

NEA'S

PREMIERE

November
2021



NEA Entrepreneurs Crafted for Community

Jonesboro's First Microbrewery

DECREASE WASTE,
INCREASE PROFIT

One Man's Trash is
Patriot Recycling's Treasure

LOCALLY
OWNED
HIGHLIGHTS

HARVEST
PRODUCE RETAIL
Changing the Narrative in
the Cotton Industry

A PUBLICATION OF MOR MEDIA, INCORPORATED

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Cover Photo: Lindsey Spencer



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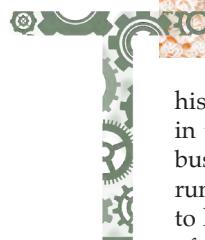
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From the Manager



his is a really special issue. As someone in the depths of trying to open their own business while also having a large hand in running this one, I find it really heartening to hear the stories, struggles and victories of other business owners. In this edition of Premiere, we share some entrepreneur highlights and a few other features about the important things to consider when starting and growing a business.

I have found that a common piece of advice from those who have launched a business is pretty simple: Just go for it.

Paulie Litt, co-founder of Harvest Produce Retail (Page 38) is a childhood actor who will tell anyone he didn't know a thing about the business he now runs until he found himself doing it.

Native Brew Works is the first brewery in Jonesboro and it's located in Dry Craighead County – all because one friend texted another and said, "Let's do this."

Patriot Recycling exists because a man saw something going to waste and thought, "We can do better."

I am in awe of those who see potential and instead of simply talking about it, decide to just start doing it.

That's what it takes, I believe, to be an entrepreneur. It takes walking toward fear and the unknown because often that is where success lies.

It's really cool to look at the innovative, creative businesses being built right here in NEA, and I hope when you read these stories you feel inspired to either chase your own dream -- or if you're already living it (business owner or not), to support others as they build theirs.

Lindsey Spencer

Manager of Creative Content

An advertisement for Glen Sain Ford. The top half of the ad features a white Ford F-150 pickup truck towing a silver Airstream travel trailer. They are driving on a winding road next to a body of water with hills in the background. The text 'Glen Sain' is written in a large, cursive, black font across the top left. The Ford logo is centered above the truck. The bottom half of the ad has a dark background with the text 'BEST PRICE' and 'BEST SERVICE' in large, white, sans-serif capital letters. The phone number '870.236.8546' and the website 'GLEN SAIN FORD.NET' are at the bottom right.

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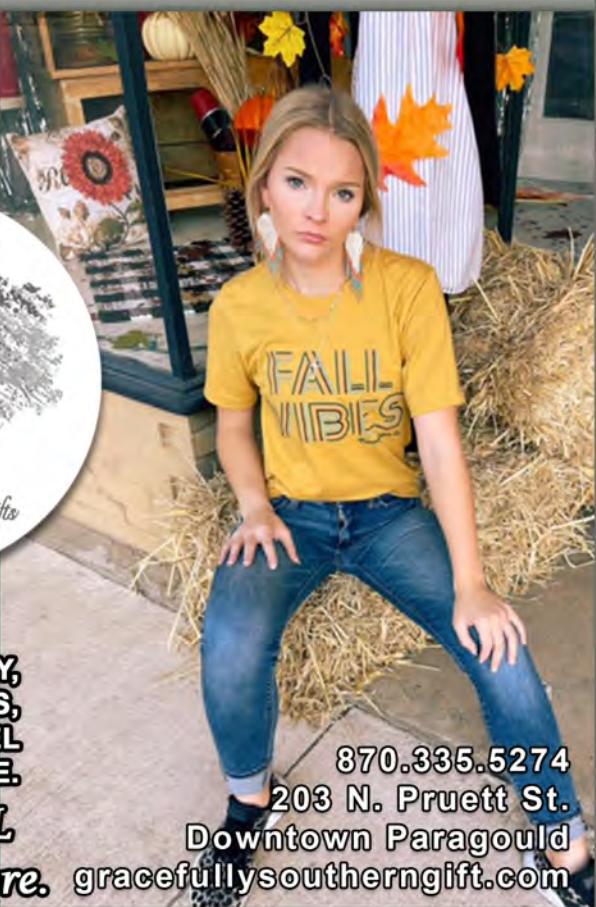


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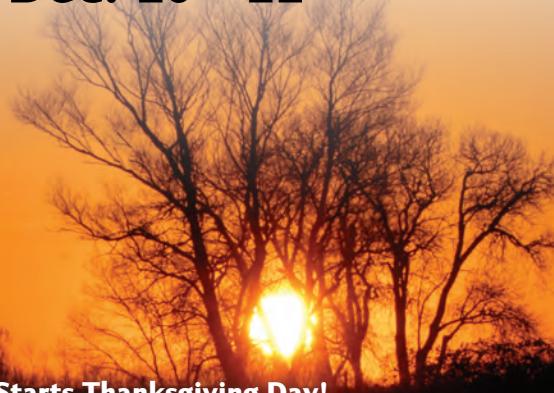
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GET RICH WITH RICHARD BRUMMETT



One of the most difficult moments of my life occurred in the summer of 2006 when early one morning I spent several minutes conferring with an oncologist in the hallway of a hospital, then had to go into my father's room and tell him he was going to die.

Usually, talking is not a real chore for me but even though I had closed my eyes and leaned up against the wall to rehearse my speech that day, when it came time to give Dad the bad news my words failed me; they got stuck somewhere between the word factory and the delivery station and I struggled to choke out a few sentences, mingled with tears of sadness atop a quivering voice. Dad was actually okay with the news, having figured out long before a late series of spinal taps and various scans that his time was limited. After hearing all the results of the previous day's tests and the doctor's summation, he said, "That's okay; let's just go home."

In mid-September of this year I again found myself fighting that battle of trying to maintain composure and deliver important words when the family of Jim Cunningham asked me to speak at his funeral service. On the "degree of difficulty scale" that morning ranks right up there with telling my dad his bad news, not because I dreaded the assignment as with Dad's situation but because I

was so honored by it and not certain I could come through; as I stood under the graveside canopy in front of Jim's loved ones on that rainy morning, I wanted to be sitting alongside them and crying if the mood struck. Instead, I was supposed to be the one to remain composed and deliver words of comfort and it was not easy. My voice broke more than once.

Why? Because the guy I was there to eulogize is one of the greatest friends I've ever known, a man who shared so much laughter with me one would think there couldn't possibly be anything funny left over, yet each time we met we immediately got right back into character. Once, when my family had moved to Benton, Jim came down and spent a weekend with us and I didn't want him to go home, but I *needed* him to. You can't call in to work on Monday and say, "I won't be in today. My best friend has been here all weekend and we laughed so hard I think I pulled something."

We liked to say we were warped from the same mold, sharing this habit of looking at life seriously only up to a point, then satirizing it from that stage forward. We found a kinship in learning to laugh rather than brood, to smile rather than frown, to try and bring to others' lives a bit of joy when the world seemed determined to destroy happiness on a daily basis. Jim was one of the masters of the craft, possessing a quick wit matched by few.

Especially in these last few years, we frequented area restaurants and the waitresses learned him quickly because of his wonderful personality. When one asked if we were brothers Jim replied without hesitation, "No, this is my dad. I thought I'd introduced you already." She walked away smiling. Another time one commented that we seemed to be really good friends and he said, "Oh, no, I'm his parole officer; I like to buy him a meal when he stays out of jail."

And she smiled.

"And They All Smiled" could be the title of his life story, because when in Jim's presence you generally were sharing pleasant moments. He had great stories; he had great jokes; he had great one-liners and observations and he made your day better, even if it had already been pretty good before you got there.

When we met, I was in the fourth grade and he was a sophomore at Oak Grove High School. Since I was developing an interest in basketball, Dad took me to watch him play and pointed out the way "Jimmy Cunningham" passed the ball, the way he beat the press, how he played with excellent court awareness. One night after a game he introduced us, and I'm sure it meant much more to the fourth-grader than to the teenager, but for weeks after that when I went outside to play imaginary basketball games by myself, I pretended to be Jimmy Cunningham. He was one of my first sports heroes.

The following year he transferred to Paragould High and once he was in charge of directing the Bulldogs' offense, they never lost. Jim played in 20 games, Paragould was 20-0 and won the state championship and I admired even more, so when we became men's league basketball teammates in the mid 1970s my journey had come full circle. I was playing alongside someone I had idolized but, more importantly, I immediately came to love him for the person he was off the court. We were a pair of guys with similar likes and dislikes, and no person or thing was exempt from our on-the-spot critiques.

So why, if you ask, were the words so hard to get out on that September morning? Because my hero was my friend, and my friend was my hero. Maybe that can be the name of my life story.



LIVING A Better Story

BY JARED PICKNEY

Gratitude is an emotion that expresses our appreciation for what we have — as opposed to, for instance, a consumer-driven emphasis on what we want or think we need.

In his book, "The Psychology of Gratitude," Robert Emmons outlines his scientific study on the role and benefits of it. Gratitude, Emmons concludes, leads us away from criticism, cynicism, despondency, and depression and toward a sense of thanksgiving, fulfillment, appreciation, and the capacity to be present.

When practiced regularly, gratitude improves our mental, physical, emotional and relational well being.

Its benefits include heightened energy levels, a strengthened heart and immune system, improved emotional and academic intelligence, an expanded capacity for forgiveness, decreased stress and anxiety and improved self care.

Perhaps, this is part of the reason why writers of the Scriptures practiced and taught on the importance of gratitude thousands of years ago. I think of the Apostle Paul's line in 1 Thessalonians 5v17-18. He says, "Pray without ceasing. In everything give thanks for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus."

My encouragement to you is to take the time this holiday season to cultivate a spirit of gratitude and express it with lots of thanksgiving.

We honor God when we do that. And we make things a lot better for ourselves and others as well.

To that end, I encourage you to spend time each morning practicing gratitude. Grab a pen and paper (or use your phone) and begin writing down 24 things within the past 24 hours you are thankful for. It doesn't have to be anything big. Sometimes for me it's a cup of coffee, the laughter of my children or the ability to get around in a truck that still works.

Upon making your list, take time to thank God for all the blessings in your life. You will be surprised how practicing gratitude, even in the small things, will begin to have a massive impact on your life.



