



# CASSVILLE Democrat

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## FELONY WARRANT

**Who:** William Lawson Jr., born 1982, of Washburn  
**What:** Is charged with first-degree kidnapping, first-degree burglary, second-degree domestic assault and misdemeanor violation of order of protection  
**Bond:** Set at \$100,000, cash only

## Man charged with kidnapping

Suspect allegedly broke into home, assaulted victim

BY KYLE TROUTMAN

kt troutman@cassville-democrat.com

A Washburn man is facing three felonies and a misdemeanor after allegedly breaking into a victim's home, kidnapping and transporting the victim to another residence, then not allowing the victim to leave or call for help.

William Lawson Jr., born 1982, of Washburn, is charged with first-degree kidnapping, first-degree burglary, second-degree domestic assault and misdemeanor violation of order of protection.

According to a probable cause statement filed by Cpl. S. Bounds, with the Barry County Sheriff's Office, the incident occurred at about 8:38 p.m. on Dec. 25, 2025. Bounds said the victim reported Lawson allegedly came to her residence, picked the lock on the front door and entered the home. The victim said Lawson then allegedly assaulted her in her vehicle by placing her in a choke hold with his arm around her neck, and as she struggled to breathe and was trying to fight Lawson off, he allegedly bashed her head against the center console, pulled out her hair and slapped her in the face multiple times.

The victim stated Lawson allegedly took her against her will by shoving her out of the driver's seat, and he deprived her of calling for help by taking her cell phone away. The victim stated Lawson allegedly drove her to his residence while keeping her in a choke hold, and when they arrived, she ran down the road and Lawson tackled her and was on top of her.

The victim said Lawson applied so much pressure against her she felt like she was going to pass out. The victim said she agreed to go back to Lawson's residence, and while inside, Lawson held on to her wrist to prevent her from leaving. The victim said Lawson called a witness, identified by Bounds as his mother, on his cell phone, and the witness came upstairs and also would not allow the victim to use her cell phone to call 9-1-1.

The victim sustained a cut

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## County sets \$8.59M budget

Reserve fund bolstered to work toward sheriff's Office, jail payment

BY KYLE TROUTMAN

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The Barry County Commission has approved the annual budget for 2026, preparing to spend up to \$8.59 million across all departments and funds, \$2 million more than last year after agreeing to move that

## BARRY COUNTY GOVERNMENT

**What:** Approves \$8.59 million budget, up \$2 million from 2025  
**Law Enforcement:** Budget set at \$4.9 million, an increase of just over \$250,000  
**More:** County aims to build reserve fund to pay off jail in 8 years

equal amount into the reserve fund.

Joyce Ennis, Barry County Clerk, said the county has bud-

geted \$8,599,895, with an estimated revenue projection of \$6,253,100, plus \$9,096,299 carried over from 2025 for a total appropriation of \$15,349,399.

Ennis said the \$2 million hike compared to last year's \$6.67 million budget is aimed at the longer-term goal of paying off the Barry County Sheriff's Office and county jail property when the opportunity arises in eight years.

The reserve, Ennis said, will have about \$11.5 million by the end of 2026, and with annual

additions, the county hopes to pay off the property and still have a healthy reserve intact.

Major changes in the budget were few and far between this year, as the county is fully staffed and operating efficiently, according to county commissioners.

"We're fully staffed and everything is working right, so it's a good time to add to the emergency fund and keep giving us that extra bit of cushion," said Gary Schad, northern commis-

CONTINUED ON PAGE 7A

## Raising the walls



Construction crews working on the 7th Street Bridge project install culvert walls for the incoming bridge. Hartman and Company was awarded the bid at \$738,000, and the new 15-foot triple-span reinforced concrete box bridge over Flat Creek will replace the low-water crossing damaged beyond repair by flash flooding in 2017. The project is set to be completed by May, complete with a vehicular crossing and sidewalk pedestrian crossing, and it may open sooner to allow for travel prior to being paved. Kyle Troutman/kt troutman@cassville-democrat.com

## Weather spotting classes coming to Cassville, Monett

Public invited to attend Office of Emergency Management education sessions

BY KYLE TROUTMAN

kt troutman@cassville-democrat.com

The Barry County Office of Emergency Management will host a pair of weather spotting classes on Feb. 7 and Feb. 24, aimed at informing not only first responders, but also the public, on how they can spot dangerous weather and what to do when it occurs.

David Compton, director of the office,

said classes have been held annual for about 25 years, typically attended by first responders in law enforcement and fire departments, as well as amateur radio operators.

"It's typically one class per year, and last year's was held in Purdy," he said. "We try to move them around between the northern and southern parts of the county so everyone has opportunity to attend. Last year's class was more about tactical weather spotting, and this year, we are doing a more generalized class that will be more suitable for the public, but our first responders will also still be there and learn a lot."

Compton said topics include recog-

nizing cloud formations and storm formations, and when out spotting, how to do it safely, when to report something and to whom.

"That is about gathering actionable data like what they are seeing and where they are, then we can transfer that information to the National Weather Service," he said.

While radar-indicated storms are common, Compton said because it takes 6 minutes for the radar to complete a cycle, spotters are key for reporting spin-ups or smaller events not visible on radar.

"Many times throughout my career,

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2A

## 9 pounds of meth found just west of county line

2 arrested after McDonald County, drug task force execute warrant

BY KYLE TROUTMAN

kt troutman@cassville-democrat.com

Two people were arrested on Jan. 13 following a McDonald County and Ozarks Drug Enforcement Team bust in Powell, just west of the Barry County line, that allegedly turned up near-

## METH BUST

**Where:** Powell, just west of Barry County line  
**What:** Two individuals arrested, more than 8 pounds of meth recovered  
**More:** Man found hiding in woods after bust

ly 9 pounds of methamphetamine.

Devin Black, born 1980, of Powell, and Dennis Wishon, born 1995, of Seneca, are each charged with first-degree drug trafficking.

According to a probable cause statement filed by Blake Barrett, deputy with the McDonald County Sheriff's Office, at about 1:30 a.m. on Jan. 13, authorities went to the suspect's address in Powell to serve a narcotics warrant. A press release from McDonald County Sheriff Rob Evenson said law enforcement had received information Black had allegedly returned to her residence the day before with four pounds of methamphetamine.

Upon arrival, Barrett said

three people were arrested outside a bus in which Black was living. Evenson's release said more individuals fled the scene.

After starting a search of the bus, Barrett said he located two clear baggies allegedly containing a white

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NEWS BRIEFS

Pioneer Road District to meet

The Pioneer Road District Quarterly Meeting will be held on Jan. 29 at 6 p.m. at the Wheaton Volunteer Fire Department building, located at 407 E Hurlbut in Wheaton.

Library events upcoming

The following events will be held at the Cassville Branch Library: Thursday, Move 'N' Groove Low Impact Exercise, 11 a.m., sign-up requested, Libraries for Everyone, 2 p.m., Kids Movie, 3:30 p.m.; Saturday, Crochet, 10 a.m. to noon; Tuesday, Story Time (ages 3-6), 10 a.m., Homeschool Class, 11 a.m.

Cassville Farmers' Market open on Saturdays

The Cassville Farmers Market is open weekly on Saturdays on the Barry County Courthouse Square, from 8 a.m. to noon. Vendors are offering eggs, vegetables, hand-made crafts, baked goods and more. Those interested in becoming a vendor may contact Chad Sprinkle at 417-846-3539.

Wheaton Depot Museum to reopen in April

The Wheaton Depot Museum is closed for the winter and plans to reopen in April. For more information, or special requests, people may call 417-846-3146.

Lessons offered before Seligman's Saturday dances

The Seligman Chamber of Commerce country dances at the Seligman Chamber Event Center are every Saturday from 7-10 p.m. No alcohol is allowed. Admission is \$10 per person, and 18-and-under are free. There is a potluck, 50-50 drawing and door prizes. Free dance lessons will also be given from 5-6 p.m. For more information, people may call 479-903-3640.

OATS rides available in Barry County

OATS Transit offers regular transportation services for the rural general public of any age, seniors, and individuals with disabilities. People may call the local OATS Transit office at 417-887-9272 or 800-770-6287 to schedule a ride or find out about services in the Barry County area. People may also visit the OATS website at oatstransit.org to view local schedules under "Bus Schedules," then click on the county of service. OATS Transit is hiring drivers statewide to continue serving riders. Openings are listed on the OATS website.

Students supporting students



Cassville High School Students Against Destructive Decisions (SADD) recently demonstrated the power of compassion and community by raising \$1,700 to support fellow CHS student Cooper Hendrix, who is preparing for an upcoming kidney transplant. SADD members organized and hosted a Color Fun Run in October, with all proceeds from participant registration and donations going directly to Hendrix and his family to help offset medical expenses related to the transplant. "I am so proud of our SADD students," said Elaine Boles, CHS school nurse and SADD club sponsor. "They organized the Color Run, but it was not just a Fun Color Run; it was about a community coming together to help show support for one of their own. Cooper is a senior at Cassville High School; he is on the donor list awaiting the call to receive his kidney. I would like to thank everyone involved either by making a donation and/or participating in the 1-mile walk/run event and helping us show our support for Cooper." The mission of the CHS SADD club is to provide students with the best prevention and intervention tools to deal with issues of underage drinking, drug use, impaired driving and other destructive decisions. From left: Isacc Luney, Hendrix and Ricky Norris. Contributed photo

Kidnapping: Warrant issued, bond set at \$100,000, cash only

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to he left knee, redness to her left thigh area, a cut to her right big tow, swelling on her right fifth finger and red markings on her neck. The victim confirmed there was an active order of protection against Lawson, with whom she's had a relationship. A warrant has been issued for Lawson's arrest, with a bond set at \$100,000, cash only.

Weather: Classes on Feb. 7 in Cassville, Feb. 24 in Monett

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1A  
that has helped us get warnings out rapidly," Compton said. "We have sounded sirens when radar and the National Weather Service say there is no tornado, but a trained spotter is reporting seeing one. There's been more than a few times where spotters have reported seeing something the National Weather Service isn't seeing, then later, we find damage." Compton said the classes are geared toward delivering information spotters want to know, which has led to diversity in the programming year by year. The Barry County training class in Cassville will be on Feb. 7 at 10 a.m. at the Cassville High School Commons Area and the regional training will be on Feb. 24 at 7 p.m. the Monett City Park Casino. Both classes are free of charge. Topics include severe weather formation; Identification of dangerous storms, including severe thunderstorms, tornadic thunderstorms, flash flooding, lightning and safe weather spotting practices; spotter communications; and countywide event coordination. "Anyone can attend either training, and at the regional meeting, we hope to fill that room with 100 or more people from multiple jurisdictions and counties," Compton said. "We haven't done a regional training in a while, so we're glad to be able to do it this year." Because classes are open to the public, Compton is hoping for strong turnout. "A better turnout helps us keep these classes going year after year," he said. "Russ Nichols also has done a great job reaching out and putting the regional class together."

Meth: Mushrooms, pills, paraphernalia also found

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1A  
crystal substance weighing 32 grams. While searching, a backpack was located outside next to Wishon, which allegedly contained multiple clear gallon-size bags with a white crystal substance, in total weighing 3,722 grams, or 8.3 pounds. Barrett said while interviewing Wishon, he allegedly stated Black had just traveled to Oklahoma City and brought the substance back to the house. He said when law enforcement arrived, he grabbed the bag and ran trying to not get her in trouble. According to Evenson's release, after the residence was secured, authorities conducted an extensive search of the property, utilizing foot patrols and drones in the wooded area. Wishon was located hiding in the woods with the backpack. As part of the search, Evenson said law enforcement also allegedly recovered 22 grams of suspected psilocybin mushrooms, eight unidentified pills and various items of drug paraphernalia. Barrett noted that Black has multiple felony convictions from different states, including possession of a controlled meth, failure to appear on a felony and possession of fentanyl in Arkansas, as well as possession with intent to deliver or sell in Tennessee. Black and Wishon are both being held in the McDonald County jail on no bond.

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The *Cassville Democrat* corrects factual errors or clarifies information promptly and courteously. If you have a correction or clarification, please email Publisher Kyle Troutman at ktroutman@cassville-democrat.com.

