

Blytheville mayor gives “State of the City” address

NEA Town Courier

BLYTHERVILLE-- During Tuesday night's Blytheville City Council meeting, Blytheville Mayor Melisa Logan gave her annual State of the City address.

Her address :
“I would like to first recognize President Pro Tempore R.L Jones, the members of the Blytheville City Council, who I would like to introduce Ward 1 Linda Moore and Jacquin Benson; Ward 2 Matthew Perrin and Barbara McAdoo Brothers; Ward 3 Bishop R.L. Jones and Shirley Marshall; the Directors of each Department, and our administrative team. I would like to give honor to and thank God, who has allowed us to see this year, 2026 as a city. I also want to thank you Blytheville for the opportunity of continued service. We began this year with an approved balanced budget. Our legislative audit was conducted, and we received a clean audit.

What an incredible year 2025 was, so many anticipated improvements happened. What we learned or were reminded of, is the fact that as a one of the county seats, the largest municipality in the county, the most northeastern city in the state, one of the Meccas of steel, and home to the highly anticipated Cold War Center, WE are resilient, strong, and essential to the nation. As a city we were able to focus on many areas of infrastructure improvement. Thank you, Council. As we finish this first quarter of 2026, we continue to invest in the city's infrastructure. We have many things on our to do list this year.

It has officially been 1171 days, 28120 hours in office. And, each day I pledge to do just one more thing to bring commerce and people home. Real change takes time, you cant flip a coin or flip a switch. I never made promises I presented ideas some have been good some have been not so good but tonight I would like to report results.

Public Works
Director Mark Key and Dogwood Street Improvement Project is happening and has been awarded to SUGG. I'm excited to be a part of that



Blytheville Mayor Melisa Logan giving the State of the City address on Tuesday, March 17. Logan (right) sits beside City Clerk Melody Lawson.

much needed upgrade. They should begin work soon. This is the 300,000 Street Aid Grant awarded at the end of 2024.

Code Enforcement
One thing that stands out more than others is the continued removal of blighted structures throughout the city in collaboration with the Code Enforcement Quality of Life Unit. And this reignited vision for a cleaner more attractive Blytheville. We are now a fully staffed, fully integrated Vegetation and Blight fighting operation. We employ 6 full-time officers, 1 admin assistant, and an Abatement Crew of 4 seasonal.

We are still looking to appoint a full Nuisance

Abatement team; we are actively seeking interested individuals.

We are now at 235 removed structures; we are on target to demolish 75 additional structures this year.

Waste Water / Sewer Department

We patiently waited to hear good news from the Appropriations Committee about the commitment to our infrastructure request and we have been reselected to receive 5 million dollars in appropriations for fiscal year 2026, our check is on the way. We were able to partner with Heritage Square and its affiliates to address some flooding and back-up issues affecting one of our most vulnerable

populations.. We have about 1 million left of the 2.6 million dollar Wastewater grant fund to continue the work for Wastewater infrastructure. Which gives us about 6 million dollars to work this year alone.

Blytheville Waterworks/ the Water Dept

13.4 million dollars has been awarded by the Governor to our city to address PFAS/lead PIPES and its danger to our groundwater and wastewater systems. This could potentially mean huge discovery and maintenance funding for additional infrastructure priorities. We have completed the transition to full radio read meters including our commercial

partners. We repaired a huge infrastructure leak under the railroad tracks at Moultrie with BSNF's agreement.

The Blytheville Police Department

Watch the news, our officers are working to bring the statistics down. To date we have installed more than 27 cameras and readers, looking to complete 8 this year. We have sky cops, we have license plate readers, we have the canine. Now we need sensible people who value the sanctity of life. I want to speak to the heart of the reason we are increasing our presence. Public Safety. We must protect the fabric of who we are as a community to keep us safe we deployed intradepartmental teams of

officers onto our streets and took many illegal guns, drugs, and offenders off the street. We are working with other municipality Mayors, the County Judge, the Sheriff, The Arkansas State Police, and other Law Enforcement agencies to address and continually curtail violence. You cannot hide in Mississippi County. We are all on one accord. These efforts have paid off. Over the past year, we have driven crime down and we are not finished. Our Illustrious Police Department is readily becoming an unmatched department. We now have two certified Federal Special Task Force Officers, we've added a specialized Mobile Command Post to our fleet, and we've fully adopted Policies and Procedures which is a major component of Accreditation. We have a fully capable and certified Dare Instructor who is also PLECET Accredited for community engagement and who will also be attending the FBI Academy soon, Asst Chief Stewart.

Blytheville Fire Department

We have a new Chief and Assistant Chief/Fire Marshall, that we promoted last year. Our fire fighters have continued to support each department; we have hired some new firefighters and have solid plan for training as we are fully staffed with a waiting list for the first time in a very long time we are having to score applications for new hire and waiting lists. . Our fire department was so involved in the community, splash days and chili cook-offs, cooking for a cure, and Christmas toy drives. We continue to serve the public with excellent service. All while listening for the call to service. We are anticipating the construction of a new firehouse and admin station. We have procured the land.

I would like to take a point of privilege and talk about the Public Safety Tax that is set to sunset within a year, 70% of the tax secures a current and future wage in the retention of our Police and Fire. When we dial 911, we want to be darn sure

See MAYOR, page 2A

Mississippi County raises capital asset limit

By Joseph Fondren
NEA Town Courier

BLYTHERVILLE— The Mississippi County Quorum Court's Finance and Personnel Committees met briefly on Monday afternoon at the Annex Building.

During the Finance Committee, the justices present raised the limit on the capital assets list from \$1,500 to \$5,000.

Finance Chairman Michael White added they are still working on the issues regarding the District Court fees, but discussions were getting there.

County Judge John Alan Nelson's administrative assistant, Cindy George, gave a positive review of the new cleaning crews that have begun cleaning the Blytheville Courthouse.

George said, “We are definitely happier with Marcus cleaning. It is clean. Smells nice in the morning. The window sills are getting dusted. The windows are clean, and the floors are vacuumed. And we're not paying him any more than what we were paying the other company.”

White added that the owner wasn't happy about not getting paid more. Justice Tobye McClanahan mentioned she informed

the new cleaners to come up with a proposal and speak with the Quorum Court.

Justice Molly Jackson asked Nelson, once the Osceola Courthouse closes for repairs, where the custodial workers will go during the reconstruction.

Nelson responded that they haven't gotten that far yet.

During the Personnel Committee, the committee briefly discussed a policy that was created in 2019. The policy deals with those unable to have FMLA or ADA kickin for a disability.

According to Finance Director Kelli Jones, the policy isn't specific enough to deny, according to two attorneys.

Jones added the policy has been helpful and used many times during its inception.

Jones added that the employee is receiving four more weeks of disability due to how the policy currently reads.

After further discussion, the justices motioned to add to the policy which is only for the first 12 months of employment.

The full Quorum Court will vote on the addition to the policy via an ordinance at its Tuesday, March 24 meeting.

Blytheville council backs new strategic plan

By Joseph Fondren
NEA Town Courier

BLYTHERVILLE— The Blytheville City Council met for its monthly council meeting Tuesday night at the Justice Complex, where they heard from the new Blytheville Strategic Committee and passed seven resolutions and one ordinance.

The Council also received an update from the Blytheville Strategic Committee chairman, Mike Schueren.

According to Schueren, the committee has held three meetings since January and has established its leadership, vision, and goals.

Schueren explained he

serves as chairman; Jennifer Blankenship is vice chair; Matt Perrin, secretary; and Amy Riston, historian.

Meetings will be on the first Monday of each month at 6:30 p.m. at the Ritz Parlor.

Schueren announced the committee's long-term plans include: Land Bank, Housing policy, and Code Enforcement prioritization. Short-term plans include: enhanced lighting along major corridors; updated welcome signage; and repair or replacement of street signs and signals.

The Council unanimously passed the lone ordinance, which allowed the city to enter into a contract with a municipal employee, Fireman James Gann, at 360

Fire Protection.

The first resolution passed placed municipal liens on six properties — 312 South 16th Street; 384 North Hollywood; 202 West McHaney; 2309 Marguerite; 130 East Main; and 1107 South Clark.

The second resolution unanimously approved condemned a property — 2321 Marguerite — and ordered the property be demolished.

The third resolution, unanimously approved, reappointed four commissioners — Steve Arroyo, Nov. 1, 2029; Zach Logan, Nov. 1, 2028; Jeremy Dever, May 15, 2027; and Seth Wyatt, May 18, 2029 — to the Baseball Facilities Commission.

The fourth resolution, unanimously approved, hired Terracon of Little Rock to facilitate work issued by the Pfas grant.

The fifth resolution, unanimously approved, allowed the mayor to sell “certain unneeded, obsolete, and non-operational scrap equipment or vehicles to the scrap metal recycling business or bidder paying the highest price.”

The sixth resolution, unanimously approved, amended the 2026 budget.

The final resolution, unanimously approved, allows the city to enter into an agreement with Critical Edge for \$82,800.00 — \$6,900.00 per month.



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Opinion

REVIS’ RAMBLINGS

Staying active is essential

I don’t like to dwell on age, even though it seems I do write about it quite often. I try not to think about getting older, but almost every few days during a conversation, a younger person will refer to someone as elderly or older. Two out of three of those conversations are referring to a person about my age or even younger. Reality then sets in. The scale that most younger people use to measure age puts everyone over the age of 65 in the “elderly” category. I can’t fault them. I remember the days when I thought 50 was old.