Happy Thanksgiving

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DJA's Fall Fest



Edd Hatten, Waylynn Haskins and Lauren Hatten



Erin, Larisa and David Bearden



Amber and Jennifer Younge



Thomas and Madeline Ragland

Downtown Jonesboro's Fall Fest took place on October 9 at Rotary Centennial Plaza in front of the Forum Theatre. The festival featured live music and local artists.

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

HILL TOP SPIRITS

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PET *of the* MONTH

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BY BATCAT VOWELL



My family is overjoyed that you picked me for the Premiere Magazine Pet of the Month. Mommy says I have a hard time being still for pictures, but I think my fanciness shines through, anyway.

I was a very small kitten when my litter mates and I were dropped over a fence that belonged to a very big loving dog named Ollie. He shared his food with us. One night Ollie had to go inside instead of staying with us and something tried to get us. I cried and cried running in every direction. Smelly Bro was the first to find me. Mommy was right behind him. I was too scared to run to them, but the wild Soki cat was walking with them (she thinks she's their protector). I ran to her thinking she would help me, because she was a cat. She led me to Mommy, who scooped me up. I wasn't sure about her at first, but she was a calming human. I knew I would like her. They took me door to door trying to find who I had stayed with before. Mommy said she couldn't stand to think of a little boy or girl missing me. She finally got to Ollie's house. Ollie's mom told Mommy that someone saw us being dropped off. She had been trying to pick us up but we would run away.

I have loved being with my new family. They make sure I have yummy food and play with me. I protect them from grasshoppers, moles, and frogs and post about my adventures on Facebook.

An advertisement for ARPets Hospital. It features a smiling dog with its tongue out, surrounded by fallen autumn leaves. The dog is wearing a blue collar. On the left, there is a white circle containing the hospital's logo, which is a red paw print with a blue caduceus (a snake entwined by a staff) inside it. Below the logo, the text reads "ARPets Hospital" and "Where your pets are ARPets!". To the right of the logo, the text "Open M-F 7 A.M. - 6 P.M. SAT 8 A.M. - 12 P.M." is displayed. At the bottom, a red banner contains the text "The Holiday Season is upon us! Have you made your boarding reservation yet?". Below the banner, a blue footer bar contains the text "We Make Boarding Fun With Our CATurday Suites & PAWliday Inn!" and "MAKE AN APPOINTMENT: (870) 336-1000 • 10215 Hwy 49 N Brookland, AR 72417 • arpethospital.com".



I could sense the excitement when I answered the phone. As outdoor buddies do, Shane got right to the point and excitedly said, "Grace got an elk permit!" Grace Williams is Shane Williams' twenty-year-old daughter and she had drawn an elk tag for public land in Arkansas. The tag would allow Grace to take a cow (female) elk in the Gene Rush Wildlife Management Area. We conversed for a just a few minutes about the hunt and then hung up knowing we would be discussing details as time got closer.

As with any outdoor opportunity, there is always the chance interesting stories will develop during the experience, but the one of elk in Arkansas is a great story in itself.

Early explorers and settlers found an abundance of wild game as they ventured into the territory that later became Arkansas. Most accounts do include elk, though they were eastern elk. Originally found across the eastern side of the USA, this subspecies rapidly succumbed to unregulated hunting and habitat loss and was declared extinct by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in 1880. This left a void in Arkansas.

The Rocky Mountain elk that inhabited the western portion of the United States was seen as a possibility to stock the habitats once roamed by the eastern elk. Efforts to restock elk in The Natural State began in the early 1900s, but continued pressure from illegal hunting and habitat issues thwarted success. Efforts picked up again in the 1980s and this time the elk gained a foothold in the remote areas of Newton County, along the Buffalo River near Jasper. While a deer is a browser, elk are grazers and the heavily forested, mountainous terrain in the area did not provide much grazing opportunity, thus limiting population growth. Efforts to improve habitat by creating openings in the forest began in the 1990s and the elk responded and the population began to grow.

With an expanding herd, it was decided the population could support a regulated hunt. In the late 1990s Arkansas hunters were given the opportunity to hunt elk based on a random draw. Currently, around 20 permits are awarded each year. Due to continued

herd expansion, there are now opportunities for private landowners to take elk, along with the limited public permits. For more information about elk hunting, please check agfc.com for full details.

As the dates for the October elk hunt approached, Shane spent several days scouting the Gene Rush Wildlife Management Area near Hasty. Even though the hunting area is limited, elk, especially the cows, seemed to be ghosts in late days of September as Shane searched the rugged terrain. There were a few bulls in the area, but cows were difficult to find. I was able to discuss the area with a few knowledgeable outdoorsmen and passed on some information to Shane for prehunt scouting, but it provided no solid evidence of any cow elk.

Grace's hunt started on the first Monday of October, and Shane invited me to join them. I was excited, as it would be a great opportunity to experience an Arkansas elk hunt and provide some insight I could relay during future classes and programs.

Shane and Grace spent the night in Jasper, but, due to family obligations, I had to make the trek to the remote area of Newton County in the wee hours of the morning on opening day. Shane and Grace pulled up at the trailhead about the same time as I and we got our gear ready and headed out. Shane had located a food plot being used by elk and had placed a ground blind along the edge of the plot. They slipped quietly into the blind and I arranged a makeshift hide just outside the blind in the edge of the woods. Anticipation was high!

We had been sitting for a few minutes when a tan colored object moved into the field below us. It took just a moment to identify it as a bull elk. Not what Grace had a tag for, but it was impressive to see an animal of the species we sought, especially in regard to the history of elk in Arkansas. The bull munched on some grass and then slowly made his way back into the timber.

We sat quietly for a couple more hours and watched the sun bring the Ozarks to life. Squirrels and birds were our entertainment as time clicked by. I became drowsy from the four-hour pre-dawn drive, but about mid-morning movement in the lower end of the field caught my eye. Immediately it felt as if my heart stopped and adrenalin began to rush as a huge bull elk sauntered out of the woods and into the field. It was almost like an apparition, though the audible gasps of "Elk!" from Shane and Grace proved otherwise. The massive animal entered the field, shook his impressive headgear and began to casually feed.

Even though he was near 300 yards away, the feeling of awe made it difficult to move. The story, the history, the programs, and the loads



CHUCK LONG

Regional Education Coordinator Northeast Education Division Arkansas Game and Fish Commission

of learned information had come full circle as the bull completed the cycle of many things I had studied. As far as hunting experiences go, it was top of the list.

All we could do was watch the majestic animal as Grace only had a cow tag, but seeing the culmination of the conservation efforts of such an animal seemed almost as good as a punched tag. The bull fed in the plot, then eased across the field and into the forested mountains.

We encountered another bull in the late afternoon, but saw nothing that was legal. As of this writing, Grace's tag has not been filled, but there were still a few days in the hunt.

As a hunter, just being a part of this story is what it is all about. Many hunters often look at a full game bag or a punched tag as evidence of success, but there is so much more to it than a limit of fowl or fur.

Hunting is an important part of conservation equation, and seeing conservation work is a true blessing. The success of the Arkansas elk herd is an example of individuals, conservation groups and governmental groups working together to insure opportunities for both wildlife watchers and hunters.

Want to see some elk in Arkansas? Check out the area around the Buffalo River. Stop in at the Elk Education Center in Ponca for some great information.

Get outside this fall and enjoy The Natural State and I hope to see you out there!



HEALTH & THE CITY

WITH DR. BETHANY DAVIS

Still deciding on the exact single origins and blends we will be using in the coffee shop, each morning a very precise routine has been established: I wake up, start the kettle, brush my teeth, get dressed, make the bed, feed my dog, drink a large glass of water (or two), then brew a beautiful 12 ounce pour over. After the coffee is brewed and it has cooled for a few minutes, I taste it, my husband tastes it, and we write down the notes of the coffee, including the flavor notes, the body, the acidity of it, etc. We have a "coffee journal" in which we have meticulously written down which coffees we plan to brew at the coffee shop in order to have a wide variety of options.

Needless to say, this routine has become one of my favorite things.

When he leaves and before I start my day at work from home, I read the *New York Times* while finishing my first cup (or starting the second one, if I'm honest). While I try to read all the sections, I typically find myself quickly scrolling down to the "Arts and Ideas" section, where on this particular Thursday in October the main headline read, "The benefits of journaling." I was intrigued. Not just because of my coffee journal entry I had just completed, but because I know how much journaling has helped me in the past. Like most practices, I had fallen off the wagon of journaling, but this article inspired me – I might just start this again.

Some call it a diary; some call it a journal. Whatever you want to label it, there is a certain premise that is inferred about journaling that has been ingrained into our brains since childhood, as the *Times* article alluded to. You might picture the teenager in her bedroom, in love and scribbling "Dear Diary," talking about a crush and putting hearts over her eyes. On the contrary, you might picture a journalist attempting to capture a juicy story, or in this day and age,



you likely imagine a person in a therapy session trying to get to the root of their feelings.

Whatever images or predispositions pop into your mind about someone who journals, journaling is an advantageous tool for everyone. It is merely an instrument of self-reflection, and a cheap one at that. As I've alluded to in many of my previous columns, the better we know ourselves, the more confident we show up in the world. This act of self-care may seem like it takes up time at the end of the day or another thing you need to do after your already never-ending list of things, but the benefits of journaling cannot be argued. An abundance of studies demonstrate journaling can lead to a stronger immune system, better sleep, higher IQ scores, increased self-confidence, and boosts in mindfulness, memory, and communication skills. Who doesn't need more of this?

No matter how content you are in your day-to-day life, we all have things we'd like to sort through. This could be from a difficult situation you are facing presently, something in your past, or something as simple as a feeling you can't shake. Consider journaling as a technique to organize your thoughts and make sense of them. Sometimes seeing your thoughts on paper and reading them, whether that be out loud or in your mind, helps to understand them better. You will likely discover something, from which you can then develop action steps to move forward. I like to think of journaling as a way of talking to myself like I would talk to a friend.

You can grab a notebook for very little cost and can take a journal almost everywhere; I never travel without mine! To begin, simply open the book, flip to the first page, and ask yourself these prompted questions: Is there something that's bothering me? If so, what is it? Is there something I'm really happy

about in my life right now? What did I do today that I loved? What did I do today that I didn't love?

