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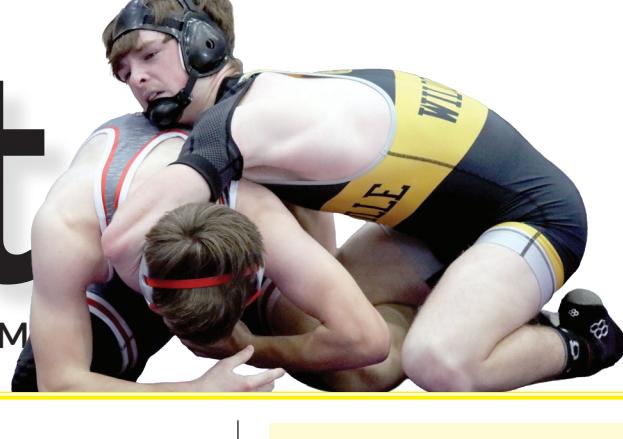
PHOTO: CHICKEN TRUCK ROLLS OVER ON HWY. 37 — PAGE 2A

A DOZEN WILDCATS HEADING TO DISTRICTS >>>

Cassville aims to take most wrestlers ever to state tournament. — PAGE 1B

CASSVILLE Democrat

FEBRUARY 18, 2026 | CASSVILLE-DEMOCRAT.COM



Awaiting death

Local resident delves into organ donation laws after situation involving sister

BY SHEILA HARRIS

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In Missouri, every hospital is required, by law, to enter into an agreement or affiliation with an organ procurement organization (OPO) in order to coordinate and facilitate organ donations and transplants.

ORGAN DONATION

What: A look into area organ donation processes

Who: Midwest Transplant serves the hospitals in Barry County

More: Family in 2018 had relative held against hers and their wishes

Most people are familiar with the altruistic aspects of organ donation: how donations save lives at no cost to donors (who won't continue using their

organs anymore).

Robert Kesterson, of rural Barry County, agrees that organ donations save lives. However, he believes that the average person is unaware of the laws governing the organ procurement process, itself, as they pertain to the death of hospitalized patients.

Kesterson's eyes were opened to that process after his sister Brenda Kesterson's death in February 2018, while she was a patient at CoxHealth

in Springfield. There, Kesterson said, his sister's remains were held against the wishes of her family and without their knowledge, until a representative from an OPO had an opportunity to look his sister's body over for donatable parts.

"Brenda died of natural causes," Kesterson said. "She and I had talked about end-of-life issues some time before her death, and she'd told me that she did not want to be an organ

CONTINUED ON PAGE 3A

CITY OF CASSVILLE

What: Is purchasing old city hall next to pending pocket park

Why: Will allow for bathrooms adjacent to park, community space

Cost: Building being purchased for \$85,000

Old city hall, new purpose

City buying building next to former Hall Theatre property

BY KYLE TROUTMAN

ktroutman@cassville-democrat.com A building formerly owned by the city of Cassville will once again be part of its property portfolio.

Richard Asbill, Cassville city administrator, said the city is purchasing the old city hall building at 210 W. 8th St., which sits adjacent to the former Hall Theatre Property where a pocket park is in the works.

"We were questioning Jerry Watley about the building, like the sewer lines and general layout, just so we would know what's next to us [on the Hall Theatre property]. That developed into interest in purchasing the building. The Hall Theatre footprint is very small, and we were looking for bathroom options. We knew if we added bathrooms, the park would lose that square footage.

"This option allows us to incorporate bathrooms in the existing building. We will add a door on the east side facing the park, and that will allow for a community room with a kitchenette for things like birthday parties and private events. It will be another nice community gathering point. It will also make the pocket park more civically oriented."

The Hall Theatre building burned on March 1, 2022, and last year, the city was able to purchase the property at a trustee's auction for \$3,000. The city had previously paid for demolition and cleanup, and a community committee was formed to determine what to do with the space. That committee settled on a pocket park, with seating, a small playground and a pavilion.

Asbill said officials had been considering pre-cast bathrooms, similar to what is at the City Park by the ball-fields, but with the opportunity to buy the old city hall, plans changed.

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Clanton, Hendrix crowned at Southwest



Junior Lane Hendrix, left, and senior Olivia Clanton, smile after remedying a falling tiara situation after the pair were named Southwest Homecoming King and Queen on Friday. Kyle Troutman/ktroutman@cassville-democrat.com

Pair of Cassville officers commended at Council

2 on force recognized for actions on the job

BY KYLE TROUTMAN

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Two Cassville police officers have been presented commendations for actions taken within the line of duty considered above and beyond the call.

At the February Cassville City Council meeting, Officer Jacqueline Murray and Officer Codie Evatt were each recognized, Murray for quickly locating a vehicle sto-

len out of Springfield and Evatt for helping rescue a child from the roof of a burning home.

According to the commendation given to Murray by Chief Donald Privett, Murray spoke with an individual regarding her daughter's vehicle, which had been stolen in Springfield.

"The individual indicated she believed the vehicle would likely never be recovered," Privett said. "Officer Murray then reached out to one of her police academy instructors, who is also an officer with the Springfield Police Department, and pro-

vided information about the stolen vehicle. Within a few hours, the Springfield officer contacted Officer Murray to report that the vehicle had been located and recovered."

According to the commendation given to Evatt, on Nov. 1, 2005, officers were dispatched to a structure fire where a child caller was stranded on the roof of the first story of the residence.

"Evatt arrived on scene and safely assisted the child off the roof, removing the child to safety prior to the arrival of the

CONTINUED ON PAGE 6A

Eagle Rock woman charged federally with meth distribution

44 pounds of meth allegedly bought in Phoenix, transported to Missouri

BY KYLE TROUTMAN

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An Eagle Rock woman is one of two defendants in a federal case involving the alleged attempt to distribute more than 500 grams of methamphetamine.

Amber Beck, 34, of Eagle Rock, and Michael Wilson, 49, of Lamar, are each

FEDERAL CRIME

Who: Amber Beck, 34, of Eagle Rock

What: Is charged with possession with intent to distribute 500 grams or more of a mixture of a substance containing meth

More: 44 pounds of methamphetamine found in vehicle on I-44

charged in U.S. District Court with possession with intent to distribute 500 grams or more of a mixture of a substance containing methamphetamine.

According to an affidavit

filed by Matthew Walker, task force officer the Drug Enforcement Administration Task Force and Ozarks Drug Enforcement Team, in July 2024, Walker received information from a reliable confidential source that Wilson was leading a small group of individuals in the transportation and distribution of a large amount of methamphetamine and fentanyl, which he would bring back to Missouri for distribution.

Through investigation, Walker was able to verify Wilson had made several trips to the Phoenix area prior to being taken into custody.

acy and was on supervised release in July 2024. Wilson had recently gone into custody or a supervised release violation, and the source said prior to that, Wilson had been making regular trips to Phoenix, Ariz., to purchase large amounts of methamphetamine and fentanyl, which he would bring back to Missouri for distribution.

Through investigation, Walker was able to verify Wilson had made several trips to the Phoenix area prior to being taken into custody.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2A

LOCAL

NEWS BRIEFS

JAG organizing donation drive

Cassville High School JAG students are stepping up to support local families in need by organizing a donation drive for Bright Futures. On Saturday at the Walmart Supercenter in Cassville, JAG students will be collecting items and monetary donations to help stock Bright Futures with essentials for students in the community. All donations, large or small-are greatly appreciated and will go directly toward meeting student needs. JAG would like to invite the public and local businesses to bring items such as school supplies, hygiene supplies (e.g., combs, brushes, hair ties, shampoo), clothing items (e.g., hats, gloves, socks, T-shirts, and sports shorts), and other necessities, or to contribute cash donations. Collection tables will be set up on the market side of Walmart on Saturday from 1-3 p.m., and JAG students will be available to answer questions and accept contributions. "By giving what you can, you're helping Bright Futures continue its mission to ensure every student has the support they need to be successful at school. Thank you in advance for your generosity and for supporting our JAG program and Bright Futures," an event press release said.

