

The Eagle Democrat

SINCE 1885

YOUR HOMETOWN PAPER

138th Year

Warren, Arkansas, Wednesday, January 25, 2023

No.30



Mayor Gregg Reep signed the "National Day of Racial Healing Proclamation". Pictured left to right: Warren City Clerk Janice Nelson, Mayor Gregg Reep, and administrative assistant Charlotte Tenner-Brown.

Warren Mayor signs National Day of Racial Healing Proclamation

Warren Mayor Gregg Reep proclaimed January 17, 2023 as National Day of Racial Healing. The proclamation was signed by Mayor Reep.

The proclamation signed by the mayor states the following:

"WHEREAS: Just like those who came before us, it is our duty to protect the children of the City of Warren, Arkansas and maintain communities in which they may all be given the opportunity to succeed; and

WHEREAS: We must all work earnestly to create courageous and supportive environments that acknowledge the traumatic past; promote the healing of the wounds created by racial, ethnic, and religious bias; and build and equitable and must society so that all of Warren's children can thrive in nurturing

environments that do not violate their safety, dignity, and humanity; and

WHEREAS: Every single person can have the opportunity to exhibit and act of kindness to make a simple change within themselves that can have a profound effect on an entire society; and

WHEREAS: If we all dedicate ourselves to the principles of truth, racial healing, and transformation, we can all bring about the necessary changes in thinking and behavior that will propel this great City of Warren, Arkansas forward as a unified force where racial biases will become a thing of the past; and

WHEREAS: Racial healing is a vital and crucial commitment to the education, social, mental, and overall, well-being of all residents in the City

of Warren, particularly children; and

WHEREAS: The City of Warren, in conjunction with others throughout the State of Arkansas, and the United States of America, acknowledges January 17, 2023 as the "National Day of Racial Healing in the City of Warren," and urges all citizens to promote truth, racial healing and transformation in the ways that are best suited for them individually, as a means to working together to ensure the best quality of life for every child.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, R. Gregg Reep, Mayor of Warren, Arkansas do hereby proclaim January 17, 2023, as "NATIONAL DAY OF RACIAL HEALING 2022 IN THE CITY OF WARREN, ARKANSAS".

Hermitage School District approves server agreement

The Hermitage School Board met for their first meeting of the year on Monday, January 9 at the Hermitage High School Cafeteria.

The Barracuda Back-up Server and Service agreement was presented by Nevada Johnson. The agreement includes \$6,000 up front and \$5,000 yearly. A motion was made to approve and accept the agreement. The school board voted to approve the motion.

Superintendent Dr. Tracy Tucker updated the school board on School Choice applications and procedures.

She also reported on training hours for the board members. A motion was made and approved to accept the training hours for the board members.

The school board reviewed a request for a Winter Formal for students in grades seventh through ninth grade. The school board approved the request for a Winter Formal.

The school board approved the Arkansas School Board Association revisions to the school board policy after it was reviewed.

Jamie Corker submitted a letter of resignation to the

school board. The letter of resignation was accepted by the school board.

Jade Huitt and Rosalynda Ellis were hired as prom sponsors.

A recommendation was made to hire JT Best for two hours daily and to be paid on an hourly basis as a maintenance worker at the school district. The recommendation was approved.

The next school board meeting will be at 6 p.m. on Monday, February 13 at the Hermitage High School Cafeteria. The meeting is open to the public.

Rep. Barker speaks at quorum court meeting

By Zach Killian

State Representative Sonia Barker attended the Bradley County Quorum Court meeting on Tuesday, January 17. She represents District 96 which includes parts of Bradley County. She spoke before the quorum court about her background. She and her family live in Smackover. She was a teacher for over 30 years. She is serving her fourth time as legislator.

She mentioned she served on the education committee and the transportation committee. She is also on the Joint Audit and the Joint Energy Board. She told the quorum court she carried the Fairness in Women's Sports Act in the state.