If this is too in depth already, let me remind you that journaling doesn't have to be this introspective, especially to begin with. It can be something as simple as your favorite meal or something that made you laugh or angry that day. It can quite literally be one word. You can write on a particular topic, or it can be jumping between topics, gathering insight from your life and your day. Most of the time, you just need to start writing. I especially loved a particular quote from the *Times* article: "The mind is a surprising place, and you often don't know what it may be hiding until you start knocking around in there. Often, writing in your journal is the only way to find out what you should be writing about."

Think outside the box - journaling doesn't need to be an entry right before bed. Personally, my hand gets tired really quickly, so I tend to give up pretty soon when journaling by hand. Although I do encourage writing it by hand if you can (it's slower, and allows you to process it more in depth) sometimes I type it, print it out, and then stick it in the journal. As an auditory learner, I've found that another unique journaling method is to write down a few questions, record them in your voice memo app, and then play it back to yourself in your headphones and answer the questions aloud as you cook or go for a walk. Sometimes journaling in the morning is the best, but sometimes you may want to journal in the evening. Be flexible. You definitely don't want to force it into something you have to do every day, but write when you are distressed about something, only for about 10-15 minutes.

In our fast-paced modern world, anything that makes us self-reflect or slow down may seem like a waste of time or even "granola." However, it is one of the most cost-effective and useful tools we have to forge a better, more emotionally healthy life. To summarize, I'll leave you with a quote from Dr. Pennebaker, a social psychologist at the University of Texas at Austin, a pioneer of writing therapy. "There's no single magic moment, but we know that it works. Journaling provided me with an important outlet for the debilitating anxiety that had come to paralyze me at odd hours each day. Certainly, I got to know the dusty corners of my brain better, and, when I did, my true desires became harder to ignore."



MOORE on MANNERS

WITH LINDA LOU MOORE

RSVP - DO I NEED TO BUY A VOWEL?

You have just received a holiday invitation and after reading the who, what, when and where, you notice the letters R.S.V.P.

What is RSVP? And What Do You Do?

(A) You do nothing. It's not important to respond to your host.

(B) You wonder, "Do I need to buy a vowel?"

(C) You inform the host or hostess whether or not you will be able to attend.

If you answered (C) - You are the guest of which hosts and hostesses dream.

However, if you answered (A) - You are their worst nightmare.

The definition of R.S.V.P. is the abbreviation for the French "repondez s'il vous plait," which in English simply means "please reply." This is a request for a response to

the invitation.

If you have ever given a party or planned an event you understand how important it is to know how many people will attend. Deciding on the food, drink, decorations and space accommodations for the event is essential. You've sent 100 invitations. Your invitation asks for a reply, yet the week before the event you have only heard from 20 people. Fifteen have accepted and five have declined. What about the other 80 guests? Do you "guesstimate" how many will attend?

Drum Roll Please.

A Public Service Announcement from hosts and hostesses everywhere:

"The psychic hotline has been disconnected." R.S.V.P. means that you, the guest, promptly respond to your host's invitation. Most hosts are not mind readers.

People usually only consider the duties of a host, or the person responsible for the event. But, you the guest, have an important obligation to the host. The guest has the responsibility to reply to the invitation in a timely manner.

The Pandemic And Parties

The pandemic has changed the way many people socialize. With the ready availability

of vaccines there are some people who are still cautious about attending social events. Don't assume your host will know how you feel; acknowledge your host's kind invitation.

It's All About You

You need to let the person who is giving the party know whether or not you will attend so they can make proper arrangements for you. R.S.V.P. really is all about you, and how you will be remembered by your host.

Quote of the day:

"Miss Otis regrets she is unable to lunch today, madame."

Cole Porter, American Composer

Even Miss Otis, who was "up to her neck" in other matters, took time to regret. Well, that's another story.

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

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DARE 2 Tread the Trails



The US Renal Care DARE to 2 Tread the Trails event took place on October 16 at Craighead Forest Park in Jonesboro.

Runners had the opportunity to participate in a 5k, 10k, or half marathon trail run. The fun continued on October 17 with a mountain bike poker ride. The event benefits Craighead County's D.A.R.E. (Drug Abuse Resistance Education) Program.



A collage of five professional portraits of medical staff. From top left: Dr. Calixto Cazano, a man with a beard and glasses; Abbey Taber, APRN, a woman with long brown hair; Dr. Justin Yancey, Pediatrician, a man with a beard and a white coat; Charrae Burdin, APRN, a woman with long blonde hair; and a fifth portrait at the bottom which is partially obscured.

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Lessons LEARNED IN Motherhood

BY CAITLIN LAFARLETTE

I took Eva to the beach for the first time this September. I had low expectations (rule number one of having children!) for how much she would enjoy it, but I was pleasantly surprised.

She wasn't a fan of the sand. Who is? But when she set eyes on the ocean, every hour spent crying in the car (both of us) was suddenly worth it. I spent every summer vacation growing up in Panama City Beach and the water is as much a part of me as Arkansas is. I had hoped Eva would take to it as well, but reminded myself she is her own person.

Thankfully, every day we were there she couldn't wait to get to the beach. When bath time rolled around, the crying started. Bathwater wasn't cutting it anymore: She wanted the ocean. It was exhausting and hilarious all at once.

Naturally, I kept a very close eye on her. Before we took our first steps in the water, I gripped Eva's hand tightly. I had the passing thought that maybe she would immediately run to the shore all on her own, fearless and full of adventure. That is when I took a step back and realized how much parents push independence upon their little ones.

Of course my child more than likely wouldn't dive headfirst into the water. The ocean is intimidating to me. I can't imagine seeing it through her eyes.

So we spent the week splashing on sandbars, picking up shells. And slowly Eva became more confident. She made it clear when she wanted to swim and when she was done. And by our last day, I was running to keep up with her as she waddled into the water alone. A few times she even walked backward into the waves. I may have a few gray hairs now from that.

After watching my daughter find her confidence and independence on her own, I knew it was time to stop trying to make her do things she isn't ready for. Sleeping on her own and regulating her emotions, for example. Our trip to Florida taught me if I support her through anything and everything, she will find her way.

Paragould Chamber Banquet



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

Retired Mayor Mike Gaskill accepting the 2020 Lifetime Achievement Award from 2019-2020 Chamber Board Chairman Brett Bradford



Bill Brewer of First National Bank accepting his 2021 Lifetime Achievement Award from 2020-2021 Chamber Board Chairman Kevin Lang

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Booktoberfest



Booktober, a book fair for all ages, took place on October 16 at Native Brew Works in Jonesboro. Featuring books and other items reminiscent of youth book fairs, this special event was a partnership between Explore MOR NEA, Verb Book Store, and Native.

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



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Get Downtown Festival



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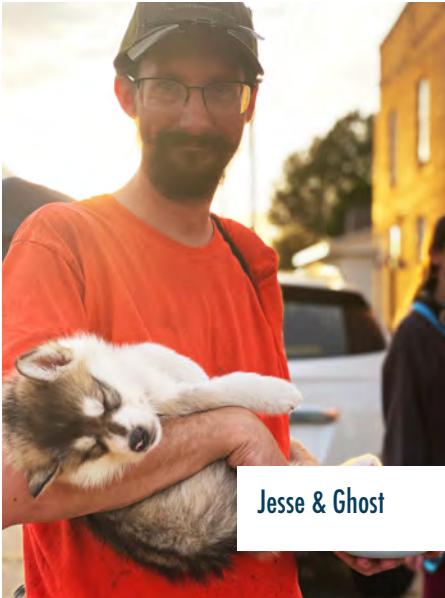


The Get Downtown Festival, hosted by the Greene County Future Fund, took place on September 24 and 25 in Downtown Paragould and featured a movie in the street, a 5k and 10k run, live music throughout the event, local artists and several food trucks. Locals and visitors alike traversed Pruitt Street to eat, shop and play on a beautiful September day.

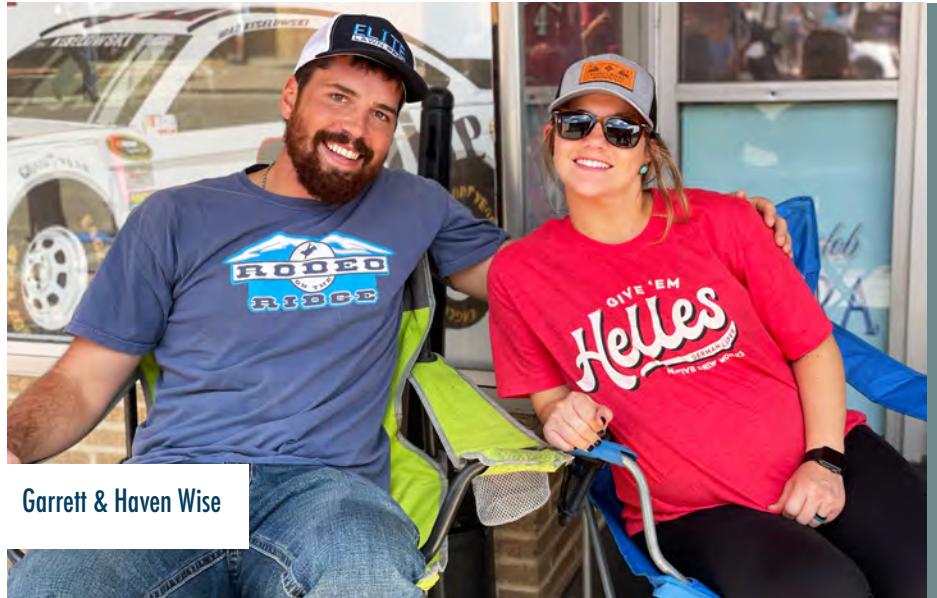


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► More photos from this event can be found on Premiere's Facebook page.



Jesse & Ghost



Garrett & Haven Wise





Learning As You Go

WITH DR. KRISTIN SULLIVAN

With November being the month of business entrepreneurship, I struggled for ideas. I kept thinking, "Hmm, well, how do I talk about business and how I did it?" This is the best I have come up with. I don't want to focus only on how I did what I did, but instead want to hone in on what I have learned along the way. This may be absolutely no help to anyone, but it is my hope that just maybe it may shed some light on someone who needs it.

