen-year old

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Avery is carrying on the family legacy with a budding flower and vegetable garden business.

When I asked Colonel what it meant to have his children and grandchildren join him in the farming operation, his answer was simple: "It's a dream come true, having someone I can trust to take some of the load off and having the kids and grandkids here."

Colonel went on to say farming was always a good fit for his personality. It allowed him the independence to be his own boss and have freedom to go and do as he wanted. At the same time, Colonel spoke about how the farming community forms a tight-knit, supportive group that learns from each other and is willing to swap out equipment and step up when one of them needs help.

Dustin echoed his dad's words, saying "I always wanted to farm and never had a desire to do anything else. I grew up going to work when Dad went to work and coming home when he did." His memories include being with his dad, Uncle Gary and the family atmosphere inherent in farming. "My mom and aunt would bring supper to the field during planting and harvest seasons. We grew up playing on the equipment. We were," Dustin laughed, "child labor and didn't know it!"

Mandy added, "My best memories growing up happened on the farm. Whether it was putting in rice spills with my brother and cousins, driving a tractor or playing on top of the grain trucks in the soybeans, we always had the best time. Kory and I wanted to make sure our children grew up with the same values and experiences that I did."

Supportive wives are an essential part of that family atmosphere. Colonel's wife Debbie is a CPA, the primary bookkeeper of the business. Dustin talked about his wife Tiffany and how farm wives spend so much time raising the kids alone. Even as he mentioned this, Dustin's own toddler son Brooks was playing in the farm shop, another generation learning to love being with his dad and granddad on the farm. Along with Kory, Mandy and their girls, Dustin's six-year old daughter Molly rounds out the immediate farm family group.

Dustin attended ASU, graduating with a degree in Ag Business. Colonel talked about the tremendous changes in farming he has seen over the course of a lifetime. Today, a farmer can work 100 acres in a couple of hours when it once took two days. In the early years, Colonel might borrow \$70,000 to make a crop. Today it requires a loan in the millions of dollars. The amount of land they farm has grown from that initial 140 acres to over 6700 acres that the family owns and/or rents each year.



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Technology brought most of these changes. Bigger equipment, more control with irrigation, better seed varieties, fertilizers and weed control products have all contributed to increased yields and being able to farm more land with less manual labor. When thinking about the changes and what he has witnessed, Colonel shook his head and said, "It's amazing."

He gives Dustin the credit for keeping up with new technology. Dustin points to Colonel's expertise as a mechanic that can keep the equipment running. "Dad is so smart in his ability to work on equipment," he said, "and that's a huge benefit in staying on task each season. Having a good mechanic on hand saves money and time when time is critical."

"My dad is the hardest working, most generous man I know," were Mandy's words. "He made sure my brother and I never wanted for anything. I've always said he would give the shirt off his back to a stranger. He would argue with me, but he is also the smartest man I know. He can fix anything! He raised us to know the value of hard work but is also the biggest kid in the room when it's time to have fun."

More so than many other businesses, farming has its ups and downs, with especially hard years that stand out in the memory. As Mandy said, "It's not for the faint of heart." For the Henson family the key to surviving hard times revolves around staying focused on family and making a long-term commitment to the family-oriented atmosphere farming provides, as well as believing in the bigger scope of what farming contributes to society. "We are producing food and clothing for the world," Dustin said, "and that gives it a meaningful purpose bigger than ourselves."

Colonel and Dustin didn't say it, but I saw in both of them the same deep love for working the land. A love Dustin and Mandy learned from their dad and are passing on to their children. From the hopes in spring when a crop is planted to the rewards that harvest brings, the family enjoys being outside, working with their hands and watching plant life grow and mature to harvest. Dustin said it with these words: "God takes care of it all. We are just the babysitters, protecting it."

Colonel is a man of few words, but his love for the farm and the day-to-day blessing of having his family near and working with him spoke volumes. The deep roots of farming in his own family history are being passed on to another generation that seems to love it as much as he does, despite the hardships.

As the Colonel would say, "It's a dream come true."