Leslie Huitt, CEO of the Bradley County Medical Center, presented her report to the quorum court. She said it's a hard time for hospitals. She said reimbursements should increase next year. She also stated she met with the USDA and applied for a \$1 million grant to repair the roof of the hospital. If the application is accepted, the hospital will pay the rest of the \$650,000 for the repairs.

Justice of the Peace Pat Morman said the ambulance services had improved. Huitt said the ambulance service has been responsive to their requests.

It was also reported that the Bradley County Medical Center Board appointee French Wynne III would fill Kenneth McDougald's position on the board. The hospital board still has one more vacancy to be filled.

Bradley County Judge Klay McKinney reported there was



Rep. Sonia Barker was the guest speaker at the Bradley County Quorum Court meeting.

eight inches of flooding in the last storm. The county used 278 loads of gravel to repair the roads in the county.

The courthouse had new flooring and carpet installed.

The judge stated the county received a \$7,200 grant to refurbish the bell tower clock. Completion is said to be done in the next few weeks. He reported the total cost for the bell tower renovation project was \$495,074. Much of the funding came from grants.

Judge McKinney was chosen to represent southeast Arkansas on the Association of Arkansas Counties board.

Judge McKinney also

reported the county has seen an "epidemic" of stolen street signs since Christmas break. About 30 street signs had been stolen including Stop signs on county roads. He said it costs the county money to replace the signs. He warned if anyone is caught stealing signs, there would be consequences. The judge stated cameras would be installed to catch anyone stealing signs.

The next quorum court meeting will be at 6 p.m. on Tuesday, February 21. The meeting will be at the Bradley County Courthouse in the courtroom. The meeting is open to the public.

New market opens downtown



The Bradley County Chamber of Commerce held a ribbon cutting ceremony and grand opening for the new store, The Main Street Market, on Saturday, January 21. The new store is located at 223 South Main Street in Warren. Fernando and Maria Sedano are the owners of The Main Street Market.

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Hermitage receives grant for street overlays

The Hermitage City Council met on Thursday for the first meeting of the year. It was also the first meeting with new mayor Matt Cathey.

It was reported the overlaying of the streets in Hermitage totaled about \$490,000. The city received a grant for \$300,000. Not all

streets would be worked on. Mayor Cathey said the street repairs would start on the roads close to the Hermitage Schools.

It was also reported the wells stopped reading. The city went with Ferguson Waterworks to fix the issue. City Attorney James

Hamilton said they were still waiting to close on the sewer project.

The city council approved Mayor Cathey to be on the bank lockboxes and have former mayor Tonya Kendrick's name off the lockboxes.

There were no fires reported. The fire department was

working on pump trucks.

It was reported the water samples sent to the Arkansas Department of Health passed.

The next city council meeting will be at 6 p.m. on Thursday, February 23. The meeting will be held at the Hermitage Community Center.

Re-New-ing Edinburg group discusses upcoming events

Special to The Eagle

President Tolano welcomed those present and called the meeting to order. Minutes of the previous meeting were emailed and passed out to those present. Motion was made by Larry Waldrop, seconded by Brenda Triplett. Motion passed.

Roger McClellan passed out the financial statement and after a general discussion with no questions, it will be filed for audit.

Martha advised the group she had attended a Kickstart Cleveland County banquet planning committee meeting on January 12 for the banquet scheduled for February 24 at the Cleveland County Fairgrounds. The Volunteer of the Year for each Kickstart group will be recognized plus the meal will be catered by Big Reds. Tickets are \$20 per person. The guest speaker has not been determined, however,

the theme will be "Cleveland County's 150th Anniversary". Each Kickstart group is requested to provide pictures for a slide show plus put together a table display showing 2022 activities.

Roger thanked former county judge Melody Spears for supporting the county's new purple heart designation by having road signs placed on state highways throughout the county.

