

# The Eagle Democrat

SINCE 1885 | YOUR HOMETOWN PAPER

139th Year

Warren, Arkansas, Wednesday, December 27, 2023

No. 25



## Looking back at 2023: Demolition, hospital department closes, new construction

### MAY

Demolition began downtown on Tuesday, May 2 a day earlier than planned due to the unstable condition of the buildings. Crews worked throughout the week and continue to work at the time of the publication.

Bradley County Judge Klay McKinney said progress was going well and progress was going faster than expected. Safety was their main priority. He commented he hoped by next Saturday, the demolition would be close to being done.

He said one of their concerns was the light pole on the corner. Workers are doing the best they can to save the light pole.

Judge McKinney said they have saved all the bricks from the buildings and have them piled up. It takes 100 loads to the landfill for each building. On Saturday, they did 75 loads.

Judge McKinney told The Eagle Democrat termites had gone up the interior wall and ate the roof causing it to fall in.

The demolition project took three to four weeks to plan before they started.



File photo

### MERCHANTS AND PLANTERS HOLDS RIBBON CUTTING



Joanna Poole/Eagle Democrat

Merchants and Planters Insurance Agency held a ribbon cutting and open house on Tuesday, December 20. Employees of Merchants and Planters and other members of the community gathered to celebrate. Their business hours are 8 a.m.-5 p.m., Monday-Friday.

### JUNE

Local artist Josie Hargis was awarded Arkansas Country Music's Inspirational Singer of the Year in Conway on June 5 at the Arkansas Country Music Awards.

"I was not expecting that at all," Hargis told The Eagle Democrat about her win. "My mom told me I should probably prepare a little acceptance speech in case I did win and I just told her no. I did not think it was going to happen. I was nominated with some really talented groups who have done it longer than me and have more music out than I do. It was crazy. I blacked out when I went to make my speech."

Hargis made her singing debut in 2019 with the Grace Cowboy Church Band. She said that was the first time she started singing publicly.

She enjoyed singing even before performing publicly.

"When I was really young, I would sing at my church with my grandma, who would take me every Sunday. We usually get there before anyone else and I would just get on stage and sing for her for a while," said Hargis. "Then I stopped, and then started back."

Hargis said she was shy about singing in public. Singing a special at her church in 2017 got her back into singing. She commented she still gets nervous when she sings, even singing at

See **RECAP** Page 6

## Hermitage City Council looks at proposed 2024 budget

By **JOANNA POOLE**  
reporter@theeagledemocrat.com

Hermitage held its monthly city council meeting on Thursday, December 21. The meeting was called to order by Mayor Matt Cathey.

The city police report was given by Police Chief Ben Poole. He reported that the citations given for November were as follows: one for failing to stop at a stop sign, two for no proof of insurance, one for no vehicle license, one for driving on a suspended license, three for shoplifting, one for terroristic threatening, and two fictitious

tags, totaling 11 citations. A motion was made and passed to accept the police report.

The fire report was presented by Assistant Fire Chief Tim Whitney. He reported that in the last month, there has been one fire. Whitney also reported that the city's new fire truck is now in service. He reported to the city council that the new addition to the fire department is done and is very nice.

"It is more than what we expected, and I appreciate y'all letting us get it," Whitney said.

A motion was made and passed to accept the fire report. The Public Works Supervisor



Joanna Poole/Eagle Democrat

Travis Stanley presented the public works report. He told the council members that all water samples that had been collected and tested passed and every-

thing was normal. A motion was made and passed to accept Stanley's report.

The proposed budget for 2024 was examined by the

council members. The council members went into executive session to discuss resolution 151 which is whether or not city employees will receive a raise

in 2024. It was decided that the police department employees and the public works employee would receive a three percent

See **CC** Page 2

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## Passin' the Faith Along

By REV. JIM BALES  
Pastor - First Assembly of God  
*Sponsored by Merchants & Planters Agency*

### STAND FIRM

Over the years, I have been asked for an opinion on certain biblical issues. As the coming of the Lord draws near, I want to reaffirm my commitment publicly to the holy scriptures.

- I firmly believe in the inspi-

ration of the word of God- 2 Timothy 3:16. The authority of the scriptures in every circumstance- Matthew 24:35. The Incarnation The virgin birth Forgiveness of sin through Je-

sus Christ- 1 John 1:9  
The Baptism in the Holy Spirit- Acts 2:4  
The rapture of the church- 1 Thessalonians 4  
Salvation comes only by repentance and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.- Romans 10:9,10  
Love, love, love- 1 Corinthians 13  
• The Bible speaks against:  
Homosexuality- Romans 1 and 2  
Transgenderism- Genesis 1:27  
Same-sex marriage- Genesis 1v27  
Fornication- Matthew 19:8,9  
Adultery- Matthew 19:8,9

Abortion- Psalm 139:13-16  
Pride- Proverbs 16:18  
Violence and hostility- 1 Thessalonians 4:11-12  
Unbelief- Hebrews 11:6  
The Gospel message not the truth of God's inspired word has changed! Altering/changing theological positions of the Word as an accommodation to personal experience will only serve to diminish our commitment to Christ.  
Until we stand in His eternal presence, I pledge to stand firm and embrace the Word of God and the unchanging truth it reveals. Remember, JESUS IS COMING SOON!

### CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS

THURSDAY, JANUARY 11

#### Public Meeting

The Southeast Bradley County Water District Public Water Authority of the State of Arkansas will be having their annual public meeting on Thursday, January 11, 2024, 6:00 pm at the SEBCWD Water Office Board Room located at 320 South Main Street, Hermitage Arkansas.

### CC

Continued from Page 1

raise. Motions were made and accepted for the proposed

2024 budget and resolution 151.

The next city council meeting will be at 6 p.m. on Thursday, January 18 at the Hermitage Community Center.

### FIRST STATE BANK HOSTS CHRISTMAS OPEN HOUSE



Joanna Poole/Eagle Democrat

First State Bank held its annual Christmas Open House on Wednesday, December 20. The festivities included light refreshments and a visit with Santa.

## A note from Bradley County Chamber of Commerce

"Dear Chamber members and friends,

Your Chamber of Commerce is finishing up an eventful year, and looking forward to 2024 and the future. Our annual meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, January 16, 2024, at noon in the Immanuel Baptist Church Family Life Center.

Founded in 1924, the Bradley County Chamber of Commerce is the community's leading membership-driven advocate and champion for business. The mission of the Chamber is to promote community and economic development, increase the level of prosperity, and enhance quality of life for all the citizens of Bradley County.

The Chamber has been blessed with strong working relationships with all aspects of the communities in the past and hopes to continue this into the future, working together to help energize, improve, and market Bradley County in 2024.

Doug Thorton with Redneck Gourmet will cater the event. Please RSVP at [www.bradleychamber.com/rsvp](http://www.bradleychamber.com/rsvp) so we can plan accordingly.

Thank you so much, and we look forward to seeing you January 16.

Sincerely,  
Board of Directors"

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**Auctioneer's Note: THIS IS GOING TO BE A GREAT WAY TO START THE NEW YEAR!!!** Lots more items not mentioned, come to the PREVIEW and CHECK IT OUT! Follow us on Facebook for updates or our website for pictures at [www.chuppsauction.com](http://www.chuppsauction.com).

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PERIODICALS POSTAGE PAID at  
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POSTMASTER: Send address changes to  
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# Rotary Club of Warren hears program on Israel



Rotarians Dixon Platt (left) and Dr. Bob Smalling.



Junior Rotarians Abigail Raines (left) and Gustavo Ramirez.

**SPECIAL TO THE EAGLE**

The Rotary Club of Warren met for its weekly meeting inside First Methodist Church Tuesday, December 19, with its last meeting of 2023 on the schedule. The group heard from Warren High School Junior Rotarians Abigail Raines and Gustavo Ramirez to begin the program. Then Rotarian Dr. Bob Smalling presented his program of fellow Rotarian Rev. Dixon Platt. Platt spoke about a trip to Israel and the landmarks there. He also talked about a wall that has been there for over 2,000 years that people would pick up

large rocks or small rocks and add them to the wall to fortify it. Platt said this reminds him that everyone can play a role, no matter how big or how small, in all walks of life no matter the organization or cause. He then transitioned into a message about the upcoming Christmas holidays. He talked about the Christmas Eve Midnight Service at the Methodist Church and had a few of the candles they use for the event. Some were bent, almost broke, or all twisted around, but they still worked and could still spread the Light of Christ this holiday season. The Rotary Club of Warren will

not meet for the next two weeks and will resume its normal meetings on Tuesday, January 9, 2024.

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**HAPPY NEW YEAR 2024**

It's a new year, a fresh start, and a chance to let all of you know how much we appreciate your loyal support. We're so inspired by the strength, compassion and resilience we've seen all around us through a challenging year, and we're proud to be a part of this caring community. As we begin anew in 2022, we wish everyone here good health and good fortune.

Happy New Year, and thanks for being such wonderful neighbors!

**Bradley County Medical Center**  
 404 S Bradley St, Warren, AR 71671  
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**THANK YOU**  
 for a successful and happy  
**OPEN HOUSE**

Our Christmas Open House was a memorable event, filled with Santa Claus, delicious food prepared and served with love, and lots of Christmas magic! Thank you to our community, customers, and friends for joining us!

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# The Eagle Democrat

# Editorial

## Arkansas House Report

Jeff Wardlaw  
Ark. State Representative



Recently members of the Arkansas Legislative Council heard from several state agencies who are currently making plans for the 2024 Solar Eclipse.

This astronomical phenomenon, where the moon will cast a shadow over the sun, is expected to create a 117.9-mile-wide path of totality. The shadow will touch down in the southwest tip of Arkansas near De Queen at 1:46 p.m. and journey northeastward, exiting the state near Pochontas at approximately 2 p.m.. For those lucky enough to be in the center of the path, a mesmerizing four minutes of total darkness will unfold.

What makes this event particularly noteworthy is the anticipation that it will become the largest tourism event in Arkansas history. With up to 1.5 million visitors from outside the state and an additional 500,000 Arkansans expected to travel to the path of totality, the influx of approximately two million people poses unprecedented challenges and opportunities for the Natural State.