Community Garden monthly meetings returning

The Barry County Community Garden is resuming the monthly meetings on the first Monday of every month. The March meeting will be held on March 2 at 5:30 p.m. at Harwick Farms and Nursery in Cassville. Those who are already gardeners at every skill level, including beginner, are interested in growing food, or are interested in volunteering with the Community Garden are invited to attend.

4-H hosting 5K and 1-Mile Fun Run

The Barry County 4-H will host a 5K and 1-Mile Fun Run fundraiser on March 21 starting at the Cassville Aquatic Center, located at 501 Sale Barn Road in Cassville. Check-in is at 8 a.m., and the race begins at 9 a.m. Cost is \$25 for adults and \$15 for students, and cost for the 1-Mile Fun Run is \$20. People may register online at <https://pears.io/events/mu/4287/>, or at the MU Extension office, located in the Barry County Courthouse, by March 1.

Summer Putting League kicks off April in southwest Missouri

Mini golf enthusiasts are invited to tee it up this summer with the Summer Putting League, running from April through September and featuring monthly competitive play at two local courses. League play will take place on the first and third Tuesday of each month, beginning at 6:30 p.m. Each event will consist of 36 holes, with an entry fee of \$20 per night. The first Tuesday of each month will be at Coral Reef Mini Golf in Branson, and the third Tuesday of each month will be at Zone 4 Mini Golf and More in Cassville. The season will conclude with a championship event, scheduled for October or November, where league participants will compete for top honors. The Summer Putting League is open to players looking for fun, friendly competition throughout the warmer months. For more information or questions about the league, people may contact, Jody Kimble at 479-831-6757.

Quilts of Valor event at Cassville Senior Center

On Tuesday, The Cassville Senior Center, located at 1111 Fair Street in Cassville, will host an event for veterans, and the public are also invited to attend. During this Event, the Quilts Of Valor organization will present quilts to a group of local Veterans. The presentation is during the regular lunch time at the Center, from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Book collection now at Bayless-Salyer house

The Barry County Genealogical and Historical Society book collection is now located at the Bayless-Salyer house on the corner of 9th and Townsend streets, behind the Post Office. This collection includes genealogical and historical information on states (including Missouri, Arkansas and Oklahoma), immigration and migration, the Revolutionary War, Civil War, WWI, WWII, Native Americans and African Americans. It also has a vast collection of local family histories. The research room is open Wednesdays from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. For all other times, people may call Norma Terry at 417-827-6585, or Lynna Spellman at 417-827-9676.

Voter registration ongoing for April elections

For those who are not current registered voters of Barry County and who wish to vote in the April 7 General Municipal Election, the last day to register to vote is Wednesday, March 11, 2026. People may register to vote at the County Clerk's Office or the Monett Chamber of Commerce. Registered voters should notify the Clerk's Office of any change of address or name. Photo ID is required to vote in the April General Municipal Election. Absentee voting is ongoing at the Barry County Clerk's Office in Cassville, from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Two-week in-person, no-excuse absentee voting begins March 24. If unable to vote in person, voters may send a written request to the office of: Joyce Ennis, 700 Main St. Suite 2, Cassville, MO 65625, or fax to: 417-847-5311. The Office will need: name, physical address, mailing address, date of birth, last four digits of Social Security number, phone number, reason for voting absentee and signature. Those who live in the Monett area may go by the Monett Chamber Office and fill out the absentee application. They will fax it to the Barry County Clerk's office. Absentee applications are also available at sos.mo.gov. For more information, people may call the Barry County Clerk's Office at 417-847-2561, opt: 3, or email jennis@barrycountyclerk.com or ajohnson@barrycountyclerk.com.

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.

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.

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Monett woman injured in wreck at Hwys 37, Hwy. W

Vehicle fails to yield at intersection

BY KYLE TROUTMAN

ktroutman@cassville-democrat.com

A Monett woman was injured in a wreck at 3:40 p.m. on Feb. 7 at the inter-

section of Highway 37 and Highway W in Butterfield.

According to a Missouri State Highway Patrol report, a 34-year-old female, of Cassville, was driving a 2018 Toyota Rav 4 eastbound when her vehicle failed to yield to a northbound 2019 Jeep Cherokee, being driven by

a 37-year-old female, of Monett.

The driver of the Jeep suffered moderate injuries and was transported to Cox South Hospital in Springfield. The driver of the Toyota was not injured.

Both individuals were wearing safety devices, and both vehicles were totaled.

Chicken truck rolls over at Hwy. 37, Old Exeter Road in Cassville



A tractor trailer hauling chickens was involved in a rollover accident at the intersection of Highway 37 and Old Exeter Road on Thursday. According to the Cassville Police Department, the wreck involved a vehicle and a semi, which rolled over in the middle of Highway 37. Two female adults and two juveniles in the passenger vehicle sustained minor injuries and were transported to Mercy Hospital in Cassville. Contributed photo

Meth: Allegedly transported from Ariz.

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Wilson was released from custody and placed on a new term of supervised release on Jan. 31, 2025, moving to Lamar and taking a job in Carthage. In August 2025, the source alerted Walker that Wilson had allegedly resumed trips to Phoenix and was again distributing methamphetamine in Missouri.

On Feb. 7, 2026, Sgt. Tim Barrett, with the Missouri State Highway Patrol, observed a vehicle allegedly traveling

73 miles per hour in a 70-mile-per-hour zone on Interstate 44 outside of Joplin in Jasper County.

Barrett initiated a traffic stop due to the speed, and because the rear license plate was allegedly obstructed. Beck was identified as the driver of the vehicle, and Wilson was the passenger.

Barrett utilized his K-9 partner, James, who is a certified drug-detection animal to conduct a free air sniff of the vehicle. James gave a positive alert for the odor of narcotics, and a probable cause search of the vehicle allegedly revealed a black plastic tote that

contained 44 quart-sized bags of a crystalline substance believed to be methamphetamine.

Beck and Wilson were arrested and transported to the MSHP satellite office for interviews. During a post-Miranda interview, Wilson allegedly said his first trip to Phoenix was in November or December 2025, when he purchased 10 pounds of methamphetamine. He also allegedly stated on a second trip, he purchased 25 pounds of methamphetamine and used the \$60,000 in profits from selling the 25 pounds and "reinvested" it to purchase the 44 pounds located in the vehicle.

DEA Task Force Officer Michael Larery interviewed Beck, who after being advised of her Miranda rights allegedly said she and Wilson had made four or five trips to Phoenix, each time returning with what she thought was 10-15 pounds of methamphetamine. Beck allegedly said she received one pound of methamphetamine for payment for each trip.

Beck said on this specific trip, they went to a

Hispanic male's house and an unknown person showed up and put methamphetamine inside of the vehicle. She overheard Wilson talking to the Hispanic male, and from what she could gather from their conversation, she believed there should be 44 pounds of meth in the vehicle.

At the ODET office, Walker tested the substance in three packages, each testing positive for methamphetamine. Each of the bags weighed about one pound, and all bags were similar in size and weight. The approximate total of methamphetamine recovered was 44 pounds, or 19,976 grams, which Walker said in the statement is consistent with distribution rather than personal use.

Beck and Wilson remain in custody and have had their first court appearances. The federal charge, a Class A felony, carries a range of punishment of no less than 10 years imprisonment, no more than life imprisonment, no more than a \$10 million fine and no less than 5 years supervised release.

CORRECTIONS

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.

CASSVILLE Democrat

COVERING BARRY COUNTY LIKE THE MORNING DAWN

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Organs: If patient dies in hospital, OPOs have set times organs are viable

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1A

donor, nor to have her remains [altered] in any way, other than what was required for her funeral and burial."

After his sister's death, which occurred shortly before 2 p.m., Kesterson informed Fraker Funeral Home in Marshfield — where Brenda had a pre-arranged burial plan — of her death. He and other family members then asked permission from CoxHealth staff to remain with Brenda's body until it was transported to the funeral home.

"They wouldn't let us," Kesterson said. "We were told that she might need to be seen by the coroner, and that it could take a while."

Without options, the Kesterson family left the hospital at about 2:30, with plans to meet again at the funeral home in Marshfield the next morning.