I went to veterinary school. I did not go to business school. I have a minor in chemistry and thoroughly enjoyed my semester in Soils at Arkansas State University. I castrated pigs, a bull, and worked with chickens, sheep, goats,

and innumerable other animals along the way. I did not take a course in running a business. So, you can imagine, when I decided to open my own veterinary practice it took me on quite the learning journey.

From the start, if you are like me, you ask your momma for her advice. It was through my mom that I learned of the Arkansas Small Business and Technology Development Center through Arkansas State University. Two people played a major role in helping me to formulate my business plan in order to move forward with my business model: Kelli Listenbee and Laura Miller. They are phenomenal.

When the business plan was done and the bank gave us the go-ahead, my husband and I started looking for the right place -- it just so happened to be a home. So, I put pencil to paper and reworked the floor plan to now become a functional veterinary hospital. The contractor came in and made the dream a reality. While the future ARPets was under construction, I went to work on all the intricacies of the business. My husband purchased four very large marker boards, and this helped me get all of my ideas out and onto something tangible that made sense of it all. I could brainstorm -- erase the unworkable, adjust/edit/refine small details easily, and do this all while still maintaining the big picture in order to make my business more efficient. I still use the marker boards to this day. Just as I refined the dream with the marker boards before we opened, the refining and editing of how your business functions does not end at your opening day. You have to be able to adapt and respond to the needs of your business and clients, and this changes over time.

Other things I've learned: Number one, always be kind. Customer service is the most important aspect in any business; always being kind and respectful will make this easy. Second, a business owner is never off the clock. Anymore, I doctor during business hours and do business during the hours in between. Luckily, I have a wonderful office manager -- Susan Greenway -- who helps me with the business side. Third, build a good team. Your business will not work without a good team to support it. The final thing I want to share: You cannot be emotional with the business side. The facts are, everything in this world costs money; nothing is ever free. The animal loving side of me wants to do all I can to make every pet better and give all patients the gold standard of care. It was a hard lesson to learn that all the supplies we have cost money, the employees working are paid hourly and not for free, the business we are practicing out of has to be paid for, and the products we sell have to be purchased. You must learn to get creative. If I know the budget I have to work within, I can formulate a plan to best treat my patient and not break the bank for my client. It's important to keep money coming in in order to make sure we're still here for the next patient.

If you are thinking of opening your own business, take a step back and consider why you want to do what you're doing, what it will take to get there, and then start to work on formulating your plan to make your dream a reality. Starting a business takes hard work, dedication, passion, and patience. Follow your gut, work hard, stay honest; success will follow.

*Special thanks to Katherine Prescott for her guidance in editing

Something Sweet

There's a lot of things to worry about when it comes to the Thanksgiving meal. Take something off your plate.

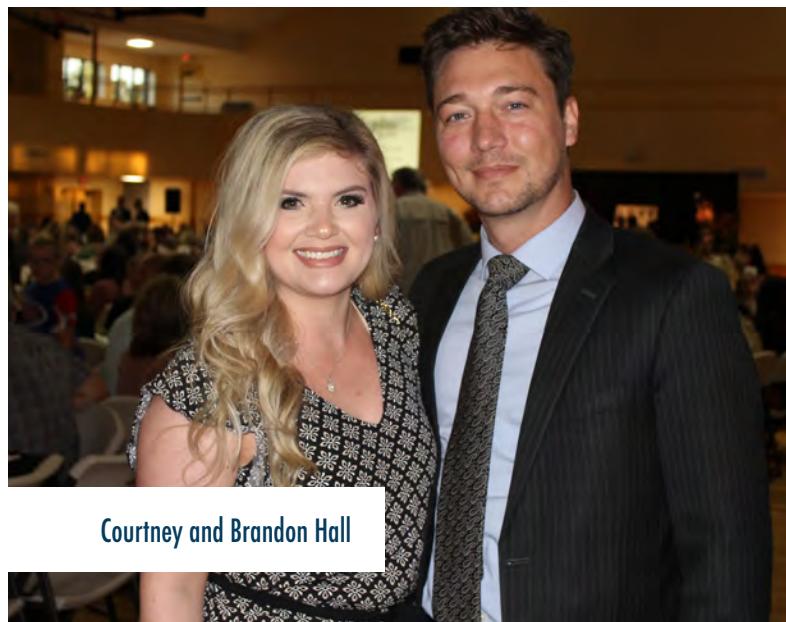
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Celebrate Life Gala



Executive Director Valerie Long



Courtney and Brandon Hall



Ashlee Foster and Shannon Mason

Options on Main, a faith-based, pro-life, non-profit organization, held its Celebrate Life Fundraising Gala at the Paragould Community Center in October. Options on Main offers services to women and men facing an unplanned pregnancy and has a new location – Options of Paragould.

The group's largest fundraiser of the year, the Gala allowed Options staff and volunteers to share an evening with clients and supporters, enjoy a catered meal, listen to testimonials and hear the touching words of featured speaker Dr. Tony Evans, senior pastor of Oak Cliff Bible Fellowship. Dr. Evans is passionate about the pro-life cause and helping pregnancy centers expand their mission of creating a culture of life.



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Plates on Pruett



Photos by Knight Productions

The Paragould Leadership Alumni hosted Plates on Pruett on October 18th. The special event featured a full course meal and entertainment. Ticket sales benefitted the accessories for the new 8-Mile Creek Trail.

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



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ENTREPRENEUR HIGHLIGHT

Patriot Recycling

Turning Waste Into A Profitable Business

BY RICHARD BRUMMETT

Brandon Mason says he was into plastics "since Day One after graduation," and now he's into it every day.

Having spent more than a decade using his degree in accounting and corporate finance on the number-crunching side of things for a pair of area manufacturers, the Paragould entrepreneur is now hands-on as the owner of Patriot Recycling & Consulting, dealing with all phases of product recycling.

"I learned plastics by being in the background," said Brandon, now 35. "I was pushed into learning more about raw materials and once I looked around, I saw how much your life is affected by plastic. I wanted to know what these things we were spending all this money on were used for and why something cost as much as it did, and I took more of an interest in that side of things."

With a recycling center in Walnut Ridge and an office in Paragould, Brandon said he started out "brokering, buying plastic, reselling and never touching it."

"It's a very different experience as a broker only. We decided to rent space in the old Barton Lumber building and we could handle about one

truckload to repackaging and sell. When we moved out, we increased to space able to handle about ten truckloads. Here, we have production capability. We couldn't really grow until we could actually process plastics."

The Walnut Ridge building is filled with the various types of plastic recyclables and stacks of cardboard, all broken down and ready to be shipped elsewhere -- some back to original owners, some overseas. In addition to running machinery like grinders, forklifts, blenders and a separation line daily, Brandon also works with clients in areas like project management, transportation and disposal of plastics. "In general, we handle mostly post-industrial scrap plastic or cardboard," he said. "The gist of it is to save the customer money on disposal. Industry is very good at recycling because it's chasing the dollar. The general population is not very good at it; they need a solid reason that would drive it. In Arkansas, there is no real incentive. A lot of municipalities are not geared to handle the volume, even though it wouldn't be as high as expected."

The United States is greatest producer of trash in the world, with every American accounting for more than 1,600 pounds of garbage every year. While Americans make

up only five percent of the world's population, they produce 40 percent of the world's total waste in the form of plastics, papers, food waste and more. According to National Geographic, around 91 percent of plastic doesn't actually get recycled; that means only around nine percent is being recycled as of March of this year, winding up instead landfilled, incinerated, or littered.

"We converted last year 454,674 pounds. We have the capacity for 14 million pounds per year of recyclables here," Brandon said of his Walnut Ridge facility. "That's 14 million not in a landfill somewhere, and also 14 million not having to be made from raw materials. We have a drop trailer program locally, we do pickups, we're bringing in loads from Mexico, Canada, Malaysia, China and then they're sent back. This pallet, for instance, is to be shipped to India. We're handling all types of plastic," making it smaller by shredding it and turning it into environmentally responsible products."

The environmental benefits of plastic recycling are great but so are the monetary. Reusable items save money when compared to constantly buying single use plastics and reduce how much space is taken up by waste -- space that can be used for something

CONTINUED ON PAGE 28



else. Making money through the sale of processed recycled items is also rapidly becoming a reality. Since the price of raw materials can fluctuate – the price of plastic, for example, would be tied to the price of oil – manufacturers often look to recycled materials as a cheaper alternative. That drives up the costs of recycled materials, making recycling businesses more profitable. Referred to by many in the industry as the full recycling loop -- from curbside collection to buying recycled products to recollection -- it is a lucrative and increasingly vital process. A strong demand for recycled products ultimately requires that those products be cost competitive and of high quality both at home and in the global marketplace.

That's one reason Brandon's full-service menu can be a valuable tool for customers. He isn't focused only on the factory end of business; he also can sit and consult with clients to formulate a workable plan that potentially puts more money into their pockets. "Everything from project management to disposal costs to creating more savings," he explained, "we can analyze the situation and help the customer find more opportunities."



The bottom line for America is, the success of recycling won't depend on how much landfill space is saved but on whether or not recycling makes economic sense. "You'll never get to 100 percent recycling," Brandon said. "But as the plastics community matures, we will see the consolidation of more materials. We do 10-15,000 pounds per day, Monday through Friday. We're beginning to realize how much plastics affect our daily lives. That pen you're holding,

your computer, your phone, a food wrapper ... all plastic. Waste has become an environmental threat, due to a lack of proper disposal and recycling. We're helping to change that."

The home office for Patriot Recycling and Consulting is located at 203 N. Pruett Street in Paragould. Brandon may be reached by phone at (870) 573-3095 for more information.