The Christmas photo winners were Annette Luff 1st place, Jeanna Pennington 2nd place and Jackie Harton 3rd place. Thanks to everyone who participated.

Trenna Kemp had been contacted by Stacey Waltz with the Cleveland County Community Theater concerning an Ole Time Jamboree dinner theater featuring entertainment by Shae Carson on February 28. Group members were contacted and agreed to

hold the jamboree rather than the game night scheduled for that night. Tickets will be \$20. A workday is scheduled for January 20 at 10 a.m., January 26 and January 27 at 9:00 am at the NE Community Center.

Melody Spears informed the group that a community center fundraiser is scheduled for March 11 at 5:00 p.m. and either pit barbecue or fish will be served.

Motion was made by Don Triplett, seconded by Brenda Triplett, to purchase a new electric stove for the community center for \$599 plus tax. One of the two stoves at the center was previously owned when installed and has had numerous issues over the last few years. With the jamboree scheduled January 28, an additional stove is needed to prepare the meal. Motion passed.

Larry Waldrop mentioned

to members that Christmas décor storage is becoming an issue as additional items are added each year. More storage will be necessary in the upcoming years.

The re-New-ing Edinburg group also sponsored a retirement reception honoring Judges Gary & Melody Spears and their 16 combined years of service to Cleveland County at the Cleveland County Courthouse on December 28.

Also, approximately 110 children (200 adults) visited with Santa at the New Edinburg Community Center December 16 and 17 where re-New-ing Edinburg served hot chocolate and cookies plus gave each family attending a Christmas ornament.

Motion was made by Patricia McClellan, seconded by Brenda Triplett, to adjourn. The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, February 21. Motion passed.

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All alone by the veranda railing,
teardrops drenching the branches,
although her face is unadorned,
her old charms remain.
Behind the locked gate,
on a rainy night,
how she is filled with sadness.
How differently she looked
bathed in golden waves
of moonlight, before the darkness fell.

Chinese poet Qian Xuan (1280)

Source: www.metmuseum.org

News Briefs

- **St. James A.M.E. Church in Warren** will host the 29th Annual MLK Banquet at 5 p.m. on Saturday, January 28. Banquet tickets are \$15. The keynote speaker is Bishop Chester L. Thompson, senior pastor of Zion Hill Baptist Church in Camden. The 2023 MLK Honorees are: Candace Jones Jackson, Katrina Moore, Doris Penister Jordon, Andrew Tolbert, Patricia Thomas, and Tiffany Clifton.

- **The BCEDC will have their annual meeting** at 5:30 p.m. on Monday, January 30 at Immanuel Baptist Church Life Center.

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With Scott Quimby

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PINK TOMATO FESTIVAL T-SHIRT LOGO CONTEST

Here is your chance to use your artistic ability for the greater good!

Contest is now open to design the official logo for the 2023 67th annual Bradley County Pink Tomato Festival.

See www.pinktomatofestival.com/contest-rules/ for more information.

Deadline for submissions has been extended to 4 pm February 10th, 2023.

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The EAGLE Democrat

Editorial

Arkansas History Minute

by
Dr. Kenneth Bridges



Few people today outside fans of Rhythm and Blues may remember Albert King, but no one can listen for long to the great music acts since the 1950s without hearing his influence. The Arkansas blues legend was a pioneer for modern music.

Albert King was born Albert King Nelson in Indianola, Mississippi, in 1923 to a family of migrant farm workers. He was one of thirteen children. When he was still very young, the family moved near Forrest City, Arkansas, where he would grow up and develop his musical talents.

Like many other southern musicians, he got his greatest musical education at church. Growing up in the 1930s, his family would perform as part of a gospel group at their local church and some neighboring ones. His father enjoyed playing the guitar, and the future blues artist soon taught himself how to play the instrument. According to one story, he bought his first guitar for \$1.25. As he was left-handed, he learned to play the right-handed instrument upside-down, eventually becoming one of his trademarks.