"Before I left Brenda's room, I told the nurse on duty that Brenda did not want to be an organ or tissue donor, and that nothing was to be removed from her body other than medical equipment," Kesterson said. "The nurse told me she understood."

At 7 p.m. that night, Kesterson discovered from the director at Fraker Funeral Home that his sister's body had still not been released from the hospital to the funeral home.

"I called my other sister, Peggy, who told me she'd received a call at 5 p.m. from someone requesting to remove a tissue sample from Brenda's body," Kesterson said. "We traced the call to Mid-America Transplant, an organization we hadn't heard of at the time."

Kesterson, a retired police chief, quickly gathered more information.

"I called Cox Hospital and demanded that my sister's body be released immediately," he said. "That's when I learned that Brenda's body had been removed to Saving Sight."

The non-profit organization serves as a repository for donated eyes and corneas.

Although Kesterson said he accomplished the release of his sister's body from the hospital, the experience left a bad taste in his mouth.

"When a decedent is held at the hospital against the wishes of the family, without the family's prior knowledge, while an organ procurement organization

attempts to get permission [for organ donation], it's disrespectful both to the decedent and to the next-of-kin," Kesterson said.

Over the next weeks, Kesterson began a journey of discovery regarding organ donation laws and the relationship between hospitals and OPOs.

Per Centers for Medicare and Medicaid (CMS) rules, there are currently 55 OPOs that serve the entire United States. Two serve Missouri: Mid-America Transplant, which serves the eastern half of the state, plus the City of Springfield; and Midwest Transplant, which serves the western half of the state, including Cassville and Monett.

Laws regulating organ donation can be found in Missouri Revised Statutes, Chapter 194.

Not only are all hospitals required to be affiliated with an OPO, they are also required by law to report all deaths or pending deaths to OPOs as soon as they occur, or appear about to occur.

According to statute 194.260, failures to report deaths or approaching deaths to OPOs can result in "administrative sanctions." Those sanctions also prospectively apply to emergency responders, including law enforcement, firefighters, paramedics and others serving in an official capacity who arrive at the scene of a crime or an accident.

Lori Pace, Manager of Regional Operations for Mid-America Transplant, represents hospitals in Springfield, Branson, Bolivar and many other facilities within her designated territory. Death reports from hospitals, said Pace, are matched against organ donation referrals that are made by those hospitals.

"If they don't match, we let the hospitals know," Pace said. "When we receive a referral from a hospital that a prospective organ donor has died, or is near death, we send a family support coordinator and hospital partner specialist to that hospital."

Pace said the purpose of the OPO representatives in the hospital is two-fold: to determine the patient's eligibility for being a donor, and to approach and support families in their decision to donate a loved one's organs.

"Before we disturb a family unnecessarily, we want to determine whether

a person is even qualified to be a donor," Pace said.

Donations of organs, tissues and eyes or corneas can be accepted, if a patient qualifies, Pace said.

"Less than 1% of patients pass in such a way that organ donation is possible," Pace said. "And, less than 14% are eligible to be a tissue donor."

If a patient is still alive, but is being supported by a ventilator when her team arrives in the hospital, "we're there to see how it goes," Pace said.

Death, by Missouri's legal definition, can occur in two ways: loss of brain function, or loss of cardiac and pulmonary (circulatory) function.

A brain death, which, in a hospital setting, must be declared by a doctor, is more straightforward. Circulatory deaths can be a bit trickier for organ donation purposes.

"If a family chooses to remove life support, death can occur within minutes, or take much longer," Pace said.

A delay of two hours can mean a prospective donor's organs are no longer viable, she said.

"A time of death is usually called five minutes after cardiac and pulmonary functions cease," Pace said.

However, in order for organs and tissues to remain viable for donation, the patient must be re-attached to a ventilator, where they are again monitored for signs of life for another five minutes.

"And another five minutes after that, just to confirm," Pace said. "We cannot be wrong about a patient's death. There are ethical lines we do not cross."

The number of organ donations after circulatory death (DCDs) are on the rise in the United States after a final rule released by CMS in 2020 warned that underperforming OPOs would be decertified.

In a Fall 2023 edition of "Hospital Executive Insights," published by The Organ Donation and Transplantation Alliance (The Alliance), hospitals were told to expect a higher level of OPO activity in their facilities as a result of the CMS rule.

The highest performing OPOs are involved earlier in the ICUs, well before brain death is declared or the decision to withdraw care is made," The Alliance

stated. "Your OPO may become more insistent on converting potential cases into authorized cases."

Some of those potential cases, according to The Alliance, would include donors age 75 and older, and those with HIV and Hepatitis.

The Alliance stated that procuring viable organs in the face of family opposition and obtaining the release of bodies from coroners and medical examiners were considered part of an "OPO strategy."

While The Alliance, of which Mid-America Transplant and Midwest Transplant are members, appears to boil organ procurement down to a competitive numbers game, Pace said she and her family-support teams represent the "human side" of donation.

Pace, a donor-mom herself, lost her 13-month-old son to an irreversible brain bleed and subsequent brain-stem death in 2004.

"We were approached by a representative of Mid-America, and my husband and I chose to donate our son's heart, liver and kidneys," Pace said. "It helped us in that time of trauma, something we had no control over, to know that three other lives were saved.

Losing him was hard, but donation helped provide some meaning and hope for the future."

Pace said she also lost her stepson, last fall, to cardiac arrest at age 31, and his body, too, was responsible for saving three other lives.

Pace now works for Mid-America to support other families in crisis in hospitals. She said most of the members of her family support teams have personal stories similar to her own.

There are currently over 100,000 people in the United States on a waiting list for an organ donation and transplant, said Pace.

According to stats from opodata.org, Missouri currently has a waiting list of 2,141 people in need of a transplant. Sixteen of those people die every month, while waiting, the site states.

Mid-America Transplant has organ procurement agreements with 124 hospitals in 84 counties in Missouri, northeast Arkansas and southern Illinois.

Organ transplants can be performed at 10 locations.

tions in Missouri, including five hospitals in Kansas City, one in Columbia and four in St. Louis.

have a reasonable opportunity to obtain that familial permission.

Robert Kesterson wishes

he had been aware of

these practices before his

sister's passing.

"My final communication from CoxHealth was a letter informing me that my problem was with Mid-America Transplant, not CoxHealth," he said. "I disagree. My family left Brenda's remains under the care and custody of CoxHealth, and no one else. They were responsible for the unpleasantness we experienced, in my opinion. I asked them how they could justify holding human remains against the wishes of the family, in violation of Missouri Revised Statute 194.119 (the 'Right of Sepulcher'), which clearly states that next-of-kin has ownership of the remains."

The hospital had no definitive answer for him, Kesterson said.

"I figured out that my family's experience was not out of the ordinary, but was perhaps standard operating procedure," Kesterson said.

Again, Kesterson emphasized that he's not against organ donation.

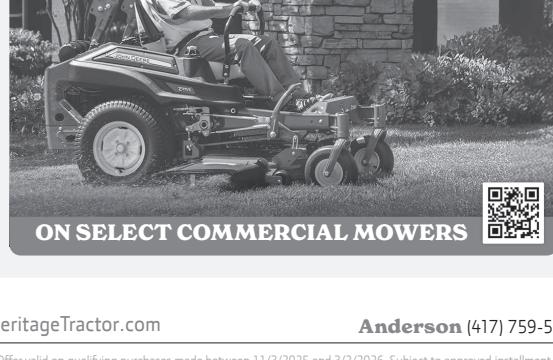
"I'd just like to see legislation changed so that hospitals are required to inform patients and their families, upon admittance, about the practices and presence of OPOs in the hospital."

The Cassville Democrat reached out by email to CoxHealth for information about hospital protocol for organ procurement, but was referred directly to Mid-America Transplant.

Mercy Cassville did not respond to a request for information by press time.



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PUBLISHER'S VIEW



KYLE TROUTMAN

Bringing back 'Everyday Heroes'

Every now and again, when leafing through our bound editions for the weekly Through the Years page, my wife, Jordan, or I come across things from those days of old that make us ask: Why did the Democrat ever stop doing this?

A couple of weeks ago, that exact thing happened with a recurring series from the 1990s.