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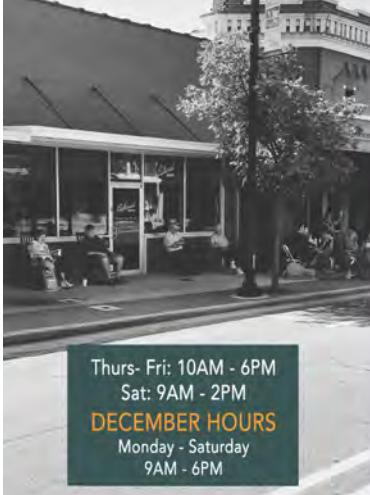
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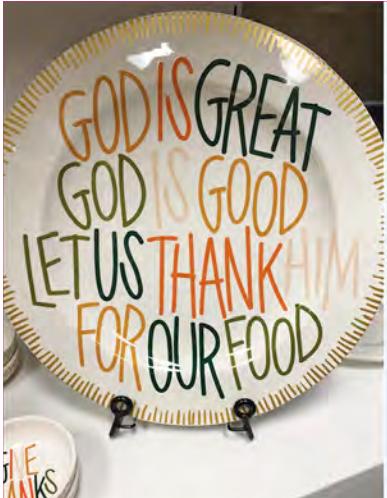
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DOWNTOWN PARAGOULD EVENTS



November 5
St. Mary's 18th
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November 5-7
Carrie the Musical
The Collins Theatre
7:00 p.m.



November 7
Holiday Open House
Downtown Paragould
1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.



November 11
Veterans Day Coffee
The Crossing
9:00 a.m. - 10:30 a.m.



November 20
Chad Garrett and Friends
The Collins Theatre
7:00 p.m.



November 22
Bluegrass Monday
The Collins Theatre
7:00 p.m.

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

explore DOWNTOWN JONESBORO

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NOVEMBER 13-15

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November 4
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Tasting Menu
Roots



November 5
First Fridays at the Forum
The Foundation of Arts
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November 6
Breakfast With Ballerinas
The Foundation of Arts
11:00 a.m.



November 13 - 15
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November 14
Brunch
Roots
11:00 a.m.

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ENTREPRENEUR HIGHLIGHT

Native Brew Works

Four Friends Launch Jonesboro's First Microbrewery

BY CAITLIN LAFARLETTE

When you walk into Native Brew Works, the first thing you might notice is the colorful posters representing an assortment of craft beers all brewed on location. The second thing you might notice is plenty of chatter and laughs – families with kids gather to play board games and old friends catch up over drinks. Outside, dogs lounge with their owners and guests linger sometimes for hours. You can sit wherever you like, whether in the renovated bowling alley seats up front, at the bar, a regular table, outside on the patio, or all of the above during your visit.

"It's a place to cultivate community," co-owner Jackson Spencer said, describing what the space is now.

The brewery, open since August, was born from a home brewing course Spencer took part in with childhood friends Dustin and Ellen Hundley in 2012. Dustin continued crafting his own beer after the course and Spencer said they began talking of their own business, "like anybody wants to do" after learning to make beer.

Once legislation was passed in 2019 allowing microbreweries in the state, Spencer asked the Hundleys, both co-owners, to move back to Jonesboro from Memphis to bring their business idea to life.





BEFORE



AFTER

It took a lot of work to turn the old building on Gee Street, once an auto parts store and since several other things, into a brewery and restaurant with a beautiful interior and spacious outdoor space.



BEFORE



AFTER



"This community needs something," Spencer recalled thinking. "If there wasn't anything like it, we were going to build it ourselves."

Spencer also teamed up with co-owner Heath Gammill, who serves as the middle man and assists in sourcing food, and the LLC for Native Brew Works was signed in October 2019. Dustin started his first brew July 14.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 36

The brewing process begins with four simple ingredients: water, malted barley, hops and yeast. Once the water is heated, Dustin mixes in the malted barley, and the starches are converted to sugar. He then adds the mixture, now called wort, to the boil kettle and adds hops, which creates a bitterness to offset the sweetness of the sugars. Some beers, like the Give 'Em Helles, a German Lager, have few hops added. Others, such as IPAs, can have as much as six times the amount of hops.

After boiling, everything is transferred to the fermentation tank and yeast is added. From grain to glass for an ale lasts about two weeks, or four weeks for a lager. The brewing process takes around six hours and fermentation between five and six days. The remainder of the time is spent allowing the beer to condition and moving it into serving vessels.

Customers can view the area where these custom beers come to life through windows at the back of the building, and can even see the taco slingers in the kitchen prepping an array of nachos, tacos and dips. While the food is delicious, it isn't the focus for the brew crew.

"We're a brewery that serves good food, not a restaurant that serves beer," Spencer pointed out.

After grabbing a beer (or a flight), visitors are free to roam the area and play the multitude of board, card and yard games available.

"It's really cool to see people using the space the way we envisioned it," Spencer said.

"One of the coolest sounds you can hear in here is the sound of Jenga blocks falling," Gammill said. "It makes you wonder, what else do we need for Jonesboro?"

So would the brew crew want to see more breweries, or more similar concepts in Jonesboro?

"Competition is welcome," Ellen said. "And it's not even competition, it's community." She added the team wants to have a direct impact on the Jonesboro area by partnering with nonprofits and charities, and educating the community. "We want things to be an experience here."

The crew already has regular customers visiting, and supporters can be spotted all over NEA with the various merchandise available for sale. But one thing that won't be seen outside the doors: the actual beer.

Due to restrictions, Native Brew Works cannot offer off-premise sales – meaning you won't find six-packs on site or in liquor stores, and you can't get this local brew at other local restaurants.

The neon sign that lights up Gee Street simply reads "Native," as the word "brew" isn't allowed. The owners are barred from posting about alcohol consumption at Native on their personal social media accounts and the front windows have to be covered to keep passersby from seeing beer served and consumed.

Despite this list of rules, customers return weekend after weekend, day and night, sipping tall glasses of Give 'Em Helles, Neon Moon, Pitter Patter and a new gluten-free seltzer: Basic Batch. The brew crew is constantly on the move taking orders and cleaning tables, but most importantly, spending time with customers.

"It's a lot of hard work but it's not lost on us that we are lucky to have been able to open our own business," Ellen said.

"We're happy that people are so gracious and patient," Gammill said. "I'm blown away that I'm a part of it."



Native Brew Works is pet friendly and often hosts special events such as yoga, Booktoberfest (Page 18) and movie nights.



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ENTREPRENEUR HIGHLIGHT

HARVEST PRODUCE RETAIL

Changing the Narrative in the Cotton Industry

BY LINDSEY SPENCER

Paulie Litt says if the cotton/t-shirt thing doesn't work out, he can always fall back on acting. You might assume most actors have a fallback plan, but for Paulie it's the other way around. The childhood actor turned young entrepreneur has landed in Jonesboro, running a textile factory with longtime friend, Robert Rinearson.

HPS' story began in 2018 when Paulie learned cotton in America ships twice around the world before it's sold in America. Believing that was insane, he reached out to Robert.

"When I thought of the idea, I said, 'You know really, I need somebody smart,' I was thinking, and then one day I thought, 'Robert!' So, I didn't even call him, I just went over to his house," Paulie shared. "He happened to be on spring break – he has a degree in physics – and I went over and said, 'I got this great idea. Let's start a textile facility.' He's a man of few but important words and he just said, 'Okay,' and walked out of the room. I called my mom up and said, 'Mom, we're golden. Robert's on board – everything is good. We're going.'



Like two years later he's retelling this story to a friend of his and I overhear him, I'm dead serious he goes –"

"I thought he was a nutjob!" Robert said, intervening on Paulie's story. "I had to get out of that room as fast as I could."

"I couldn't believe it!" Paulie continued. "The whole time he thought I was crazy."

It may just take a little bit of crazy,

though, to forge one's own path as an entrepreneur. Or as Paulie said while speaking on an entrepreneur panel at a Jonesboro Young Professionals Network Conference, "We're all young and dumb."

At some point for every entrepreneur there is a moment when they decide to stop planning and simply go for it. Most business owners can attest to learning as they go, building their businesses on each experience as they come.



For Paulie and Robert, so far so good, despite learning how the machines operated when they first turned them on and they didn't work.

Harvest, Produce, Retail is all about building as they go and finding the right customers who will want their product.

"We want to create the brand from the ground up, because that's the story," Paulie said. "The story is: The ability for someone to buy a t-shirt and know their grower and know their seller."

Paulie said the Mississippi Delta grows the best cotton in America, and there are thirteen cotton gins within fifty miles of the HPR factory.

The HPR team knows the implications behind the "bring it here" mentality. Producing a superior product without sending it around the world several times over certainly sounds nice, but because labor cost is so cheap elsewhere, it means a cheap T is not what is produced in the HPR facility. Instead, a more expensive and much higher quality shirt is what HPR's customers will receive.

"We get to one finish line and it's not really a finish line, it's more of like a checkpoint in Mario Cart where you get rejuvenated, and then you're like, 'Alright, we'll continue, we'll keep going. We'll make our own t-shirts.' And then it's, 'Oh, now we're going to sell our t-shirts.' It's been interesting, I'll tell you that."



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BY LAURA MILLER

At some point during your life, you probably wanted to be your own boss. We constantly see images of successful entrepreneurs on television and social media and think, "That could be me."

Owning your own business sounds like a great idea, but starting a business is more than just renting a location and putting up a sign. It takes preparation and planning.

A logical place to start is by looking at whether the idea is feasible. This evaluation will help you understand the business environment in which you will function, identify opportunities and risks associated with the potential business, and decide if your idea is worth investing more time, effort, and money.

How do you assess feasibility of your idea? Begin by evaluating the market, your management skills, and the money required. These work together like a tripod – without one, a business concept falls apart.

Management skills and money will not make the business feasible unless there are customers who need or want what you have to offer, at the price you will sell it. Ask questions like, Who is my target market? Are there enough customers who want my product or service? Who are my competitors? What do they do better than I will be able to do?

Market and money don't guarantee success unless you have the abilities to manage the business. Be honest with yourself when you ask, "Do I have the knowledge and skills to manage the business? Can I manage employees? Can I sell to others?" As a business owner, you either know it, you learn it, or you buy it.

Market and management require money to implement the business idea. You will need some cash of your own to get started.

I've yet to see a lender make a 100 percent small business loan, so plan on injecting a percentage of the total project cost in cash. Where will your startup funding come from?

Finally, if you decide to move forward, developing a business plan is in order. You can use the information from your feasibility exercise to draft the narrative that tells the story about what you plan to do.