In the 1940s, he began playing in Osceola and soon joined a band called In the Groove Boys. As his career developed, he would soon go by "Albert King" as a stage name. In the early 1950s, he was playing in small clubs and with bands in the Chicago area, occasionally recording. He returned to St. Louis in the latter part of the 1950s, recording "I'm A Lonely Man" in 1959, and his most popular hit, "Don't Throw Your Love on Me Too Strong," which hit #14 on the R&B charts in 1961. The Big Blues, one of his best-selling albums, was released in 1962.

When he came to Memphis in 1966, he signed with Stax Records, which gave him an even wider audience. In 1967, Born Under a Bad Sign was released, and Bill Graham, owner and promoter of the Fillmore Auditorium in San Francisco, invited him to perform. King would routinely outplay some of the most famous musicians of the day appearing on the stage at the same time, including Jimi Hendrix.

In 1969, he performed with the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra, the first time blues and classical music had been mixed together in an event King called an "87-piece Blues band." In 1970, he played with The Doors at a performance in Vancouver, British Columbia. This concert would be released as an album in 2010 as The Doors Live in Vancouver 1970. Along with B.B. King and Freddie King, he began to be known as one of the Three Kings of Blues Guitar and the "Velvet Bulldozer."

King was revered by fellow musicians. Eric Clapton was quick to point to his influence with his own album, Disraeli Gears (1967). Eagles guitarist Joe Walsh long himself as an admirer. Texas blues guitarist Stevie Ray Vaughan cited King as his lifelong inspiration. Many artists him for being a part of the development of soul music by the early 1970s.

Albert King would die just a few months shy of his seventieth birthday in late 1992, just two days after his last concert. He would be inducted into the Arkansas Entertainers Hall of Fame in Pine Bluff in 2010 and Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in Cleveland in 2013.



Senate Week in Review from Ben Gilmore Senator

There are many stages in the process of convicting criminals and sentencing them to prison. Senate Bill 2, the "Truth in Sentencing and Parole Reform Act of 2023," will change many of them.

Currently SB 2 is a shell bill, which means it consists only of the title. That's because the co-sponsors are still gathering ideas from people in the many areas of law enforcement that will be affected.

Stakeholders include county sheriffs and police departments, prosecutors, judges, wardens, prison security officers, parole and probation officers, transition programs, victims' rights advocates, defense attorneys, drug courts, specialty courts, drug treat-

ment programs and alcohol abuse programs.

The reforms will cost money, so SB 2 will have a ripple effect on the other spending categories in state government.

Last year many elected officials listed stronger law enforcement as one of their campaign issues.

In an interview, the Senate sponsor said that a major focus of the bill would be to protect people from repeat violent offenders who are released from prison on parole, sometimes after serving as little as a sixth of their sentence.

Under SB 2 inmates would have to earn their parole eligibility through good behavior; it would not be guaranteed merely by serving a portion of their sentence. The bill would create incentives for inmates to complete rehabilitation programs.

One challenge the sponsors must address is that about 1,700 inmates are being held

in county jails in an average month while they wait for available space to open in a state prison unit.

County jails don't have the funds or resources for the programs that state prisons can offer, such as treatment for drug abuse and job training. Thus, while inmates are serving time in a county jail they are not preparing for a productive life after their release.

The measure will lengthen sentences and tighten parole provisions because violent offenders are getting out too soon, the sponsor said. Some inmates don't participate in job training and drug rehab programs. A strong incentive to participate would be to make it a requirement in order to become eligible for parole.