State agencies have been diligently crafting plans to address the multifaceted implications of this gathering. The Arkansas State Police is strategically deploying troopers across the state, with supervisors instructed not to approve time off on the day of the eclipse. The Arkansas Department of Emergency Management is coordinating contingency plans with various state agencies, ensuring a swift and coordinated response to any unforeseen situations.

Arkansas State Parks are set to welcome an estimated 83,000 visitors during the eclipse. With 20 of the 21 state parks in the path of totality already sold out for the required four-night minimum stay, it's evident that enthusiasts are eager to immerse themselves in this celestial spectacle.

The Arkansas Department of Health, in collaboration with ambulance and hospital associations, is addressing potential emergency scenarios, while the Arkansas Department of Transportation (ARDOT)

has released a comprehensive Traffic Management Plan to guide public officials in managing the expected surge in traffic volumes.

For businesses and employees, flexibility is key. Where possible the ARDOT is encouraging remote work, adjusting schedules, and exploring alternative means of commuting can help alleviate congestion

and ensure a smoother experience for everyone involved. With meticulous planning and community cooperation, the Natural State is poised to not only witness a spectacular solar eclipse but to eclipse expectations in managing this astronomical event.

## Eating for luck on New Year's Day

By JOANNA POOLE  
reporter@theeagleanddemocrat.com

New Year's Day holds different traditions for many people. Some people visit other homes while others opt to stay home and do nothing. As a kid, my family didn't have any New Year's Day traditions. It was probably because we weren't a superstitious family, and we were always told that there was no such thing as luck. We most likely ate whatever my mother felt like cooking.

Recently I was told by a friend that whatever you're do-

ing at midnight, you'll be doing for the rest of the year, so they make sure they go to bed with a clean house as a way of hoping that their house will be clean all year long. Some southern families are careful about who they allow their first guest to be on January 1. The story goes that the first person who enters your home after midnight on New Year's Eve is a symbol of what's to come. However, the one thing that seems to be the same for everyone is the tradition of what they will eat.

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## Arkansas History Minute

by  
Dr. Kenneth Bridges



Questions of war and peace weigh heavily on any politician who takes the job seriously. Lives are on the line. As the nation raced to World War I, one Arkansas Senator, William Kirby, tried to slow down the march to war.

William Fosgate Kirby was born in Miller County in 1867, one of four sons to a Confederate veteran and farmer from Alabama. He attended schools on both sides of the state line. He ultimately became a lawyer, gaining his law degree from Cumberland School of Law in Tennessee.

Kirby became a respected legal mind and spent two terms in the Arkansas House of Representatives and one in the state senate. In 1904, he compiled an encyclopedia of the state's laws and court decisions surrounding them, Kirby's Digest of the Statutes of Arkansas. He served one term as attorney general before rising to the state supreme court.

Kirby ran against Sen. James P. Clarke in 1914 but lost in a very

See HISTORY Page 6



Senate Week in Review from Ben Gilmore Senator

In 2023 the legislature enacted major changes to state laws affecting the operations of public schools and state prisons.

The centerpiece of the 2023 session was the LEARNS Act, a proposal by the governor to make school choice more affordable, raise teacher salaries and train high school students for well-paid jobs even if they choose not to go to college.

It raises minimum teacher pay from \$36,000 to \$50,000. That benefits 15,249 teachers. It provides a raise of \$2,000 for veteran teachers. Also, teachers are now eligible for 12 weeks of paid maternity leave. There are financial incentives of up to \$10,000 for teachers who excel

in the classroom.

The act created Education Freedom Accounts to help parents pay for tuition at private or parochial schools. The initial amount proposed would be 90 percent of per pupil foundation rate of \$7,413 this year. It repealed the cap on charter schools and removed the limit on school choice transfers.

Schools with poor results on school report cards will be able to hire an additional 120 literacy coaches. The families of students who are struggling in kindergarten through grade three can apply for \$500 to hire a tutor. Literacy standards for K-3 are tougher, so that more students read at grade level before they move up to fourth grade.

It expands school safety measures, such as more training in crisis response and mental health awareness.

To better prepare high schoolers for the workforce, it directs high schools to offer dual course tracks. Students can choose ca-

reer training for highly-paid jobs, or an academic college preparatory curriculum.

Beginning in 2026, high school students must complete 75 hours of community service in order to graduate.

Also this year the legislature approved Act 659, the Protect Arkansas Act. It lengthens prison sentences for violent offenders and requires inmates to work harder to qualify for parole.

One goal is to provide juries with more accurate information about the length of the actual prison sentences time that convicted criminals are truly going to serve.

Criminals convicted of rape and capital murder would serve 100 percent of their sentences. The 100 percent standard also applies to aggravated robbery, human trafficking, Internet stalking of a child and more serious categories of aggravated residential burglary.

Offenders would serve 85 percent of their sentence after

conviction for a long list of violent felonies, including second degree murder and first degree sexual assault.

Making offenders serve longer sentences would bring Arkansas sentencing guidelines more in line with those used by federal prisons, where people convicted of federal crimes serve almost all of their sentence.

The legislature approved funding for more prison beds to more effectively implement Act 659, and to reduce overcrowding in county jails that hold state inmates. On a typical day, county jails house about 2,000 convicted state inmates, creating dangers for jail staff and people in jail for minor offenses.