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SUBMITTED BY GENIA RUTHERFORD, PROGRAM & OUTREACH COORDINATOR

The ladies living at The Bungalows at Jonesboro enjoyed a lovely tea party recently to commemorate Mother's Day. The ladies invited their daughters and friends to accompany them to a party decorated in pastel hues and filled with lots of sweet conversation. While listening to soft piano music, they were served petite quiche, fresh fruit, cheese cubes with crackers and pastel colored sugar cookies along with

hot tea and cold lemonade. They listened to a poem entitled "Grandma's Apron" and read Bible verses explaining about the many varieties of Spirituali-TEAs. The oldest mother, mother with the most children and the mother with the most grandchildren were also recognized. Before leaving, each lady received a bar of soap that had been beautifully decoupage'd by some of the residents. All in all, it was a lovely afternoon.



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# Summer Fun on Water BEGINS WITH SAFETY AWARENESS, PREPARATIONS

SUBMITTED BY ST. BERNARDS PEDIATRIC HOSPITALIST DR. CAMILLE CHAN

Many of our favorite summer memories involve water. We remember pool parties, beach trips, lake time, floating lazy (maybe roaring) rivers and catching fish. We find water everywhere on Earth, even within ourselves, making it our planet's most abundant natural resource. Because of our need for water, spending time in and around it only makes sense.

Water also has inherent risks and potential dangers if we do not prepare properly. Water safety begins with proper preparation and awareness of surroundings. Before heading to the water this summer, we should always do the following:

- Assign an adult "water watcher." Water poses the greatest risk to young children, and many tragedies occur because of a lapse in supervision. In a water watcher program, however, each present adult takes a shift with the sole purpose of making sure that kids stay safe. When the person's shift ends, water watcher duties go to the next adult. These assignments help guard against the thought that, "Somebody else is watching the children," especially with several adults nearby.
- Wear life jackets and vests on open water. Proper-fitting flotation devices save lives, even among expert swimmers. We often have trouble seeing underwater hazards, and vests give us an extra layer of safety should we get hurt or tired and have trouble swimming. Little ones in particular should never get on a boat without wearing a life jacket. Finally, when shopping for a new life jacket, the label should have "U.S. Coast Guard approved" somewhere on it.
- Prepare for the weather. Some of our worst sunburns can occur during the summer. We should wear UV-protective clothing while also applying and reapplying sunscreens with at least a 30 SPF on exposed skin. In addition, we usually do not take into account the heat when we swim, so we should all take regular breaks to hydrate.
- Have at least two barriers between young children and pools. Barriers protect children from going into pools unsupervised. The first barrier may be an indoor latch or alarm, and the second barrier actually surrounds the pool itself. Permanent or removable fencing can serve as the second barrier, and pool covers can help protect even further.
- Learn to swim, whatever the age. Children can begin taking swim lessons as early as six months old, and proper education can teach adults who never learned how to swim as well. We should remember that drowning is often preventable and silent. Sadly, despite our best efforts to promote water safety, drowning remains a leading cause of death in children ages one through four. When a person struggles in the water, they usually do not splash around, yelling for help. We all need to watch for persons most at risk, and the ability to swim or float gives us an extra layer of water safety.

Because swimming and other water activities have so many physical and mental benefits, we should all enjoy them this year. Ultimately, proper planning and awareness will ensure that everyone has a good time.

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SUBMITTED BY ARKANSAS METHODIST MEDICAL CENTER

Arkansas Methodist Medical Center (AMMC) is proud to introduce LEQEMBI (Lecanemab), a groundbreaking FDA-approved medication designed to slow the progression of Alzheimer's disease and improve the quality of life for patients and their caregivers.

LEQEMBI is an antibody therapy that targets the detrimental amyloid beta protein, associated with the formation of plaques in the brains of individuals with Alzheimer's disease. In a marked advancement over previous treatments, LEQEMBI not only mitigates symptoms but also slows the progression of the disease itself by selectively binding to and clearing amyloid plaques from the brain.

"LEQEMBI is a significant step forward in Alzheimer's treatment,

but it shouldn't detract from the importance of early detection and preventative measures," said Dr. Ron South, Neurologist at AMMC Neurology Associates. "Our comprehensive evaluation process helps us determine eligibility for LEQEMBI treatment, ensuring we can provide this innovative therapy to those who will benefit most."

AMMC is honored to be one of the select few institutions in Arkansas to offer a comprehensive LEQEMBI program, distinguishing itself as a leader in advanced Alzheimer's care within the region. This program emphasizes our dedication to not only enhancements in patient care but also hope and support to those dealing with Alzheimer's, positioning AMMC at the forefront of neurological healthcare services.