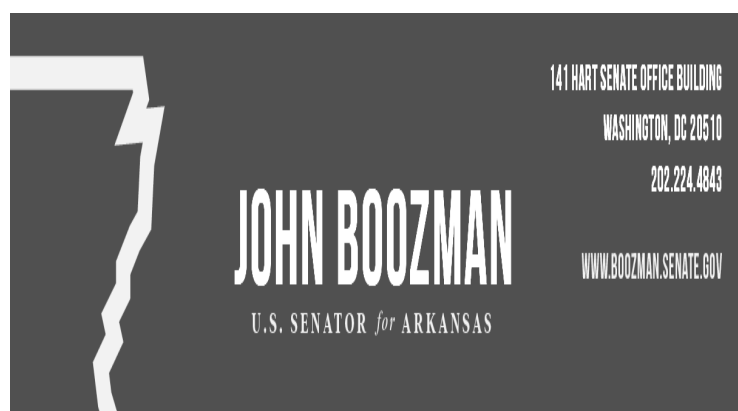
The legislature will consider proposals to add prison space. The question is how many more beds to build, and how many of the new beds will be

for violent and dangerous offenders.

At the end of 2022 the Department of Correction had more than 17,000 inmates in its jurisdiction. That is an increase of about 3,000 more inmates since 10 years ago, and an increase of about 5,000 inmates since 20 years ago.

In fiscal year 2010 the legislature appropriated \$338 million from the state's general revenue fund to the Correction Department for operating state prisons. Last fiscal year the appropriation was \$494 million.

The Senate co-sponsor of SB 2 said that garnering a consensus in support of the bill would depend on its total cost. It probably will be a couple of weeks before the details are finalized. When that happens, the bill will be amended. It will no longer be a shell bill with just a title, but will be "a fairly large piece of legislation."



Americans have long called on Washington to cut inefficiencies in federal programs and modernize them for the 21st century. Yet rarely, are those calls heard on Capitol Hill.

Come this summer, we will get a good glimpse at what happens when Congress follows through with rhetoric and puts change into motion, as a lot of hungry children will be helped as a result.

A long overdue modernization of our summer meals program, based on ideas I have championed for years, recently became law.

These reforms update rules that have been in place for over 60 years. Generations of families have struggled with the challenges these restrictive regulations presented

while Washington sat idle.

Those difficulties arose from the requirement that children travel to a central location and eat at that site during the summer. This may work well in some communities. However, in rural areas, it can be difficult for children to reach a meal site, if one even exists.

Continuing down this antiquated path left many families scrambling to find access to nutritious meals for their children during the months when classes are not in session.

The solution I have long advocated for, and successfully incorporated in the Fiscal Year 2023 government funding package, is to give states more options to reach hungry children during the sum-

mer. There are proven ways to achieve this goal, but until now, states have been powerless to employ commonsense approaches like off-site meal options or the issuance of electronic benefits cards.

These options do not replace congregate feeding sites, which as I previously noted, work well in many communities. But the one-size-fits all approach is outdated, and states have needed additional ways to fill the void in communities where it is not feasible for children to gather in a central location to eat.

Moving forward, states will be allowed to provide non-congregate meal options, such as grab-and-go or home delivery, to eligible children, and issue Summer Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) cards, capped at \$40 per child per month, to eligible families on a permanent basis.

These options proved to be quite effective during the pandemic. When social distancing mandates were in place, Congress waived the requirement for children to travel to a central location and eat their meals onsite. In turn, this spurred innovation with public-private partnerships

that provided access to nutritious meals for young Arkansans.

We already had evidence to show summer EBT works. Pilot programs conducted by the U.S. Department of Agriculture prior to the pandemic showed summer EBT successfully reduced child hunger by over 30 percent among participants.

A handful of my colleagues and I had been pushing for these changes for many years. The success of these options during the pandemic convinced the rest of Congress it was time to act. While I am pleased to see these much-needed reforms are now law, it really should not be this difficult for Congress to act when a solution is staring us in the face.

While government is almost always behind the curve on innovation, we can show the American people that we are serious about fixing the way Washington works. It just takes a willingness from policymakers to focus on solutions, rather than punditry. Ending food insecurity is a great place to start that commitment.