Then, I recommend you develop financial projections on a monthly basis for the first two years of operation. This serves two purposes: First, you can project the level of profit for the business. If you can't make the profit you want or need, why would you want to proceed? Second, a two-year financial forecast will be a benchmark to gauge if the business is performing as expected. Also, if you apply for a loan, a lender will require projections as a means to determine whether the business can make the loan payments.

Doing your due diligence by planning and preparing – before launching a business -- is key to increasing the odds of being successful.

Laura Miller is director of the Arkansas Small Business and Technology Development Center at Arkansas State University. ASBTDC is the state's largest small business assistance provider. The A-State regional office serves ten counties in Northeast Arkansas. Assistance is provided at no charge to entrepreneurs and small business owners. Learn more at asbtdc.org.

The Arkansas State University ASBTDC is funded in part through a cooperative agreement with the U.S. Small Business Administration through a partnership with the University of Arkansas at Little Rock and the A-State Neil Griffin College of Business. All opinions, conclusions, or recommendations expressed are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the view of the SBA.



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Branding WHY IT MATTERS

BY LINDSEY SPENCER

In honor of this special entrepreneur edition of NEA's Premiere magazine, we've highlighted some businesses that are doing something truly unique. In order to get one's business off the ground, most entrepreneurs would agree it's all about a good product. But in order for people to learn about a good product, marketers would likely agree a strong brand is important in communicating with potential customers.

It's my job at Premiere to stay true to, and also develop, our brand. As MOR Media's Manager of Creative Content, a part of my role has also been to develop a new brand for our company: Explore MOR. I've learned a lot, but I decided to sit down with a branding expert to discuss what goes into creating a strong brand and continuing to grow that brand over time.

I invited my friend Tifani Black, co-owner of Shadrachs in Paragould and the brilliant mind behind much of the growth of the Shadrachs brand, to talk about what branding is, how it can fuel the growth of a business, and why it's important for your brand to grow and evolve.

LINDSEY: According to Wikipedia, "A brand is a name, term, design, symbol or any other feature that identifies one seller's good or service as

distinct from those of other sellers." But a definition I like a lot better, from entrepreneur.com, "Your brand is your promise to your customers. It tells them what they can expect from your products and services and differentiates your offerings from your competitors. Your brand is derived from who you are, who you want to be, and who people perceive you to be." I thought that was really cool but I'm interested, in your own words, what is branding and why is it important?

TIFANI: I like the description "it's a promise that you make to your customers." I think that's not how I would have originally put it but I like that. To me, it's the culture that your customer should expect in what they see and what they experience, and what they feel when they come to your business.

LINDSEY: So what all does, or can, branding encompass?

TIFANI: Oh goodness. Literally everything. I think the most important areas are graphic design – that's a very important part of branding – and culture, that's a big part of branding for us. I think some businesses don't focus on the culture aspect of branding but that is so important because the way a customer feels when they walk in your business is a huge part of your brand. I think

that's neglected a lot in businesses. So, the music you're playing when a customer walks in – you might think that's for your employees but it really is part of your brand. Logo design, website, social media – anything that your customers see is branding.

LINDSEY: Really, anything that touches your customer via your brand could be considered branding.

TIFANI: Right, and that can be signage, the way your building looks on the inside or outside. Really anything they see or experience about your business comes back to branding.

LINDSEY: I kind of gave myself the title of branding manager for a business my husband and best friends are owners of, because I knew what it was I wanted to provide. But I think it's funny because in some ways I'm a glorified t-shirt straightener. In my mind, the way those t-shirts are folded is sometimes as important as what I posted on social media that day – because it comes back to the perception of the quality offered.

TIFANI: Yes! When I walk in, I'm always thinking about what t-shirts are out, what purpose decorations are serving, because everything you put out there will add into your brand. Interior design is a huge aspect of your brand.



LINDSEY: What do you wish more businesses knew or understood about proper branding?

TIFANI: I wish more businesses understood that branding is not stagnant. It's not like when you open your business you just set your logo and your fonts and keep that brand forever. Branding has to change as we evolve, and as technology evolves. Things go out of style, so we have to continually rebrand and rebrand. In the seven years I've been at Shadrachs, it feels like we're always rebranding.

LINDSEY: That might be a better way to do it because if you make big changes you might alienate your customers, whereas if you are constantly making little changes that speak better to your audience, it's more like training your customer to appreciate the new things.

TIFANI: Right, and there are things that are popular now that would not have made sense a few years ago. You're always having to think of new things and how that fits into your brand. So I think continually evolving is important, but also staying consistent. Finding that consistency, like what can we NOT change? What's important to keep the same?

LINDSEY: Since we're on the topic of rebranding, if someone realized that it's essential for their business to create a stronger brand, or to pivot and rebrand, where should they start?

TIFANI: I think for me, the first thing I would do is research which brands I like and try to draw inspiration from other brands. Start making a vision board of what colors, fonts, packaging, interior design and start piecing together what you like and how that fits into the business you already have. Having good people on your team, too, who can help you fulfill your vision. A good graphic designer, photographer, interior designer and others can help you bring what you want to life.



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As a therapist for 10 years and certified perinatal mental health professional, I help new parents and birthers work through these stigmas and other barriers to overall well-being. Help is available. We are not meant to fight these battles alone.

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MAKE IT YOUR OWN CAMPAIGN BRINGS COLOR TO DOWNTOWN JONESBORO

BY CAITLIN LAFARLETTE

Walking in downtown Jonesboro is a bit more colorful these days, and it's all thanks to the Downtown Jonesboro Alliance and the Polish Agency.

DJA started a project to brighten up various alleyways, and executive director Lindsey Wingo reached out to several artists to make a part of those areas their own. According to Katie Spencer, director of operations for the Polish Agency, different art groups have applied to create their own projects on the brand new trash cans in the alleyways as well.

Spencer said DJA reached out to the Polish Agency to help with a new campaign, funded by a grant the DJA received.

"We did some brainstorming about what personally brings us, our colleagues and our friends downtown and realized it is a sense of pride, belonging and ownership of the area," Spencer said. "Downtown feels like our place."

For Spencer and the Polish Agency, the goal was to run a campaign that shows all the community residents that downtown can be a place they can make their own.



"There is something down here for everyone," she added.

The Make It Your Own Downtown campaign, launched in June, involves the DJA's awarding multiple \$500 tuition scholarships to Arkansas State University student artists. Winners will assist in transforming the downtown area with their own murals. Spencer said DJA will provide all paint and supplies, and students provide their talent.

In addition to bringing ASU students on board, Polish sent forms to various art groups around town to sign up to paint trash cans.

"Polish is honored that DJA brought us in to help out with this project," Spencer said. "We've seen what letting the community unleash their creativity has done for other cities and we are anticipating more activity downtown as people come out to enjoy the art."

Coming Up ►Self Made



► **S**elf Made, a pop up shop created and curated by the Fall 2021 Design Entrepreneurship class in the Department of Art + Design at A-State, will take place on Saturday, December 4th, at Grounded in Downtown Jonesboro.

The Design Entrepreneurship class is "an artistic practice of artists and designers with the intent to pursue economic opportunities."

Visit exploremorena.com/community-calendar for more information as we receive it.



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BY CAITLIN LAFARLETTE

The trick to succeeding as an artist is finding a special niche. For Jeannie Walsh, that involves around 200 guitar picks and 4-6 hours of her time.

Walsh, who has degrees in art education and graphic design, was living in Florida amongst a large art scene and bouncing ideas off a friend to find a way to stand out. That friend took Walsh to a Miami art show where people had recycled trash art.

"I loved that concept but I was not going to go dumpster diving for art," Walsh said. "It caused me to start looking at things in a different way."

That art show led her to create something new and different, with just a simple product from the dollar store: stickers.

Walsh found rainbow stickers and used them to design a portrait of Ellen Degeneres. She then moved on to stickers that reminded her of Saturday morning cartoons and Batman and Robin were born. Rocket Man came from rocket stickers. And then, customers asked about more musicians.

Walsh continued with portraits of John F. Kennedy and Jackie O., and a Marilyn Monroe piece with "happy birthday" stickers.

"But the music thing was still in the back of my head," she said.

So, she set out to create a portrait of Jimi Hendrix with guitar picks.

"When it came to life, I knew that I found my niche, and that was it," she said.

Walsh begins by sketching a portrait of the musician and cuts up guitar picks to lay over the outline. The pieces take anywhere from 200-400 picks. While Michael Jackson, Chris Cornell and Elvis are examples of her celebrity work, Walsh also works with customers who had musicians as family members, and they offer up their own guitar picks.

"That is just amazing to me because I think that just really puts their own stamp on it," Walsh said. "When they're sending me photos, too, I don't know necessarily what that person's character is like. So I have to work on the photo where it looks okay to them."



Walsh added it is "very cool" knowing she can help bring something of the past to a customer that he or she can put on display.

Since moving back to Jonesboro from Florida, Walsh has settled in as a full-time artist. Outside of her guitar pick niche, she also works in acrylics and pen and ink. She even creates portraits out of VHS tapes, such as Jack Sparrow from a copy of Pirates of the Caribbean.

"Art is my passion. That's what I'm doing pretty much anytime I have free time," Walsh said. "As long as you enjoy doing it, I don't think that's work."