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“We are proud to offer LEQEMBI as part of our commitment to providing the latest innovative treatments to our community and delivering exceptional care,” said Dr. South. “Our goal is to improve the lives of those affected by Alzheimer’s disease and offer hope for a brighter future.”

“For patients in the LEQEMBI program, we are excited to offer a dedicated Dementia Coordinator, Jessica Nutt, APRN. This role is pivotal in providing continuity of care for all our patients,” said Dr. South. “Jessica works closely with patients, families, and our team to ensure seamless communication and support throughout the treatment process. It’s about more than just medicine; it’s about comprehensive care for the individual.”

Current patients of AMMC Neurology Associates are encouraged to discuss LEQEMBI with their provider during their next scheduled appointment. Those not currently under the care of AMMC Neurology Associates but wishing to be evaluated for Alzheimer’s disease are asked to request a referral from their current provider to AMMC Neurology Associates. For more information on LEQEMBI and how to request a referral, visit the Neurology services page at [www.myammc.org](http://www.myammc.org).



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BY RICHARD BRUMMETT

# NEA'S EXERCISE TRIO

**T**hey are sort of the Three Amigos of their exercise group, a trio understanding the importance of both exercise and socialization and making the most of the opportunity at hand.

June Horne, Lise Cater and Teresa Rowe are dedicated members of the Geri-fit Class offered by the East Arkansas Area Agency on Aging in Jonesboro, and each sees benefits in multiple areas. Class instructor Shannon Smithee said Geri-fit is a strength training class, an evidence based program focused on increasing strength, improving mobility and preventing falls, all areas of importance to individuals who have reached the age bracket associated with senior citizens.

"It's a more advanced class, using dumbbells and elastic bands," she said. "We get on the ground, and get back up. If you don't maintain,

it's hard to do. We try to have an awareness of that. The dumbbells are mostly light but we can add more if we want to. We do lunges, squats, leg lifts, stretches, a little cardio.

"It can become a downward spiral after a fall. You can get negative feedback from your brain, so we work on different strategies to get down and get back up, try different methods. In any given situation you can begin to feel confident. We practice the moves available to you. Geri-fit is learning these moves through repetition. We focus on improving strength and balance but just as big is the socialization, making friends."

June, Lise and Teresa agree.

**CONTINUED ON PAGE 54**

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# NEA'S EXERCISE TRIO

## June, Lise, & Teresa

...CONTINUED

"The social part, I agree is important. We don't have many in the class but June and I have been there since the start and then we've all gotten pretty close," Teresa said, then added with a laugh, "We're all from the Valley View area so we know who to tell stories on and gossip about. Sometimes Shannon has to say, 'Ya'll need to calm down and concentrate.' Before I started, my husband had been real sick and I took care of him for about a year-and-a-half. Then he got better and I sort of saw it as my opportunity to get out into the world again. We had a pretty big class and I knew a couple of the others in it already, but I was ready to be around people again."

"We do talk," June said, "you know we do! It's a big plus to get out and keep up with friends. I pretty regularly meet with friends but I'm not one to exercise by myself. So it's good for me."

"The camaraderie is important, I think," added Lise. "I knew June because we worked together at Valley View. I taught her daughter, and now I look forward to the social interaction."

But the main goal of the program is to help seniors avoid taking tumbles and to maintain muscle and strength. All three ladies say they have seen definite positive results. "It's a great program," Lise, who will be 74 in December, said. "We stretch, and flex, and work on balance. There were a couple of times I can think of that I might have fallen but I didn't because of the class. I have friends who'll say, 'You really walk upright' and I have a lot of stamina and strength because of the workouts."

June, the senior member of the trio at 76, said, "I saw an article in the

newspaper and a friend had been in a class like it before and I started over five years ago. It met my needs; I just generally wanted to stay active. I do think a real benefit of it is as we get older the risk of falls is greater. Some people get down and can't get back up. Shannon works on that for us. The risk is there but this helps us a lot."

Teresa, the youngest at 66, had dealt with an injury before joining the group and naturally had reservations. "I can tell a big difference in strength and movement," she said. "I had a pretty bad knee injury, and a real stiff knee. When we started doing these lunges I thought, 'I'll never be able to do this.' But I was, and it has really helped me. I have a close friend and we've walked for 30-some years but I try my best to stay active. I can tell a difference. I do everything out in our yard. I have one son who is in Little Rock and the grandkids are in Fort Smith, so they're not close and I just get out and take care of what needs taking care of. I can tell the exercise helps."