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Letter Policy

The Eagle Democrat urges all responsible persons to express opinions on any subject of general interest to the community by way of a letter to the editor. Letters submitted for publication must bear the signature, address, and telephone number of the writer and should be limited to 300 words. Letters should be mailed to The Eagle Democrat, 200 West Cypress, Warren, AR 71671.



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FEATURES FROM THE BIBLE

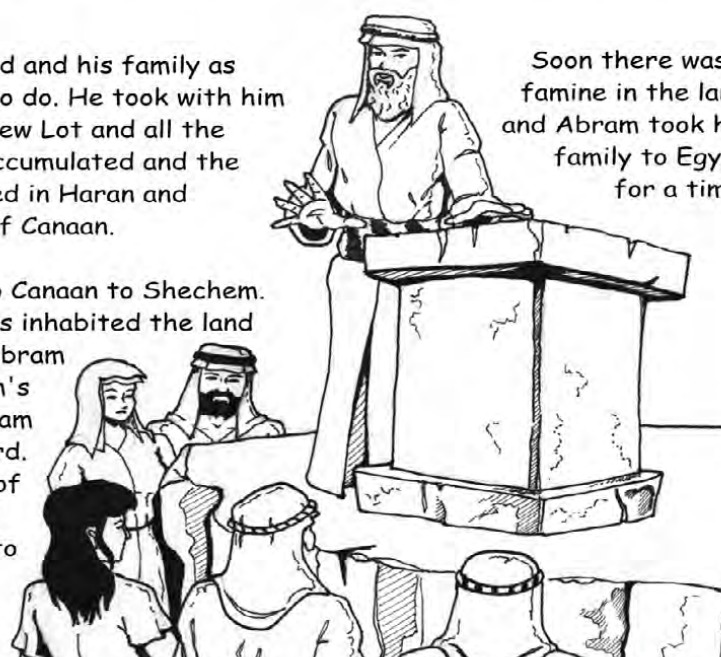
TRUTH IN SCRIPTURE

Abram Builds Altars
Genesis 12

Abram left his homeland and his family as the Lord had told him to do. He took with him his wife Sarai, his nephew Lot and all the possessions they had accumulated and the people they had acquired in Haran and they went to the land of Canaan.

Soon there was a famine in the land and Abram took his family to Egypt for a time.

The group traveled into Canaan to Shechem. Although the Canaanites inhabited the land the Lord appeared to Abram and promised to Abram's offspring the land. Abram built an altar to the Lord. Next he traveled east of Bethel and pitched his tent and built an altar to the Lord and called on the name of the Lord.