Most people my age don’t think in terms of the elderly unless we are thinking of a person being fortunate enough to live well into their 90s.

Age is something you just



Revis Blaylock
NEA Town Courier

have to experience. The elderly title hits people at different stages of life. I’ve always said age is a state of mind. Lately, I have been thinking it is more like a state of the body.

I plan to do better with my “senior” exercising, walking, reading, and finding new interests that are supposed to keep us alert and balanced. It is recommended that we (older folks) have at least 150 minutes of moderate exercise a week. There are numerous books on the subject of aging. Every book I have reviewed stresses exercise, a healthy diet, and the right amount of rest. Those are things I have mostly ignored throughout my life, but I plan to do better.

I am being a little flippant about age, but it really is a serious topic we don’t give much thought to until it hits home.

I read that older adults outnumber children in 11

states and nearly half of the U.S. Counties. A 2025 report said the U.S. population of ages 65 and older rose by 2.1 percent to 61.2 million.

The population under the age of 18 decreased by 0.2 percent to 73.1 million from 2023 to 2024. That still gives us more children than older people, and that is definitely a plus for the future. We need those young people to grow up, work and help keep our Social Security checks coming on time.

People seem to be living longer. We have good medicine today, and we have not had to work as hard as our great-grandparents did. My paternal grandmother always said hard work never killed anyone. She worked hard all of her life and died at the age of 96. She chopped

cotton well into her early 80s. I am not as positive as she was about the hard work not hurting us, but I will say it worked for her.

Life expectancy has risen through the years. I think it is now 79. In 1975, the life expectancy was 72.6. Thank goodness it is going up.

I do believe that we senior citizens need to keep going as long as we are able. We need to find something that interests us and keep our minds busy. It is never a good idea to sit down and do nothing. That cannot be good for anyone at any age.

People have looked for the fountain of youth since the beginning of time. We can do a lot of things to improve appearances, which gives the illusion of being younger, but there is no way

to stop the years from passing by. Some people age better than others, and that is just life.

At the end of the day, we are not supposed to live in these bodies forever. They do wear out. After all, we have to move on to make room for those to come.

I recently heard a young man who was celebrating his 57th birthday say he was thankful for each one of them. The popular quote by author Gretchen Rubin, “The days are long, but the years are short,” is true, and we realize it more and more with each birthday.

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POLITICAL COLUMNIST

Will SOS runoff voters care about ‘salty language’?

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How important is a candidate’s use of online “salty language”?

The question arose last week regarding past messages posted on the X social media platform by Bryan Norris, candidate for secretary of state.

Norris placed first in a three-person race in the Republican primary March 3. He faces state Rep. Kim Hammer, R-Benton, who finished a close second, in the March 31 runoff. The runoff is necessary because no candidate won a majority.

The secretary of state’s most noteworthy duty is being in charge of elections at the state level. The officeholder also maintains and secures the State Capitol and administers business filings.

Norris’ posts came to light on social media last week. In one, he spelled out “f-you” in all caps in a comment directed at Sen. Tom Cotton. Several other posts also are not publishable in a family



Steve Brawner
Political Columnist

newspaper.

There was another where he said President Lyndon Johnson, the CIA and Israel assassinated President John F. Kennedy. He told the Arkansas Democrat-Gazette that he was “probably halfway asleep when I wrote that, if I did.”

In an interview with KATV reporter Daniela Dehaghani that is available on the station’s YouTube channel, Norris said he was frustrated with Cotton because his

office had not been helpful when Norris faced a personal issue when he retired from the military.

Norris, a retired 21-year veteran, said soldiers use “salty” language. He told Dehaghani that his wife has been trying to get him to clean it up. He said he would not be using that language as secretary of state.

“I’m a human being that makes mistakes from time to time, and the best I can do is fix those mistakes and correct them as I move forward,” he said.

In a statement he texted, Norris said he is the target of a smear campaign by the Republican establishment and contrasted his record with Hammer’s.

State elected officials have endorsed Hammer, a Baptist pastor who almost certainly doesn’t use much profanity. Those included Gov. Sarah Huckabee Sanders, Attorney General Tim Griffin, Lt. Governor Leslie Rutledge and Cotton. Current Secretary of State Cole Jester called on Norris

to quit the race after the X posts surfaced. Norris, the outsider, has been endorsed by several notable national allies of President Trump, including MyPillow CEO Mike Lindell.

Norris’s introduction to Arkansas politics came with his leadership of an Independence County (Batesville) voter-led initiative requiring paper ballots, and he has made election security one of the centerpieces of his campaign. He said private companies using unsecure source code own the guts of the state’s voting machines.

While Norris passed the paper ballot initiative in Independence County, Hammer passed legislation in 2023 requiring counties that use paper ballots to pay for their printing, among other provisions. He does not favor a switch to paper ballots, saying that no one has demonstrated that the machines have led to stolen elections in Arkansas.

Norris criticized Hammer for his sponsorship of a

legislative package that would make it more difficult for citizen-led efforts to change the Constitution and pass initiated acts. The latter are laws that voters enact.

Hammer’s laws included one that would require signature-gatherers to ensure signers have read the measure in their presence. Another would require voters to present a photo ID to the canvassers. Another would require canvassers to inform signers that petition fraud is a crime.

Hammer’s argument is that it’s too easy for out-of-state entities to corrupt the process for their own benefit, and it’s too easy for groups to mislead signers.

The argument’s other side is that the laws would make it much harder for voters to engage in citizen-led direct democracy. Judge Timothy Brooks agreed that those

aforementioned ones went too far. He issued a preliminary injunction last November while letting other laws sponsored by Hammer stand.

Voting starts March 24 and concludes March 31. The winner will face Democrat Kelly Grappe and Libertarian Michael Pakko in the November election.

The runoff will likely decide the next secretary of state because the state is so Republican. Turnout will be very light as this is the only statewide race on the ballot.

In other words, a small percentage of voters will probably choose the state official responsible for making sure everyone’s votes are counted accurately.

That’s a darn shame. Steve Brawner’s column is syndicated to 21 outlets in Arkansas. Email him at brawnersteve@mac.com.

MAYOR

From page 1A

those lights are headed to our rescue. Help us honor their service.

Parks and Recreation

Dr. Melinda Martin is a Top-Notch Archeologist, and she has made the world of Museum Curation an adventure. She has been establishing a new footprint for all things Delta Gateway Museum. Dr. Martin has established Science Saturdays, Smart Snacks, Mobile Displays and now we will be DGM, the Museum on Wheels as we just purchased a mini bus to transform into a county-wide mobile unit.

Our Golf Course believe it or not, had its best year yet with almost 518,000 in revenue and is gearing up for a successful Golfing Season. I spoke to a young man from Jonesboro who drives to Blytheville to play golf on our course. We attracted thousands of out of town visitors last season for tournaments and free play and we’ve increased membership by 25%.

The Ritz, our fully restored 1930’s Opera House is truly the centerpiece of our Community Theater, Fundraising, and ARTS life here in the city.

Our new Director, Mr. Tom Henry is working hard to restore regularly scheduled programming. We’ve had record numbers of attendees these past few major events. The Follies was a huge success, we weathered a monumental ice storm to attract huge crowds of performers and audiences.

We have a new Main Street director in our 1938 ART Deco world renowned

Bus Station, Ms. Amanda Eskin. Mayfest, Trick or Treat on Main, Chili Cook-off are huge crowd pleasers and have already kicked off with planning. Main Street Blytheville has a community clean-up scheduled in April to shine up our downtown corridor. We are also looking to partner to introduce a Farmer’s Market hopefully this summer.

Also in our Parks Department, we were awarded the \$500,000.00 State Outdoor Match grant and finished the tennis court in Walker Park; The excitement for this renovation is indescribable. We hope to begin fencing work (adding road gates) to limit access after-hours soon. We are looking forward to more improvements to include some type of water play for our community. We will be moving into Williams Park and Cypress Park Improvements this year as well, updating playground equipment.

We have currently 638 active business licenses throughout the city.

The Chamber reported more than 14 ribbon cuttings last year in our city.

Our three hotel projects are each nearing completion. Jack’s Family Restaurant is here, Rose’s Department Store is here, Antoni’s Nails is here, Valero is here, Maverick is here, McDonald’s will break ground in April, its here! Messer Trucking is here, B and B Diner is here, JBrook is here, Olive and Company is here, Priority Health Clinic is here

Flatland purchased a building, it’s here, Mona Nissi Relocated to Main Street its here, Las Casita is here, Herren Tire is here, Marlo’s is here, The Legacy Event Center is here. OMG is now at NUCOR, Food trucks are

here, the Soup Kitchen is here. Christin World changed ownership but decided to remain here.

In this year, we will prioritize the following projects:

*Attracting retail business and restaurants.

*The revisioning of Main Street Blytheville, if we build and restore and renovate and motivate... THEY WILL COME! We have families that have brought and are bringing their businesses downtown and we are thankful for businesses like the New York Store, Russells, Mailboxes, Hubbard and Hoke, Me and My Sister, who have been here more than 10 years

*Address and Resolve lighting issues throughout the city concentrating on entrances and exits, we are working with Entergy to enhance lighting along south highway 61. We will focus more on the beautification of that area of the city this year.