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Barry County

Health Corner



WIC services available at Barry County Health Department

The Barry County Health Department offers WIC (Women, Infant, and Children) services to clients that qualify. The WIC program is a supplemental nutritional program for women, children, and infants. Eligibility includes pregnant women, women breastfeeding their infant up to the infant's first birthday, and postpartum women up to 6 months. It also covers infants up to their 1st birthday and children through the age of 5 years. You must live in Missouri and the household income can be no more than 185% of the federal poverty income guidelines.


WIC offers a variety of foods including: milk, cheese, yogurt, eggs, peanut butter, whole grains, fresh and frozen fruits/vegetables. It offers supplemental infant formula, infant cereals, and infant fruits/vegetables. WIC can offer an average monthly savings of \$60.00 per child.

A very vital part of WIC is offering nutritional education and support to our clients. We encourage our clients to participate in goal setting and discuss topics related to nutrition and activity. WIC believes that breastfeeding is best for the baby if possible and offers education and support through our program. Our nutritionists and Breastfeeding Coordinator can offer one-on-one counseling with new moms in order to promote a successful breastfeeding journey.

Please call The Barry County Health Department at 417-847-2114 to see if you qualify and make an appointment for certification.


*Publisher's note: This article is courtesy of Barry County Health Department, located at 90 Barry County Drive in Cassville. The Department may be reached at 417-847-2114.*

Bright Futures gets winter clothing from Amazon




The Cassville R-IV Bright Futures program has been selected as a recipient of the Amazon Together We Give program. The program was nominated for this donation by Sim's Tile and Flooring, which serves as an Amazon delivery hub in Cassville. Through this donation, Cassville R-IV received 60 jackets, 60 hats and 60 pairs of socks. These items will help keep Cassville students warm during the winter months. Bright Futures' mission is to bring community members together to help meet the basic needs of all students at Cassville R-IV. This generous contribution will directly benefit several students by ensuring they have essential winter clothing. From left: Ross Edie, delivery driver; Mindi Artherton, Cassville School District; and Hazelynn, Bailey and Rozlynn Sims, Sim's Tile and Flooring. Contributed photo


PHOTO ALERT!



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New crochet class at Cassville High School



A new crochet class has started during engage hour in the high school library, taught by student Emma Bowling. Bowling often crochets during the school day, and when asked if she'd be willing to teach others, she jumped right in. The group meets once a week during the second half of engage. Bowling even put together small starter kits for participants to help them get started. Contributed photo

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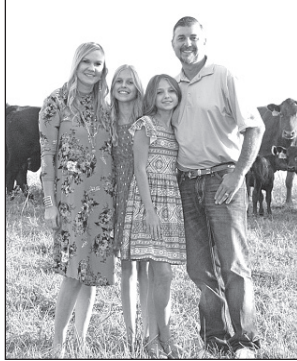
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# COMMENTARY

## PUBLISHER'S VIEW



KYLE TROUTMAN

### Pick up a whistle!

I got my first job at 11. Well, I suppose it wasn't technically a job. They say do the things you love and you'll never work a day in your life. At that age, the thing I loved most was soccer.

I played any chance I got, and as soon as I was old enough, I followed in my father's footsteps and picked up a whistle.

The job was refereeing soccer games on the weekends, and for a pre-teen, the money was fantastic! I started doing younger youth games, but by my mid and late teens, I had graduated to refereeing youth my age or even a year or two older, as well as assistant refereeing for the men's amateur league, where I could make \$150 a day if I put in about 8 hours.

Refereeing any sport is challenging. There are the black and white rules of the game, like if the ball goes out of bound on the sideline, the team who did not touch the ball last gets a throw-in. But, like anything else in life, there are gray areas. The phrase for this in the soccer refereeing world is, "In the opinion of the referee."

Through working thousands of games from age 11-26, when I moved to Cassville, I had nearly weekly lessons in decision-making, fairness and game management.

These are tools I took with me in my daily life and in my career. Upset customers and angry coaches are not all that different from one another. Keeping calm, explaining situations and reaching solutions are all easier said than done when dealing with the ill-tempered.

I have my few horror stories from the field. The most memorable was when I was about 12 years old and refereeing a U-9 game. I don't remember the exact cause of the argument, but the coaches of both teams started getting into it, so much so the game came to a halt as kids and parents watched the duo square up with one another. It wasn't the last time I had to send a coach or parent to the parking lot, and it takes a considerable amount of courage as a pre-teen to tell two grown adults, "This game will not continue if you both don't leave."

Outside of the negative parent and coach interactions over the years, the benefits from refereeing are abundantly clear. For soccer especially, physical fitness was a big plus. Refs, at least the ones who do it right, run about 6-8 miles in a 90-minute match, more than most players in the game.

There was also a connection to community, the referee community. I developed many great relationships with my fellow referees not only where I was based in Little Rock, but also in places like Memphis, where we would routinely work weekend tournaments.

Another benefit was travel and life experiences. Twice, I refereed at the Disney Soccer Tournament at the Walt Disney Wide World of Sports complex in Kissimmee, Fla. Through my late teens, I participated in the Olympic Development Program, enjoying a week-long camp at the University of Alabama playing against the best players in a 12-state region, then getting a couple days off and refereeing the following week with some of the best refs in the region.

Akin to dealing with coaches, parents or players upset with calls is the fact that I built a thick skin. Keeping your cool in some moments is tougher than it may seem, but professionalism shown in high-energy moments is translatable to many, many other facets of regular life.

Also, by exuding the correct professionalism, you end up becoming a role model for younger (or even older) referees who find themselves in similar situations. Being placed in that role gives a sense of pride and joy I've found tough to replicate since leaving the game.

While I don't referee much any more, constrained by time, work and having a family, I still enjoy watching referees in all sports I cover, and make an effort to compliment them when the opportunity arises.

An example of that was in the district championship football game against Seneca. The referee on Cassville's side was the epitome of a good official. On top of his good calls and vocal explanations when maybe not everyone agreed, he offered candy to managers and kept things light by dancing to the music over the scoreboard.

After that game ended, I chased him down just to say, "Hey man, you called a great game and I could tell you were having a lot of fun. Keep it up."

His response was greater than I expected. "Hey, hey guys," he called out to his fellow officials grinning ear to ear. "Did you hear what that guy said?"

If you frequent gyms or fields this year to watch youth sports, please keep in mind that no matter how well or poorly a referee may be doing, we are all human. Refs don't go into games intending to make bad calls, but they do happen. Like anything else in life, adversity is part of the game.

Also, there is a shortage of referees in nearly all sports, partially due to treatment, so if you have time or interest, or love sports and being a role model, give it a shot. If you have kids who play sports, encourage them to sign up.

Advancement opportunities are everywhere, and they will learn while also doing something fun. At least, it was fun for me.

*Kyle Troutman has served as editor of the Cassville Democrat since 2014 and owner/publisher since 2023. He is a three-time ISWNE Golden Dozen award winner. He may be reached at 417-847-2610 or ktroutman@cassville-democrat.com.*

## STAFF VIEW

### Take it or leave it

In spite of Russian trolls and slanted algorithms, some food for thought can be harvested from Facebook.

Three recent posts gave me pause for consideration.

"If a person wonders what they would have been doing if they had lived in Hitler's Pre-World War II Germany in 1938, they're probably doing it now," one Facebook post stated.

I can't argue. Today's headlines are increasingly overwhelming. I want to look away and believe that totalitarianism can't happen here, as many Germans surely did.

Some might say that the U.S. today can't be compared to 1938 Germany, but similarities are hard to ignore. The following tidbits are courtesy of Wikipedia.

Before his election in 1924, Hitler gained popular support by promoting German nationalism, antisemitism, and anti-communism. His oratory was charismatic; his propaganda campaign, which included playing on Christians' fears of "being swamped by an influx of Eastern European Jews," was effective.

After Hitler's election in 1933, Germany withdrew from the League of Nations and the World Disarmament Conference, and military spending was given priority over unemployment relief.

Members of the national military, as well as civil servants, were required to pledge an oath of loyalty to Hitler himself, instead of to Germany's constitution.

In a move that transformed Hitler's government into a "de facto legal dictatorship," basic rights were suspended and people could be detained without trial.

Hitler gained full control over the legislative and executive branches of government, and he and his allies began to suppress the remaining opposition. Elections became a sham, as non-voters and those who attempted to vote



SHEILA HARRIS

against Hitler were threatened with reprisal. Political opponents were rounded up, arrested and shot, but many German citizens excused Hitler, believing that he was restoring order.

Hitler told a British correspondent in 1934 that German citizens laughed when he told them he intended to remain in power, but he got the last laugh when he eliminated the last legal remedy by which he could be removed from office.

Hindsight revealed the estimated 6 million Jews and millions of journalists, professors, dissenters, homosexuals, Jehovah's Witnesses and others whom Hitler and his cohorts murdered, but the average German didn't wake up until trouble was at their doorstep. By then, silence behooved them, if they were to live.

"Totalitarianism doesn't arrive with a warning label, [but] grows when silence feels safer than truth," states a quote on Facebook attributed to blogger Ella Hicks.

The concept is familiar.

In a good marriage, wisdom sometimes dictates holding one's tongue for the sake of preserving the relationship.

But in a bad marriage, one partner must remain silent – to tiptoe as if walking on eggshells – to avoid detonating the wrath of the other. Such fear-motivated silence is not golden, no matter what virtuous spin is put on it.

The dynamic represents a relationship rotten at its core. Fear-induced silence allows totalitarians to flourish while producing guilt, self-loathing and shame in those who remain silent.

As of late, I've found myself walking on eggshells, trying hard to claim virtue by telling myself that, by remaining silent, I'm keeping discord out of the local community.

Perhaps.

But it's possible that my silence is also contributing in some small way to the death of our democracy. Sad that it's come to this.

Which brings me to the third Facebook post I read that made me stop and think. The question was asked, and I paraphrase, why people repeatedly post controversial material on Facebook. Do they suppose that people can't do their own research and formulate their own opinions? The writer wondered.

I gave that post and the question some serious thought.

In this age of news bombardment and information overload, it's almost impossible for any one person to do enough research to learn every facet of every topic pertinent to our national interest. With Facebook, I can learn what other people are reading or thinking about, and, in so doing, maybe broaden my own horizons.

Facebook and various online news sources give me freedom to sift, sort and digest, and I'm under no obligation to agree. Sometimes, in turn, I like to share what I learn.

A person can take it or leave it, but, in sharing, my obligation is fulfilled.

*Sheila Harris is a long-time Barry County resident and a sales executive and investigative reporter for the Cassville Democrat with a particular interest in environmental and human-interest topics. She may be reached at sheilaharrisads@gmail.com.*

## AMERICAN INSIGHTS

### Born of promise and protest

On Wednesday morning, August 14, 1765, Andrew Oliver awoke to find himself hanging in effigy from a Boston Liberty Tree. Like all those who accepted the position of stamp distributor, Oliver's effigy swayed "the whole day without the least opposition," the Boston Evening Post reported. In the evening, "a number of reputable people assembled," took down the effigy, and paraded it "in a regular and solemn manner" through the streets. Stopping at the dock on Kilby Street, the crowd leveled a building reputed to house the dreaded stamps. Taking "the wooden remains," the crowd marched in a mock funeral procession to Fort Hill, where they kindled "a noble fire" and committed the effigy to the flames "for those sins of the people which had caused such heavy judgments as the Stamp Act, etc., to be laid upon them."

Naturally harrowed by the incident, Oliver resigned his position the next day. "The newspapers will sufficiently inform you of the abuse I have been met with," he wrote to Jared Ingersoll, a fellow stamp distributor in Connecticut. "After having stood the attack for 36 hours—a single man against a whole people—[and] the government not being able to afford me any help during the whole time, I was persuaded to yield in order to prevent what was coming."