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CENTRAL MISSIONARY BAPTIST
406 E. Seminary St., 870-226-5197
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147 W. Pine St., 870-226-5410
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 4. A Man Called Otto (PG-13) Tom Hanks, John Higgins
 5. Plane (R) Gerard Butler, Daniella Pineda
 6. House Party (R) Andrew Santino, Tosin Cole
 7. Black Panther: Wakanda Forever (PG-13) Letitia Wright, Lupita Nyong'o
 8. The Whale (R) Brendan Fraser, Sadie Sink
 9. Whitney Houston: I Wanna Dance with Somebody (PG-13) Naomi Ackie, Stanley Tucci
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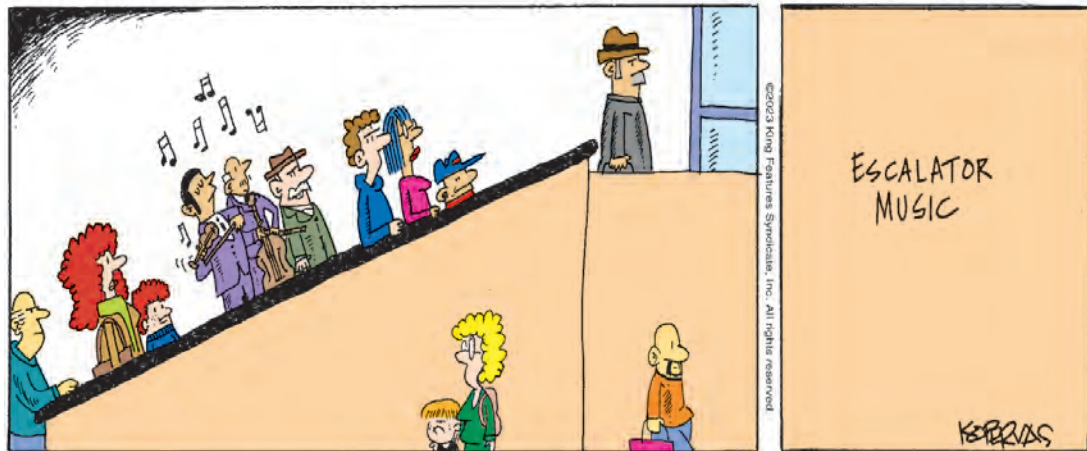
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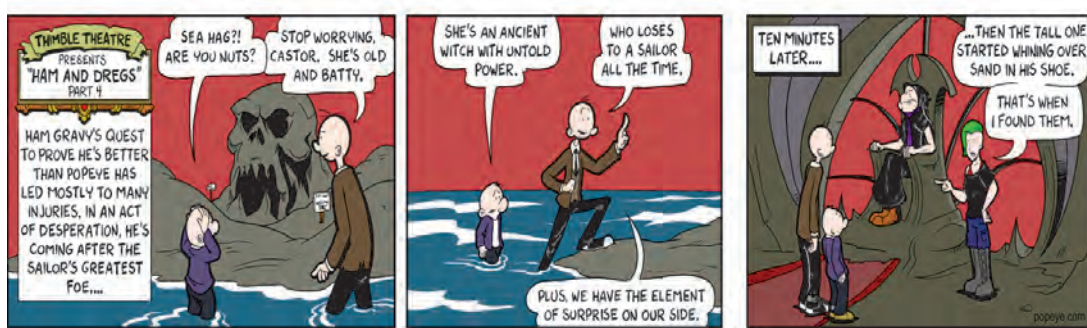
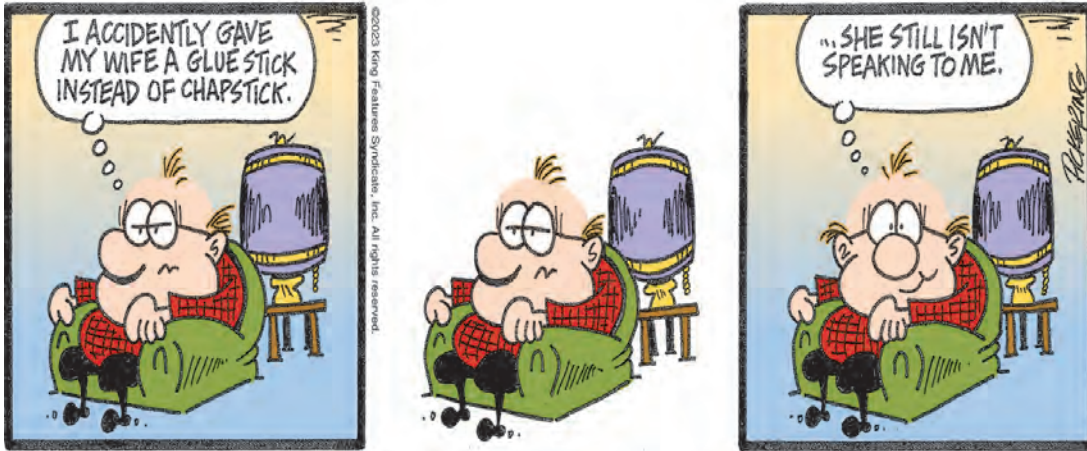
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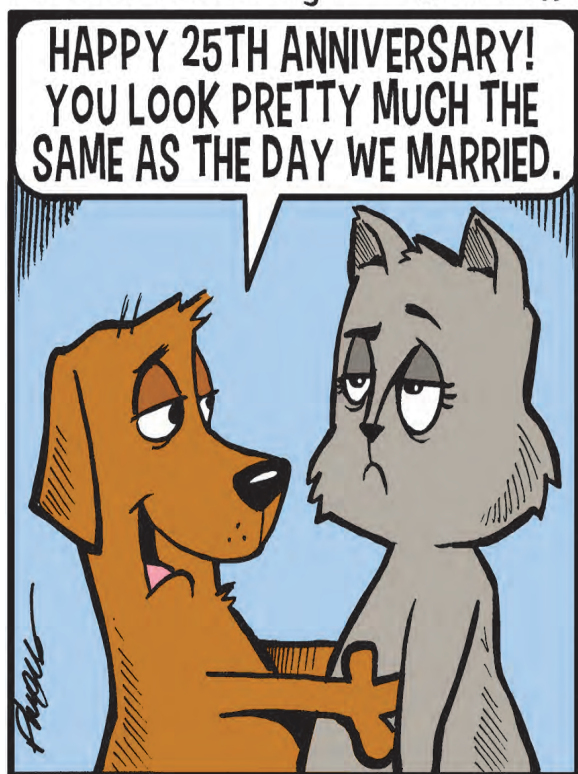
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OLIVE