Keep Arkansas Beautiful and Adopt a Block..The Recycling Center are all projects the community can own. 70,000.00 grant funding through MRCTI

We are adding commercial trash pick-up to our tranche of services

*Our administrative team is critically working to recruit builders and potential investors. Housing, Housing, Housing. We adopted a Land Bank Ordinance, and we want to emulate other cities like Paragould.

*Our Summer Employment Program happened because of our partners Hays, DGM, ANC, Blytheville School District, BCSM, Kings Backyard BBQ, McDonalds, and the Cold War Center, our city departments and MCAEOC.

We are working toward the start-up of a Youth

Commission Empowerment Initiative to offer our youth grades 10-12. We are working in tandem with the Arkansas Delta Women’s Leadership Academy.

Last year I closed with we are the evidence; I want to repeat that we are evidence that there is something worth fighting for here. We can’t look to the left or to the right we must look within. What are we doing to help. What you are talking about is it mere gossip or progress and planning. We are not the same, we were created different to affect change to bring ideas together to figure out the best plan. They not like US!! I told you that there was no easy solution to these challenges, but with steady hands and bold leadership, we wouldn’t just bring Blytheville back; we would make it better.

Closing

As we move forward, let us remember that leadership is not only defined by what we choose to do, but also by what we choose **not** to do. Restraint, discipline, and integrity matter just as much as action. The decisions we decline—those that compromise our values, divide our community, or trade short-term gain for long-term harm—are often the ones that define us most.

In Blytheville, we choose responsibility over convenience. We choose progress over complacency. And even when it is difficult, even when it is unpopular, **we choose to keep making the hard right choices** — because our city, our children, and our future deserve nothing less.

Together, with unwavering faith and relentless resolve, we will continue to move Blytheville forward. Let us make 2026 a year to remember.

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News Of Note

United States Marshals Fugitive Task Force conducts Operation Steel Resolve

NEA Town Courier

The United States Marshals Service (USMS) Eastern Arkansas Fugitive Task Force (EATF), in coordination with federal, state, and local law enforcement partners, successfully concluded Operation Steel Resolve, a targeted fugitive enforcement initiative conducted

from March 9-13, across Northeast Arkansas.

This multi-day operation focused on identifying, locating, and apprehending violent offenders and high-risk fugitives with outstanding warrants, enhancing public safety across the region. During Operation Steel Resolve, law enforcement officers

achieved the following results:

- 24 fugitives arrested
- 66 warrants cleared
- The cleared warrants included serious and violent offenses, to include:
 - 6 homicide-related charges
 - 23 aggravated assault and battery charges
 - 2 sexual assault charges

- 7 firearm-related offenses
- 6 drug-related offenses
- 22 additional charges, including various felony and misdemeanor offenses

“These results reflect the unwavering commitment of our task force and partner agencies to pursue those who pose the greatest threat to our communities,” said Acting United States Marshal

for the Eastern District of Arkansas, Cory Harris. “Operations like Steel Resolve send a clear message—violent offenders will be found and brought to justice.”

The Eastern Arkansas Fugitive Task Force is comprised of deputy U.S. marshals and task force officers from partnering

agencies working collaboratively to locate and apprehend fugitives throughout the district. The United States Marshals Service remains dedicated to protecting the public by apprehending dangerous fugitives, supporting local law enforcement, and ensuring that justice is served.

Leachville City Council hears department reports

By Revis Blaylock

NEA Town Courier

Leachville City Council heard department reports at the March meeting held on Monday. Mayor Rodney Robertson called the meeting to order with all council members present.

Following the approval of the minutes and the financial report as presented by City Treasurer Vanessa Wheeler, Police Chief Steven Pearson gave an update from the department.

Chief Pearson informed the council that they had written 61 citations, 33 warnings, and served five warrants since the February 16 meeting. Officer French will be graduating from the academy soon. He also reported that one of the police vehicles was in the shop for repairs. The department is also working on creating a CID Division and setting up classes.

Chief Pearson said Sgt. Amy Poindexter has been working on compiling information for guidelines for UTVs, ATVs, and golf carts.

Sgt. Poindexter said she has reviewed several ordinances from different towns in the area, as well as the latest state laws for UTVs. She said regulations include that drivers must have a valid driver's license, the UTV must be registered and insured. It also must be equipped with lights.

Mayor Robertson said Sgt. Poindexter has put a lot of time into this to get the ball rolling.

“I have worked with deputies on accidents and actually had to have people airlifted out,” Poindexter said. “We want everyone to enjoy their UTVs, but we also want everyone to be

safe and abide by the laws.”

She said golf carts are not under the same regulations as UTVs. They suggested drivers must be at least 14 years old to drive golf carts, with the UTVs being at least 16 years old with a valid driver's license.

The city can add additional regulations, but it cannot take away from the state law. She has also contacted the city attorney for feedback.

She distributed several ordinances for the council members to review.

“We must abide by the House Bill,” Councilman Greg Penix said. “We can add on, but we can't take away, so we know the drivers must be 16 with a valid license, the UTV registered, insured, and equipped with lights.”

The council voted to table the subject until the next meeting, giving them time to review the ordinances and laws.

Councilman Robert Ballard, who also serves as the city maintenance superintendent, informed the council that the treatment plant is working well and he can tell a difference in the water.

“The water is looking better,” he said. We need to give it a little more time. I was told it could be up to six months for us to see the full effect, but it seems to be helping. The well is scheduled for repair on Thursday.”

Ballard asked about the mower the council had put in the budget, and was given the approval to go ahead and get it as long as it did not exceed the amount budgeted.

Tammy Stockton, managing the Melody Theater, gave an update on

recent activities. She has several birthday parties booked and is working on school field days at the movies.

She said they showed EPIC: Elvis Presley in Concert, from the new studio that they joined. Proudio Group helps them get newly released films at a lower cost with the \$150 a month membership.

They will be showing King of Kings on April 11 at 7 p.m.

An upcoming play by Studio 42 will be presented on April 16-19. Rumors by Neil Simon will be shown at 7 p.m. each night with a 2 p.m. matinee on Sunday.

She expressed her appreciation to the fire department for their help in getting ready and cleaning up the theater after the Make-A-Wish concert.

She said a light backstage was replaced, and ceiling tiles damaged by a previous leak were replaced.

Animal Farm will be shown at 7 p.m. on May 9.

“We are looking for monthly sponsors that will be willing to help pay for the movies each month,” she said. If anyone knows of a business that might be interested, let me know. We are trying to come up with ideas on raising the money. We lost some of our Foundation memberships.”

She expressed her desire to see the theater remain open.

“Sometimes we have a good crowd and other times, we may not have but five or six,” she said.

She asked the council about helping with a fundraiser bringing a cover band, Urgent: Tribute to Foreigner, on June 13. The cost will be \$4,000, and they requested

motel expenses.

Stockton went on to say she had been running the theater for three years and had never asked for funding.

“I think this will bring in a crowd, and we may make around \$8,000. If we do, we could pay back the \$4,000 and have money for the rest of the year.”

After a discussion the council voted to pay the \$4,000 from the Melody Theater fund if the band will come without the city paying for motel expenses.”

They also discussed having a local artist paint windows that can change with different theater schedules. No action was taken at this time.

Councilman Penix, who also serves on the park commission, said games will start March 28, and there will be two tournaments at the Leachville park. There are eight baseball teams signed up. They are working on fundraisers for work needed on the dugouts. He invited everyone to come out and catch a game.

Lisa Turner, community gym committee member, gave a report informing the council that the floors will be done on March 26. The gym will be closed for a couple of weeks after that.

“We are having good attendance with our open gym,” she said. “We have three birthday parties booked this month, wrestling in May, dance classes, basketball lessons coming, and working on pickleball. Everything is good at the gym.”

Jerrold Price addressed the council about reimbursement for an additional \$1,300 that he incurred while working on the main street building that will soon house a bakery.

Price said, “The water meter we were shown, and the one we hooked up to, was not the right one.

“It was confusing because at one time there was an apartment in the back and the business with separate meters. We were shown the meters, and we spent money to trench and tie into the meter, but it was not the right one, and we had to do it over. It was not our fault. It was just a mistake, but I am asking for reimbursement. We have spent a lot of money on the building.”

After a discussion, the council voted to reimburse Price for the additional \$1,300 it cost to hook up to the correct meter for the new business.

Price, president of the Leachville Beautification Corp., gave an update on the work of the Depot. The LBC acquired the Farmers Market building. The building was traded to Dry Land for the old train depot.

“Now the depot will qualify for grants,” Price said.

The roofing supplies were donated, Price's company supplied the work, and the depot has a new roof and a new south wall.

He also said there is a business looking at the end building of Main Street.

Penix shared a concern he had about animals in the community storm shelters.

“Are we liable if someone gets bitten?” Penix asked. “With 50 people in there and five or 10 dogs, it is not if it happens, but when it happens. I have dogs, but this is a concern of mine.”

Councilman Michael Webster suggested designating one shelter for people with animals and making the other one

animal-free.

Several agreed that some people will not leave their pets behind.

No action was taken.

Webster commented that he had used the new online payment method for his water bills, and it worked well for him, and it was easy.

Announcements:

–Main Street Clean-up will be on April 18. Volunteers are needed. Clean-up will be from 10 a.m.-noon. Pizza will be served to the volunteers following the clean-up.

–Meal on Main will be held May 16 from 6-9 p.m. There will be 150 seats. Price said there are about 25 tickets left. The new bakery will hold a soft opening that evening.