Prison reform will be a major issue in 2024 because the governor, the attorney general and the Board of Correction are in a highly publicized legal dispute over how quickly those beds can be opened.



As another year draws to close, news outlets will be highlighting many of the most significant people, places and events of the past year. As we all consider how much has changed in the last twelve months, I also know that the most important stories are the ones that impact us and our families directly. Births and deaths. New adventures. Difficult challenges.

Whether family, friends or kind strangers, we all touch so many lives. For me, helping people has always been a priority while serving in Congress. A helping hand really can make a difference and provide hope when experiencing challenges with the federal government.

In 2023 my staff and I were honored to help thousands of Arkansans who contacted me for assistance with various federal agencies. I hear from people through my website, in grocery stores and community meetings, and even the occasional hand-written letter. No matter how someone reaches out to me, each story and question is important.

I am grateful for the trust of so many Arkansans. By helping with these concerns, I have a better understanding of how our government is, and is not, working. It is very valuable to understand as we consider budgets and policies and I know it can help in very personal ways, too.

Many requests this year were unique because of an increased demand for international travel. After several years of staying home, more Americans than ever decided to take that dream trip, visit family in other countries, study abroad and make international business deals in person.

My office helped more than 600 Arkansans with passports and visas, most of them during June and July. I know my colleagues in the Arkansas congressional delegation experienced a similar influx of requests and delivered assistance. It was a very challenging time for federal agencies and for travelers.

In recent days the U.S. Passport Service announced it reached its goals of returning

to pre-pandemic processing times, so I'm hopeful this will make it easier for Arkansans applying for or renewing a passport in the future.

My staff and I also saw an uptick in requests for help with military records and honors. One reason for this increase was because of changes to Department of Veterans Affairs disability benefits allowing expanded eligibility under the PACT Act. These long overdue benefits impact Arkansas veterans with service-connected toxic exposure and other situations unique to their military service. I was grateful to be part of the legislative solution and my office is honored to help support veterans who are trying to work through this new process.

It was also a big year for Social Security requests with more than 200 Arkansans re-

questing help. Many federal agencies are still working through policies regarding appointments, remote work and other internal changes that happened with the COVID-19 pandemic. These bureaucracy problems can impact people applying for benefits and I am glad we were able to help when things got lost or delayed or needed an in-person solution.

I am blessed with a tremendous team in Arkansas and Washington, D.C. that shares my dedication to Arkansas. They have valuable experience navigating these situations. We are all here to help.

Before we celebrate 2024, I hope you have the opportunity to reflect on 2023 and recognize that, regardless challenges and joys of the year, you know people are here to help when you need it.

## NOTICE

Due to the New Year's Day Holiday, The Eagle Democrat will be CLOSED Monday, January 1. The deadline for the January 3 paper will be Friday, December 29 at noon.



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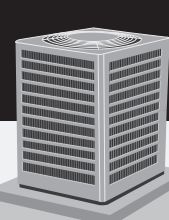
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# Obituaries

## Margaret Elaine McDougald

Margaret Elaine McDougald, 81, of New Edinburg died December 17, 2023. Born September 19, 1942 to the late Edward Speer and Vivian McCann Speer. Survivors: son, Chris Hopson (Melissa), four grandchildren, three great-grandchildren. Funeral 10 a.m. December 20, at Frazer's Funeral Home. Burial was in Freehouse Cemetery in by Frazer's.

## OBITUARY POLICY

The Eagle Democrat publishes obituaries edited to The Eagle's format, up to 50 words, free of charge. All words over the 50 word limit will be charged at a rate of 34 cents per word. Obituaries that are requested to be published "exactly as the furnished copy" will be charged 30 cents per word for the entire obituary. No form of "thank you" will be published within the obituary. No exceptions. The cost to publish a picture with the obituary is \$10. The deadline to submit an obituary is noon on Monday.

## RECAP

Continued from Page 1  
church every Sunday.

Her uncle, David Mann, is one of her musical inspirations. Mann has helped co-write her songs. Hargis said members of the Grace Cowboy Band also have helped her a lot. Her other inspirations include Carrie Underwood, Maverick City Music, and Harry Styles.

Her first single, "My Best Friend" thrust her into the spotlight with over two million views on Tik Tok. The single also garnered her over 100,000 followers on the social media platform. She said she did not expect to get that much attention.

"I posted a little clip of ["My Best Friend"] on Tik Tok right after I wrote it and it got over 2.3 million views, which was insane, and we finally got it released," said Hargis. "I think to be sort of a nobody, I'm getting a good bit of attention that I never would have expected. It's crazy, but it's good."

Hargis said when it went viral, it was "mindblowing" to her. Her phone kept blowing

up and she didn't know what was going on.

What made her feel the most accepted was the positive feedback she received for her single.

The lyrics for "My Best Friend" was written in 30 minutes at Hargis' house. It was the second song she had ever written.

"It was crazy how fast the words just came to me, definitely from God," said Hargis.

Musically, Hargis said she comes up with a little melody in her head with the lyrics and sends it to her uncle, who puts music to it.