About once a month, there would be a specifically boxed article with the timeless catchy headline: "Everyday Heroes."

An example of that series can be found in this week's Through the Years. In February 1996, and in less than 350 words, two George's employees received recognition for springing into action in the face of danger.

John Moore and Josh Jones had just finished their shifts at the poultry processing plant and were going east down Highway W when they passed a chicken hauler that "didn't look right" as it went by. In the rear view, Moore saw the truck and trailer topple over.

Rather than continue on their drive, or even just dial 9-1-1 and wait, Moore and Jones doubled back to the scene and pulled the driver — who needed 20 stitches — out of the vehicle a few minutes before the semi became fully engulfed in flames.

Better yet, when asked about it later, both men refused to take credit for their actions as "bravery."

"Anyone would have done what we did," they said.

The fact Jordan had brought the "Everyday Heroes" series to my attention so recently made the piece stand out, and though I did take this space last week to make a timely commentary on the Super Bowl Halftime Show (which as expected was equally criticized as it was praised), naturally coming across the story of Moore and Jones a few hours before writing this was nothing short of inspiration.

As far as we can tell, the first iteration of "Everyday Heroes" came in 1995 while Bob Mitchell was in his final stretch of ownership before selling the Democrat to the Schlichtmans. We've seen it a few times more over the next few years and not exactly sure when it ended, or why. If my journalistic instinct is correct, sometimes, series like this just fall by the wayside for lack of time or lack of participation.

Whatever the reason, seeing it so frequently recently has inspired us — and with good reason. There's one story in this week's edition that could qualify for two recognitions.

Two Cassville police officers received commendations last week for their actions. In November 2025, Officer Codie Evatt arrived to a house fire on Mill Street where a child caller was stranded on the roof. Before firefighters arrived, Evatt was able to help the child to safety.

Less than two months later, Officer Jacqueline Murray volunteered her connections and off-duty time to help locate a vehicle stolen from Evangel University in Springfield. Not only did the crime happen in another jurisdiction, but neither the victim nor her mother actually live in Cassville proper.

Evatt could have waited for assistance but acted with resolve. I reported that fire story back then, but was unaware of Evatt's actions until weeks after the story was written. Murray's actions I would have never known about if not for the commendation. It was the effort of Dianna Sexton, mother of the girl whose car was stolen, that led me to write more on the incident.

Sexton attended the City Council meeting to give further praise to Murray — a surprising and inspirational opportunity to share some good news in our community.

Beyond public-service minded acts of bravery or going beyond the required call of duty, there's one more "Everyday Heroes" act I can think of in recent weeks. Last month, Grant Preddy and his father, Robert Preddy, worked together to drop a burning mattress from a second story and pull it out the front door of their home.

That quick action meant the difference from being displaced and their home significantly damaged, or worse, but it was also a heroic act of bravery to get it done.

Beyond that, hundreds or even thousands of "Everyday Heroes" acts occurred in May 2024 when the windstorm blew through town. Every day, someone in Barry County does something brave, kind, gracious or incredible, we just need to know what they are.

So, to that end, if you know someone who has done something amazing, tell me about it. Call me at 417-847-2610, or email me at ktroutman@cassville-democrat.com.

Whether it's 350 words or 1,500, stories about the great things we do for one another should be shared. I can't wait to hear them and have the honor to share them.

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.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The purpose of the Commentary page is to provide a forum of various opinions, and we highly encourage letters to the editor. The opinions of columnists are not necessarily shared by the Cassville Democrat or its staff. If you have an opinion, send a letter to Kyle Troutman, Cassville Democrat, P.O. Box 486, Cassville, MO 65625, email ktroutman@cassville-democrat.com or scan the QR code to the right to submit a letter online.



COMMUNITY VOICES

It's a not-so-wonderful life without Missouri public schools

In "It's a Wonderful Life," George Bailey is shown a world in which he never existed.

His hometown of Bedford Falls becomes Pottersville, a place stripped of stability, opportunity, and decency. Businesses close. Families struggle. Crime rises. Hope disappears.

Missouri does not need an angel to show us what life would look like without public schools. We are already seeing pieces of it falling apart in the form of charter and private school growth and public/political skepticism that has become exhausting to continually defend against. Public schools are Missouri's George Bailey institutions. They quietly hold communities together, especially in rural areas, while rarely receiving credit for the role they play. Remove them, or weaken them beyond recognition, and the transformation is swift.

In Cassville, our school district is not just an educational institution. It is one of the largest employers, a hub for community events, and a stabilizing force for families. When schools thrive, local businesses survive. When schools struggle, the entire town feels it.

In Monett, schools support workforce readiness, career training and the future labor pool for area employers. Undermining that system and businesses do not expand, they leave. In smaller communities (Washburn, Seligman, Wheaton, Exeter and Purdy), where distances are long and options are few, public schools provide transportation, meals, special education and stability for children who have nowhere else to turn. Remove the school and there is no alternative waiting nearby.

If state leaders truly believe public education is expendable or even needs extreme makeovers, then they should be honest about the experiment they are proposing, one that trades community stability for ideological blindfolded darts.

Every Pottersville has a Mr. Potter. In Missouri, Mr. Potter doesn't wear a top hat. He wears policy language, talks of "efficiency," "school choice," "charters," and "property tax relief."

He does not close schools outright. He slowly bleeds them dry. Unfunded mandates. Responsibilities shift downward. Expectations rise. Then, when cracks appear, the system is blamed for not surviving neglect. It's an old strategy: dismantle the supports, then declare the structure unsound.

So, if lawmakers believe Missouri can function without public schools, they should follow that logic to its conclusion. Step back. Watch the consequences unfold. Absorb the disruption. And then pay attention to how quickly communities demand the very institutions that were dismantled in the name of reform.

Pottersville wasn't just poorer, it was harsher. The same would be true across Missouri. Public schools feed children every day. Remove them, and food insecurity rises immediately, especially in places like Barry, Lawrence and McDonald counties, where schools are often the most reliable source of daily meals for students.

Schools are also the first line of social/mental health support in many rural communities. Counselors, nurses and trusted adults notice when something is wrong. Without that safety net, issues escalate, from anxiety and depression to substance abuse and resurface later in emergency rooms, jails and courtrooms.

Crime does not increase because children lack discipline. It increases when structure disappears, opportunity



MERLYN JOHNSON

nity fades and economic stress takes hold. Ironically, public costs do not shrink. They just move, becoming more expensive, less effective and harder to manage.

In "It's a Wonderful Life," the most devastating change isn't the buildings, it's the people who left. That same quiet departure would spread across deep Southwest Missouri. Families would simply stop believing their hometowns could offer their children a future. And then they would move.

The road south to northwest Arkansas is already familiar. If Missouri legislators continue to make operating public schools unnecessarily complicated, that road becomes a permanent exit ramp. Families will follow opportunity, stability and hope; and they will find it where schools are treated as assets instead of liabilities.

When families leave, they take more than enrollment numbers. They take workforce potential, civic leadership and generational investment. Once they go, they do not return.

George Bailey's loan office kept Bedford Falls from collapse. Missouri's public schools serve the same role. Schools support construction projects, transportation contracts, utility services, local vendors and small businesses. When school funding erodes, those ripples spread quickly. In communities like Anderson, Aurora, and Neosho, weakened schools mean stalled growth, declining property values, shrinking municipal revenues and fewer public services.

There is no private-sector substitute capable of educating every child, transporting them safely, meeting special education needs, feeding them and anchoring community life, especially in rural Missouri.

Educating hundreds of thousands of children is not simple work. It is human work. It is complex, imperfect, and deeply relational. And it requires structure, sustained investment, and shared responsibility.

The expansion of private and charter schools threatens to widen the gap between rich and poor, offering increased opportunity to the wealthy while leaving families in poverty further behind. In the 1970s, '80s, and '90s, public schools were widely viewed as a shared civic investment; places where most children, regardless of background, learned together on the same playing field.

A child from a low-income family sat in the same classroom, followed the same curriculum and had access to the same opportunities as a child from a wealthy home. That common experience helped sustain the belief that education could be a true equalizer.

In recent years, however, growing criticism of public schools has fueled skepticism rather than improvement, undermining that collective commitment to equity.