–Price said they are also working on a proposal to partner with Arkansas Northeastern College for a refresh of the ANC building on Main Street.

–May 16 from 8 a.m.-1 p.m. will be the Keep Leachville Cemetery Beautiful Day. Councilwoman Lisa Baldrige said they are accepting donations for flowers to be placed in the cemetery. She also encouraged anyone who wants to volunteer to join them. They will meet and park at the community gymnasium.

–The Leachville Harvest Festival will be Sept. 11-12. The event will be kicked off with a parade at 7 p.m. Friday in remembrance of 9-11, followed by a concert featuring the band Petal Shelf. Saturday's festivities will begin at 9 a.m. Entertainment will be announced. Baldrige said there is still space for food and craft vendors and asked everyone to get the word out.

Rrinaco comes to Bluegrass Monday on March 23

NEA Town Courier

JONESBORO – Rrinaco will perform traditional bluegrass and a variety of acoustic music at the next KASU-FM Bluegrass Monday concert. The show will take place on Monday, March 23, at 7 p.m. at the Collins Theatre, located at 120 West Emerson St. in Paragould.

Rrinaco is the “alter ego” of Corrina Rose Logston-Stephens. Last year, she released an album under this name on the acclaimed Rebel Records label. On it, she explores bluegrass music beyond the boundaries of the genre's sometimes strict traditional norms. However, her music is intentionally timeless and still steeped in acoustic music traditions.

As Rrinaco, Logston-Stephens explores topics lyrically not typically covered in bluegrass music, including awkward social situations, cluttered desks, tinnitus, and

gaslighting, along with more traditional topics of faith and Christianity.

Logston-Stephens has an impressively long bluegrass music resume. She grew up in a musical household and had interests in punk rock music before beginning to play fiddle at age 14. She graduated from Belmont University with a degree in music.

She has performed with legendary bluegrass acts Jesse McReynolds, Del McCoury, and Jim Lauderdale. With her husband Jeremy Stephens, she's also a founding member of the award-winning traditional bluegrass act High Fidelity, and together they also perform in the pre-bluegrass “brother duets” style of mu/sic as the Stephens Brothers.

Logston-Stephens won the fiddle competition at the prestigious Galax Old Fiddler's Convention, and

she also plays multiple other stringed instruments. She has also had multiple #1 bluegrass hits, both as part of High Fidelity and as a solo artist.

Joining her onstage for this concert in Paragould will be Stephens. Primarily known as a banjo player, he also plays guitar, mandolin, and bass. He spent seven years as a member of the legendary gospel group Chuck Wagon Gang.

Also performing with Logston-Stephens will be Lauren Price Napier. With her twin sister Leanna, they recorded and toured as the Price Sisters, and they played at Bluegrass Monday in 2025. Lauren is known for her Bill Monroe-style mandolin playing.

Norbert McGettigan III will be playing bass for this concert. He also plays bass in the Larry Stephenson Band and in the Jason Carter Band. Multi-instrumentalist

Kevin Buchanan will also perform in the concert. He has been featured on recordings by Logston-Stephens, and he is an in-demand Nashville-based musician.

Additional information about Logston-Stephens and her Rrinaco project is available online.



Submitted Photo

Rrinaco

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Bingo Night set to benefit youth program

NEA Town Courier

There will be a Bingo Night to support the youth in their presentation of SpongeBob The Musical: Youth Edition.

The event will be held at Pathway Church in Blytheville on Saturday, April 11. Doors will open at 6 p.m., and the games will start at 6:30 p.m.

The cost will be \$2 per card; \$5 per book of five; and \$2 per dauber.

Concessions will be available.

Record

OBITUARIES

TheArtha Weaver

TheArtha Weaver, 62, passed away Saturday, March 14, 2026, at his home. He was born Aug. 19, 1963, in Earle, Ark., to Willie and Severia Weaver. TheArtha was preceded in death by his parents; his sisters, Cleora Blankenship, Henrietta Gant, Leola Hampton and Mary Clark; his brothers, Rev. O.W. Weaver, Willie Weaver Jr., Theodore Carl (T.C.) Weaver and Charles Weaver.

TheArtha attended Blytheville Schools and was active in basketball. His other interests included



TheArtha Weaver

watching sports on television, listening to old school

music like Motown and rock/pop music from the '70s and '80s. He also loved gospel quartets, mainly the Jackson Southernaires.

He is survived by his sisters, Della White, Veria Falls and LeAnna Turner, all of Blytheville; his very close nephews, Carlos Johnson, Larry Clayborn and Rodarius "Roq" Weaver, all of Blytheville; and a host of aunts, nieces, nephews and cousins.

Per his request, there will be no funeral service or visitation. Wolfe Brothers Funeral Home is in charge.

Shirley Jean Robinson-Johnson

Shirley Jean Robinson-Johnson was born on May 24, 1946, in Greenville, Miss., to the late Cleotha Robinson and James Plez. Shirley was preceded in death by her parents; two sisters; two brothers and her beloved daughter, Sandra R. Jenkins, whom she held dear in her heart all the days of her life.

On Tuesday, March 17, 2026, our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, called Mama Shirley home. He sent his angels to escort his daughter from St. Bernards Regional Medical Center in Jonesboro into his eternal presence, granting her the peace and healing she so richly deserved.

Mama Shirley leaves to cherish her loving memory two sons, Samuel Jenkins Jr. of Pensacola, Fla., and Brandon Johnson of Paragould; one daughter,



Shirley Jean Robinson-Johnson

Alvque (Randy) Henderson of Gosnell; five granddaughters, LaShanta Wimbley, Brittany Jenkins, Ranecia Henderson and Raegan Henderson, all of Little Rock, and Sofiya Jackson of Dyersburg, Tenn.; one grandson, Jamal Johnson of Grand Rapids, Mich.; five

great-granddaughters, Bryleigh Caruthers, BryNiah Caruthers, BryAshia Caruthers, LaSandra Caruthers and RayLeigh Caruthers, all of Little Rock; and three great-grandsons, Mikylan Jenkins, Jordan Jenkins and Bryson Dockett, all of Little Rock. She also leaves to cherish her memory one goddaughter, Eureka Cooper; special friends, Doris Jackson and Clara Brooks; and the family of Doris Jackson, whom she lovingly referred to as her second family.

Funeral services will be held Saturday, March 21, at 1 p.m. at Wolfe Brothers Funeral Home Chapel, 634 W. Main Street, Blytheville.

Final arrangements are entrusted to Gwen Smith at Wolfe Brothers Funeral Home & Cremation, 634 W. Main, Blytheville.

Chester Glenn Ashabranner

Chester Glenn Ashabranner, 95, of Manila, passed from this life Wednesday, March 18, 2026, at Monette Manor Nursing Home. Son of the late Herman G. and Lillian Pauline Powers Ashabranner, he was born and raised in Manila. He was a 1948 graduate of Manila High School and went on to earn a Bachelor's Degree from Arkansas Teachers College

in Jonesboro. Chester worked as a commodity grader for the United States Department of Agriculture. He was of the Baptist faith and loved hunting, fishing, and farming. In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by his wife, Francis Ashabranner.

Survivors include four cousins, Gary Kisner (Nora) of Manila, Donnie Ashabranner, John

Ashabranner and Terri Morris.

Funeral service will be 10 a.m. Friday, March 20, in the Howard Funeral Service Chapel in Manila. Burial will follow in the Manila Cemetery. The family will receive visitors on Friday from 9 a.m. until service time at the funeral home. Friends may sign the online guest register at www.HowardFuneralService.com.

Lyle Wayne Niederbrach

Lyle Wayne Niederbrach, 60, went home to be with the Lord on Wednesday, March 11, 2026. He was born on June 19, 1965 in Osceola, Ark., and was a 1983 graduate of Blytheville High School.

He was preceded in death by his beloved wife of 32 years Machele Denise Niederbrach of Blytheville, his sweet mother Nancy Sharon Niederbrach, his feisty granny Edith Niederbrach and his paw paw Arnold Niederbrach.

Lyle is survived by daughter Ashley Nichole Angel; grandchildren, Aiden, Kylie and Leland; sisters-in-law, Monica Gunkel of Gosnell and Shawna Katz of Little Rock; cousins, Darrell White, Patricia Holland, Mickie Coram, Wanda Aldrich, Catherine White and Maryann Niederbrach; and a host of friends that loved him like a brother including



Lyle Wayne Niederbrach

Carol Henry, Ricky Mask, "Uncle Nute" Sheppard, Tommy Wilbanks, Tobe Akins, Jeffrey Smith Akins, Rick and Linda Hamilton, Debra Orr and Jerome Elliott.

Lyle never met a stranger and was always ready with a joke or a funny story every time he saw you. He loved fishing, singing and he especially loved barbecuing meats and feeding everyone

he could. He was kind and generous and would do anything within his power to help people. His life was one of service to his family, friends and community. Periods of employment included Manager of the Dogwood Community Water Association and serving students at the Gosnell School District. But his work helping others extended to serving with the Blytheville Emergency Squad when he was younger, serving as pastor for multiple churches, driving school buses and telling everyone about his Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

A Celebration of Life Service will be held at 2 p.m. Monday, March 23, at the Ruddle Road Church of God in Blytheville. Pastor Danny Pankey and Rev. Tobe Akins will be officiating. Everyone is invited to come and celebrate the life well lived by our friend.