The Stamp Act birthed a crisis in America that had no parallel. "I took every step in my power to prevent the passage of the Stamp Act," Benjamin Franklin, Pennsylvania's agent in London, wrote. "But the tide was too strong against us." Passed overwhelmingly by Parliament in March 1765 despite a flood of petitions



DAKODA PETTIGREW

against it, the legislation went beyond the regulations of trade in previous times and levied fifty-five different duties directly on the colonists. No piece of paper escaped the new taxation, which included duties on attorney licenses, playing cards, land grants, college diplomas, and newspapers. "For every skin or piece of vellum or parchment, or sheet of paper, on which shall be engrossed, written, or printed," the colonists read over and over again for twenty-five pages, "a stamp duty." "Poor America," Edmund Pendleton wrote. "Every kind of business transacted on paper is taxed."

Americans took particular umbrage at the taxation of their newspapers, which by 1765 had become a cherished medium of free expression. The act, the historian Arthur Schlesinger wrote, "was a millstone round the colonial printer's neck, for it hampered him not only as a newspaper publisher but also in all other phases of his business." Nearly every aspect of the printing business became the object of new taxes, which covered sheet sizes, pamphlets, almanacs, and advertisements. Failure to comply, of course, would result in heavy fines. "I must Die, or submit to that which is worse than Death," the defiant New Hampshire Gazette declared, "be Stamped, and lose my Freedom."

Most American printers were determined not to comply. "Be not

intimidated," John Adams wrote anonymously in the Boston Gazette, "your paper deserves the patronage of every friend to his country." "The liberty of free inquiry is one of the first and most fundamental of a free people," declared a writer in the unstamped New London Gazette. "The press," the editor of the Connecticut Gazette wrote, "is the test of truth, the bulwark of public safety, the guardian of freedom, and the people ought not to sacrifice it." On Saturday, September 21, the radical printer William Goddard published the Constitutional Courant, a single-issue, single-page newspaper in New Jersey "Containing Matters interesting to Liberty, and no wise repugnant to Loyalty." Vowing not to give in to "the vile minions of tyranny and arbitrary power," the Courant declared, "Let it be our honor, let it be our boast, to be odious to these foes to humankind."

And odious they would be. Riots demanding the resignation of stamp distributors took place throughout the colonies. In Connecticut, a party of hundreds surrounded Ingersoll and forced him to resign. After acquiescing, the mob instructed him to throw his hat in the air and shout, "Liberty and property!" three times.

From Portsmouth to Savannah, effigies of stamp distributors, along with those resembling royal governors and the King's ministry, lit the night sky, and on October 3, the elderly John Hughes, the only remaining stamp distributor north of the Potomac, resigned.

In Virginia, Patrick Henry declared that the colonial assembly alone had the "right and power to lay taxes and impositions...and

that every attempt to vest such power in any person or persons, whatsoever other than the General Assembly...has a manifest tendency to destroy British as well as American freedom." "The countenance of so respectable a colony as Virginia confirmed the wavering, and emboldened the timid," David Ramsay wrote. "Opposition to the Stamp Act, from that period, assumed a bolder face."

By the end of the year, the colonists had effectively defeated the Stamp Act. "If Great Britain can or will suffer such conduct to pass unpunished," Hughes wrote, "a man need not be a prophet to see clearly that their empire in North America is at an end." Eleven years later, the colonies declared independence.

Standing inside the Old North Church in Boston on April 18, 1975, President Gerald Ford said, "It is well to recall this evening that America was born of both promise and protest—the promise of religious and civil liberties, and protest for representation and against repression."

Years earlier, in 1787, Thomas Jefferson wrote that "a little rebellion now and then is a good thing, and [is] as necessary in the political world as storms in the physical."

Democracy may be noisy on occasion—even silly—but it's better than the alternative: as Jefferson wrote, "I prefer the tumult of liberty to the quiet of servitude."

*Dakota Pettigrew is a summa cum laude graduate of Liberty University with a Bachelor's of science in political science and history. Pettigrew's father went to school in Cassville, and he lives in Tennessee. He can be reached at pettigrewdakoda6@gmail.com.*



50 years ago  
Jan. 28, 1976  
— COURT HOUSE PLAN CHANGED DUE TO FUNDS

A major change in plans of the renovation of the Circuit Court spaces has been ordered by the Barry County Court. The \$48,000 project will not include a weight bearing floor above the courtroom. Presiding Judge Nolan McNeill announced this week the court had eliminated this phase of the program as too costly. The administrative court will instead remodel the spaces, lower the ceiling and at the same time institute a switching of office spaces to accommodate moving of the Barry County Extension offices to the court house. First of the moves will be to provide spaces in the present balcony area at the rear of the court for Prosecuting Attorney Dale Burke. Present spaces used by County School Superintendent Charles Vaughan and Assessor Glen Nicoll will be allotted to the extension office, now in the basement of the Cassville post office. Nicoll's office will move to the current downstairs offices of Burke and the school's section will go to the old magistrate-probate court offices. Both Surveyor Austin Brock and Recorder Artie Spain will retain the present second story offices. George Ulmer, Miller-Newell and Associates of Cassville, was instructed to provide plans for this remodeling and relocating. Rooftop air conditioning will be planned for the upstairs offices in the courthouse. Associate Judges Lige Frost and Dick Sanders concurred in the plan that will lower the ceiling and generally remodel the present chambers of Judge William Pinnell. Installing a weight bearing floor above the entire court room was determined to be out of reach by available funds when the ground under the structure was examined.

**— NEW OFFICERS NAMED IN SHERIFF'S POSSE**

The Barry County Sheriff's Posse met Monday night at the First National Bank Building. Aside from regular monthly business, new officers were elected for the year. Elected were president, Sheriff Vernon Still, vice-president Bob Norman, secretary-treasurer Artie Spain, drill captain Donald Stumpff, assistant drill captain, Johnny Saunders. Carl Fanning was elected a three year board member, Floyd Ash two years and Warren Drake, one year. The Posse discussed various activities for the coming season. In commemoration of the Bicentennial they plan to participate in the events at the American Legion Grounds February 21 with other organizations. The event sponsored by the Posse will be in the form of an old fashioned horse race. The details of this event are not complete at this time. Also discussed was the possibility of having a Pony Express mail run during Rodeo Week at Cassville. This event would consist of posse members making about a 25 or 30 mile mail route, carrying the mail by horse back. Horses and riders would be situated at each mile section. Mail will be carried in saddle bags and transferred from one rider to another each mile. Sheriff Still expressed high appreciation to the member the past year and would like to have other members join Membership applications are available. The application is to be signed by two members recommending applicant and approved by the board. Anyone wishing to join can get in touch with Sheriff Still or any member of the Posse.

40 years ago  
Jan. 29, 1986  
— CHAMBER WANTS TO INCREASE \$17 MILLION TOURIST INDUSTRY

Cassville Chamber of Commerce emphasis this year will be toward improving the \$17 million dollar tourist income for Barry County. That's what

Dr. Chip Kammerlohr, incoming president told the 160 members and guests if the annual membership dinner Saturday night. And, to back up the project, the C of C hosted Eugene Dilbeck, director of marketing services, Oklahoma Tourism and Recreation Department, as keynote speaker. Dilbeck, a native of Purdy, started remarks with admitting he got started in the tourist industry as a high school student back in 1963 as an employee at Roaring River State Park. Using a 19-point presentation of possibilities for Cassville to consider, Dilbeck said Barry County ranked 28th in Missouri's 114 counties in tourist income. He said a sidelight of the industry is a \$3.2 million payroll from those who provide services to this area's visitors. Encouraging the full usage of the area's deep history, presentation of existing and new events and festivals, Dilbeck said "anything that pulls a traveler off the road to visit Cassville or the surrounding area, would be an increase." The speaker said the area's momentum of the 1960's had probably been lost to other regional attractions. "But," Dilbeck said, "these aren't Cassville and surrounding area's major competitors. Actually, attitude of maintaining the status quo can be more of a problem than anything," he said. There were over 160 persons attending the event, one of the largest in recent history. More than once extreme bad weather conditions have prevailed on the dinner evening. The speaker suggested local tourism interests get with others in the four-county area, or even branch out into a multi-state effort. He also spoke on regional efforts to keep the area clean. Another feature would be to make everyone that comes into contact with visitors make a good attitude presentation, be knowledgeable about area attractions and aware of the value of tourism dollars. Awards presented at the meeting included a special recognition to Mrs. Lucille Johnston, an area educator and business person for her support of the Chamber. Receiving a community service award was Mrs. Maxine Rowland, founder of Second Act, booster of Share Your Christmas, hospital auxiliarian and district public relations contributor. Outgoing president Landon Fletcher made the presentations and then received the past-president's plaque from Kammerlohr. Entertainment was provided by Matt Cardin, CHS musician on the piano and electronic keyboard. Members of the board introduced included: Don Cupps, Gary Fields, Bob Mitchell, John Anglum, Dr. Carolyn Hunter, Chip Lawson, Jim LeCompte, Dick Moger and Joe Preddy. Not attending were Byron Tucker and Debbie Workman. Ella Frost, C of C secretary, was reorganized for her work during the year by Fletcher. Three Belles was credited with decoration ideas and arrangements. Mrs. Louise Brooks and school cafeteria staff received a gift from the Chamber. Committee chairpersons for the year will include: Mark Smith, ambassador; Ron Miller, agriculture; Landon Fletcher, advertising and public relations; John and Cecilia Miller, community betterment; Jim LeCompte, community development; Chip Lawson, finance; Bob Mitchell and John Anglum, industrial development; Dick Moger, industrial relations; Tom Cardin, legislative and city planning; Debbie Workman, membership; Joy Chappell, merchants; Joe Preddy, roads and highways; Corky Stehlik, special events; and Jack Nickols, tourism.

30 years ago  
Jan. 24, 1996  
— CHAMBER SALUTES CITIZENS FOR COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Cassville forward was



**40 YEARS AGO: HONORED FOR LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AND COMMUNITY SERVICE** — A highlight of this weekend's annual Cassville Chamber of Commerce banquet was the awarding of the organization's Community Service and Lifetime Achievement Awards. Recipients of these honors are pictured above with Mark Smith, 1995 chamber president. Darrell Ledenham, on the left, received the Community Service Award for countless hours spent organizing Cassville's Sesquicentennial celebration and serving as chairman of the planning committee. Bob Mitchell, on the right, received the prestigious Lifetime Achievement Award for his extensive involvement in the community over the past 42 years. An article, highlighting the achievements of both recipients, accompanies this photograph. Democrat file photo

the underlying theme voiced by 1996 Chamber President Kathy White at the Chamber of Commerce's membership banquet Saturday. White's address was part of the annual event that marks a new year for the chamber. Over 110 business leaders attended the banquet, which was held in the Cassville High School cafeteria. The featured speaker for the evening was Jason Allen, who is the northwest Arkansas representative for the Fellowship of Christian Athletes. Allen, who is a former Arkansas Razorback quarterback, gave a motivational speech about having a winning attitude based on Character. Outgoing Chamber President Mark Smith had the honor of presenting the chamber's Lifetime Achievement and Community Service awards. Darrell Ledenham received the Community Service Award for his leadership in planning Cassville's Sesquicentennial. Bob Mitchell was presented with the Lifetime Achievement Award for his 43 years of serving the community in numerous leadership positions.

**Bob Mitchell**

Over the past 43 years, nothing happened in Cassville without Bob Mitchell's familiar presence. Hat turned backwards on his head, camera around his neck and notepad in hand, Bob chronicled area events as editor of the Cassville Democrat. Mitchell's attendance at events was never passive. He not only wrote about the city of Cassville but has been a driving force in its progress. Mitchell joined the Cassville Democrat staff in 1953 after four years in the U.S. Navy. During his stint as a Navy journalist, he had the distinct honor of meeting Missouri's own president, Harry S. Truman. Mitchell remembers Truman singling him out of a crowd of servicemen and stating that he was Means Ray's nephew from Cassville. Mitchell's involvement and leadership in community organizations is extensive. He was president of the Chamber of Commerce in 1974 and 1976. He also served as president of the Cassville Rotary Club in 1970. In 1984, he received the Community Service Award from the Cassville Chamber. The 1947 graduate of Cassville High School has served on the city's planning and zoning commission and was chairman of the March of Dimes for many years. Mitchell also was a member of the Boy Scouts board of review. His career achievements included being elected president of the Ozark Press Association in 1969. Mitchell has served twice as commander of the American Legion and has chaired the group's reunion committee for many years. He was named an honorary colonel by Governors John Dalton and Warren Hearnes. If Mitchell was asked which accomplishments he is most proud of,

he would probably list his involvement in Cassville's Industrial Development Corporation. He has been an IDC board member since the 1970s and currently serves as the corporation's board chairman. The IDC is responsible for attracting industry to the area. Mitchell has also been known to champion causes which he believes are crucial to the future of this area. He worked hard to make sure that Shell Knob's Central Crossing Bridge became a reality.