She recorded her first two songs at a recording studio in Crossett. She is working with D.J. Lisemby at his home studio on upcoming songs. Lisemby helps them produce her music. He is also part of a Christian band named weR-called.

"I'm super grateful for D.J., and his family, for being so helpful and willing to work with me," said Hargis. "I'm super excited for future projects that we hopefully will get to work on soon."

For her future music plans, she said she doesn't really have any. As she puts it, "flying by the seat of my pants."

Hargis would love to continue writing music and write music for a living, even writing songs for other artists. Hargis said she loves to perform.

"It would be great, but I'm not praying to get famous or rich or anything like that," said Hargis. "As long as I can live comfortably and do what I love to do, that's the dream."

Hargis said she's working on new songs. She commented she's always writing songs. Some she'll forget about and come back to months later. As a solo artist, she is working on recording one song at a time. However, she is working on an album with Grace Cowboy Band.

Hargis told The Eagle Democrat said she has been contacted by small record labels and managers. She stated she hasn't signed anything.

"I'm just trying to make sure I can trust people really," she said.

Her dream tour would be

See RECAP Page 8

## For AR Kids coalition announced ballot measure to improve student learning across Arkansas

SPECIAL TO THE EAGLE

A coalition of Arkansas advocacy groups announced a ballot measure to amend the Education clause of the Arkansas Constitution at noon Thursday at the State Capitol.

"We are here to launch a ballot measure campaign that will dramatically improve student learning across ALL of Arkansas," said Bill Kopsky, Executive Director for the Arkansas Public Policy Panel.

The ballot measure does three fundamental things to help our children succeed in school and life. First, it invests in four of the most effective programs that boost student learning.

It will create:

1. Universal access to free, voluntary pre-k for all 3 and 4 year olds in Arkansas.

2. Universal access to free, voluntary after-school and summer programs.

3. Universal access to help low income children get the help they need to overcome the obstacles that poverty creates for learning. Arkansas ranks nearly last in the nation for child poverty, and it is a major obstacle to success for our students and the state as a whole. But there are proven ways to help students overcome that.

4. And finally, our ballot measure guarantees access to high quality special education for every child in Arkansas with special needs.

For AR Kids wants to set the bar higher for Arkansans in terms of quality education for all, speakers said Thursday.

"Set the bar high. We're here to make sure our kids have quality education. That our kids have a better quality of life," said Elaine Williams,

Chair of the Education Caucus of Citizens First Congress and of Concerned Citizens of Prescott. "We're not here to go backwards. We're here to go forward."

Arkansas is currently number one in food insecurity for kids and near the bottom in education metrics for the nation, including being woefully behind in terms of special education. Public schools need funding to stay open, and public schools are a crucial cornerstone for communities, said April Reisma, President of the Arkansas Education Association.

"This is the time for Arkansas to make a difference," she said. "Stand and support our children."

The second part of the ballot measure establishes minimum education standards so every student in Arkansas has an opportunity to learn.

Barry Jefferson, president of the Arkansas NAACP, said they've been on the "front lines of fighting for quality education for minority students," and that this ballot measure evens the playing field, including for both urban and rural kids.

Finally, the proposed ballot measure states that public money should come with public standards, public transparency and public accountability.

"The third and final part of our ballot measure creates an equal playing field for all public, tax-payer supported schools," Kopsky said. "It requires ANY school that receives tax-payer support to follow the same academic standards and standards of accreditation. Taxpayers have a right to know that their tax dollars are spent effectively."

Jefferson said, "If you get

public money, you must account for it. That's fair."

All sides – both Republicans and Democrats – were represented in overwhelmingly supporting the concepts in this ballot measure. These are high quality polls with a low margin of error, said Steve Grappe, Executive Director of CAPES.

"Stand up and carry a ballot. I saw a vision of hope. This is what it was," Grappe said.

In polling the group released today:

- 77.1 percent of Arkansans support equal standards

- 78.7 percent of Arkansans support basic minimum standards

- 78.5 percent support for universal, voluntary access to Pre-K

- 81.3 percent support for universal, voluntary access to After-School / Summer programs

- 83 percent support for universal access to supports for kids in poverty

- 86.6 percent for access to high quality Special Education

For AR Kids members encouraged everyone to visit their website, ForARKids.org, to find more information – including the full ballot measure – to sign up to volunteer, and to donate. Most of all, they encouraged everyone to educate themselves and others about the issues and to vote.

"We need more people to get out and vote", Reisma said. "We can make Arkansas better by voting!"

"This is going to be a volunteer, grassroots effort," Kopsky said about the ballot measure signature collection process, which will start in the new year for the For AR Kids coalition.

## EDITORIAL

Continued from Page 4

On New Year's Day, people tend to eat for luck by eating foods that are supposed to bring them good luck. People in the Northwestern part of the Unit-

ed States eat salmon on New Year's Day. New Englanders eat pork, but usually, their side of choice is sauerkraut. In some places, a special cake is made with a coin baked inside. The person who gets the piece of cake with the coin inside is considered very lucky. Here in the

South, most families have the same three items on the menu: some kind of pork, black-eyed peas, and either cabbage or some other kind of green. While other side dishes may vary, those three things tend to be staples. But there are reasons that these dishes are popular

for New Year's Day.