Blytheville Police Report

NEA Town Courier

3-5- An officer was dispatched to Birch Street in reference to a theft of property. The victim told police that Raiteri Raushay Carter entered her home without permission and stole \$380 cash from her purse. She was out of the room and heard someone in the house, and saw a vehicle she knew to usually be driven by Carter.

3-6 - An officer was dispatched to Franklin Street in reference to a rape in progress reported. On arrival, contact was made with the victim/complainant, who said it was false and had been made by her ex-boyfriend, Johndarius Westmoreland, from Mississippi. She informed the officer that she was being harassed by him with calls, emails, and texts with threatening messages. While on the scene, officers observed a call from Westmoreland. Officers advised him to stop contacting her. The affidavit process was explained to the complainant.

3-6 - Shakara Daniels was reported to have made harassing communications toward the victim, who said they were once friends, but she hears from friends that Daniels is speaking badly of her on Facebook, threatening to take everything away from her. The victim said she had been attacked by her in the past and is in fear of what she might do.

3-7 - Nekia Burns was charged with DWI 1st. An officer observed his vehicle sitting in the parking lot at the drive-thru of the McDonald's that appeared to be closed. The officer approached the vehicle and requested a driver's license, vehicle registration, and proof of liability insurance. He only provided a driver's license. The officer detected a strong odor of intoxicants and observed slurred speech from Burns and a failure to answer commands. Burns refused a field sobriety test and a portable breath test. Due to Burn's slurred speech and inability to clearly state where he was or understand his surroundings, the officer requested medical assistance. Pafford EMS was dispatched and transported him to Great River Medical Center. The vehicle was towed. The officer made contact with Burns at the hospital and issued a citation for driving while intoxicated and having no liability insurance. While in the room of the ER, Burns walked to the corner of the room and urinated inside a biohazard container that was present in the room. The incident was observed while I was present in the room. All of these events were captured on the body camera and uploaded as evidence.

3-7 - An officer was dispatched to South Franklin Street in reference to a disturbance involving a suspicious person. He made contact with the victim, who reported that she was inside her residence and observed Arthur Williams standing outside her living room window. When she told him she was calling the police, he fled. The victim was informed that in order for an arrest to be made, the officer would need to observe Williams on her property. He told her he would remain in the area in case Williams returned. Approximately 10 minutes later, Williams reappeared inside the backyard of the residence. Williams was apprehended. It should be noted that Williams was previously trespassed from the residence. Williams was placed under arrest and charged with misdemeanor criminal trespass.

3-9 - An officer received a hit on one of the flock cameras about a stolen plate. The vehicle was located at 1305 East Main at the gas pump. Before the officer pulled in, he saw the driver, later identified as Amanda Mosley, exit the vehicle and walk into the store. The officer went inside and waited until Mosley exited the bathroom. The officer advised her she was not free to go. She was taken outside and told to stand in front of the patrol vehicle. A passenger was also identified. It was confirmed that the license had been stolen. A search of the vehicle did not locate anything illegal. Mosley received three citations for driving on a suspended license, no liability insurance, and theft by receiving. The jail was only taking felony charges for females. The plate was logged into evidence.

3-9 - An officer was dispatched to Hickory Lane in reference to a physical altercation between a mother and daughter. A call from a female advising that a mother assaulted her 18-year-old daughter. The victim said that when she arrived home, her mother, Pamela Hopper, became upset and initiated a verbal altercation that quickly escalated into a physical confrontation. Her mother threw a cell phone at her, striking her in the forehead, and then punched her in the nose, which caused her nose to bleed, and struck her in the face multiple times. Pictures were taken of the injuries while on the scene. The mother had left before the officer's arrival. The victim was advised of the affidavit process.

3-10 - An officer was dispatched to Byrum Road in reference to an elementary student with Marijuana. The juvenile admitted to having it and said he had found it behind the dumpster at his apartment. The Marijuana was taken and logged into evidence. The school contacted his father, and the student was sent home with him. Crimes against children were also contacted.

3-11 - Officers were dispatched to North 2nd Street in reference to a domestic disturbance. The caller said she was asleep inside her boyfriend's apartment when she heard banging on the door. She called her boyfriend, Christopher Reed, who told her to call the police; it was his ex-girlfriend, Calandria Hudson. Hudson broke out a window. She was charged with criminal mischief, 1st degree. It was later found that Reed, the victim, had several warrants through the Mississippi County Sheriff's Office. Reed was transported to the Blytheville Police Department and transferred to the custody of the Mississippi County Sheriff's Office.

3-9 - An officer was dispatched in reference to a domestic disturbance. When the officer arrived, the victim informed him that the offender, Joshua Roger, had left the residence. She said he became

angry, and when she tried to leave, Roger followed her outside and continued the confrontation, and pushed her to the ground. A witness who lived nearby said he was outside and observed the incident. Roger was charged with battery, 3rd degree.

3-7 - An officer was dispatched to East Main Street in reference to a theft/shoplifting complaint from Walmart. The Loss Prevention Officer reported Nathan Allen Trantham had been caught stealing steaks worth \$103.45. The merchandise was recovered. Trantham was issued a citation and was trespassed from the Walmart located at 3700 East Main Street. Trantham acknowledged the trespass warning and was advised that returning to the property could result in additional criminal charges.

3-8 - An officer was dispatched to Riveroaks in reference to a disturbance. The caller/complainant reported that she was at her residence when her daughter, Tamara Handy, began a verbal altercation with her through her bedroom door. The victim said she had threatened to whip her. The eviction process was explained to her, but the caller said she does not think it will work due to her having a key and her brothers letting her in.

3-8 - It was reported that Tykiria Brown and Tayonna Black have been following the victim around and calling her. She said that they tried to jump her for a second time within a week. The victim said she has a video of the incident that was posted to Facebook. The victim has requested a restraining order. Charges are harassment.

3-9 - An officer was dispatched to Lakewood Street in reference to a harassment complaint. The victim reported that Rashead Station has been calling her phone from a "No Caller ID" number. The victim said she had previously told Staton to stop contacting her, but the calls continued. The victim was advised to document the dates and times of the calls and save evidence related to the communications. She was advised of the process to obtain an Order of Protection if the behavior continues.

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Five arrested in Osceola shooting

By Sandra Brand

NEA Town Courier Editor

Five suspects have now been arrested and charged in connection with the Saturday, March 7 shooting at Cielito Lindo which claimed one life and injured three others.

It was around 10:14 p.m., the restaurant bar was crowded. All of a sudden, multiple shots could be heard coming from the front parking lot. Someone knocked over a booth and everyone began to run... many hiding

under tables or searching for the back door. There was screaming... complete chaos.

Moments later it was discovered four people had been shot and rushed by private vehicles to the South Mississippi County Regional Medical Center. Keamar' Jae Wilkins, 19, of Osceola, died from his injuries. Three others received treatment for non-life threatening injuries.

According to Wels Skaggs, Information Officer with the Osceola

Police Department, Glenn Brown, Jr. 28, of Joiner, and Jamarius Darnell Winda, 25, of Osceola, were arrested on Thursday. Dekes Ziyon Slayton, 24, Marcus Tyquan Slayton, 21, and Kani Niree Turner, 30, all of Joiner, were all arrested on Friday.

Brown, Dekes Slayton, Marcus Slayton, and Winda, all appeared before Judge Catherine Dean in Osceola District Court Friday, March 13. Turner appeared in Osceola District Court Monday.

Community EGGstravaganza Easter egg hunt set

NEA Town Courier Editor

The Osceola Parks and Recreation in partnership with Junior Auxiliary of South Mississippi County will host the annual Community EGGstravaganza Easter Egg Hunt.

The hunt will be held at 10 a.m. Saturday, April 4 at the Osceola Sports Complex (behind the community center).

The egg hunt is for ages toddler-11 years old. The Easter Bunny will be available for photographs. Parents/guardians must

take photographs with their own camera or phones.

There will be prize eggs located on all four fields.

Everyone is asked to bring two nonperishable canned goods to benefit the Osceola Food Pantry at the First United Methodist Church in Osceola.