He and other area leaders lobbied local congressmen and got their attention. The end result was construction of the bridge, which now links Shell Knob to areas south of the lake. Mitchell's wife, Sue, daughter, Shelley, son-in-law, Dennis, and grandson, Andy, were in attendance at the banquet to watch Mitchell receive the award.

**Darrell Ledenham**

For the first six months of 1995, Darrell Ledenham was the busiest man in Cassville. During that time, he chaired Cassville's Sesquicentennial Committee and prepared for a spectacular 150th birthday celebration. Under Ledenham's leadership, volunteer members of the committee worked eagerly to finalize arrangements for an unforgettable weekend. Ledenham said his goal for the event was to make it fun-filled and affordable for everyone. Instead of "begging" businesses and individuals for contributions, Ledenham and his committee were able to solicit the help of the city's four financial institutions and seven industries to subsidize the cost of putting on the city's birthday party. Ledenham's favorite memories from the Sesquicentennial include the hot air balloon spectacular and Willard Scott's display of Cassville's afghan on national television. Another milestone was locating William B. and Louis Porter Cass to

serve as parade marshals. The logistics of scheduling the many events and taking care of the details, took all of Ledenham's personal time and attention for months. Darrell's wife, Beverly, said that Darrell's "life" stopped until it was all over. The Washburn native and MSSC graduate is a social worker at the Missouri Division of Aging. He currently serves as treasurer of the Volunteer Advisory Board, which oversees Second Act and Share Your Christmas. He is fulfilling his second term on the Cassville City Council and is a member of the Barry County Genealogy and Historical Society. Darrell and Beverly have three daughters, Kristi Bryant and Kandace Koehler of Cassville and Kara Ledenham of Joplin. The Ledenhams live in one of Cassville's architectural treasures, a 1906 Victorian house they have restored and filled with period antiques.

**— COUNCIL PLACES BUSINESS LICENSE ISSUE BEFORE VOTERS**

Cassville City Council members voted Monday to place two issues on the April 2 ballot. They are asking residents to approve fee increases for city business licenses and are requesting that the city collector's position be changed from elected to appointed. The business license fee has been set at 50 cents for the past 30 years. City Administrator Greg Beavers said payment notices were sent to city merchants several months ago. In response, many business owners called and asked if their 50 cent bill was a typographical error, Beavers said. After reviewing license fees in other cities, the council is proposing a new, more detailed fee schedule. The proposed license fees for merchant, retail and food service businesses are: \$10, for businesses with fewer than five employees; \$15, for six to 15 employees; \$25 for 15 to

25 employees; and \$35 for businesses with more than 25 employed. Other proposed fee categories are: financial institutions, \$35; professional services, \$15; service establishments without retail sales, \$10; daily peddler's license: \$5; weekly peddler's license, \$25; 30-day peddler's license, \$100 Beavers said the fees were set to cover city costs not to generate revenue. The council is also asking voters to change the city collector to an appointed position. If the issue is approved, the new designation will take effect after Collector Kathleen Speer's term expires in 1997. Jeanette Crates was hired by the city as a full-time utility billing clerk to assist the collector who is currently on medical leave. Come Beavers said the council's reasons for wanting an appointed collector are three-fold. He said an elected collector's only duty is to collect city revenue. If the position were appointed, the collector could undertake additional duties. He also said that an appointed position would provide more stability. An appointed collector would also be able to work full-time, allowing city residents to pay bills eight hours a day every day. City voters have rejected a similar issue twice in the past two decades. In other action, the council:

- Accepted a revised bid for phase one of the city's greenway trail. Beavers said site clearing and trail preparation costs were deleted from the bids, as were 700 feet of board walk and a three-inch crushed stone trail surface. After bids were revised, Hutchens Construction was the low bidder at \$64,193.52. Other revised bids were: \$68,676.14, Seven Valleys Construction; and \$72,952, Christian Construction. The council voted to accept the low bid. Beavers said public work crews would begin site work on Feb. 5.

## Haven of the Ozarks Pet of the Week

**Meet Mary Kay!** Mary Kay came to us with 8 puppies, and she has been a great mom, but her puppy raising days are behind her. She is looking for a loving home. She is the biggest sweetheart and so gentle. Her estimated date of birth is May 26, 2021. She is a Great Pyrenees. Adopters can complete an application at [www.havenoftheozarks.org/adopt](http://www.havenoftheozarks.org/adopt). No appointment is needed. The Haven is open from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., seven days a week. All Haven of the Ozarks pets are fixed, up to date on their vaccinations, and microchipped. For more information, people may email [havenozarksanctuary@gmail.com](mailto:havenozarksanctuary@gmail.com), or call at 417-835-3647. Contributed photo



OBITUARIES



THOMAS 'TOM' PARKER

Thomas "Tom" Parker, born Oct. 25, 1925, died on Jan. 8, 2025.

Tom was born in Belknap, Ill., to Harold "Cotton" Parker and Lottie Mae Parker, of Cypress, Ill., who preceded him in death.

Also preceding in death were his brother, Danny Parker, and sister, Diana Ledbetter.

Parker is survived by his wife of 43 years, Theresa Parker; son Michael L. Keith and wife Jenea Keith, of Cassville; son Matthew Parker, of Kimberling City; son Chris Parker and wife Aaron Parker, of Grantsburg, Ill.; daughter Shanna and husband Lynnne Crain, of Olmstead, Ill.; grandson Garrett Keith; grandson Zeth Parker; grandson Xander Parker; 27 grandchildren; and 12 great-grandchildren.

Tom was a member of Ironworkers Local and Operator Engineers Local 513. He was a Boy Scout Master, Sunday School teacher, avid sportsman and hunter of upland birds, deer, elk, ante-

lope and other game too numerous to name.

**PAID OBITUARY**



SONG HER

Song Her, 58, of Monett, Mo., passed away Friday, December 12, 2025, at CoxHealth Medical Center South in Springfield, Mo.

She was born in Laos, the daughter of Youateng Her and Ka Zoua Yang.

She was united in marriage to Youa Yang in Laos, who preceded her in death. Also preceding her in death were her parents.

Survivors include her sons, Oukham Yang of Monett, Mo., and Neng Yang of Laos; daughters, Mai Yang and husband Yee Xiong, iab os Yang and husband Xai Lee and Doua Song Yang and husband Tee Xiong all of Laos; brother, Bliu Tou Her of Tenn., and sister, Zeb Her of Calif.

Services will be held from 8:00 A.M. Saturday, January 24, 2026 until 9:00 A.M. Monday, January 26, 2026, at McQueen Funeral Home in Wheaton. Burial will be at 10:00 A.M. Monday, January 26, 2026 at Maplewood Cemetery in

Exeter, Mo.

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BRIAN RAYBURN NEWMAN

Brian Rayburn Newman, 47, of Buffalo, Mo., passed away Sunday, January 11, 2026, at Colonial Springs Healthcare Center in Buffalo, Mo.

He was born December 12, 1978, in Independence, Mo., the son of Randy and Nina (Smith) Newman. Preceding him in death was his father.

Survivors his mother, Nina Newman of Macks Creek, Mo.; life partner, Angie Coppola of Buffalo, Mo.; son, Jason Newman of Longview, Texas; daughters, Tiffany Gaylord of Camdenton, Mo., Kelly Newman of Longview, Texas and Holly Newman of Buffalo, Mo.; brother, Shane Newman of Macks Creek, Mo. and two grandsons.

He grew up and attended school in Independence and Macks Creek, Mo.

He had lived in Mo. his entire life. He was employed as a truck driver for several years. He was a member of Grace Community Free Methodist Church.

Services were held Thursday, January 15, 2026 at Grace Community Free Methodist Church in Buffalo, Mo. under direc-

tion of Fohn Funeral Home in Cassville. Reverend Vicki Coons conducted the service.

Burial was Friday, January 16, 2026 at Log Church Memorial Gardens in Butterfield, Mo. Reverend Mark Moller conducted the service.

Contributions may be made to the family in memory of Brian.

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DONALD E. SKINNER

Donald E. Skinner, 82, of Cassville, Mo., passed away on Tuesday, January 13, 2026, at his home.

He was born on February 21, 1943, in Hutchinson, Kan., to Neal and Ruth (Ranson) Skinner.

Preceding him in death were his parents and one daughter Shannon.

Survivors include, his wife Carolyn Sue Stephens-Skinner; one son Cary Skinner and his wife Kim of Springdale, Ark.; two grandchildren; one brother in law, Gary Stephens and his wife Vivian of Washburn, Mo.; three sister in laws, Glenda Price of Washburn, Mo., Sandra Daniels and her husband Fred of Cassville, Mo. and Coeta Stephens of Cassville, Mo.; and several nieces and nephews.

He proudly served his country in the United States Army from 1964 to 1966.

He was a dedicated member of Corinth Baptist Church in Cassville, Mo.

Graveside service were held Friday, January 16, 2026, at Washburn Prairie Cemetery in Washburn, Mo., Pastor Donnie Spears officiated.

Memorials may be made to Corinth Baptist Church and entrusted to White Funeral Home and Crematory.

Arrangements are under the direction of White Funeral Home and Crematory.

**White Funeral Home**  
and Crematory

Online condolences and webcasting of the funeral services may be found at [www.whitefuneralhome.org](http://www.whitefuneralhome.org)

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FELONY CHARGES

Who: Jeniffer Rice, born 1990, of Cassville

What: Is charged with stealing (\$25,000 or more) and unlawfully receiving public assistance benefits

More: Suspect allegedly received more than \$8K over five years

# Woman charged with welfare fraud

Cassville woman issued summons for allegedly stealing \$38K

**BY KYLE TROUTMAN**  
ktroutman@cassville-democrat.com

A Cassville woman has been charged with two felonies for allegedly defrauding the state of public assistance benefits to the tune of nearly \$40,000.

Jeniffer Rice, born 1990, of Cassville, is charged with stealing (\$25,000 or more) and unlawfully receiving public assistance benefits.

According to a probable cause statement filed by Ashley Peters, special agent with the Missouri Department of Social Services, between September 2020 and February 2025, Rice allegedly intentionally and fraudulently misrepresented her household information to the family support division on five applications for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits and five SNAP mid certification review forms to obtain benefits for which she was not eligible.

Rice allegedly did not report all income and resources to which she had access. As a result, she received \$38,391 in SNAP benefits for which she was not eligible.

A criminal summons has been issued for Rice, with the initial appearance set for March 5 at 8:30 a.m. in the courtroom of Judge Robert Foulke.

**INJURY WRECK**

When: 6:35 a.m. on Jan. 14

Where: Highway 90, two miles west of Washburn

Who: 44-year-old Springfield man, 62-year-old Cassville woman

# 2 injured in Hwy. 90 wreck

Vehicle goes off roadway, strikes tree

**BY KYLE TROUTMAN**  
ktroutman@cassville-democrat.com

Two people were injured in a single-vehicle wreck at 6:35 a.m. on Jan. 14 on Highway 90, two miles west of Washburn.

According to a Missouri State Highway Patrol report, A 62-year-old woman, of Cassville, was driving a 2025 Kia K4 westbound when her vehicle went off the right side of the roadway and struck a tree.

The woman and a passenger in the vehicle, a 62-year-old man, of Springfield, each suffered minor injuries and were transported to Mercy Hospital in Cassville.

Both were wearing safety devices, and the vehicle was totaled.

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# E9-1-1 earns award for dispatch excellence

Barry County  
recognized  
for 4th time as  
Accredited Center  
of Excellence

Barry County Emergency Services E9-1-1 has been recognized by The International Academies of Emergency Dispatch (IAED) as an Accredited Center of Excellence (ACE) for emergency medical dispatching and emergency police dispatching.