Another area where they are all in agreement is in their evaluation of their instructor, where they all give her high marks. Teresa said

Shannon is a perfect fit to be the group leader because of her knowledge and personality.

"Shannon does a real good job," June said. "She's real receptive if we mention something we'd like to work on. She makes every day a little different to keep it interesting."

"Shannon is awesome," Lise added. "She is patient and will listen to us. Everyone at East Arkansas Agency is great."



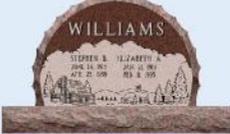


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# UPCOMING EVENT

# Bark in the Park!

SUBMITTED BY LAKE FRIERSON STATE PARK

Join us on June 15 at Lake Frierson State Park for a day of dog-friendly fun. We will have all kinds of activities for you and your furry best friend to sink your paws into including: dog hikes, puppy yoga, wildlife rehabilitation, game booths, business giveaways, and interpretive programs – all focused on your adventures in parks with your four-legged best friend.

Well behaved, leashed pets are welcome. The event will take place from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Booths and games will run the entire time and specialized timed activities include:

- » Puppy Yoga at 10:30 a.m. and 1:00 p.m.
- » Bark Ranger Dog Hikes at 11:30 a.m. and 2:00 p.m.

Call the park at 870-932-2615 for additional details or if you are a pet-focused business that would like to host a booth on that day.



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# SUPPORT TOGETHER WE FOSTER BACK TO SCHOOL SUPPLY DRIVE

SUBMITTED BY TOGETHER WE FOSTER NEA

Together We Foster (TWF), a non-profit committed to supporting children and families in the foster care system, is hosting its annual back to school supply drive. This will be the event's fourth year to help local foster children prepare for the next school year.

At the event school-aged foster children can come "shop" for their own school supplies. All items are free, but the children get the experience of choosing the items from the donated assortment. Hair stylists will also be at the event giving free haircuts to complete the back-to-school look. The supply drive will run from June 15th - July 24th. The event will take place on Saturday, July 27th. Any back-to-school items are appreciated but some of the most needed include dry erase markers, disinfecting wipes, paper towels, planners, pens, highlighters, notebooks and binders. Those wishing to donate can do so through TWF's Amazon Wishlist or at one of the local drop off locations.

- » Paragould: 4812 #9 Walcott Road
- » Jonesboro: 2532 Alexander Drive
- » Pocahontas: 1304 Pace Road or 1516 Hwy. 67S

To learn more email [togetherwefosternea@gmail.com](mailto:togetherwefosternea@gmail.com) or 870-476-6424.



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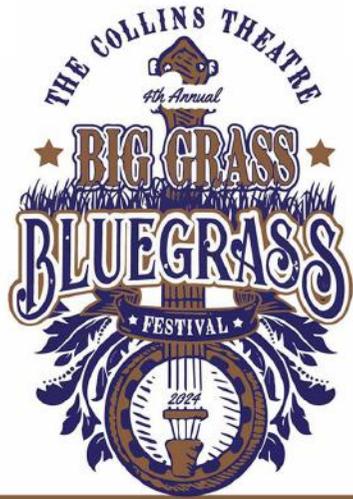


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# DON'T MISS THESE Upcoming Events in NEA

## 4th Annual Ride Against Trafficking

Hope Found of Northeast Arkansas' 4th Annual Ride Against Trafficking will occur on Saturday, June 1, 2024.

The ride will start and end at the pavilion behind Central Baptist Church located at 3707 Harrisburg Road in Jonesboro. Previously, the event was geared toward bikers but will expand this year to include cyclists, including children. With this addition, Ride Against Trafficking will include a 1.5 to 2-hour route for bikers, a choice of a 25-mile or 50-mile route for cyclists, and a family fun ride on the paved path around Central Baptist Church. All rides are followed by a BBQ lunch for all participants.

For more information, please visit [www.hopefoundnea.org/events](http://www.hopefoundnea.org/events) or contact Megan Brown at 870-761-1098.