As private and charter schools expand, the promise of choice has often translated into fragmentation; draining resources, increasing seg-

regation, and weakening accountability. States like Michigan, Ohio, and Arizona have seen unchecked charter growth lead to inconsistent quality, financial mismanagement and little evidence of improved outcomes for the students who need support the most.

Instead, of strengthening opportunity, these systems have too often widened gaps, eroding the very even playing field that public education once worked so hard to protect.

At the end of the movie, Clarence reminds George Bailey that no one is a failure who has friends. Missouri's public schools are those friends. They are flawed. They are underappreciated. And, they are essential.

They reduce poverty. They stabilize families. They protect public health. They anchor local economies. They give children a reason to believe their future can be better than their present.

Public education is not failing Missouri. Missouri is failing to fully claim what has always been its responsibility. And if leaders continue to tear down the system while denying ownership of the consequences, they may eventually rebuild it, but only after communities have paid a far higher price than reform ever required.

Missouri still has a choice. But George Bailey only got one second chance.

Here's how George Bailey might address the key legislative debates in Missouri:

"As the Missouri Legislature debates major tax changes this session, I find myself returning to a simple question that too often goes unanswered: where does the money come from? Many Missourians want tax relief, and that's understandable; everyone feels the pinch. But income and property taxes don't exist in a vacuum. They fund the very services that make our communities livable: strong public schools, safe roads and bridges, local libraries, fire protection and emergency services. I'm particularly confused by proposals to eliminate or sharply reduce income taxes, because they feel less like reform and more like a shell game. When a stable revenue source disappears, the bill doesn't vanish, it just shows up somewhere else. More often than not, that 'somewhere else' is higher and broader sales taxes, meaning families pay more every time they get a haircut, eat at a restaurant, buy groceries or seek professional services. At the same time, lawmakers are considering changes that directly affect public education, including adjustments to the school funding formula, open enrollment, and expanded school choice; all while threatening the revenue streams that support local districts. I understand the appeal of tax cuts, but Missourians should remember that those dollars buy something real. They buy opportunity in our classrooms, safety in our neighborhoods and infrastructure we all depend on. If we want lasting tax relief, it needs to come with an honest plan, not one that weakens public education and shifts the burden onto working families."

I encourage you to contact our local legislators about current legislation that will affect our public schools if passed this session: State Representative Scott Cupps can be reached by email at scott.cupps@house.mo.gov or by phone at 573-751-1488. State Senator Mike Moon can be contacted by email at mike.moon@senate.mo.gov or by phone at 573-751-1488.

Merlyn Johnson is the superintendent of the Cassville school district. He may be reached at mjohnson@cassville.k12.mo.us.

QUOTE OF THE WEEK

"People don't trust police these days because of all the propaganda and how we are so divided, but that's not the reality. Jacqueline made a difference in my daughter's perspective, and it's a testament to local police. Everyone needs to know Cassville has the best police. It wasn't about the car, it was about her taking time outside of her shift to help us. The world needs more people who care. It was very touching. My daughter cried, and we are very appreciative. Now we have a new memory around Christmas, and some light."

— DIANNA SEXTON, ROARING RIVER-AREA RESIDENT, ON HOW CASSVILLE POLICE OFFICER JACQUELINE MURRAY HELPED RECOVER HER DAUGHTER'S STOLEN VEHICLE

THROUGH THE YEARS

50 years ago

Feb. 25, 1976
- MUSICIANS ADD TO GROWING
LIST OF HONORS

After departing from Cassville at 2 a.m. Saturday morning, the CHS Stage Band traveled 300 miles to compete successfully against bands from the Kansas City and St. Louis areas to be awarded the first place trophy in Class 2AA at the Swinney Conservatory of Music at the Central Methodist College Stage Band Festival in Fayette. Greg Roark, sophomore, also received a special citation as outstanding jazz soloist. The CHS Stage Band was also honored by being asked to perform in the night concert in front of the other visiting bands, reports director John Knight. "To receive first place against such strong competition is an honor that will bring statewide recognition to our school and community. I'm very proud of this band because of their self-discipline and dedication. They deserve the recognition of being outstanding young men and women united in a common goal," commented Knight. All three of the judges from North Texas State University praised the band. "Excellent jazz feel. Lots of fire. Great bone solo. Strong, driving rhythm section; good drum solo. This is one of the most energetic and exciting bands I've heard all day. The band really looked and played relaxed and with lots of confidence. You guys definitely have soul. This is a very strong group that is obviously very happy and it reflects in their performance." Members of the stage band are, saxophones: Cathy Hollingsworth, Judy Smithson, Holly Edmondson, Marilyn Stringer, Jeff VanZandt and Alan Cannady; trombones, Greg Roark, Danny Seely, Denise Malarkey, Stuart Borders and Brian Hunt; trumpets, Jill Stephens, Doug Hart, Mike Fitzpatrick, John Cowherd and David Buntin; rhythm, Jamie Bowers, Rhonda St. John, Joe Linnenbrink, Steve Vaughan, Danny Priest and Phil Voorhees. The Cassville music department was the only unit to win straight I ratings in both concert band and stage band at the Miami, Oklahoma music festival. Cassville units were in competition with bands from Arkansas, Missouri, Kansas and Oklahoma, John Knight reported. Individuals and groups winning I ratings at the contest were: Mike Fitzpatrick, Jill Stephens, Greg Roark, Danny Seely and Brian Hunt for the brass quintet; Cathy Hollingsworth, Judy Smithson, Holly Edmondson and Alan Cannady for the saxophone quartet; Marilyn Stringer, Rhonda St. John and Annette Preddy for the clarinet trio; Troy Casteel, French horn solo; Mike Fitzpatrick, trumpet solo; Cathy Hollingsworth, alto saxophone solo; and Greg Roark, trombone solo. The CHS vocal department received I ratings at Northeastern Oklahoma State College in Miami, Oklahoma last Thursday. The concert choir received a I rating for their performance of the selections. The choir, under direction of Russell Robinson, received excellent comments from the adjudicator. Robinson had this to say after the contest, "This is our second contest this year, and so far we are batting 100% with I ratings along with Knight and the instrumental department. We sang in the afternoon and up until we sang there were no I

ratings of any schools in the Big Ten Conference, but when the kids got up to sing they really got with it and seemed to turn their nervousness into excitement." As it turned out Webb City was the only other school in the Big Ten Conference to receive a I rating. The records show that this is the first I rating for Cassville choir in over ten years at Miami. Their next contest is at Missouri Southern College in Joplin for the state competition. Vocal soloists receiving I ratings were Alan Cannady, Kathy Sisney, Brian Hunt and Danny Preddy.

40 years ago

Feb. 26, 1986
- OVER HALF FUNDS RAISED FOR
EXTENSION

Businesses and individuals have pledged over \$7,700 toward the \$12,000 needed to keep the Barry County Cooperative Extension Service open. The bulk of the money has come from financial institutions and ag-related businesses, says Ruby Vincent, extension council president. Businesses, individuals and organizations who use and believe in the educational services of Extension are encouraged to contribute to the fund by sending their tax-deductible contribution to Box 336, Cassville, 65625. Checks should be made payable to Barry County Extension Council. Extension programs offer off-campus educational opportunities to all county residents. Extension is sometimes referred to as the "fifth campus" of the Missouri University system. Whether it is identifying an insect, offering a 4-H member the opportunity to become a leader, testing soil, managing farming operations, taking college credit, teaching how to plan economical meals, or a wide variety of other opportunities, Extension facilities are at your disposal, says Mrs. Vincent.