Barry County Emergency Services E9-1-1 is the 215th Medical ACE in the world and the world's 27th Police ACE, as well.

IAED is the standard-setting organization for emergency dispatch services worldwide. Accreditation (and subsequent re-accreditation) from the IAED is the highest distinction given to emergency communication centers, certifying that the center is performing at or above the established standards for the industry. Centers who earn ACE status are the embodi-

ment of dispatch done right, and have demonstrated strong local oversight, rigorous quality processes, and a commitment to data-driven continuous improvement.

This is the fourth time Barry County Emergency Services E9-1-1 has been accredited for its use of MPDS. It was first accredited in 2016. The agency is one of six Medical ACE's in Missouri. The center also uses the Fire Priority Dispatch System (FPDS) and the Police Priority Dispatch System (PPDS).

This is the organization's second Police accreditation, originally being accredited in police in 2022 making E9-1-1 dually accredited since then

Mike Phillips, Barry County Emergency Services E9-1-1 executive director, said it's satisfying to achieve this recognition. He said employees have grown accustomed to performing at a high level and to constantly providing exemplary care to callers.

"It is a great feeling to know that our guys are meeting this quality of service and care," he said. "I know it takes a lot of work, and it was nice for us to receive this recognition again.

I am proud of everyone who contributed to this success, from the call takers/dispatchers answering the calls, to the quality assurance members reviewing calls, to the support staff who keep it all together and the supervisors and management ensuring top performance is met"

Phillips said striving for ACE status and attaining this goal exemplifies everything the agency stands for. The accomplishment is a testament to the dedication and commitment everyone displays.

"At Barry County Emergency Services E9-1-1, we pride ourselves on meeting or exceeding standards and expectations in the emergency dispatch industry," he said. "We feel that earning the ACE distinction is one way we show our community and the citizens that we are performing at a high level and value the job we do. I think it proves to our employees and our community that they are meeting the highest standard of care in our industry and these guys are truly top performing."

"Accreditation is truly a pinnacle achievement," said Christof Chwojka, accreditation board chair at IAED. "We applaud the dedicated call takers, dispatchers, and leadership team at Barry County Emergency E9-1-1 for their commitment to quality, and for meeting that high standard that few achieve. We know their community can count on these first, first responders to do an outstanding job."

IAED will present Barry County Emergency Services E9-1-1 with an Accreditation plaque that commemorates their achievement. IAED Accreditation is the culmination of a lengthy, arduous process that includes the completion of the 20 Points of Accreditation, a detailed evaluation of performance by industry experts, and a final review and ruling by IAED.

"This process is undertaken by communications centers who desire to be the best of the best," said Kim Rigden, associate director of accreditation at IAED. "Achieving ACE confirms it. Barry County Emergency Services E9-1-1 should be very proud of this achievement and the wonderful service they provide to the community and their emergency responders."

Accreditation is valid for a

three-year period, during which all standards must be upheld.

Emergency communication centers can earn multiple accreditations, one for each emergency discipline they service (medical, fire, police, and emergency nurse triage).

More than 3,500 emergency communication centers worldwide use the medical, fire, police, and emergency nurse triage protocols developed and maintained by the IAED. The protocol-based system, known as the Priority Dispatch System, is recognized as the standard of care and practice for emergency dispatch and is used in 46 countries.

Barry County Emergency Services E9-1-1, located in Cassville, was established and took its first 9-1-1 call March 2008. It is funded by local sales tax. An average number of 50,000 calls for service come through the center annually with a staff of

23. E9-1-1 dispatches for eight law enforcement agencies (and assists several other state agencies in the area), 13 fire departments and first responders, and two ambulance agencies.

## Budget: Purchase of fuel tanks could stabilize costs for county vehicles

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1A

sioner.

"We want to pay off the ail in eight years so the loan doesn't stretch out 20-30 years," said Gary Blankenship, presiding commissioner.

The total cost for the Sheriff's Office and jail was \$17 million. The county intends to make two payments on the loan this year, \$364,000 in April toward interest, and a combined payment of \$914,000 in October, with \$550,000 going toward principal and another \$64,000 toward interest. Those payments will come out of the capital projects fund, budgeted at \$2.5 million this year.

Ennis said the additional reserve fund boost is possible after the county spent only \$4,851,913 of its budget in 2025, account-

ing for 72% of funds allocated, and total revenues to the county were nearly \$7.2 million.

One line item going up this year is office supplies, going from \$80,270 to \$241,770. Ennis said elections are the primary cause for the hike.

That extra money is for election supplies, as we are buying new equipment at a cost of \$96,000, plus we will have three full elections this year," she said. "We are also developing an amortization schedule with payments from entities holding elections, which will let us set aside funds for new election equipment in the future."

Blankenship said the new equipment should last about 9-10 years.

Budget lines going up

slightly for general costs included the county clerk, building and grounds, employee benefits, treasurer's office, collector's office, recorder's office and circuit court administration. Insurance went up, as did the public administrator, prosecuting attorney and coroner budgets. In addition to a 4% cost of living raise for all employees, Ennis said the county now offers a TeleDoc option, allowing employees to avoid copays by having virtual doctor's visit for minor issues.

The raise in the prosecutor's office fund is still intended to hire a crime victims advocate, a position that has remained vacant for two budgeting cycles and is split between

the Sheriff's Office and the Prosecuting Attorney's Office.

Capital projects-wise, the county does not have any major project on tap, outside of finishing the renovation of the courtroom at the historic Barry County Courthouse, as well as intending to buy tanks, pumps and monitoring systems to allow for a fuel station at the Sheriff's Office.

Schad said that purchase will allow the county to better predict and stabilize fuel costs. Gene Robbins, southern commissioner, said an example of potential savings with the move is that the county could buy fuel in bulk and avoid price fluctuations at the pump. And, if prices at the pump

are lower than what the county paid for fuel, those who drive county vehicles can take advantage of the lower commercial cost until it goes back above the county's bulk cost.

Projecting the \$6.2 million in revenue this year, Ennis said that figure is conservative, as officials all agreed they expect interest rates to drop and a downturn to occur.

"Treasurer Greta Tripp has been doing a good job investing our money in preparation for a downturn," Schad said.

One cost-saving measure the county took recently, Ennis said, was to take a lower mileage vehicle out of the Sheriff's Office rotation for use by the Collector's office,

negating the need to buy a new vehicle.

Regarding law enforcement, the Barry County Sheriff's Office has an approved budget of \$4,930,501, an increase of just over \$250,000 compared to 2025, with estimated revenue projection at \$3,562,500. The \$1,570,879 carried over from 2025 gives the office a total appropriation of \$5,133,379.

The Sheriff's Office will also have an emergency fund of about \$500,000 by the end of the year, and it spent \$4,082,057 in 2025, accounting for 87% of last year's allotment.

"All our elected officials worked hard on their budgets and are good stewards of taxpayer money," Schad said.



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# County updating courtroom with historical look



From left, Jeff Myers, Dusty Graig and Tyler Schmitz install double doors on the second story entrance to the courtroom at the Barry County Courthouse. Kyle Troutman/ktroutman@cassville-democrat.com



Evan Craig, with Jeff Myers Construction, cleans off brass door fittings for the Barry County Courthouse's courtroom on Thursday. The renovation project, which began in late October 2025, is set to be completed by the end of this month or early February. The project cost is \$218,000, and it is being funded by interest gained from American Rescue Plan Act funds the county previously invested. Kyle Troutman/ktroutman@cassville-democrat.com



Pictured is a view from the balcony of the Barry County Courthouse courtroom, which has been closed since the 1980s. A renovation project expected to be completed in the next month will open the balcony back up for use. Kyle Troutman/ktroutman@cassville-democrat.com

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# Tigers seek consistency

Exeter hoops hoping to get healthy as districts approach

**BY KYLE TROUTMAN**  
ktroutman@cassville-democrat.com  
On Friday, Exeter Boys Basketball coach Josh Trammell started his ninth different set of starters in 13 games, a trend the Tigers hope to break as they approach conference and dis-

**TIGERS HOOPS**  
**Record:** 1-13  
**Last result:** 83-24 loss to New Heights Christian  
**Next up:** Exeter travels to Marionville on Friday

trict play in coming weeks. In his first year at the helm, Trammell said the Tigers struggled through the first half of the season — bagging only one win, 84-28, over Bronaugh — and there were multiple reasons for the challenges.

“We’ve been dealing with a lot of adversity,” he said. “That’s been the story these last three weeks. There is a different dynamic with a new coach and new ideas and expectations, and we’ve been buying in, but doing things the correct way has been a challenge at times.” Trammell said outside of injuries, accountability has been difficult with players struggling to show up consistently. “We’re working hard on improving our accountability and consistency,” he said.

On the floor, the Tigers are looking to do what they do best — play fast. “We want to continue doing the things we’ve been successful at, like running the floor,” Trammell said. “When we run the floor, we can compete with anyone. In flashes, we’re very successful with that, but we’ve struggled to put together complete games with it.” Excluding three losses at the Pierce City Invitational, Exeter averages about 44 points per

CONTINUED ON PAGE 6B

## Lady Wildcats best Springfield Catholic



Cassville's Alex Holycross reels in a rebound during action against Springfield Central on Thursday. The Lady Wildcats prevailed in the contest, 56-27. Kyle Troutman/ktroutman@cassville-democrat.com



Cassville's Audrey Kennedy fights through a foul to get a shot up during a home game against Springfield Central on Thursday. Kyle Troutman/ktroutman@cassville-democrat.com



Cassville's Briley Artherton is fouled as she drives the lane during a home game against Springfield Central on Thursday. Kyle Troutman/ktroutman@cassville-democrat.com

## SCOREBOARD

### Wildcats win Neosho consolation bracket

The Cassville boys basketball team competed in the Crane tournament last week. On Jan. 12, Cassville fell to Monett, 62-51. Carlos Barrientos led in scoring with 16, followed by Aiden Whittington with 14. On Friday, Cassville beat Seneca, 70-32. Tyson Bohmke led the way with 22 points while Masin Bryan, Whittington and Spencer Drollinger all added 9 each. On Saturday the Wildcats won the consolation of the tournament defeating Glorio De Academy out of Springfield, 62-59. Whittington led the Wildcats in scoring with 24, followed by Bohmke with 13 and Bryan with 10. This week, Cassville hosted Hollister on Monday and will travel to Neosho on Friday.

### Lady Wildcats win only game of the week

The Cassville girls basketball team had one game scheduled this week and came out on top against Springfield Central High School, 56-27. The Lady Wildcats took an early 21-5 lead after the first quarter and never trailed throughout to move to 9-5 on the season. The JV also came out with a win 49-12. Scoring for Cassville: Audrey Kennedy, 14; Brylee Gross, 13; Taylor Kennedy, 8; Briley Artherton, 8; Alex Holycross, 5; Aubrey Stoufer, 3; Aubrie Atkinson, 3; Tomi Blankenship, 2. Cassville continues in non-conference play this week with three games, playing Forsyth on Monday, Springfield Catholic on Tuesday and Pleasant Hope on Thursday.

### Cassville Girls Compete at 2026 Branson Invitational

The Cassville girls wrestling team turned in several strong individual performances at the 2026 Branson Girls Invitational, facing a deep and competitive field from across the state. Leading the way for Cassville was Analeigh Winchell at 155 pounds, who finished as the tournament runner-up and scored 22 team points. Winchell advanced to the championship match with four impressive wins by fall, including pins over opponents from Liberty Wentzville, Jefferson City, Rolla, and Reeds Spring. She closed the day with a second-place finish after a hard-fought decision loss in the finals. At 145 pounds, Anna Vanderhoef earned a fifth-place finish, contributing 11 team points. Vanderhoef rebounded from early losses to secure three victories by fall in the consolation rounds, finishing strong in the fifth-place match. Alexis Lands also placed sixth at 170 pounds, scoring 9 team points. Lands opened the tournament with a first-round pin and added another fall in the consolation bracket to reach the fifth-place match. At 125 pounds, Hopelyne Thompson placed sixth and added 7 team points. Thompson advanced with a medical forfeit before competing in the fifth-place match against strong competition. Other Cassville wrestlers gained valuable experience against quality opponents. Myah Dunfee placed eighth at 130 pounds and scored 3 team points, highlighted by a win by fall. Gracey Farsungchin finished 12th at 120 pounds, while Estrella Garcia placed 11th at 140 pounds, with each adding 2 points to the team total. Molly Pickett rounded out Cassville's placers with a 13th-place finish at 135 pounds. The Lady Wildcats were not at full strength, as the team battled illness throughout the previous week. Cassville is hopeful to have a healthy lineup moving forward as they prepare for a busy stretch that includes a dual with Reeds Spring, the Big 8 Girls Conference Tournament, and an upcoming dual against McDonald County.