Eating black-eyed peas on New Year's Day is thought to bring good luck and prosperity. Some people believe that each pea represents a coin, symbolizing wealth. Cabbage and other kinds of greens are often thought to symbolize money

and bring financial prosperity because of their color. Pork, whether in the form of ham, pork chops, or hog jowl is considered a symbol of progress and prosperity.

Southern food traditions are deeply rooted in our culture and represent a blend of history, su-

perstition, and the desire for a prosperous and fortunate year ahead. While different families have variations on specific dishes served, the underlying theme is to welcome a brand-new year with good fortune and hope. I wish you all a safe and happy New Year!

## HISTORY

Continued from Page 4

narrow race. Clarke, however, died suddenly while on an October trip to Little Rock in 1916. Gov. George Hayes called for a special election to fill the remainder of Clarke's term on November 7. Kirby won a resounding 69.2 percent of the vote and headed to Washington, DC, the next day to be sworn in. President Woodrow Wilson had narrowly won re-election that same day, running on his record of reform and noting that he had kept the country out of the deadly war in Europe.

As soon as Kirby took office, he faced many issues over continuing American neutrality and German provocations. Wilson tried to keep the United States neutral since World War I began in 1914. Well into 1916, he pressed both sides to enter peace negotiations, offering to mediate the war himself. Many Americans, however, steadily resigned themselves to one day entering the war.

Former Secretary of State William Jennings Bryan, whom Kirby had long admired, had strongly objected to Wilson's early policies of continued trade in the war zone, believing that they could draw the country into the war. He had resigned a year earlier over those disagreements. Kirby shared similar misgivings. Resistance to war persisted in both parties.

By early 1917, the situation worsened as Germany called for unrestricted attacks on shipping and attempted to incite Mexico to attack the U. S. In response to Germany's call for unrestricted submarine attacks on any ships, including any American or any other neutral ship, Wilson called for breaking off diplomatic relations. It was the next step toward war, which many Americans now demanded. The Senate announced it would vote on a resolution approving Wilson's action. Kirby, like several other senators, still held out hopes for peace. The resolution passed 78-5 in early February, with opposition coming from progressive reformer Robert LaFollette

of Wisconsin and Democrat James K. Vardaman of Mississippi. Kirby voted against breaking off diplomatic relations.

The slide toward war continued without stop. Two weeks after the Senate resolution, Germany sank a British passenger liner off the coast of Ireland. Twenty Americans had been aboard the vessel, and an American mother and her daughter died.

Wilson called for arming all American ships, including civilian ships. While Wilson believed this was necessary for ships to defend themselves, Kirby and others believed it an unnecessary provocation.

But principles have consequences, good or bad, and Kirby faced bitter recriminations back home. Newspaper editorials excoriated him while politicians openly criticized his stances.

On April 2, Wilson asked Congress to declare war on Germa-

ny. He understood the incredible responsibility he had. After his speech, he told an aide, "My message today was a message of death for our young men."

The Senate voted on the war resolution on April 4. Kirby reluctantly voted in favor of it, and the measure passed 82-6 in the Senate, with 11 abstentions, and by a vote of 373-50 in the House. He continued to support Wilson's policies throughout the war, including the votes in favor of ratifying the Treaty of Versailles officially ending the war and the accompanying vote for the United States to enter the League of Nations, a forerunner of the modern United Nations. The U. S. and the Allies stood victorious by November 1918 but at the cost of 117,000 American lives.

As the 1920 election season approached, Congressman Thaddeus Caraway of Jonesboro

challenged Kirby in the 1920 Democratic Primary. Kirby's record in support of Wilson's policies became a focal point of the contest. Though Kirby offered a spirited defense of his early stands, the affable Caraway and his more strident defense of the

lead-up to the war swayed voters. Caraway won easily with 63 percent of the vote.

Kirby returned to Arkansas and joined the Little Rock law firm of former Gov. Hayes. In 1926, he returned to the state supreme court. He died in 1934.

## JOB OPENINGS

The City of Warren is currently accepting applications for a full-time Dispatcher for the Warren Police Department.

The City of Warren is currently accepting applications for a Full-time and Part-time Patrolmen for the Warren Police Department. (Certified preferred) Applicants must be able to pass an extensive background investigation.

Applications may be obtained at the Warren Police Department, 200 Alabama Street, Warren, AR 71671, or by calling (870) 226-3703.

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## JOB OPENING

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The Warren School District is searching for a Bilingual Paraprofessional to work closely with assigned students. Qualifications for this position are as follows: Associate Degree or 60 college credit hours, must pass the Paraprofessional Praxis, and if hired, complete a background check \$38.25 and Child Maltreatment Check \$11.00, Total Cost \$49.25.

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**FEATURES FROM THE BIBLE**  
 TRUTH IN SCRIPTURE  
**Achan**  
 Joshua 7 and 8


Joshua had told the Israelites, "keep away from the devoted things, so that you will not bring about your own destruction by taking any of them. Otherwise you will make the camp of Israel liable to destruction and bring trouble on it. All the silver and gold and the articles of bronze and iron are sacred to the LORD and must go into his treasury." Joshua 6: 18-19.