Bradley County Spelling Bee winners announced



Warren School District and Hermitage School District met this Friday to compete in the Bradley County Spelling Bee. Spellers from both districts competed for a chance to move on and compete in the Arkansas State Spelling Bee in March. WMS 7th Grader, Addysen Powell, placed first and will move on to compete in Little Rock on Saturday, March 11. Hermitage Elementary Student, Avery Ledbetter, placed second. Brunson Elementary student, Mariah Partman, placed third. All the participants were first and second place winners at their school spelling bees.

Arkansas Workforce report indicates action needed to secure future

Special to The Eagle
Arkansas hospitals are facing a critical staffing shortage that is only exacerbating the profound financial volatility they are facing. A new report issued by Global Data, commissioned by the Arkansas Hospital Association (AHA), reveals that the shortage of health care workers in many specialties is anticipated to continue or worsen over time, as increasing needs continue to exceed the supply of professionals. The current shortfall of 9,000 registered nurses in Arkansas will not be resolved by 2035 without intervention, and the licensed practical nurse (LPN) workforce would need to grow by an additional 55 LPN full-time employees per year above anticipated status quo growth to maintain current Arkansas use patterns. By 2035, there will be a shortfall of approximately 240 to 580 respiratory therapists to meet the projected demand. Other specialties showing shortfalls include physician assistants, phlebotomists, clinical laboratory technicians, and emer-

gency medical technicians. In response to this analysis, the AHA is taking the initiative now to advocate for several key strategies to stabilize and grow Arkansas's health care workforce, including expanding the workforce pipeline for the occupations facing the greatest shortages, building heartier workforce retention programs, developing new models of care, expanding training programs into communities with the greatest need, improving data collection, and advocating for policy changes that will support a more robust pipeline. "Hospitals in Arkansas faced workforce challenges even before the COVID-19 pandemic, but the situation

is now alarming," says Bo Ryall, President & CEO of the Arkansas Hospital Association. "These projected shortfalls pose a significant threat to the health and wellness of our communities and, frankly, to the stability of our state. We must not take our excellent health care workforce for granted. "The plain facts presented by this report offer us a starting point to begin to address the need – more urgent by the month – to build up our pipeline of health care professionals," Ryall continued. "This problem will not be solved quickly or by hospitals alone, but we owe to the coming generations to take aggressive action to meet this challenge."

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