### Middle school teams combine for 5 wins

The Cassville Middle School boys basketball teams continued their strong play this past week, with the 7th grade team finishing 2-1 and the eighth-grade team posting a perfect 3-0 record. The seventh-grade squad opened the week with a loss to Neosho, 23-11. The Wildcats responded well, bouncing back the following night with a dominant 50-20 road victory at Aurora. Cassville closed the week on a high note with a 36-24 win at McDonald County, showing improved execution and effort on both ends

CONTINUED ON PAGE 6B





Girls Wrestling

1/20	Cassville/Reeds Spring/Hollister	Away	5:00 pm
1/21	Big 8 Girls Tournament	Home	5:00 pm
1/22	McDonald County	Away	6:00 pm
1/27	Seneca	Home	5:00 pm
1/29	Monett	Away	6:00 pm
2/5	Rogersville/Bolivar	Away	5:00 pm

Boys Basketball

1/23	Neosho	Away	7:15 pm
1/27	Lamar	Home	7:00 pm
1/30	Seneca	Home	7:15 pm
2/3	Monett	Away	7:15 pm
2/6	Skyline	Home	6:00 pm
2/10	East Newton	Home	7:15 pm
2/13	Mt. Vernon	Away	7:15 pm
2/17	Southwest	Home	7:15 pm
2/20	Nevada	Home	7:15 pm
2/26	Forsyth	Away	7:00 pm

Girls Basketball

1/22	Pleasant Hope	Away	6:00 pm
1/26	Lamar	Home	7:00 pm
1/29	Seneca	Home	7:00 pm
2/2	Monett	Away	7:00 pm
2/5	Ash Grove	Away	7:15 pm
2/9	East Newton	Home	7:00 pm
2/12	Mt. Vernon	Away	7:00 pm
2/20	Nevada	Home	7:00 pm
2/24	Neosho	Away	7:00 pm
2/26	Carl Junction	Home	7:30 pm

Boys Wrestling

1/22	McDonald County	Away	6:00 pm
1/23	Big 8 Conference Tournament	Away	
1/27	Seneca	Home	6:00 pm
1/29	Monett	Away	6:00 pm
1/31	Peoples Bank of Seneca	Away	
2/5	Rogersville/Bolivar	Away	5:00 pm

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2. Hat with heart, pom-poms, and a striped cuff.  
3. Hat with zig-zag, pom-pom, and a long tassel.  
4. Shoe with pom-poms and a bear face.  
5. Shoe with pom-poms and a floral pattern.  
6. Shoe with pom-poms and an 'X' pattern.  
7. Hat with heart, pom-poms, and a striped cuff.  
8. Hat with star, wavy lines, and a striped cuff.  
9. Shoe with pom-poms and a bear face.

ANSWER: 4 AND 9

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A: Don't look, I'm changing.

### JUST kidding

Q: Why did Goofy put a clock under his desk?  
A: Because he wanted to work over time.

### JUST kidding

Q: How did the farmer mend his pants?  
A: With cabbage patches.

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A line drawing of a happy cartoon dog wearing a winter hat and scarf, standing on skis and holding poles.

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A dot-to-dot puzzle of a winter scene featuring a polar bear, two evergreen trees, and several snowflakes. The puzzle consists of 60 numbered dots.

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			1
		2	
	3		
4			2

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- A number can only appear once per column
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4	1	3	2
3	2	4	1
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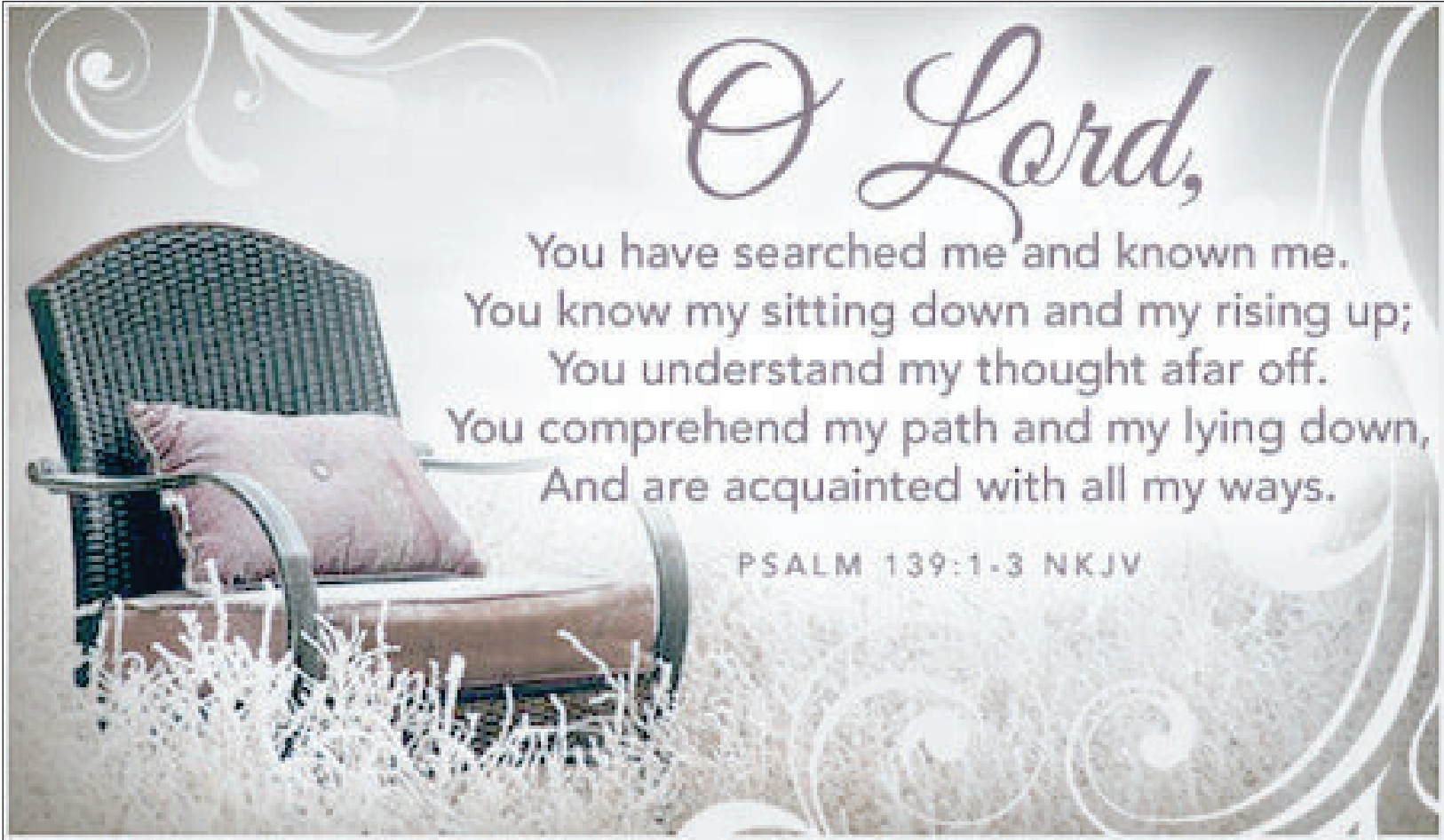
A photograph of the White Funeral Home building, a single-story brick structure with a large arched entrance. A large sign in the foreground reads 'WHITE FUNERAL HOME'.

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**SPECIAL NOTICE**  
**IMPORTANT INFORMATION:**  
Please check your ad the first day of publication. If it contains an error, report it to the *Cassville Democrat*. Errors will be corrected, and credit will be issued for the first day of publications only. The *Cassville Democrat* shall not be liable for any loss or expense that results from the publication (whether published correctly or not) or omission of an advertisement.

**FOR RENT**  
**FOR RENT:** 2BR, 1BA, country setting, close in Cassville, \$850 per month, Serious inquirers only. 417-848-5556.  
**FOR RENT:** In Purdy, 2BR house, central air & heat, fenced yard, storage building, \$850/mo plus deposit. Call 417-847-2808.

**PETS**  
**PUPPIES:** 4 female Frenchies for sale. 6 months old. \$500 each. Call 316-579-6316.  
**MISCELLANEOUS**  
**VOTER REGISTRATION CANVASS / NEW VOTER ID CARDS**

By law, every two years the Barry County Clerk's Office is required to canvass the voters before a general election for federal office. This is for the purpose of updating our records with correct addresses / names. The Barry County Clerk's Office will be sending each registered voter a new Voter Registration ID Card around the week of January 20, 2026. When you receive your card, please verify that all the information is correct. If it is not, please fill in the correct information and return the card to our office. This card will replace your old Voter Registration ID. If you receive a card for a relative that no longer lives in Barry County or is deceased, please notify our office in writing. Please include their name, date of birth, last four digits of their Social Security Number, your signature and relationship to them. If you have any questions, please call our office at 417-847-2561.

Thank you,  
Joyce Ennis  
Barry County Clerk  
Only insertion 01/21/26  
2

**NOTICE OF ELECTION OF SUPERVISORS SWCD BOARD ELECTIONS**

Let it be known that the Barry County Soil and Water Conservation District will hold an election for one supervisor in each of two different territories in the county. Territory 2 includes (Townships: Pleasant Ridge, McDowell, McDonald, Jenkins, Mountain, Ozark, and Crane Creek) and Territory 4 includes (Townships: Liberty, Exeter, Washburn, Ash, and Sugar Creek). The election will take place from February 1 to February 20. Ballots are available to print online at <https://mosoilandwater.land/content/barry/board-members>. Printed ballots may be returned to the district by mail and must be postmarked no later than February 20th. You may also vote in person from 8 am to 4:30 pm at 3202 County Farm Rd Cassville, MO 65625. Each eligible land representative in the district is allowed one vote. A land representative is defined as the owner or representative authorized by power of attorney of any farm lying within an area proposed to be established, and subsequently established, as a soil and water conservation district under Chapter 278, RSMo. Each farm is entitled to representation by a land representative: provided, however, that the land

**MU EXTENSION HIRING**  
University of Missouri Extension in Barry County will be hiring a Full-time Office Support, with paid vacation. This job does not include medical insurance. Computer skills, Quick Books, excellent communication and people skills needed. To request an application, please call 417-847-3161, email: [barryco@missouri.edu](mailto:barryco@missouri.edu) or stop by the office: Courthouse, 700 Main St., Ste 4, Cassville. Application deadline: January 30, 2026. EOE.

representative is a taxpayer of the county within which the soil and water district is located. The following qualified candidates will be considered for election: Territory 2 - Christopher Cale Hammen  
Bryant Vaught-Jenkins Township  
Voyd Brown-McDowell Township  
Territory 4 - Clay Hammen-Exeter Township  
Steven Mattingly-Exeter Township  
Supervisors manage the administration of district policies and programs, as well as district personnel and funds. The district is supported by the one-tenth-of-one-percent parks, soil and water sales tax. For additional information on the district election, contact the district office 417-847-2862 EXT: 3, [stephanie.parsons@swcd.mo.gov](mailto:stephanie.parsons@swcd.mo.gov) and 3202 county Farm Rd Cassville, MO 65625  
1st insertion 01/21/26  
2-6

**NOTICE**  
The Towers, LLC proposes to build a 255-foot self-support communications tower structure. Anticipated lighting application is medium intensity dual red/white strobes. The Site location is 19032 State Highway MM, Barry County, Exeter, MO 65647  
Lat: [36-39-26.99], Long: [-93-56-47.17].  
The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) Antenna Structure Registration (ASR, Form 854) filing number is A1351422.  
**ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS** - Interested persons may review the application ([www.fcc.gov/asr/applications](http://www.fcc.gov/asr/applications)) by entering the filing number. Environmental concerns may be raised by filing a Request for Environmental Review ([www.fcc.gov/asr/environmentalrequest](http://www.fcc.gov/asr/environmentalrequest)) and online filings are strongly encouraged. The mailing address to file a paper copy is: FCC Requests for Environmental Review, Attn: Ramon Williams, 445 12th Street SW, Washington, DC 20554.  
**HISTORIC PROPERTIES EFFECTS** - Public comments regarding potential effects on historic properties may be submitted within 30 days from the date of this publication to: Trileaf Corp, Alec Nimkoff, [a.nimkoff@trileaf.com](mailto:a.nimkoff@trileaf.com), 66 South Logan Street, Denver, CO 80209. 203.856.1011.  
Only insertion 01/21/26  
2

**PROBATE**  
**IN THE 39TH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT, BARRY COUNTY, MISSOURI**

Judge or Division: PROBATE  
Case Number: 25BR-PR00191  
In the Estate of RUTH ETTA BUCHNER, Deceased.