- COUNTY'S EAGLE POPULATION
IN FACTOR MISSOURI'S
LEADERSHIP

Whether the addition of two more eagles will be enough to vault Missouri into the number one spot nationally is both doubtful and academic. Missouri has been either number one or number two with Washington State in the number of wintering bald eagles for the past several years and no doubt will be again this year. Department of Conservation and other eagle counters saw two more eagles this year than in 1984, the last record year. The count is taken during the first full week of the new year. There were 35 bald eagles in Barry County in a Christmas bird count conducted by Merle Rogers, Roaring River State Park naturalist, and volunteers. Barry County's 35 birds were concentrated in the southern part of the county. Most were in the Washburn Prairie area, where the birds are provided a good supply of chicken. Rogers said the birds fed almost daily on poultry that was disposed of by growers. Some of the dump areas back in woods are visited by as many as 30 birds at a time, according to one resident observer. Eagles are also frequenters of Roaring River State Park, of some areas on Table Rock Lake and have been seen at various points down Flat Creek. They will all be leaving within two weeks, according to observers. Their departure is due either to increased human activity or nesting calls elsewhere. "The eagle count is in conjunction with the annual mid-winter

waterfowl survey," says Jim D. Wilson, ornithologist for the Conservation Department. Conservation agents, biologists and Wildlife Division personnel, and people from the U.S. Corps of Engineers and the Fish and Wildlife Service do the counting. Wilson said the survey recorded 977 bald eagles in Missouri, not counting the Mississippi River which is recorded separately because Missouri shares those eagles with Illinois. Weather conditions were favorable for counting eagles, Wilson says. The cold weather in December froze from 60 to 90 percent of the lakes in north Missouri which concentrated the birds around the remaining open water. The Missouri River north of St. Joseph was a hotspot, with 76 birds recorded. Wilson said the water in southern Missouri was largely open, which spread the birds out more. He said there were eagles reported in 55 of Missouri's 114 counties. There were seven golden eagles and three unidentified as to species. Nearly a third, 31 percent, of the bald eagles seen were identified as immature. That figure indicates an average recruitment of young birds into the overall population. The Mississippi River contributed 258 eagles, which will be attached to a survey by the Illinois Natural History Survey. The previous high eagle count was in 1984 with 975. There were 955 seen in 1981, 779 in 1982, 908 in 1983 and 758 last year. In other eagle news, the Department hacked six eaglets last summer. Hacking is a process of conditioning parentless birds to the wild by feeding them in an isolation tower, with no human contact, until they are ready to fly. The young birds come from other states where the nests have been destroyed or something has happened to the parents. The Department has been working with the Fish and Wildlife Service at Mingo National Wildlife Refuge since 1981 and has hacked 18 eagles so far. Plans are to work with at least six more this year. If Dickerson Park Zoo in Springfield is successful at hatching eaglets, we'll have more to work with at Mingo, Wilson says. The zoo has been trying to hatch eagles, using parent birds that have been injured so severely they can't be released to the wild. The project has been plagued by difficulties with survival of the young. There already are four eggs being brooded by bantam chickens, with prospects for more. And we had two active nests in the wild last year that produced four eaglets, Wilson says. We expect those to be active again this year. And there are other nests built but not used by eagles which could become active.

30 years ago

Feb. 21, 1996
- R-IV SCHOOL BOARD APPROVES
\$500,000 RENOVATION PROJECT

Ground source heating and cooling system to be installed — The Cassville R-IV School Board accepted bids last week on a one-half million dollar project that will renovate portions of the elementary and middle school's existing heating systems. A base bid from Ground Source Systems in the amount of \$474,785 was approved, along with a \$50,659 bid for an alternate portion of the project. Ground Source is the company that installed the high school's heating and cooling system. Superintendent Dan Bailey said work on the



50 YEARS AGO: GREENWAY UNDERWAY — The Greenway project is underway along the shores of Flat Creek in Cassville. Les Chapman and Donnie Shelley of Chapman Construction Company prepare a portion of the trail for concrete. Cement piers will be placed along this section of the trail in order to support an elevated walkway. Dan Philbrick inspects the shore to ensure that as much foliage as possible remains along the bank for protection during times of high water. Democrat file photo

project will begin the day after school ends in May and will be completed by summer's end. The new heating and cooling system, which will be similar to the one installed at the high school, will be placed in two main portions of the school's elementary and intermediate wings. One section will include the current fourth and fifth grade classes, which are located in the old high school hallway, as well as the art room, band room and middle school gym. In the elementary wing, the main hall, including second through fourth grade rooms, the elementary art, music and primary cafeteria, will be affected. Bailey said the newest portion of the elementary school and the old portion of the middle school would not be included in the renovation. Bailey said the project will probably be financed through lease purchase funds. The district expects to receive about \$50,000 back in rebates from Barry Electric and KAMO for installing a ground source system. "After this summer, we'll work on the rest of the buildings a section at a time," Bailey said. In a related project, board members voted to accept the low bid of \$90,500 from R.E. Smith Construction for completion of a window and wall renovation project in the elementary wing. According to Bailey, the bid from R.E. Smith came in well below the projected cost of \$125,000. Bids for a new track surface were taken under advisement until the board could negotiate with

Hutchens Construction, the project's low bidder. Bailey said Hutchens' bid of \$150,536 was over \$35,000 higher than the expected cost. The board will now try to delete portions of the project to reduce cost. Bailey said the board is currently comparing a latex surface with a polyurethane surface. The polyurethane is a slightly better surface but would require more costly maintenance.

- EXTRAORDINARY ACT OF BRAVERY: MEN PULL DRIVER FROM BURNING TRACTOR-TRAILER

John Moore, pictured on the left, and Josh Jones, center, were honored for "actions above and beyond the call of duty" by George's, their employer. The two men pulled a driver from a company truck that had overturned and was on fire. Glenn Balch, corporate loss control director, is shown presenting the two men with \$100 checks and Good Samaritan plaques on behalf of George's. The presentation was made during lunch break before a crowd of fellow employees. Last Thursday, John Moore and Josh Jones had finished work and were heading home on Highway near Butterfield. About four miles west of the George's Processing plant, the two George's employees passed a company live haul truck loaded with chickens. As the truck went by, Moore noticed that the trailer didn't look right. When he glanced back in his rearview mirror, Moore saw the trailer overturn, pulling the tractor with it. Moore immediately stopped and drove back

to the scene. When the two men approached the overturned rig they found the driver disoriented and still in the cab. At the same time flames began to leap out of the grill. Instantly, Moore and Jones grabbed the driver out of the truck and got him out of the way. A few minutes later, the tractor was fully engulfed in flames. The driver received 20 stitches and was kept overnight in the hospital for observation. He is now back at work. In recognition of Moore and Jones' efforts, George's presented the two men with plaques and checks for \$100 during Tuesday's lunch break. The plaques read: "George's Farms presents the Good Samaritan Award to John Moore/Josh Jones for his action above and beyond the call of duty. Your concern for others as well as your company has earned our respect and appreciation." Glenn Balch, corporate loss control director who investigated the accident, said that Moore and Jones humbly declined to take credit for their bravery, stating that anyone would have done what they had. "We are very grateful," Balch said. "It could have been really serious. There could have been the loss of a life if the men hadn't risked injury to themselves to get the driver out." Moore, 39, lives in Rocky Comfort and has worked at George's for the past two years. Jones, 17, is from Stark City. He has been employed at the plant since November of last year.

Haven of the Ozarks Pet of the Week



Tatum is a small mixed breed. Her date of birth is Jan. 21, 2025. She weighs 25 pounds. She gives snuggles and loves. She is a fast learner and is learning basic commands in her cold weather foster home. Her foster said Tatum is a sweet, smart and alert dog. She loves other dogs. She loves people and is very affectionate. She just loves. She does her business outside and sits on command. She loves to go for walks. She is not a fan of being in a kennel. She will need to be fed separately. Tatum has a tendency to be very sneaky when it comes to finding the human's food. Adopters can complete an application at 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 havenozarksancillary@gmail.com, or call at 417-835-3647. Contributed photo

OBITUARIES

**JUANITA BANKS**

Juanita Banks, age 89, of Lewisville, Texas passed away Sunday, February 8, 2026 at Garden Ridge Place in Lewisville.

She was born August 26, 1936 in Ridgley, Missouri the daughter of Champ and Lucille "Lucy" (Savage) Brattin. On March 21, 1954 in Exeter, Missouri she was united in marriage to Ronald Lee "Ronnie" Banks, who preceded her in death on April 13, 2021. Also preceding her in death were her parents and brother, Leroy Brattin.