ADVENTIST SEVENTH DAY ADVENTIST Corner South Ruddle & Clear Lake Ave. Bill Painter, Min.	MT. MORIAH BAPTIST 920 S. Lake, 762-5549 Theodus Rucker, Min.	RIDGECREST BAPTIST 816 Delmar, ST. PAUL MISSIONARY BAPTIST 1630 West St. 763-0785 Bennie Washington, Min.	DOGWOOD CHURCH OF CHRIST 532-9413 Fred Baugh, Min.	FAITH PENTECOSTAL Highway 61, Holland Minister James Riley	CONNECTION 4110 Memorial Drive on the Airbase Joe Richardson, Pastor	NEW BEGINNINGS 2515 West Main
ASSEMBLY OF GOD WELLSPRING CHURCH Willow & Division, 763-3328	MT. NEBO MISSIONARY BAPTIST 2224 Marguerite St., 763-9370 Curtis Pointer, Min.	NEW ST. PAUL MISSIONARY BAPTIST 515 E. Sawyer, 763-7332 Clark Phillips III, Min.	EASTSIDE CHURCH OF CHRIST 300 N. Ruddle Rd., 763-6666 Greg Groves, Minister	GOSPEL TEMPLE CHURCH OF GOD IN CHRIST 1108 David Lane, 762-5574 Charles E. Thomas, Min.	DISCIPLES OF THE LORD PENTECOSTAL 620 S. Canal St., Luxora L.W. Bolden, Min.	NEW LIFE CHRISTIAN OUTREACH CENTER 1800 W. McHaney, 532-5871
BAPTIST ARMOREL BAPTIST 4527 N. State Hwy. 137 Spur 763-0059	MT. OLIVE MISSIONARY BAPTIST 361 S. Hickory Lane, Burdette O'Neal Homer, Min.	TRINITY BAPTIST 918 East Main, Michael Welch, Min.	NORTHSIDE CHURCH OF CHRIST Highland at N. Hwy. 61 Bill Drake, Min.	HEART LAND PENTECOSTAL CHURCH OF GOD Corner of Moody & Bevill Bobby McDaniel, Min.	END TIME HOLINESS PROPHETIC MINISTRY 1215 W. McHaney, 776-1344 Sham & Rosemary Maharaj, Min.	NEW MACEDONIA REAL LIFE MINISTRIES 309 West Main Clintell Cothran, Min.
BEACON BAPTIST 205 S. 20th	NEW BETHEL MISSIONARY BAPTIST 1255 S. 9th St., 763-5526 Howard Smith III, Min.	TRUE GOSPEL MISSIONARY BAPTIST 1604 West Rose, 838-7933 Carl Rogers, Min.	SOUTHSIDE CHURCH OF CHRIST 1213 South Franklin, 762-1916	HOLY TEMPLE CHURCH OF GOD IN CHRIST 1024 Thompson St. Henry Brown, Min.	EVANGELISTIC CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST 1012 South 15th, 838-1090 Johnny Brown, Min.	OPEN DOOR HOUSE OF PRAYER 705 Harrison, 763-7441 Henry Mays, Min.
BETHANY BAPTIST Gosnell Gary Hyde, Min.	NEW FAITH BAPTIST 712 Linda St., 763-2469 Rev. Laddie Whaley	WEST END MISSIONARY BAPTIST Beale and West Rose Streets. 623-8786 Rev. Andrew Mitchell	EPISCOPAL ST. STEPHEN'S EPISCOPAL 1512 Willow St., 763-8646 Scott Trotter, Vicar	HUFFMAN CHURCH OF GOD Danny Lacer, Min.	FRONTLINE FAMILY OUTREACH MINISTRIES 116 W. Main, 776-0579	OPERATION LIFELINE OUTREACH MINISTRIES & SERVICES Blytheville, AR 72315 Evangelist W.B. Chapple 800-635-0128
Broadway Baptist Church 607 Broadway Sunday School @ 10 Church @ 11.	NEW HOPE MISSIONARY BAPTIST Yarbro, Charles Jackson, Min.	YARBRO BAPTIST 3137 E. State Hwy. 150 Bro. Rick Robbins	EVANGELISTIC UNITY EVANGELISTIC 117 East Plaza Willie Branch, Min.	NEHEMIAH TEMPLE CHURCH OF GOD IN CHRIST 922 S. 2nd St. & McHaney 763-1011 - D.L. Coms, Min.	GOD'S HOLY TEMPLE 2065 S. Division R. Crenshaw, Min.	PRINCE OF PEACE 501 E. McHaney Timothy J. Rogers, Min.
CLEAR LAKE BAPTIST 3700 East State Hwy. 148	NEW IMMANUAL MISSIONARY BAPTIST 1425 S. Elm St. Burton Furlow, Min.	CATHOLIC IMMACULATE CONCEPTION 1301 West Main St. Father Francis Madanu	JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES KINGDOM HALL OF JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES 1305 E. Moultrie St., 763-1382	NEW LIFE PENTECOSTAL 109 North 2nd	GOS LIGHTHOUSE Lilly and Vine, 763-6212 J.C. Seward, Min.	ST. MARK FULL GOSPEL OUTREACH Pastor Dr. R. Hopkins Asst. Pastory Larry Mosley
COLERIDGE BAPTIST 2567 N. County Rd. 535, 763-3480	NEW JERUSALEM MISSIONARY BAPTIST East and Mitchell Sts., 763-6858 James Jones, Pastor	CHRISTIAN ABUNDANT LIFE CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP 1712 S. Division Ronald & Tracy Farmer, Mins.	LUTHERAN FIRST LUTHERAN Sixth and Walnut Sts., 763-6339	REVIVAL CENTER 321 South Lake St., 763-2808 Charles Warman, Min.	GRACE LIFE 1501 E. Moultrie Ronnie Hayse, Min.	ST. MATTHEWS SPIRITUAL 1917 W. Vine Pastor Sherry Kennedy
DELL BAPTIST Corner of Main & School St.	NEW LIBERTY BAPTIST U.S. Hwy. 61, Bro. Mike Gonzales	CHRIST FAMILY CHRISTIAN 105 West Main Fred Wright, Min.	METHODIST BETHEL AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL 111 W. Coleridge Alverniece Clark, Min.	STEVENSON FAITH TEMPLE CHURCH OF GOD IN CHRIST R.A. Stevenson, Min.	GREATER DIMENSIONS WORLD OUTREACH MINISTRIES (EAST) 700 S. Lake St. (corner of Lake and Poplar) Apostle C.A. Turner Sr.	THE CHURCH OF THE LIVING GOD 304 Sawyer Curtis Smith, Min.
EMMANUEL BAPTIST 4315 N. County Road 535 Half Moon • 870-763-8343 Bill Emmerling, Pastor	NEW LIFE BAPTIST TEMPLE 109 N. Pecan, Osceola Marion D. Hall, Min.	CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP BIBLE 1012 S. 15th St. Eddie Echols, Min.	CARTER TEMPLE CME 8th and Rosamonds Sts., 763-6441 Freeman McKindra Jr., Min.	PRESBYTERIAN FIRST PRESBYTERIAN Corner of 10th & Highland 763-3126 Randy Jumper, Min.	GREATER JEREMIAH SPIRITUAL 701 South Lake R. Roberson, Min.	THE MIDWAY CHURCH OF GOD Turn off I-55 at Hwy. 140 West Go West approx. 7 miles Terry Dennis, Min.
FAIRVIEW BAPTIST 1100 North Franklin, 763-5824 Mike Silvey, Min.	NEW LIFE/KOREAN GOSNELL BAPTIST 603 Hwy. 181 Seunghwa Lim, Min.	FAITH & GLORY CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP 1510 Kari Lane, 870-824-2968 Adron Poole, Pastor	FIRST CHRISTIAN (DISCIPLES OF CHRIST) 600 West Main St., 762-2448	OTHER ABUNDANT LIFE CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP 1712 S. Division Levi & Annette Conleg, Mins.	HARVEST TIME TABERNACLE 5376 East State, Hwy. 137 763-3543 Terri Brassfield, Min.	THE NAKED TRUTH 639 Mississippi Ave. M. Logan, Min.
FIRST BAPTIST 715 West Walnut St., 762-2432 Pastor: Don Edmiston	NEW ST. JOHN 629 Mississippi Rev. Scott Hopkins	GREATER FAITH CHRISTIAN 700 South Lake St. 762-2588 Kirby Massey, Min.	MORMON CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS 1308 Mockingbird Lane, 763-2808	APOSTOLIC TABERNACLE 1510 Kari Lane, 763-7024 Jason Putman, Min.	HOLY TABERNACLE CHURCH OF THE LORD JESUS 200 South Lake Street, 763-1540 Elder John Blair, Min.	THE REAL TRUTH MINISTRIES Willie Warren, Min.
FIRST GENERAL BAPTIST Howard & Marguerite Streets Earl Gipson, Min.	NEW MT. OLIVE BAPTIST 534 Maple 762-2732 Douglas Echols, Sr., Min.	JEREMIAS CHRISTIAN SPIRITUAL Coleridge St.	NAZARENE FIRST CHURCH OF THE NAZARENE 112 East Main St., 762-2048 Charles Privett., Min.	BIBLE MISSIONARY 620 Park Ave., 763-7116 Robert Christian, Min.	HOUSE OF PRAISES THE BODY OF JESUS CHRIST MINISTRIES 1075 S. Hwy. 61, 762-1855 Jerry Perkins, Min.	UNITED SPIRITUAL 2032 West Street, 776-1387 John Murphy, Min.
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Community

Delta Gateway Museum is hosting Smart Snack program

NEA Town Courier

Delta Gateway Museum in Blytheville is hosting activities every Tuesday and Thursday afternoons from 3:30-4:30 p.m.

The Smart Snacks program allows young people to learn, explore,

and grow. The Smart Snacks program provides a healthy snack and an educational worksheet at each visit. The program is fun and educational.

Delta Gateway Museum is located at 210 West Main Street, Blytheville.

Manila FFA dinner/ auction date announced

NEA Town Courier

Manila High School FFA auction/dinner will be held on Saturday, May 2. Dinner will be at 5 p.m., and the auction will begin at 6 p.m.

The event will be held in the Manila High School Volleyball gymnasium. The cost is \$10 at the door.

There will be a variety of items to be auctioned to benefit the FFA program.

Calendar of Events

Friday, March 27:

–The Leachville Library will hold storytime at 1 p.m.

Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, March 27. 28. 29 and April 5:

–Trinity Baptist Church in Blytheville, 918 East Main Street, will host their Passion Play at 7 nightly. The final presentation will be held on Easter Sunday, April 5, at 7 p.m. The public is invited.