**NOTICE OF LETTERS TESTAMENTARY GRANTED (SUPERVISED ADMINISTRATION)**

To All Persons Interested in the Estate of RUTH ETTA BUCHNER, Decedent:  
On January 5, 2026, the last will of Decedent having been admitted to probate, the following individual was appointed personal

representative of the estate of RUTH ETTA BUCHNER, decedent by the Probate Division of the Circuit Court of BARRY COUNTY, Missouri. The name and business address of the personal representative is: BILL BUCHNER, 21705 JASMINE LANE, EAGLE ROCK, MO 65641  
The personal representative's attorney's name, business address and phone number is: CORDELIA HERRIN, P.O. BOX 276, CASSVILLE, MO 65625, 417-847-2734

All creditors of said decedent are notified to file claims in court within six months from the date of the first publication of this notice or if a copy of this notice was mailed to, or served upon, such creditor by the personal representative, then within two months from the date it was mailed or served, whichever is later, or be forever barred to the fullest extent permissible by law. Such six-month period and such two-month period do not extend the limitation period that would bar claims one year after Decedent's death, as provided in Section 473.444, RSMo, or any other applicable limitation periods. Nothing in Section 473.033, RSMo, shall be construed to bar any action against a decedent's liability insurance carrier through a defendant ad litem pursuant to Section 537.021, RSMo.  
Date of the decedent's death: 20-OCT-2025  
Date of first publication: January 14, 2026  
Date of second publication: January 21, 2026  
Date of third publication: January 28, 2026  
Date of fourth publication: February 4, 2026  
Craig Williams, Circuit Clerk by S. Parker, Deputy Probate Clerk  
Receipt of this notice by mail should not be construed by the recipient to indicate that the recipient necessarily has a beneficial interest in the estate. The nature and extent of any person's interest, if any, can be determined from the files and records of this estate in the Probate Division of the above referenced Circuit Court.  
1st insertion 01/14/26  
1-4

**IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF BARRY COUNTY, MISSOURI PROBATE DIVISION**

IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF BETTY MAY JOHNSON, DECEASED ESTATE NO. 25BR-PR00065

**NOTICE OF FILING FINAL SETTLEMENT & PETITION FOR DISTRIBUTION**

TO ALL PERSONS INTERESTED IN the Estate of BETTY MAY JOHNSON, Deceased:  
You are hereby notified that the undersigned Personal Representative will file a Final Settlement and Petition for determination of the persons who are successors in interest to the personal property of the Estate of Betty May Johnson and of the extent and character of their interest therein and for distribution of such property, in the Probate Division of the Circuit Court of Barry County, Missouri, on or after February 12, 2026, or as may be continued by the Court, and that any objections or exceptions to such Final Settlement or Petition or any item thereof must be in writing and filed within twenty (20) days after the filing of such Final Settlement.  
Angela C. Artherton, Attorney  
Sam Cowherd, Personal Representative  
10388 Farm Road 2172  
Cassville, MO 65625  
(417) 665-6511 [angela@arthertonlaw.com](mailto:angela@arthertonlaw.com)  
Dates of Publication - 1/14/2026, 1/21/2026, 1/28/2026, 2/4/2026

# FARM AUCTION

**Saturday, Jan. 24, 2026 — 10 a.m.**

**Location:** From Washburn Mo at the Trojan PQ Mart, go South on Hwy 37 for 2.6 miles. Turn right and follow signs. (28267 St. Hwy 37, Washburn MO)

**NEW HOLLAND 4X4 CAB TRACTOR (LIKE NEW) – HAY EQUIPMENT – HONDA 4 WHEELER – DODGE DIESEL PICKUP W/ HYDRABED (ONE OWNER) – TRAILERS – ALL KINDS OF FARM ITEMS – IMPLEMENTS – POLARIS RANGER - GUNS – SOME HOUSEHOLD**



**Tractor:** 2018 New Holland, T4, 110, 4x4, cab tractor with New Holland 655 TL, self leveling front loader, (only 1200 hrs.) Wheel weights on the rear & fluid in the tires. (Very nice). **Dodge Pickup:** 2006 Dodge Ram 2500, Cummins Turbo diesel, single cab, automatic, 4x4, with hydra bed & hydra box, only 102xxx miles. (one owner). **Hay Equipment:** 2021 Vermeer Rancher 6650, 5'x6' round baler, net wrap or string, bale kicker & tedder wheels, like new, barn kept. – Reel Vermeer R 23A hay rake, kept undercover, very nice – 2013 New Holland H7220, disc bine, kept undercover, very nice – Mdl G42 4 basket tedder, nice, kept undercover. **Implements:** Bush Hog brand 15' batwing brush hog – pull behind Rock O Matic, hydraulic rock rake – approx. 12' offset Brilliant drill & iron works roller seeder – 3 pt 8' disc – 10' offset hydraulic disc – 3 pt bale spike – (2) S & H quick attach front load bale spikes – 3 pt round bale unroller – field drags – 3 pt Danuser post hole auger – 3 pt screen to protect tractor back glass when brush hogging – 3 pt. 200 gal sprayer – 3 pt. mdl M-96 seeder – cradle 3 pt wood splitter- quick attach grapple. **Trailers:** Gooseneck brand, gooseneck 20' x7' cattle trailer, stored undercover (nice) – Gooseneck tandem axle, steel floor, dump trailer (dump motor is bad). **ATV:** 2002 Honda TRX 350 Rancher, ES automatic 4 wheeler (nice). **UTV:** 2023 Polaris Ranger, 1000 XP, Camo with heat, soft doors, flip out windshield, power steering, 4x4, one owner, only 2400 miles (Very nice). **Farm Items:** (9) 10' panels – (6) 12' WW panels – (2) 8' pipe gates – (2) small alley gates – (10) round bale rings – (5) mineral feeders – (13) bunk feeders – (3) concrete bunk feeders – galvanized water tank – approx. 30 sticks of 23' sucker rod – misc 1" pipe & wood post – misc used T post – misc 8"x8" corner post – chain link dog pen – cattle rub – dehomer's – elect fence chargers calf puller – tank heaters – misc cattle supplies – many more items not listed. **Tools:** 2" socket set – stepladder – misc hand tools – lg crescent wrench – misc log chains – Husqvarna 340 chain saw – Hy Flo 220 power washer – Craftsman front tine tiller – old band saw - more tools not listed. **Guns:** Savage mdl 11, 22-250 bolt action with Simmons 3x9x40 scope, (never been fired) – New Haven 20 ga 3" pump shot gun – metal stackable gun safe. **Collectibles:** Horse Hames – single trees – old garden plows – block & tackle – old wood crates – old Truco metal gas cans & misc metal gas cans – sure to be more collectibles as we set up for the auction. **Misc:** Buck wood stove – roll away bed – more misc, household not listed. **Note:** 1st auction of 2026 starts off with a very good farm auction. Mr. Bishop is very meticulous and the hay equipment, tractor & truck have been kept undercover or inside & well maintained. Many items are in like new condition. There will be many more items that are not listed. In case of inclement weather, we can sell most of the auction undercover with heat. Parking is good, bring a friend or two and come spend the day with us at this awesome farm auction. **Terms:** Cash, good check or credit card with 2 forms of current ID. Must have current driver's license to obtain bidder number. All terms on bidder card apply. If paying with credit card a 5% convenience fee will be charged. If paying with a check on large items, items will be held until check clears the auction co bank unless prior arrangements have been made at least 24 hrs. before auction day. All sells as is where is with no warranty or guarantee expressed or implied. Any announcements made day of auction supersede any and all printed material.

**Owner: Wendell & Jan Bishop**



Auctioneer:  
Donnie Stumpff  
MO & AR State  
Champion Auctioneer  
#1409 | PB00051442



Auctioneer:  
Parker Stumpff  
AR State Champion  
Auctioneer  
#2352



**www.stumpffauction.com**

# 417-847-2507

THE ABOVE-REFERENCED DATE OF FEBRUARY 12, 2026 IS NOT A COURT APPEARANCE DATE. It is an estimated date as to when the Final Settlement will be filed with the Court.  
1st insertion 01/14/26  
1-4

**IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF BARRY COUNTY, MISSOURI PROBATE DIVISION**

Estate No. 25BR-PR00036  
In the Estate of: Arlie Cleo Knighten Deceased

**NOTICE OF FILING OF FINAL SETTLEMENT AND PETITION FOR DISTRIBUTION**

TO ALL PERSONS INTERESTED IN THE ESTATE OF Arlie Cleo Knighten, Deceased:  
You are hereby notified that the undersigned Personal Representative will file a Final Settlement and Petition for determination of the persons who are the successors in interest to the personal / real property of the decedent and of the extent and character of

their interest therein and for distribution of such property, in the Probate Division of the Circuit Court of Barry County, Missouri, on January 2026, or as may be continued by the Court, and that any objections or exceptions for such Final Settlement or Petition or any item thereof must be in writing and filed within twenty days after the filing of such Final Settlement.  
James Randall Attorney  
405 E Broadway, Monett, MO 65708  
Address January 14, 21, 28, February 4, 2026  
Dates of publication  
Personal Representative ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF SERVICE OF NOTICE  
Service of the Within notice is acknowledged at Monett Missouri on January 6, 2026  
PROOF OF MAILING OF COPY OF NOTICE OF FILING OF FINAL SETTLEMENT AND PETITION FOR DISTRIBUTION  
Samantha Prescott, on that state(s) that a copy of the above Notice was mailed by the undersigned on November 25, 2025 by ordinary mail, according to law, to: Heirs

Joe & Carolyn Whitmore 15238 County Lane 137 Carthage MO 64836  
Sean Knighten Piper Knighten 3706 Rt. 2217 Washburn MO 65772  
5320 McClelland Blvd, Joplin, MO 64804  
The foregoing is made under oath or affirmation and its representations are true and correct to the best knowledge and belief of the undersigned, subject to the penalties of making a false affidavit or declaration.  
1st insertion 01/14/26  
1-4

**IN THE 39TH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT, BARRY COUNTY, MISSOURI JUDGE OR DIVISION: PROBATE**

In the Estate of JAMES KING, Deceased.  
Case Number: 26BR-PR00003

**NOTICE OF LETTERS OF ADMINISTRATION GRANTED (SUPERVISED ADMINISTRATION)**

To All Persons Interested in the Estate of JAMES KING,  
CONTINUED ON PAGE 6B



SPORTS

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5B

Decedent:  
On January 14, 2026, the following individual was appointed the personal representative of the estate of

JAMES KING, decedent, by the Probate Division of the Circuit Court of Barry County, Missouri.

The personal representative's name and business address is:  
WANDA FOWLER, 211 EAGLE NEST CASSVILLE, MO 65625

The personal representative's attorney's name, business address and phone number is:  
ANGELA ARTHERTON, 10388 FARM ROAD 2172 CASSVILLE, MO 65625, 870-688-0619

All creditors of said decedent are notified to file claims in court within six months from the date of the first publication of this notice or if a copy of this notice was mailed to, or served upon, such creditor by the personal representative, then within two months from the date it was mailed or served, whichever is later, or be forever barred to the fullest extent permissible by law. Such six-month period and such two-month period do not extend the limitation period that would bar claims one year after Decedent's death, as provided in Section 473.444, RSMo, or any other applicable limitation periods. Nothing in Section 473.033, RSMo, shall be construed to bar any action against a decedent's liability insurance carrier through a defendant ad litem pursuant to Section 537.021, RSMo.