Surviving are her sons, Jeff Banks and wife Lori of Cassville and Kevin Banks and wife Kelly of Cassville; daughters, Debbie Ross and husband Bill of Cassville, and Linda Townsend and husband Bill of Flower Mound, Texas; brother-in-law, James Banks of Cassville; 12 grandchildren; 18 great grandchildren; seven great-great-grandchildren.

Juanita attended school in Cassville,

Missouri graduating from Cassville High School. She worked as a waitress for several area restaurants and was a homemaker which she loved. Juanita taught Sunday School, was the youth director at Corinth Baptist Church and song leader at Prairie Hill Baptist Church. She was of the Baptist faith and a very strong Christian woman who lived a life that exemplified faith, love, and devotion. Juanita enjoyed traveling with Ronnie and riding horses, but most of all she loved her family, especially the grandchildren. Juanita will be missed by all who knew and loved her.

Services were held at 11:00 A.M. Monday, February 16, 2026 at Fohn Funeral Home in Cassville. Pastor Richard Jones conducted the services. Burial will be at Maplewood Cemetery in Exeter, Missouri.

The family received friends from 10:00 A.M. until service time Monday at Fohn Funeral Home in Cassville.

Contributions may be made to First Baptist Church of Cassville in memory of Juanita.

PAID OBITUARY**AUSTIN JAMES PRIER**

Austin James Prier, age 35, of Golden, Missouri passed away Wednesday, February 4, 2026 at his home.

He was born March 22, 1990 in Harrison, Arkansas, the son of Jeff and Mandi (Summers) Prier.

Austin attended school in Cassville graduating with the class of 2008. He tried college and found it just wasn't for him and after a few years moved back to Golden. He tried a few different jobs but always gravitated to computers. Then he came to work for Prier Tire Supply in the warehouse, but more importantly as the resident computer guru. He had lived in Golden all of his life. Austin enjoyed playing video games on the computer with his friends, writing poems and singing songs. He loved his dog, Sammie, and cat, Clint. Austin will be missed by all who knew and loved him. He was a member of Blue Eye Baptist Church.

Surviving are his parents, Jeff and Mandi Prier of Golden; paternal grandparents, Winfred and Leeona Prier of Golden; maternal grandparents, Gerald Summers of Golden and Linda Bowie of Bergman, Arkansas and brothers, Adam Prier and wife Andrea Mata of Springfield and Andrew

Prier of Fort Lauderdale, Florida.

Services will be held at 2:00 P.M. Saturday, February 21, 2026 at Fohn Funeral Home in Cassville. Zandy Vandall will conduct the services. A private burial will be held at Munsey Cemetery in Eagle Rock, Missouri.

The family will receive friends from 1:00 P.M. until service time Saturday, February 21, 2026 at Fohn Funeral Home in Cassville.

Contributions may be made to Ronald McDonald House in memory of Austin.

PAID OBITUARY

FOHN FUNERAL HOME
Cassville, Missouri
417-847-2141

Visit www.fohnfuneralhome.com for online obituaries, guestbooks and private condolences

**NANCY MUREIL (PAINTER) LOPEZ**

Nancy Mureil (Painter) Lopez, 82, of Golden, Mo., passed away peacefully on Monday, February 9, 2026, at her home.

She was born on January 5, 1944, in Kansas City, Mo., the daughter of Glenn E. and Frances (Mott) Painter, who preceded her in death.

Also preceding her in death are her daughter, Rebecca Lopez; her siblings, Glenda, Donna, and Norman; and her stepmother, Zella.

Survivors include her son, Joe Lopez of Albuquerque, N.M.; two daughters, Michelle Lopez of Lake of the Ozarks, Mo., and Jennifer Lopez of Golden, Mo.; one brother, Dean Painter, and his wife, Betty, of Fayetteville, Ark., along with her eight grandchildren and nine great-grandchildren.

She graduated from high school in Albuquerque, N.M., then she embarked on a career as a heavy equipment operator. For a decade, her strength and determination shone through as she excelled in a field dominated by men.

A celebration of life to honor Nancy was held on Sunday, February 15, 2026, at a family friend's home. Cremation arrangements are under direction of Fohn Funeral Home in Cassville, Mo.

FOHN FUNERAL HOME
Cassville, Missouri
417-847-2141

Visit www.fohnfuneralhome.com for online obituaries, guestbooks and private condolences

Cassville residents injured in big rig wreck

Vehicle hits semi head-on northeast of Butterfield

BY KYLE TROUTMAN

ktroutman@cassville-democrat.com

Two Cassville residents were injured in a wreck at 10:57 a.m. on Feb. 9 on Highway U, six miles northeast of Butterfield.

According to a Missouri State Highway Patrol report, a 34-year-old male, of Cassville, was driving a 2014 Chevrolet Traverse northbound

when his vehicle crossed the center line and struck head-on a 2016 Kenworth Tractor Trailer, being driven by a 65-year-old male, of Cassville.

The driver of the Chevrolet and a 28-year-old female passenger, of Cassville, each suffered minor injuries and were both transported to Mercy Hospital in Cassville.

The driver of the Kenworth was not injured.

All involved were wearing safety devices, and both vehicles sustained extensive damage.

Police: Local thankful

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1A

fire department," Privett said.

Privett said the actions of Evatt and Murray exemplify the highest standards of professionalism, dedication and service expected of the Cassville Police Department.

"Both officers demonstrated sound judgment and a commitment to public safety that extends beyond routine duties," he said. "Their conduct reflects positively on the department and reinforces the trust placed in law enforcement by the community. These commendations recognize not only the individual actions taken, but also the professionalism and integrity that guide their service each day and make the City of Cassville a better place."

Sexton said that happened at about 9 p.m., and by 7 a.m. the next morning, Murray called to say the vehicle had been recovered.

"Nothing was broken," she said. "The inside was trashed, but we had it detailed and rekeyed," Sexton said. "I called the insurance company and said to cancel the claim. They asked why, and I said because we got the vehicle back. They asked, 'Who do you know?' and said that was incredible because people rarely get their vehicles back if they are stolen."

Sexton said the efforts made by Murray, when she was not on duty, exemplify the dedication of Cassville police officers.

"People don't trust police these days because of all the propaganda and how we are so divided, but that's not the reality," she said. "Jacqueline made a difference in my daughter's perspective, and it's a testament to

and to file an insurance claim."

The timing was especially tough for the family, as they are faced with added grief around Christmas time due to Sexton's mother's passing in 2023.

"It was really depressing," Sexton said. "We are already sad around that time, and it just felt like another dark Christmas."

A few days after the theft, Sexton was in Cassville and spoke to a

police officer about the issue.

"I asked if it was really true that they can't recover stolen cars, and he said it was common," she said. "Then, Jacqueline walked up and asked what was going on. She asked me for the plate number and said she would help. She genuinely cared and did not have to do that. Insurance was going to cover it, but we're still out the time and have to pay taxes."

Sexton said that happened at about 9 p.m., and by 7 a.m. the next morning, Murray called to say the vehicle had been recovered.

"Nothing was broken," she said. "The inside was trashed, but we had it detailed and rekeyed," Sexton said. "I called the insurance company and said to cancel the claim. They asked why, and I said because we got the vehicle back. They asked, 'Who do you know?' and said that was incredible because people rarely get their vehicles back if they are stolen."

Sexton said the efforts made by Murray, when she was not on duty, exemplify the dedication of Cassville police officers.

"People don't trust police these days because of all the propaganda and how we are so divided, but that's not the reality," she said. "Jacqueline made a difference in my daughter's perspective, and it's a testament to

and to file an insurance claim."

The timing was especially tough for the family, as they are faced with added grief around Christmas time due to Sexton's mother's passing in 2023.

"It was really depressing," Sexton said. "We are already sad around that time, and it just felt like another dark Christmas."