## Juneteenth Celebrations in Jonesboro

With this being the fourth year of Juneteenth's being a national holiday, our Juneteenth in Jonesboro celebration will be a month-long celebration beginning on Saturday June 1st and going through the official Juneteenth holiday on Wednesday June 19. All events are FREE! A full detailed list of events and performances, as well as more information, is on [juneteenthinjonesboro.com](http://juneteenthinjonesboro.com) and [klekfm.org](http://klekfm.org).

- **Saturday, June 1st:** Juneteenth Kickoff and Pop Up Shop/Black Business Expo 3:00 p.m.-6:00 p.m. at Legends BBQ Smokehouse 1025 W. Johnson Avenue in Jonesboro
- **Friday, June 7th:** Juneteenth Community Worship Service featuring several local churches. 6:00 p.m. at Miller's Temple Church of God in Christ 524 North Church Street in Jonesboro.
- **Saturday, June 15th:** Juneteenth Parade 11:00 a.m. (participants are being asked to first go to the E. Boone Watson Center 1005 Logan Avenue in Jonesboro at 9:30 a.m. for line up). A map of the parade route is attached. The Juneteenth Community Fair and Pool Party will be at 4:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m. at Parker Park 1506 North Church Street in Jonesboro.
- **Wednesday, June 19th:** Mayor Harold Copenhaver will read the Juneteenth Proclamation followed by the Juneteenth fireworks display. Gates will open at 8:30 p.m. at University Lions Park 502 ½ North Bridge Street in Jonesboro.

## 42nd Annual Reynolds Park Fishing Rodeo

Don't miss the 42nd Annual Reynolds Park Fishing Rodeo that is completely FREE! Ages 15 and under should arrive at Reynolds Park at 8:30 a.m. for registration and fishing begins at 9:00 a.m. Bring your fishing pole, bait, chair, and a bucket for your catches! Lunch will be provided and prizes and trophies will follow!

For more information, contact the City of Paragould, Reynolds Park, at 870-239-7530.

## Triple Swing

The St. Bernards Advocates 34th Annual Triple Swing event returns Friday, June 21, benefiting the expansion of radiation oncology services at St. Bernards Medical Center. This multi-day event includes a casual dinner and dance for approximately 400 guests followed by a two-day, four-person team golf scramble and an evening pickleball tournament.

For more information, visit [tripleswing.org](http://tripleswing.org) or contact Alden Weeks at 870-207-2503 or by email at [aeweeks1@sbrmc.org](mailto:aeweeks1@sbrmc.org).



*Beth Cupp* • 870-215-3516



*Laura King* • 870-476-2597



*Bekah Bateman* • 870-450-6442



*Casey Lyles* • 870-450-6794



*Susanne Pollard* • 870-270-0520



*Alicia Dzyotas* • 870-586-3736



# HAPPENINGS

## BRTC STUDENTS & GREENBRIER EMPLOYEES GRADUATE FROM SIX SIGMA BELT PROGRAM



Black River Technical College (BRTC) recently had two graduates from the Black Belt Six Sigma program.

Greenbrier employees James Sweatt and Robert Brady have completed the AQI Six Sigma Black Belt certifications.

Six Sigma is a stringent process that deals with quality and statistics. They completed the Six Sigma Green Belt course last year and wanted to continue with their certifications to become CSSBB.

The certified Six Sigma Black Belt graduate is a professional who can explain Six Sigma philosophies and principles including supporting systems and tools. A Black Belt should demonstrate team leadership, understand team dynamics, and assign team members roles and responsibilities.

## TERESA BRANCH PROMOTED TO DIRECTOR OF WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT



We are thrilled to announce the promotion of Teresa Branch to the position of Director of Workforce Development. In her new role, Teresa will lead initiatives to advance workforce readiness and economic growth within our community. Additionally, she will oversee The G.I.N, built and occupied by the Economic Development Corporation of Paragould, our dedicated innovation space designed to foster

creativity and entrepreneurial ventures. Teresa's extensive experience and dedication to workforce development make her the ideal leader for this crucial area.

For more information, please visit <https://discoverparagould.org/489/About-GIN>

# POWER THE FUN!









**SCAN HERE!**



**Portable power when and where you need it.**

Jetton Power Solutions, Generac, and Jack & Jill Radio Stations are coming together to give 2 lucky winners their very own Generac portable power generator! Register by scanning the QR code and filling out the form.