Date of the decedent's death:  
01-DEC-2025  
Craig Williams, Circuit Clerk by S. Parker, Probate Clerk

Date of first publication:  
January 21, 2026

Date of second publication:  
January 28, 2026

Date of third publication:  
February 4, 2026

Date of fourth publication:  
February 11, 2026

Receipt of this notice by mail should not be construed by the recipient to indicate that the recipient necessarily has a beneficial interest in the estate. The nature and extent of any person's interest, if any, can be determined from the files and records of this estate in the Probate Division of the above referenced Circuit Court.

1st insertion 01/21/26  
2-5

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**IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF BARRY COUNTY, MISSOURI PROBATE DIVISION AT CASSVILLE**

In the Estate of  
Hubert Lee Shepherd,  
Deceased  
Estate Number:  
25BR-PR00057

AMENDED NOTICE OF FILING OF FINAL SETTLEMENT AND PETITION FOR DISTRIBUTION

TO ALL PERSONS INTERESTED IN THE ESTATE OF HUBERT LEE SHEPHERD, deceased:  
You are hereby notified that the undersigned Personal Representative will file a Final Settlement and Petition for determination of the persons who are the successors in interest to the personal/real estate of the decedent and of the extent and character of their interest therein and for distribution of such property, on or about February 26, 2026 or as may be continued by the Court. and that any objections or exceptions to such Final Settlement or petition or any item thereof must be in writing and filed within twenty days after the filing of such final Settlement.

DONALD L. CUPPS, Attorney  
Ellis, Cupps, Herrin & Schwartz  
P. O. Box 276  
Cassville, MO 65625  
CHRISTINE SHEPHERD  
Personal Representative  
Dates of Publication

1/21/2026,  
1/28/2026,  
2/4/2026,  
2/11/2026

THE ABOVE REFERENCED DATE IS NOT A COURT APPEARANCE DATE.

It is an estimated date as to when the Final Settlement will be filed with the Court.

1st insertion 01/21/26  
2-5

**TRUSTEE'S SALES**

**NOTICE OF TRUSTEE'S SALE**

For default in the payment of debt secured by a deed of trust executed by Betty Szekely; Zara A. Wright, dated December 30, 2024, and recorded on January 2, 2025, Document No. 202500005, in Book No. 25, at Page 5 in the Office of the Recorder of Deeds, Barry County, Missouri, the undersigned Successor Trustee will on February 4, 2026, at 9:30 AM, at the East Front Door of the Barry County Courthouse, Cassville, Missouri, sell at public vendue to the highest bidder for cash:

LOTS 1, 2, AND 3, BLOCK 2, SMITH AND HAYES ADDITION TO THE CITY OF CASSVILLE, BARRY COUNTY, MISSOURI. ALSO, A TRACT OF LAND DESCRIBED AS FOLLOWS: COMMENCING AT THE SOUTHEAST CORNER OF LOT 1, BLOCK 2, SMITH AND HAYES ADDITION TO THE CITY OF CASSVILLE, MISSOURI, THENCE SOUTHERLY AND ALONG THE WEST RIGHT OF WAY LINE OF THE PUBLIC ROAD A DISTANCE OF ABOUT 25 FEET AND TO THE CENTER OF THE VACATED STREET THAT WAS 50 FEET WIDE, THENCE WESTERLY AND PARALLEL TO THE SOUTH BOUNDARY LINE OF SAID LOT 1, BLOCK 2 AFORESAID A DISTANCE OF 162 FEET, THENCE NORTH 25 FEET TO THE SOUTHWEST CORNER OF SAID LOT 1, BLOCK 2 AFORESAID, THENCE EASTERLY ALONG THE SOUTH BOUNDARY LINE OF SAID LOT 1, BLOCK 2 OF SMITH AND HAYES ADDITION AFORESAID TO POINT OF BEGINNING, SAME BEING THE NORTH HALF OF A VACATED STREET THAT WAS IMMEDIATELY SOUTH OF LOT 1, BLOCK 2, SMITH AND HAYES ADDITION TO THE CITY OF CASSVILLE, BARRY COUNTY, MISSOURI. ALSO, ALL THAT PART OF THE EAST 5 FEET OF AN ALLEY 10 FEET WIDE RUNNING NORTH AND SOUTH BETWEEN LOTS 42 AND LOTS 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 AND 7, BLOCK 2, SMITH AND HAYES ADDITION TO THE CITY OF CASSVILLE, BARRY COUNTY, MISSOURI, THAT JOINS LOTS 1, 2 AND 3, BLOCK 2, OF SMITH AND HAYES ADDITION TO THE CITY OF CASSVILLE, MISSOURI, commonly known as 1600 Main St, Cassville, MO, 65625 subject to all prior easements, restrictions, reservations, covenants and encumbrances now of record, if any, to satisfy the debt and costs.

SouthLaw, P.C.  
Successor Trustee  
First Publication:  
January 7, 2026.  
For more information, visit www.southlaw.com

**NOTICE**

Pursuant to the Fair Debt Collection Practices Act, 15 U.S.C. §1692c(b), no information concerning the collection of this debt may be given without the prior consent of the consumer given directly to the debt collector or the express permission of a court of competent jurisdiction. The debt collector is attempting to collect a debt and any information obtained will be used for that purpose (Casefile No. 256047-1078475).

1st insertion 1/7/26  
52-3

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**TRUSTEE'S NOTICE TO CREDITORS**

To all persons interested in the estate of  
HOY L. BILYEU,

deceased:  
The undersigned, RODGER L. BILYEU, is acting as Trustee under a Trust, the terms of which provide that the debts of the Decedent may be paid by the Trustee upon receipt of proper proof thereof.

The address of the Trustee is as follows:  
804 9th St  
Purdy, MO 65734

All creditors of the decedent are notified to present their claims to the undersigned within six (6) months from the date of the first publication of this notice or be forever barred pursuant to Section 456.5-505, RSMO.

Rodger L. Bilyeu  
Trustee  
By: Carnahan Evans PC  
2805 S. Ingram Mill Road  
Springfield, MO 65804  
Date of first publication is: January 14, 2026  
1st insertion 01/14/26  
1-4

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**NOTICE OF TRUSTEE'S FORECLOSURE SALE**

FOR DEFAULT in the payment of debt secured by a Deed of Trust executed by

GALEN EASLEY AND VICKI D. EASLEY, husband and wife, dated April 25, 2008 and recorded on in Book 08, at Page 2575, in the office of the Recorder of Deeds of Barry County, Missouri, the undersigned Trustee will on February 24, 2026 between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m., specifically at 10:00 a.m. at the East Front Court House Door in the City of Cassville, County of Barry, sell at public venue to the highest bidder for cash the following described real estate located in Barry County, Missouri, to-wit:  
Address:  
1183 State Hwy W  
Wheaton, Missouri  
Beginning at the Northeast corner of the West Half the Northeast Quarter of the Northwest of the Northeast Quarter of Said Section 34, Township 14, Range 29; Thence South 0 degrees 08 minutes 15 seconds  
West a distance of 205 feet; thence North 89 degrees 46 minutes 25 seconds  
West a distance of 80 feet; thence North 0 degrees 08 minutes 15 seconds  
East a distance of 75-feet; Thence North 89 degrees 46 minutes 25 seconds  
West a distance of 70 feet; Thence North 0 degrees 08 minutes 15 seconds  
East a distance of 130 feet to the North line of said Section 34; thence South 89 degrees 46 minutes 25 seconds East along the North line of said Section 34, a distance of 150 feet to the point of beginning.  
All in Barry County Missouri.  
to satisfy said debt and trust.  
Please publish:  
January 14, 2026  
January 21, 2026  
January 28, 2026  
February 04, 2026  
Jon Homer, Trustee  
Security Bank of Southwest Missouri  
Blake B. Fields, Attorney for Trustee  
Law Office of Blake B. Fields, LLC  
605 Main Street, Cassville, MO 65625  
1st insertion 01/14/26  
1-4

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**NOTICE OF TRUSTEE'S SALE**

WHEREAS, JEFFEREY HEALEY and KIMBERLY HEALEY, by their Deed of Trust signed and dated the 9th day of March, 2021, and recorded on March 10th 2021 in the Recorder's Office for Barry County, Missouri in Deed of Trust in Book 21, Page 1494, conveyed to Robert Haskins, as Trustee of The Robert Haskins Revocable Living Trust dated November 25, 2014, the following described real estate situate in the County of Barry, State of Missouri,

to-wit;  
Lots 10 and 11 in Presley's 2nd Addition to the City of Cassville, Barry County, Missouri, and 20 feet off the entire South side of Lot 9 in Presley's 2nd Addition to the City of Cassville, Missouri, according to the recorded plat thereof.  
which conveyance was made in trust to secure the payment of one certain note in said Deed of Trust described' and  
WHEREAS, default was

made and still continues in payment of said note;  
NOW THEREFORE, at the request of the legal holder of said note and in pursuance of the provisions of said Deed of Trust, the undersigned will sell the property above described at public vendue to the highest bidder for cash at the East front door of the old County Courthouse in the City of Cassville, Barry County, Missouri, on February 6, 2026, beginning at 9:00 a.m. for

the purposes of satisfying said indebtedness and the costs of executing this trust.  
James J. Randall trustee  
405 E. Broadway,  
P.O. Box 151  
Monett, Missouri 65708  
Telephone:  
(417) 235-8688  
TO BE PUBLISHED IN THE CASSVILLE DEMOCRAT ON:  
January 14, 21, 28 and February 4, 2026.  
1st insertion 01/14/26  
1-4

Hilburn hits 1,500



Exeter senior Shea Hilburn crossed the 1,500-career-points mark on Monday in a 60-20 loss at Seneca. The Lady Tigers are 4-9 this season and play in the Lady Bear Classic this week. Contributed photo

Tigers: In middle of road swing

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1B

game and allows about 67. Trammell said through the struggles with consistency, he has had players step up into leadership roles and guide the squad. "Coby Johnston has stepped into a leadership role and is working his butt off," Trammell said. "He leads by example, is incredibly coachable and is willing to step outside of his role and give us a chance every day. "Cameron Brattin is our only consistent starter, and day-in and day-out, he's one of the hardest workers on the court." As conference and district play approach,

Trammell said there are multiple games that will not only test the Tigers, but also give opportunities for growth. "We have several upcoming games that will give us a little taste of what competition will be like in districts," he said. "We believe we are better than we have been playing, and we have many opportunities to compete against quality teams in our district or against teams like the ones in our district, even possible first-round district opponents." To find success in the season's second half,

Trammell said health and consistency will be paramount. "We are trying to get healthy and find a consistent five starters to be competitive day-in and day-out, and I think we are close to having it," he said. The Tigers are in the midst of a long road swing, facing Marionville next on Friday and with two road games next week, then the 43rd Annual Mercy/Warrior Classic Feb. 2-7. Exeter has four home games from Feb. 9-17 against Hurley, Thomas Jefferson, Verona and Wheaton.

Scoreboard: Win over Neosho

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1A

of the floor. The eighth-grade team put together an impressive undefeated week. Cassville earned a hard-fought 33-29 win over Neosho to open the week, followed by a convincing 51-30 victory at Aurora. The Wildcats capped off the week with a strong 43-27 win at McDonald County, using balanced scoring and strong defensive pressure throughout each contest. The seventh-grade team

now stands at 4-2 on the season, while the eighth-

grade squad is 5-1 heading into next week.

**SBSECURITY BANK**  
OF SOUTHWEST MISSOURI  
*Your Locally Owned Independent Bank*  
Cassville • Exeter • Wheaton

**WILDCAT**  
**PLAYERS**  
**OF THE WEEK**

Gracey Farsungchin

Aiden Whittington

Braydyn Sizemore

Audrey Kennedy

**Scott's Taxidermy**  
Birds • Fish  
Gameheads  
& Mammals Bases  
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