But all of them did not listen. Achan took some of the devoted things for himself. The Lord's anger burned against Israel.

Joshua sent spies to Ai. They returned with word that Ai would be easy to take. They sent only 3000 men to take Ai but they were defeated.

Going before the Lord, Joshua learned that some devoted things had been taken by some soldier.

A search revealed that one named Achan had stolen a robe, some silver and a wedge of gold. Achan was stoned to death for his sin and the Israelites succeeded in taking Ai.




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**First United Methodist Church**  
 Church Office 870-226-2641  
 Sun. School - 9:30  
 Worship Service - 10:30  
 Wed. Night Meal & Devotional - 5:30  
 Rotary - Tue. - Noon  
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**BELLEVIEW ESTATES**  
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Passed this 18th day of December, 2023.  
/s/Klay McKinney, Bradley County Judge  
ATTEST:  
/s/Karen Belin, Bradley County Clerk

This publication was provided and paid for by the Bradley County Clerk in Bradley County, Arkansas. The amount paid for this publication is \$64.26.

12/27  
12/27

**IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF  
BRADLEY COUNTY, ARKANSAS  
SECOND PROBATE DIVISION**

IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF Roderick Trotter, Sr., Deceased  
NO. 06PR-23-93  
Last known address of decedent: 203 Van Street, Warren, Bradley County, Arkansas  
November 10, 2023

Date of Death: **NOTICE OF PROBATE OF WILL**

An instrument dated October 4, 2017, was on December 14, 2023, admitted to probate as the Last Will of the above named decedent, and the undersigned has been appointed Executrix thereunder. A contest of the probate of the Will can be effected only by filing a petition within the time provided by law.

All persons having claims against the estate must exhibit them, duly verified, to the undersigned within six (6) months from the date of the first publication of this notice, or they shall be forever barred and precluded from any benefit in the estate.

This notice first published the 20th day of December 2023.  
12/20, 12/27

**IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF BRADLEY COUNTY,  
ARKANSAS**

IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF LUDIE MAE NICHOLS, DECEASED  
NO. 06PR-23-10-2

**AFFIDAVIT FOR COLLECTION OF SMALL  
ESTATE BY DISTRIBUTE**

Comes LORETTA JANE NICHOLS WEIER, for the purpose of dispensing with administration of the estate of LUDIE MAE NICHOLS, deceased,  
1. The decedent, Ludie Mae Nichols, aged 93, who resided at Warren, Arkansas, died at Warren, Arkansas on May 26, 2018. No petition for the appointment of a personal representative for the decedent's estate is pending or has been granted.  
2. More than 45 days have elapsed since the death of the decedent.  
3. The value, less encumbrances, of all property owned by the decedent at the time of death, excluding the homestead and statutory allowances for the benefit of the surviving spouse or minor children, if any, of the decedent, does not exceed \$100,000.  
4. An itemized description and separate valuation of each item of property of the decedent, including the homestead, if any, and the names and addresses of the persons having possession thereof, are as follows:  
Description of Property Valuation Less Encumbrances In Possession of:  
and Extent and Details of SEE EXHIBITS A AND B Less than  
attached HERETO AND \$100,000  
MADE A PART HEREOF  
5. There are no unpaid claims or demands against the decedent or estate.  
6. The Department of Human Services furnished no federal or state benefits to the decedent, or, if any such benefits were furnished, the Department of Human Services has been reimbursed in accordance with state and federal laws and regulations.  
7. The names, ages, relationships to the decedent and residence addresses of the persons entitled to receive the property of the decedent as surviving spouse, heirs or devisees are:  
Name: Cary Don Nichols, Deceased  
Name: Margaret Elizabeth Nichols, Deceased  
Name: Ervin Elton Nichols, Deceased  
Name: Queffa Diane Nichols Hatch Age: Adult Relationship: Daughter  
Name: Loretta Jane Nichols Weier, Designated Beneficiary Distributee Age: Adult Relationship: Daughter Residence Address: Warren, Arkansas  
THEREFORE, the distributees of this estate shall be entitled to distribution of the property identified above, without the necessity of an order of the Court or other proceeding, upon furnishing a copy of this Affidavit.  
/s/Loretta Jane Nichols Weier

**EXHIBIT "B" TO AFFIDAVIT FOR COLLECTION OF SMALL ESTATE BY DISTRIBUTE FOR LUDIE MAE NICHOLS, DECEASED**  
Queffa Diane Hatch  
5-1-2019 FROM QUEFFA DIANE HATCH Too Pecos River Operating Enclosed are Division Orders to Transfer my Interest in The Title Change From Ms Ludie Mae Nichols Too Loretta Jane Weier.  
/s/Queffa Diane Hatch  
CERTIFICATE OF CLERK  
The undersigned Clerk of the Circuit Court, Probate Division, of Bradley County, Arkansas, certifies that the foregoing is a true copy of an Affidavit filed in this Court on the 3rd day of February, 2023 that the same remains on file and that no petition for the appointment of a personal representative of the estate described in the caption has been filed in this Court.

DATED this 3rd day of February, 2023,  
/s/Karen Belin, Clerk

12/27 1/3

**RECAP**

Continued from Page 6  
with Carrie Underwood and another worship artist Brandon Lake.