Saturday, March 28:

–The Manila Library will have storytime at 11 a.m.

–Lake City will host the annual Easter Egg hunt at the Wayne “Biscuit” Park on Nash Street. The hunt will begin at 10 a.m. Age divisions will include 0-2; 3-5; 6-8; 9-13. This year, there is a sensory-friendly hunt area for youth ages 0-6 and 7-13.

Monday, March 30:

–The Wilson Library will have storytime at 3:30 p.m.

Tuesday, March 31:

–Dinosaur-themed Legos at the Osceola Library at 6 p.m.

Saturday, April 4:

–The annual Adams Estate Easter Egg Hunt will be held to benefit the Leachville Food Pantry. Gates will open at 9:30 a.m. The egg hunt will begin at 10:30 a.m. A donation of \$10 per car or a non-perishable food donation is suggested.

– Blytheville City Parks will hold the 2026 Easter Egg Hunt on April 4 at Williams Park. The event will be from noon-1 p.m. It is open to all children and families. Free Easter buckets on site. There will be over 600 eggs with special golden eggs to find. For more information, contact Darrius Nichols, park director, at 870-776-6600, dnichols@cityofblytheville.com.

– The annual Caraway

Easter Egg Hunt will be held at noon at the city park. The egg hunt will be followed by a fellowship time sponsored by the Caraway First Baptist Church.

– The Big Hunt will be held at Wellspring Church, 600 North Division Street in Blytheville. The event will be from 11 a.m.-2 p.m. with laser tag, face painting, egg hunt, prizes, hot dogs, drinks, cotton candy, and inflatables, all free.

–St. Mark Full Gospel Church, 240 Lockard Street, Blytheville, will host an Easter Egg hunt beginning at 1 p.m. Everyone is invited.

Thursday, April 9:

–The Mississippi County Retired School Personnel will meet at noon in Room 101 at Arkansas Northeastern College. The program will be on Motivation.

Saturday, April 18:

–The seventh annual Blazin’ BBQ Festival and car show downtown in Manila. There will be entertainment, friendly competition, lots of barbecue, games, and more. The festival is hosted by the Manila Volunteer Fire Department.

Saturday, May 2:

–Manila High School FFA auction/dinner will be held on Saturday, May 2. Dinner will be at 5 p.m., and the auction will begin at 6 p.m. The event will be held in the Manila High School Volleyball gymnasium. The cost is \$10 at the door.

–The Caraway Fishing Rodeo will be held from 8-11 a.m. at the pond. It is open to children up to 16 years old from 8- 9:30 a.m. and from 9:30-11 a.m. for all ages.

Saturday, May 16:

–Leachville Cemetery clean-up, 8 a.m.

First United Methodist Church celebrates 75th anniversary

NEA Town Courier

BLYTHEVILLE — Blytheville First United Methodist Church welcomed Bishop Laura Merrill on Sunday as she preached during the church’s 10:55 a.m. worship service in celebration of the 75th anniversary of the dedication of the church sanctuary.

Bishop Merrill delivered a meaningful message centered on treating others with kindness and remembering that there is always room at the table for everyone. Her sermon encouraged those in attendance to continue living out the church’s mission of hospitality, compassion, and inclusion in their daily lives.

Prior to the worship service, the church hosted an open house in the church parlor from 9:30–10:30 a.m., where Bishop Merrill greeted members of the congregation and visitors from the community. The time of fellowship allowed many to visit with the bishop and celebrate this

important milestone in the life of the church.

“Celebrating the 75th anniversary of the dedication of our sanctuary was a meaningful moment for our congregation,” said Dr. Tandy Hanson, pastor of Blytheville First United Methodist Church. “We were grateful to have Bishop Merrill with us to share such an encouraging message about kindness and about making sure everyone knows there is a place for them in the life of the church.”

The service and anniversary celebration marked a special moment for the congregation as they reflected on 75 years of worship, ministry, and service within the sanctuary.

Blytheville First United Methodist Church is located at 701 West Main Street in Blytheville and continues to serve the community through worship, outreach, and fellowship opportunities for people of all ages.



Submitted Photo

Bishop Laura Merrill and Blytheville First United Methodist pastor Dr. Tandy Hanson.

REFLECTIONS

Are you a giver?

Luke 6:38

Are you a giver? Do you practice giving in your daily life? I think I can honestly say that I am a giver. I call it “investing”.

I learned about real giving from my parents. As a young girl, I had the opportunity to see my Mom and Dad do things for other people all the time. It was as much a part of their lives as breathing. Were they “rich” according to society’s definition? No. But what they DID have, they had no problem sharing. When they saw a need, they did what they could to meet it. They never made a “show” of it. Most of the time, it was done in secret, and the person never



Terri Brassfield
Minister of HIS Ministries

knew who had blessed them.

I believe when you really love the Lord, you won’t have a problem with serving...

with giving. When God’s love resides in your heart, THAT type of love produces a “giver”.

Luke 6:38 says that when we give, it will be given back; good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over. Many times I have experienced such a blessing from the Lord. I knew it was coming directly from Him. He may have used people as His “carrier”, but through those people, God so graciously met my need... time after time.

When I purposely practice giving, then I am falling under God’s principle of giving and receiving. I have NEVER been able to “out-give” God. There’s never been a time that I’ve

given that God has not taken care of me when I was the one in need.

Investing in Godly principles has a higher rate of interest! You receive back much more than you give! Pressed down, shaken together, and running over! You just can’t beat THAT return!

Have you “given” lately? It’s not always about money. It’s about time, love, care, smiles, hugs, encouragement, sharing from your supply, etc.

The rate of GOD’S return can’t be beat...but it’s the FEELING in your spirit and heart that’s so wonderful. Don’t forget to be a “giver”... then get ready to receive!

Area Easter Egg hunts announced

NEA Town Courier

Sunday, March 22:

–Blytheville First United Methodist Church will hold an Easter Egg hunt with fun, fellowship, activities, and crafts for children of all ages from 3-5 p.m. The schedule for the egg hunt will be toddlers (ages 2-4), 3-3:20 p.m.; ages 5-7, 3:30-3:50 p.m.; and ages 8-12, 4-4:20 p.m. The church is located at 701 West Main Street in Blytheville. Everyone is welcome.

Saturday, March 28:

–Lake City will host the annual Easter Egg hunt at the Wayne “Biscuit” Park on Nash Street. The hunt will begin at 10 a.m. Age divisions will include 0-2; 3-5; 6-8; 9-13. This year, there is a

sensory-friendly hunt area for youth ages 0-6 and 7-13. Bicycles for prize eggs were donated by Medic One.

Saturday, April 4:

– Blytheville City Parks will hold the 2026 Easter Egg Hunt on April 4 at Williams Park. The event will be from noon to 1 p.m. It is open to all children and families. Free Easter buckets on site. There will be more than 600 eggs with special golden eggs to find. For more information, contact Darrius Nichols, park director, at 870-776-6600, dnichols@cityofblytheville.com.

–The annual Adams Estate Easter Egg Hunt in Leachville will be held to benefit the Leachville Food Pantry. Gates will open at 9:30 a.m. The egg hunt will begin at 10:30 a.m. A donation

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–St. Mark Full Gospel Church, 240 Lockard Street, Blytheville, will host an Easter Egg hunt starting at 1 p.m. Everyone is invited.

BUFFALO ISLAND DEVOTIONAL PAGE

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"NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING"

The City Council of the City of Gosnell, Arkansas will hold a public hearing on April 14, 2026 at 5:15 p.m. at Gosnell City Hall (201 S. Airbase Highway) regarding the rezoning from R-1 to C-1 Bethany Subdivision, legally described as:

Lots Four (4), Five (5), Six (6), and Thirteen (13), Block Two (2), of the Plat of the Replat of a Subdivision of lots in the Northeast Quarter (NE ¼) of the Northeast Quarter (NE ¼) of Section Two (2), Township Fifteen (15) North, Range Ten (10) East, according to survey by W. D. Cobb, dated August 17, 1986, and recorded in Plat Book 3, Page 46, at Blytheville, Arkansas.

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For more information, email Juanita Medlin at juanita.medlin@mcaeoc.org or kim.edwards@mcaeoc.org call 870-776-1054. Applications may be picked up at the Central Office, located at 1400 N. Division St in Blytheville, AR. Applications will be accepted until March 27, 2026.

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Week of March 16, 2026

Weekend Entertainment

Doggie wrote the phone number on a piece of paper, but it was torn. Find the place for all the fragments and restore note.