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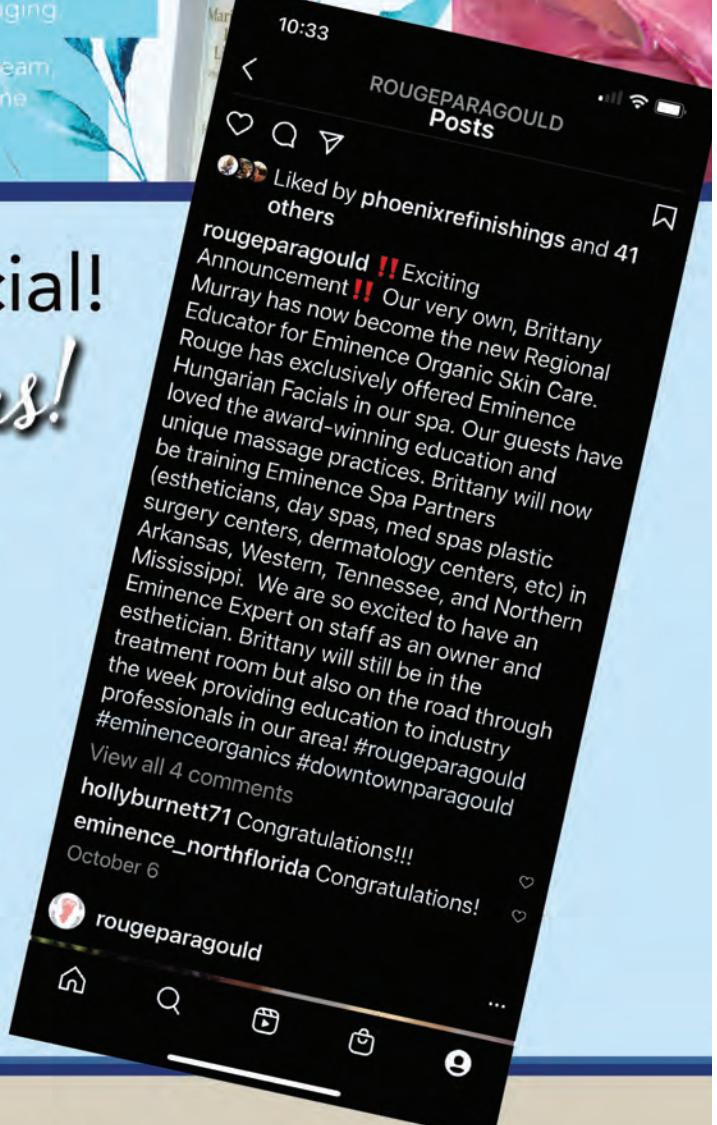


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Coming Up

► NEA Baptist Duck Classic



 **Banquet at First National Bank Arena**

 **Banquet on December 10th**

 **Hunt on December 11th**

Ever heard of the butterfly effect theory? Scientist Edward Lorenz posed the question, "Does the flap of a butterfly's wings in Brazil set off a tornado in Texas?" While it may seem insignificant, a small course of action may have quite a significant impact on an unrelated complex system. So I pose the question to you: Does the flap of a duck's wings in Wisconsin change lives in Northeast Arkansas? The answer is a resounding YES.

For the 19th year in a row, ducks will make their way down the Mississippi flyway through Northeast Arkansas. Landowners will offer their land to hunters from all across the nation. Businesses will provide sponsorship or products and services to be auctioned to banquet attendees. It's a unique event, this competition duck hunt and banquet, yet each year the amount of funds raised is significantly higher.

The reason behind the growth is the cause. The impact from Duck Classic touches lives right here in our community. The NEA Baptist Charitable Foundation is the sole beneficiary of the event. Every dollar raised goes directly into the six programs in the foundation which offer resources to individuals, free of charge. Unlike most health care foundations which focus on brick and mortar and technological improvements within their own systems, the founding physicians of NEA Baptist Clinic created the foundation as a way to truly fill needs within the community. As new needs were identified, means were created through the charitable foundation to fill them.

Currently, the foundation provides services like The Center for Good Grief, offering free grief counseling, seminars, and support for those mourning the loss of a loved one. ShareHope is a support program for parents who have lost a child to miscarriage, stillbirth, or in the first few months of life.

HopeCircle provides a community of hope for families living with a life-changing illness. Wellness Works and Center for Healthy Children offer personalized exercise and nutrition plans to adults with chronic disease and to children struggling with obesity. Lastly, the Medicine Assistance Program provides access to life-saving medication to those who need it by acting as a liaison between patients and pharmaceutical companies. All six programs are offered free of charge to anyone in need and are made possible by the funds raised at Duck Classic.

The ducks are coming ... and the need has never been greater. Whether you sponsor as a business, participate as a hunter, attend the banquet, or offer a product or service to the auction, you have the opportunity to change the life of someone in this community! Find out how to get involved by visiting www.DuckClassic.com.

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Locally Owned Elysian Counseling

BY RICHARD BRUMMETT

JoAnne Powell, LPC/Owner of Elysian Counseling Services, loves that the Paragould community still has a "small town" mindset but looms large when it comes to supporting each other. "The folks here truly care about one another and seem to work together to keep the small business owners and local business owners growing," JoAnne said. "I have been so blessed opening my practice here with all the physicians and medical offices being so welcoming and working with us in growing a wonderful partnership to assist our clients in improving their overall physical and mental health needs."

Elysian Counseling has three counselors in the office, all with different skill sets and personalities "so we can be a great fit for anyone seeking mental health services," JoAnne pointed out. "We also take all insurances including Medicaid, which most private practices do not offer. We strive to always contact a client within 48 hours and get them in the office to begin their counseling within the week they contact us for services. Elysian Counseling Services is a very laid back, personal and caring environment where our clients have told us they can feel genuine care about their improvements and services from the therapist and office manager."

JoAnne said she is most proud of her team, which came about by necessity. "I began my practice with plans of it being a single therapist office with only myself," she said. "I grew so quickly in my first year that I had to move into a larger office and hire more staff to keep up with the demand. I have been so blessed in the incredibly talented staff that came to me. We are definitely growing together not only as a hard-working, well-running therapy office but also growing together as a family and I cannot brag on my staff enough. I am so thankful for them all."

Her best advice for anyone starting a business is to always expect the unexpected and "do what you love with all your heart and passion and you will succeed," and also to be flexible. For more information about Elysian Counseling Services call 870-919-3871 or go to joanne.powell73@yahoo.com.



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Pelvic Floor & Core Physical Therapy



BY RICHARD BRUMMETT

Starla Denton, Owner/Founder of Pelvic Floor and Core Physical Therapy of Jonesboro LLC, said her many years of experience as a physical therapist have not only helped her create lasting bonds with longtime patients, it opened her eyes to the need for specialized physical therapy services in Northeast Arkansas.

"I have been a physical therapist in this community for over 30 years, previously working at St. Bernards Regional Medical Center," she said. "In that time, I have had the opportunity to serve patients from Jonesboro, Paragould, and all of Northeast Arkansas. Working as a physical therapist allows one-on-one time with your patients and you get to know them. Over the years, I have developed special bonds with so many patients who are dear to me. I think this is one reason that I do love this community. I knew I wanted to make pelvic health physical therapy available to as many people in Northeast Arkansas as possible, because this is the place I have worked and the place I call home."

Denton said it is important for area residents to know not only that her

business' services are available, but that pelvic health treatment has made enormous strides in both enactment and attitude. "When I started in this field," she said, "it was common to hear that urinary leakage and pelvic pain is 'normal.' Also, hardly anyone had heard of pelvic floor physical therapy. Although there is better awareness and less misconception today, too often patients are unaware that pelvic physical therapy can help issues such as urinary and bowel leakage, pelvic pain, and pain with sex. Many are unaware that this care is available in Northeast Arkansas.

"Pelvic Floor & Core Physical Therapy, LLC is the first pelvic health specialty clinic of its kind in this area, equipped to treat men, women, and children who are dealing with pelvic floor dysfunction. I began treating pelvic floor dysfunction in 1995 but have had the opportunity to now focus solely on this underserved population. Pelvic floor dysfunction can include issues such as urinary leakage, urgency, and frequency, bowel leakage, constipation, pelvic pain, and pain with sex. These particular problems have a significant impact on the quality of life. Too often, people don't even tell their health

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care provider about these issues because these are hard things to talk about. It is also common that people may not receive treatment because they do not know it is available right here in Jonesboro and in Paragould. I want people to know that there is hope and healing for pelvic floor dysfunction and it is available for them here at home."

Denton has been awarded the Pelvic Health Rehabilitation Practitioner (PHRP) certification, of which there are fewer than 400 in the country, signifying expertise in the field of pelvic health. Men, women and children can benefit from the services she offers. "Treatment is one-on-one, private, and performed at the comfort of the patient," she explained. "My clinic is in existence to raise awareness of pelvic floor dysfunction and to make specialized pelvic health physical therapy available to those in Northeast Arkansas. My favorite part of my job is meeting each new patient, hearing their unique story, and being able to share with them that there is hope and healing for pelvic floor dysfunction. I love being able to see them get better and I know that I am blessed to have the opportunity to do so."

Locally Owned CME Inc.

BY RICHARD BRUMMETT



Nicole Potts feels a great kinship to the Northeast Arkansas area, making her right at home as owner of CME Inc (Communication Made Easy, Inc).

"Northeast Arkansas is our home," she said. "We were born here, are raising children here, our people are here. We love the Southern hospitality, the sense of community, the way we celebrate each other's victories and come together during tragedy."

CME Inc. has grown into a trusted provider of services for children in the Paragould-Jonesboro area. "Over 20 years ago, we started with two children we served after school for speech therapy," Nicole said. "Over the years, we have grown to a group of around 40 therapists serving the speech, occupational, and physical needs of many children."

"We love kids. We make children and their progress top priority. We believe children should be placed in the least restrictive environment at all ages. We meet the children where they are. We encourage parents to place their children in a regular daycare, where they are around other children with strengths they do not have

for the environmental support of their peers. They, in turn, can use their strength to enrich other children. We go into those daycares with our excellent therapies. We believe this is the absolute best day time situation for pre-school aged children. For those children at home, we offer a free vanning service to get to our clinics in both Jonesboro and Paragould."

Nicole said when we support local businesses "we are pouring back into our community. We are helping to provide for our neighbors and friends, just like us."

She is proud of the way CME cares about "the progress and strength of the children we serve. They are our priority and it is obvious. We work in excellence and have many award-winning therapists who are experts in their fields, with masters and doctorate degrees. We have been honored to receive 'Best Children's Therapy Provider' by NEA Kids' Directory for six years in a row, and many awards have been presented to our individual therapists and entire therapy departments for the last three years." Nicole may be reached at nicole.cmeinc@gmail.com or by texting 870.930.6372 to settle on a time for a conversation.

An advertisement for CME Inc. Pediatric Therapy. The top half features a cartoon illustration of a young boy with dark skin and short hair, wearing a yellow and blue striped shirt, flexing his right arm. The background is a dark green with a white diagonal banner. The banner contains the text 'EMPOWERING LITTLE MINDS AND BODIES!' in large, white, stylized letters. Below this, in a smaller white box, are the words 'SPEECH THERAPY', 'OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY', and 'PHYSICAL THERAPY'. The bottom right corner of the banner features the 'CME Inc.' logo, which includes a green stylized 'C' and 'M' icon followed by the text 'CME inc.' in green and 'PEDIATRIC THERAPY' in black. The bottom of the ad includes the website 'cme-inc.org' and the phone number '870.932.0090'.