Deadline for first drawing will be June 30th.

ENTER TO WIN YOUR OWN PORTABLE POWER!



DIY



Power outage



Hunting



Tailgating

# LYNETTE WEST NAMED 2024 SMALL BUSINESS PERSON OF THE YEAR



Lynette West, the 2024 Small Business Person of the year award winner for Arkansas, was visited by the Small Business Administration (SBA) of Arkansas District Deputy Director Jerry Talbert on May 3. There, Jonesboro Mayor Harold Copenhaver read the SBA National Small Business Week proclamation during the recognition ceremony at HealthWear in Jonesboro.

The event was held to recognize West's achievements and dedication to growing her local business. West was able to travel to Washington, D.C., to attend the National SBA Awards Ceremony and celebrate her accomplishments with other small business owners from across the nation.

The U.S. Small Business Administration makes the American dream of business ownership a reality. As the only go-to resource and voice for small businesses backed by the strength of the federal government, the SBA empowers entrepreneurs and small business owners with the resources and support they need to start, grow, or expand their businesses, or recover from a declared disaster. It delivers services through an extensive network of SBA field offices and partnerships with public and private organizations. To learn more, visit [www.sba.gov](http://www.sba.gov).

**NATIONALLY and RANKED LOVED**

**Arkansas Children's Heart Institute**

**Arkansas Children's Heart Institute** is the only program in the state dedicated to pediatric cardiology and is once again ranked in one of seven specialties in the 2023-2024 U.S. News and World Report **Best Children's Hospitals** list.

The heart of what we do is provide unprecedented care for your child:

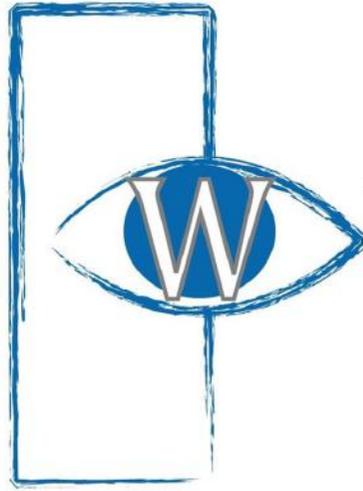
- Diagnoses, treatments for congenital heart diseases and conditions in infants, children, adolescents and young adults
- More than 500 pediatric evaluations and 380 heart transplants since 1990
- Higher four-year survival rate compared to industry averages nationwide

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 501-441-4541

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Heart Institute



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**Dr. Casey A. Wells, O. D.**

213 North Pruet, Paragould, AR 72450 | 870-236-7713

# Next Month

## American as Apple Pie



July is the time for everyone to get in their American Pride! We'll highlight some iconic American items from right here in NEA!

## Made in NEA



American Made, but make it NEA! Let's learn what all is made right in our back yard!

## Paragould Premiere Awards



THE WAIT IS ALMOST OVER! The Paragould Premiere Awards will be published for all to see in the July edition. Who will be the winners??

# Warehouse Flooring



## HAPPY FATHER'S DAY!

Invest in the space where memories are made!

*Where the prices won't floor you, but the selection will!*

1709 N. Campground Road | Paragould, AR | 870.236.1754 



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June 2024 Premiere | 63

# First-Of-Its-Kind

## NEA Baptist Mobile Health Unit

### Transforming Health Care in Northeast Arkansas

Call Ty Jones for booking  
870-936-0262

Funding for the production of this unit was graciously provided by Chris Fowler Family.

Powered by Local Tire and Wheel, NextEra Energy, and NEA Baptist Auxiliary

#### NEA Baptist Mobile Health Capabilities Delivered to the Community

##### Women's Health

- Mammography
- Paps/Breast exam
- Birth Control
- HPV Vaccines

##### Health Screenings

- Diabetes
- Vaccinations - Flu, Covid, Pneumonia

##### Cardiac Screenings

- EKG
- Blood pressure
- Cholesterol
- Scheduling CT Cardiac (Calcium) Score

##### Cancer Screening

- Prostate-PSA & Physical Exams
- LDCT Screening & Scheduling
- Tobacco Cessation
- Skin Checks

##### Behavioral Health/ Mental Health Screenings

- Depression, Stress, Impact on Total Health
- Addiction
- Insurance Enrollment