Hargis was thankful for the support from the community and all the opportunities that have opened up.

"We're just having fun and seeing what happens," said Hargis.

**OCTOBER**

**Bell tower dedication ceremony held**

Bradley County Judge Klay McKinney held a dedication ceremony for the Bradley County Courthouse bell tower on Tuesday, October 3. The ceremony was dedicated to those who helped with the big bell tower project and helped the project

**OCTOBER**



File photo

see completion. Judge McKinney, members of the Bradley County Quorum Court, Blake Dunn from CADM Architecture, and Heather Carter and Katherine Nash from Arkansas Historical Preservation.

Judge McKinney gave a speech thanking everyone for the dedication and service to the project.

"In 1903, it took some great architects, it took some great engineers, it took some great skilled craftsman to build the courthouse," said Judge McKinney. "120 years later, it did the same thing. It took some great architects, engineers, and craftsman to be able to do what was needed."

The judge said it was a group effort to get the project completed.

**NOVEMBER**

**BCMC Closes Obstetrics Department**

The mission of Bradley County Medical Center is to provide superior care to every patient, every time. However, as the governing board of the hospital, and the Senior Leadership team of BCMC look forward to

the long-term sustainability of our facility, the difficult decision to close the obstetrics (OB) program has been made.

As emotional as this decision has been, a recent revenue analysis by Stroudwater & Associates shows that our OB program is no longer sustainable for the following reasons:

- Volumes and changing demographics - The number of deliveries at BCMC has continued to decline yearly. While there is a nationwide decrease in births, there are newer facilities with specialized OB services to serve our region.
- Revenue loss - The OB department at BCMC is losing more than \$1 million annually. While our mission does not change, we must improve our financial position to grow and provide service lines that offer the most benefit to our community.

"We have gone over the numbers and made every effort to avoid this decision," stated Leslie Huit, BCMC CEO/CFO. "As a critical access hospital, we had hoped to be the exception in providing OB services. But it is now time to swallow this bitter pill and move forward in our plans to grow and accommodate

the healthcare needs of community."

Moving forward, the BCMC Rural Health Clinic is not closing and will continue to provide all family care services to its patients. We are also accepting new patients currently.

- Effective immediately, the Rural Health Clinic will be helping any existing OB patients in transitioning their care to the provider of their choice. We will work to ensure this is as seamless as possible.
- Any OB patients who present to the BCMC Emergency Room will be treated in the ER and transferred as safety permits to another facility.

While we understand that the closure of obstetrics at BCMC after all these years is difficult, we are hopeful for what the future of our hospital and the healthcare landscape in Bradley County can become.

The Eagle Democrat was among countless local businesses to be honored recently by the Warren School District with a

**DECEMBER  
Warren recognized for achievements in literacy**

The Eagle Democrat was among countless local businesses to be honored recently by the Warren School District with a

Gold Rise Community Award.

Through innovative efforts to get not only students, but older adults as well, involved in reading, Warren School District received a grant to promote literacy within the community.

Many businesses set up "Reading Corners" within their offices, as well as other businesses and members of the community donating money and other resources to the cause.

Students from Warren High School worked at the Pink Tomato Festival this summer to distribute books in addition to working with the "book bus" that drove around Warren handing out books.

A ceremony was held at Warren Elementary that opened with the JROTC students presenting the colors and saying the Pledge of Allegiance.

Superintendent Bryan Cornish welcomed the crowd and thanked Warren native Craig O'Neill for being present.

Members from the school district and the Arkansas Department of Education spoke about the success of this program and how it was made possible by the tremendous effort put forth by the community.

**DECEMBER**



File photo

**DECEMBER**



File photo

Dollar General Market in Warren held a ribbon-cutting ceremony on Tuesday, December 5, to celebrate their grand opening. Dollar General Market has 15 employees, and their business hours are 8 a.m.-10 p.m., Monday-Sunday.

**DRINK AND DRIVE AND YOU'LL SEE MORE THAN HOLIDAY LIGHTS.**

DRIVE SOBER OR GET PULLED OVER  
NHTSA

The holiday season is known for being merry & bright, so let's keep it that way and be safe behind the wheel. Let's make this the safest holiday season...  
**NO "BUZZED DRIVING".**

**BUZZED DRIVING IS DRUNK DRIVING**

Need help with drugs or alcohol? Call Phoenix Youth and Family Services  
(870) 364-1676 [www.phoenixyouth.com](http://www.phoenixyouth.com)

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STATE OF ARKANSAS  
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES  
Division of Aging, Adult, & Behavioral Health Services

# Because There's So Much to Celebrate...



## Friends Don't Let Friends Drive Impaired.



Your health is important. Your friends and family are precious. Your reputation is valuable. Your freedom is priceless. Life is irreplaceable. When you decide to drive impaired, you risk it all. Respect yourself and others by committing to a sober ride home this New Year's Eve.

### The Choice Is Yours.

1. Be a designated driver.
2. Make plans with a designated driver.
3. Reserve a ride home with a car service.
4. Call a taxi service.
5. Make overnight plans.
6. Attend an alcohol/drug-free celebration.

These community sponsors urge you to **celebrate responsibly for a safe and happy New Year!**

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