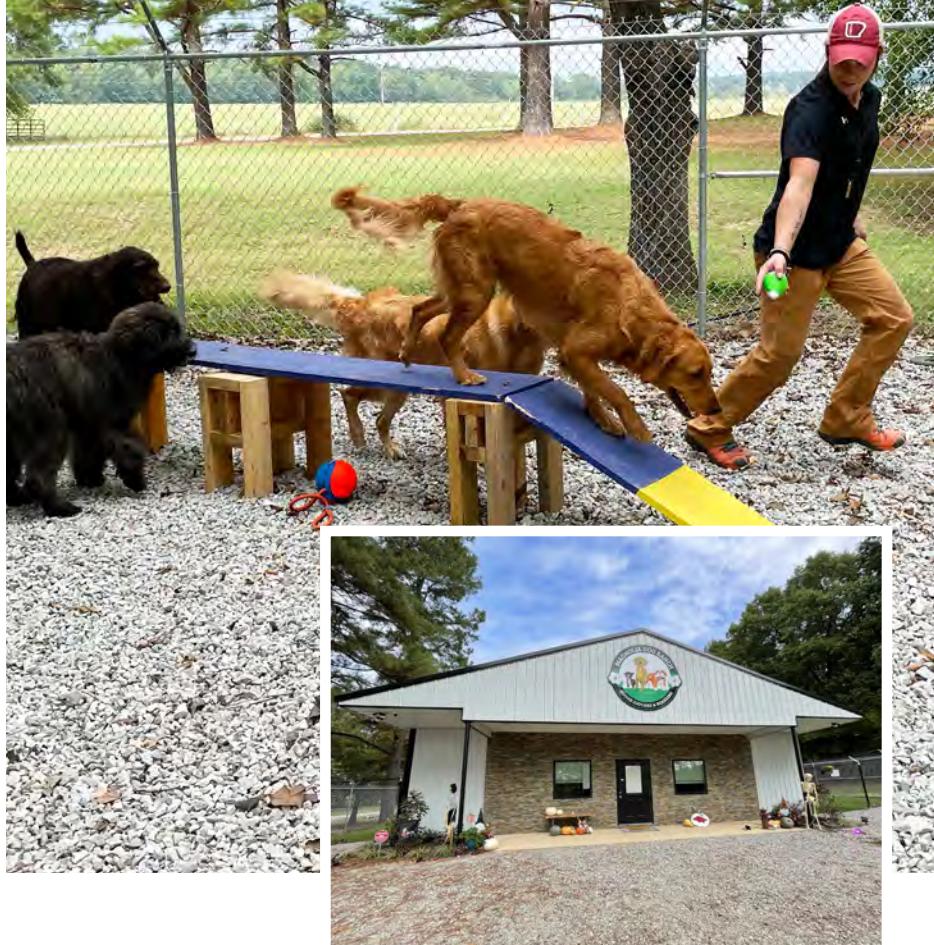
Locally Owned Magnolia Dog Ranch

BY RICHARD BRUMMETT

Jordan Engle, owner of Magnolia Dog Ranch LLC, Doggie Daycare & Boarding, has been in business since August and said she learned quickly we're all on the same team. "I would encourage people to support local business because we are all in this together and helping each other benefits all of us," she said. "Even if it's a business that offers the same services as you do I believe it's only right to recommend other local businesses as well if you are unable to meet a customer's needs."

Located at 1264 CR 761 in Brookland, Magnolia Dog Ranch offers the community and surrounding areas top of the line dog boarding and daycare services. "One thing that sets us apart from a lot of other boarding and daycare centers," Jordan said, "is our state of the art facility that was designed from the ground up specifically to meet the needs of taking care of dogs for boarding and daycare services. Our facility offers spacious indoor suites/runs, an indoor play area, five separate high fenced spacious outdoor enclosures, featuring one with a covered roof for inclement weather days, pet Astro turf in all play areas, one grass play enclosure, lots of toys, and play equipment for the dogs to interact with. Another unique aspect of our facility is its beautiful country setting, as well as the owner living within walking distance of the business."

Jordan said creating wonderful relationships with clients and offering them small things "like sending them pictures daily to their phones rather than only doing social media posts" is something she's proud of. "People who are away on vacation or business really appreciate knowing their dog is happy and safe," she explained, "and I've found that this really helps clients feel at ease and be able to enjoy their time



away without worrying about their four-legged loved ones. I'm also very proud of our boarding services where we go above and beyond to make sure that pets are not just staying with us but they're getting to play and get a little vacation of their own at the Ranch. We spend a lot of time with the dogs and they spend very little time in their kennels. We believe in providing a clean, safe, and fun environment for all our guests no matter the size, age, or energy level ... we love them all and pride ourselves on catering to each dog's specific needs and giving them all the love and affection they deserve."

A welcoming community spirit also plays a role in helping Jordan love what she does. "I love the community I'm in

because of how amazing and supportive my neighbors are," she said. "The good people of this community are always willing to help one another out with no intentions of anything in return, which I've learned is something very rare in most communities today. I love living out here on the Ridge in the country. I've always wanted to live somewhere peaceful and pretty just like where I've ended up, and I am very blessed to have found it."

► More information on the business may be gained by calling (870)634-7138 or going emailing magnoliadogranch@gmail.com.



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Locally Owned Crow's Nest Farms

BY CAITLIN LAFARLETTE

When it's time to pull out the reindeer and snowmen decor, schedule a visit to Crow's Nest Farms to complete any holiday tradition with a real Christmas tree.

Crow's Nest Farms was born in 2014 as a way for people who preferred urban living to still have access to the quiet of the country. Owner Kimberly Dale named the property after her brother, nicknamed Crow, who passed away in 2001.

"I think because of the infancy of the Christmas tree business, I am most proud of the way that so many things about it are up to Mother Nature," Dale said of the farm. "There is no talent on my end that has contributed to the business."

After the tree is strapped to the top of the car, get some furry snuggles with the group of Nigerian Dwarf goats.

Finish off the day with a trip to the gift shop, perfect for Christmas shopping. Ornaments, candles and homemade jams, cookies and candy are all available. Dale said it is important to shop locally in order to support the people you see on a daily basis.

"You want better parks, shop local. You want more things to do for the kids, shop local," she said. "The same people that buy your kids' soccer uniforms give money to the Sr. BEES, show up to clean up your town, are local business owners."

Dale also added she wants her business to make people pay attention to different ways they have been blessed and what skills they have been given to help their community. When it comes to the farm, Dale said like with most entrepreneurial projects, there is always something more: another idea and ways to build.

"I am learning something every day," she said. And another thing she has learned that she wants other business owners to know is to not listen to the naysayers.

"Nothing worth anything is easy," Dale said. "Prove them wrong."



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*Visitation may be discontinued and visitation guidelines are subject to change

HAPPENINGS



The Arkansas Sticks 7U baseball team won the state and national tournament in 2021 and finished the year at #1 in the nation in USSSA standings.



On Wednesday, September 15, Dr. Martin Eggensperger accepted a Governor's Quality Award on behalf of Black River Technical College. The Governor's Quality Award Program recognizes high performing organizations which apply at one of four award levels.



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Savannah & Alex

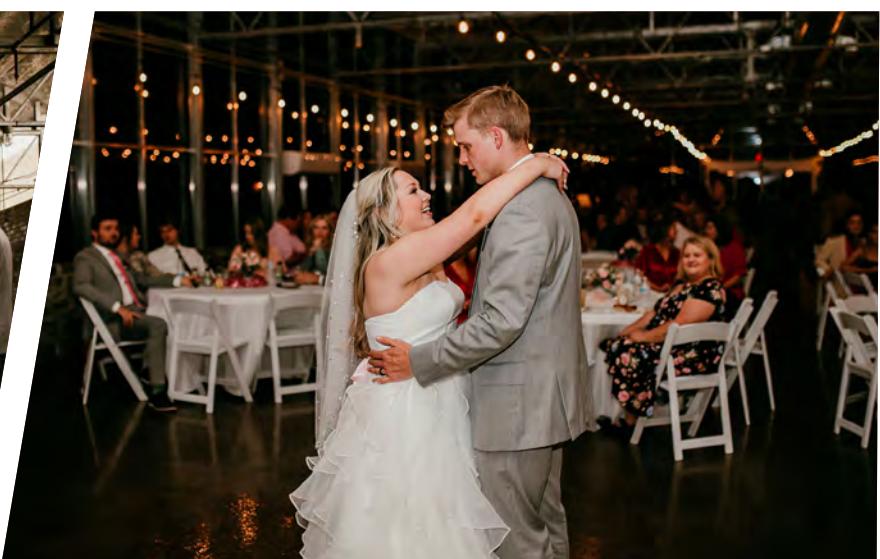
Alex and I both went to Valley View, but since he was a year older than I our paths didn't cross much. A few years later, in 2019, we got reconnected at a young adults Bible study. He asked me out on a date and 10 days later he bought my engagement ring!

When you know, you know!

A little over a year later, he proposed. We got married on October 9, 2021, at Central Baptist.

The reception was at Harmony Gardens and it was breakfast food catered by Scott Holmes. We had a coffee bar catered by Shelley at The Ridge Coffee in Brookland. Florals were provided by the Bearded Bouquet. The cake/cookies were from Harps and macaroons from Abby Cakes.

Photo/video was by Hailey & Alan Crader Photography.



2021 Kids' Events

Coming Up

November 5

First Fridays at the Forum

When: November 5 at 7:30 p.m.

Where: The Forum Theatre

Info:

foajonesboro.org

December 2

Christmas Tree Lighting

When: December 2 at 6:00 p.m.

Where: Centennial Park in
Downtown Paragould

Info:

downtownparagould.com/events

December 4

Holiday Traditions

When: December 4

10:00 a.m. -3:00 p.m.

Where: Downtown Paragould

Info:

downtownparagould.com/events

For more kids activities please
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