ACROSS

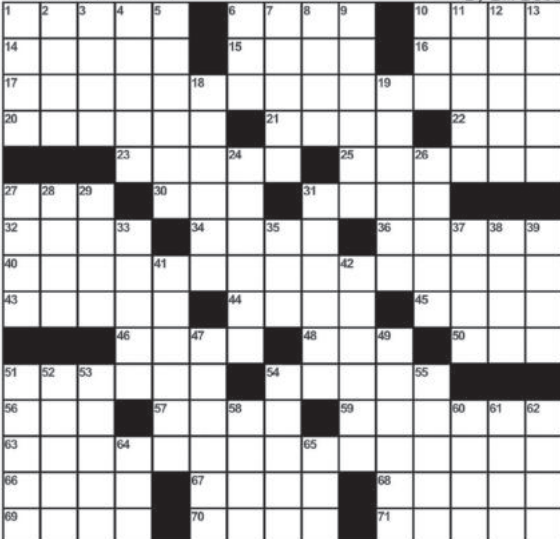
- 1) Seek permission for
- 6) Black, in poesy
- 10) Chef's secret ingredient
- 14) Some Biblical pronouns
- 15) Battering wind
- 16) Eye feature
- 17) Expecting illness?
- 20) Title for Eva Peron
- 21) A tiny amount
- 22) Maiden-name indicator
- 23) Customary ceremonies
- 25) Reduced in intensity
- 27) What have you, briefly
- 30) Moo ___ (Chinese dish)
- 31) Icky buildup
- 32) Suite section
- 34) Callas solo
- 36) Simple newsstand
- 40) Daily nap
- 43) Soft leather
- 44) Brownish purple
- 45) ___ Bator, Mongolia
- 46) Napoleon's place of exile
- 48) ___ and abet
- 50) Mine material
- 51) Aloha locale
- 54) "Tomorrow" musical
- 56) "Aladdin" prince
- 57) Check out groceries
- 59) Intertwine, as shoestrings
- 63) Mae West's first movie
- 66) Repeated sound
- 67) Bulldoze, in Great Britain
- 68) Cultural value system
- 69) Collectors' goals
- 70) ___ Mawr, Pa.
- 71) Come to, as a conclusion

DOWN

- 1) Money machines
- 2) Moccasin, for one
- 3) Tighten up type
- 4) Pavarotti, for one
- 5) Egyptian god of fertility
- 6) Breakfast staple
- 7) Foundation
- 8) Hodgepodge
- 9) Bee's attraction
- 10) Attila, to his wife?
- 11) Big occasion
- 12) Observe again
- 13) "___ on a true story!"
- 18) Revolutionary Hale
- 19) Elaborate Japanese drama
- 24) Large moon of Jupiter
- 26) "Arrivederci" relative
- 27) Important historic times
- 28) Health-food store staple
- 29) Dove shelter
- 31) High-kicking dance
- 33) Euripides drama
- 35) Last poker bet, sometimes
- 37) Christiania, now
- 38) "A ___ Is Born"
- 39) "Batman" cartoonist
- 41) Advertise for new tenants
- 42) Type of fishing boat
- 47) Antacid, for short
- 49) Banquet
- 51) Fruit of the Loom competitor
- 52) "The Brady Bunch" housekeeper
- 53) British isle
- 54) Anxious
- 55) Glitterati, e.g.
- 58) "It's ___ cry from ..."
- 60) Mideast muck-a-muck (var.)
- 61) Nattily dressed
- 62) Make impressions in stone
- 64) Three words from Santa
- 65) Suffix for "velvet"

IT'S A GOOD DAY

By Bill Bobb



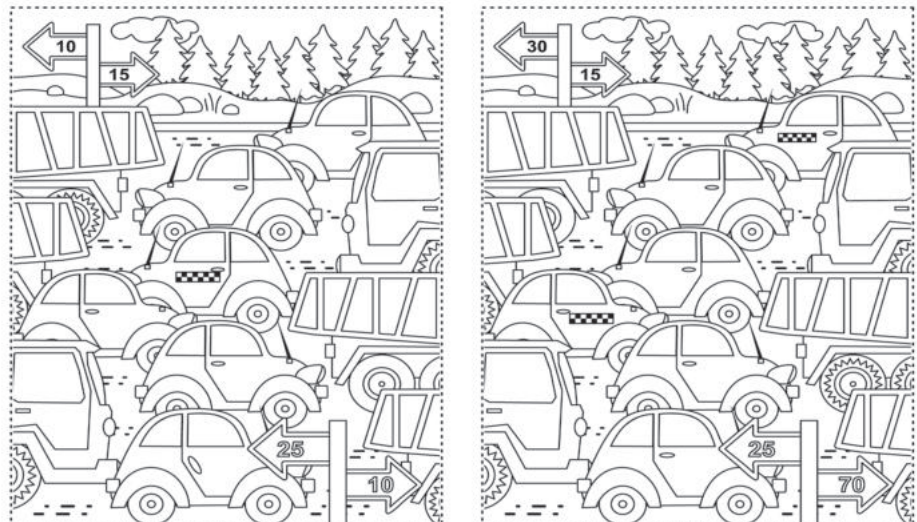
Crossword

FURRY FRIENDS WORD SEARCH CHALLENGE

INSTRUCTIONS: FIND THE 25 WORDS RELATED TO PETS HIDDEN IN THE GRID. WORDS CAN BE FOUND IN 4 MAIN DIRECTIONAL STYLES: TOP TO BOTTOM, LEFT TO RIGHT, TOP LEFT TO BOTTOM RIGHT, AND TOP RIGHT TO BOTTOM LEFT. CIRCLE OR HIGHLIGHT EACH WORD AS YOU FIND IT.

C	T	T	U	R	K	E	Y	N	Z	I	G	M	K	B	CHICKEN
H	I	W	I	C	M	C	Y	K	V	W	O	E	Y	C	GUINEAPIG
I	Q	O	O	S	X	O	A	I	A	P	A	A	A	F	GOLDFISH
C	Y	R	K	G	X	D	X	T	Z	N	T	L	W	U	ROOSTER
K	E	G	G	S	O	R	Q	T	S	D	F	I	G	Y	HAMSTER
E	D	S	K	U	P	L	T	E	G	Z	O	X	Z	O	FERRET
N	K	R	E	K	I	A	D	N	S	Y	T	G	F	H	KITTEN
D	Q	O	G	U	R	N	R	F	C	B	T	X	A	M	TURKEY
G	M	O	P	L	C	R	E	R	I	H	O	M	C	X	PARROT
S	W	S	K	U	I	H	D	A	O	S	S	A	Q	T	TURTLE
H	F	T	M	J	P	Z	J	R	P	T	H	Y	I	W	RABBIT
E	F	E	X	M	W	P	S	D	E	I	X	C	A	J	SHEEP
E	H	R	K	H	Q	E	Y	R	U	N	G	B	A	R	MOUSE
P	R	Q	L	T	S	D	M	Q	B	C	B	L	A	T	PUPPY
S	I	O	L	W	F	E	R	R	E	T	K	B	E	Z	HORSE
C	P	T	U	R	T	L	E	Y	B	G	B	J	V	K	GOAT
V	O	P	B	P	C	Y	Y	R	R	I	D	W	E	B	FISH
I	N	F	I	S	H	G	T	I	T	Y	U	R	M	D	CALF
S	Y	G	R	E	D	K	N	M	O	U	S	E	A	D	DUCK
M	M	Y	D	L	C	O	H	T	C	C	O	W	C	M	BIRD

Find the ten differences between the two pictures.



Community

Blytheville expo connects 400 students from 14 schools with area employers

By Joseph Fondren
NEA Town Courier

BLYTHEVILLE— The Allied Tech Building on the campus of Arkansas Northeastern College (ANC) was packed on Wednesday morning. Students from 14 Northeast Arkansas high schools met with business representatives from every career field.

According to Be Pro Be Proud, approximately 400 students were in attendance from schools: Brookland,

Gosnell, Osceola, ANC, Forrest City, Blytheville, Midland, Wynne, Armored, Bay, Manila, Marion, Rivercrest, and Riverside.

Employers on hand were Arkansas Air National Guard; Arkansas Army National Guard; Arkansas National Guard- Military and Family Readiness; Arkansas Elite Welding Academy; Arkansas State University- Newport; Arkansas Trucking Association; Best Manufacturing, Inc.; Big

River Steel; Gowan Milling Blytheville, LLC.; Heavy Equipment Operating Academy; Lexicon; Nucor Steel Arkansas, Riceland Foods, Inc.; Riggs CAT; Ritter Communications; SMS Group; Stribling Equipment; and Tenaris Hickman.

The schools broke into two sessions — 9:30 a.m.-11:30 a.m. and noon-2 p.m. — where they met with the businesses. After the career expo, some interviews were completed.



Students walk around career expo at Be Pro Be Proud Draft Day.



Students speak with the Army National Guard.



People speak with Mallory Haddock with Gowan Milling Blytheville, LLC.



Students speak with Nucor representatives and play Bingo at the Nucor Steel Arkansas booth.



Students stop at different employers during Be Pro Be Proud Draft Day.



Students get to sit in a helicopter.



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If you have Medicare and Medicaid, limited income, recently lost employer coverage, are turning 65, or you’ve just moved, you may be eligible for one of many qualifying events that allow you to enroll now.

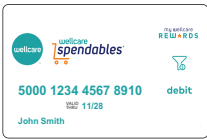
You may be eligible for a Wellcare Dual Eligible Special Needs Plan (D-SNP). Come learn about Wellcare Medicare Advantage plans you can count on.

- & \$0 monthly plan premium
- & Prescription drug coverage
- & Dental coverage
- & Vision coverage
- & Hearing coverage
- & The Wellcare Spendables® debit card with a monthly allowance to use for over-the-counter health items and dental, vision and hearing costs — and a balance that rolls over so you never lose a cent as long as you have the Wellcare plan!
- & Dario: A self-guided digital program to focus on overall well-being and provide access to social support resources.

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Benefits and allowance amounts vary by plan. Please call for more details. Allowance amounts cannot be combined with other benefit allowances which may be on the prepaid card. Limitations and restrictions may apply.

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