A few days after the theft, Sexton was in Cassville and spoke to a

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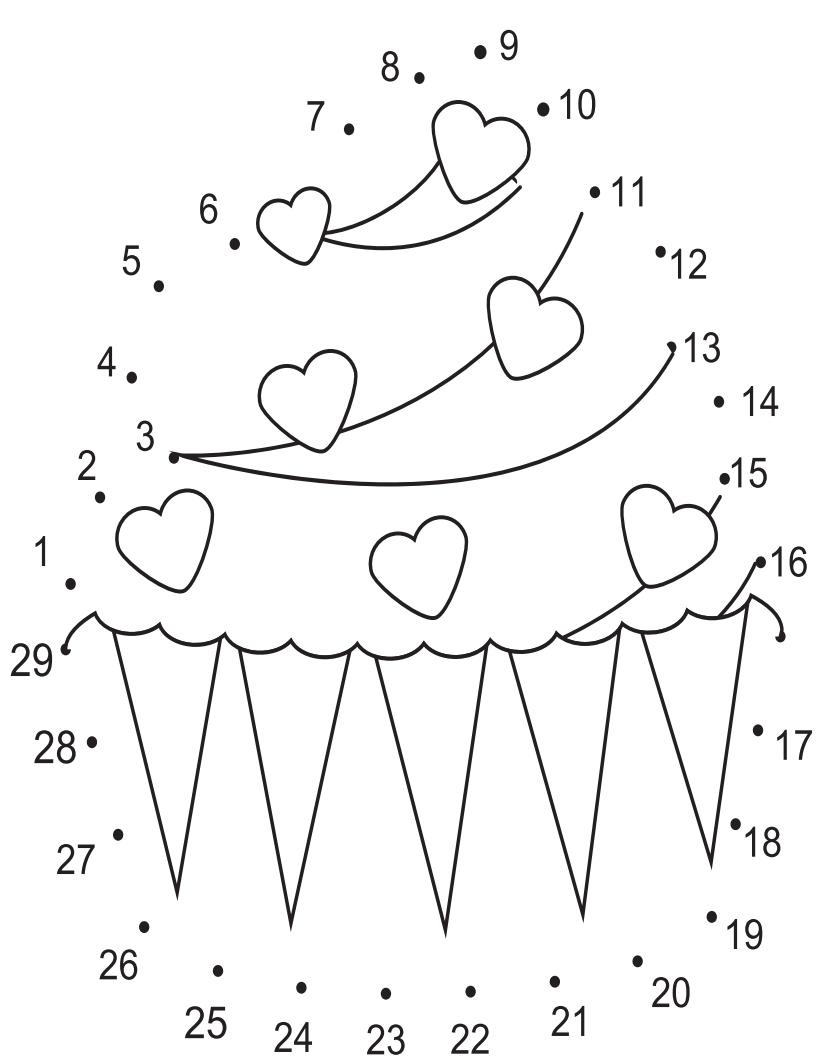
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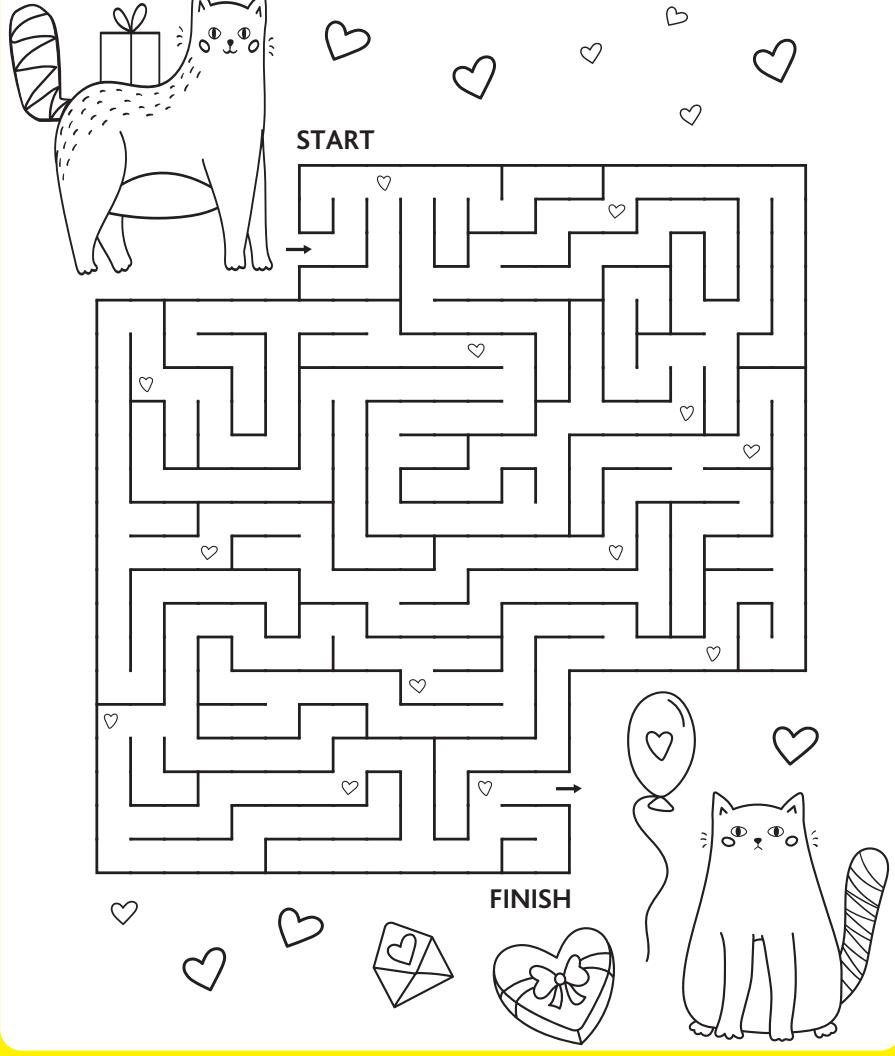


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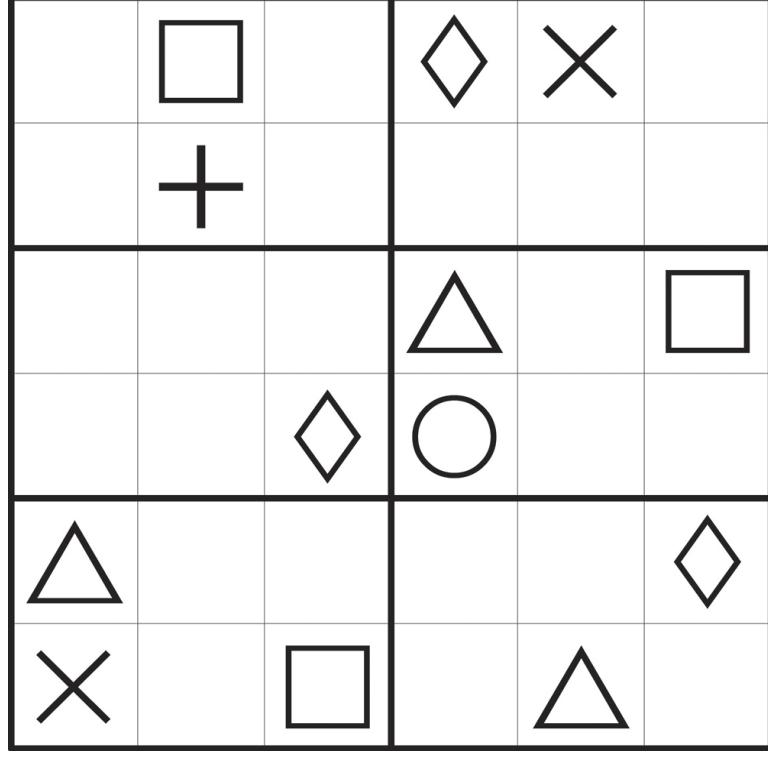
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Amazing maze



Sudoku 6x6



COMPLETE EACH GRID WITH THESE SIX SYMBOLS.

Symbols can only appear once in each line, once in each column and once in each box of six squares. Each box of six squares is marked by darker lines. Some symbols are already included in each box to help you get started. Don't forget: a symbol can't be repeated in the same line, column or box.

○	▽	+	□	◊	×
◊	□	×	+	○	▽
+	○	◊	▽	□	○
□	◊	○	○	×	+
▽	○	□	×	+	◊
+	◊	▽	□	○	○

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Q: How do oceans say hello to each other?

A: They wave!



JUST kidding

Q: What do you call a bear with no teeth?

A: A gummy bear!



JUST kidding

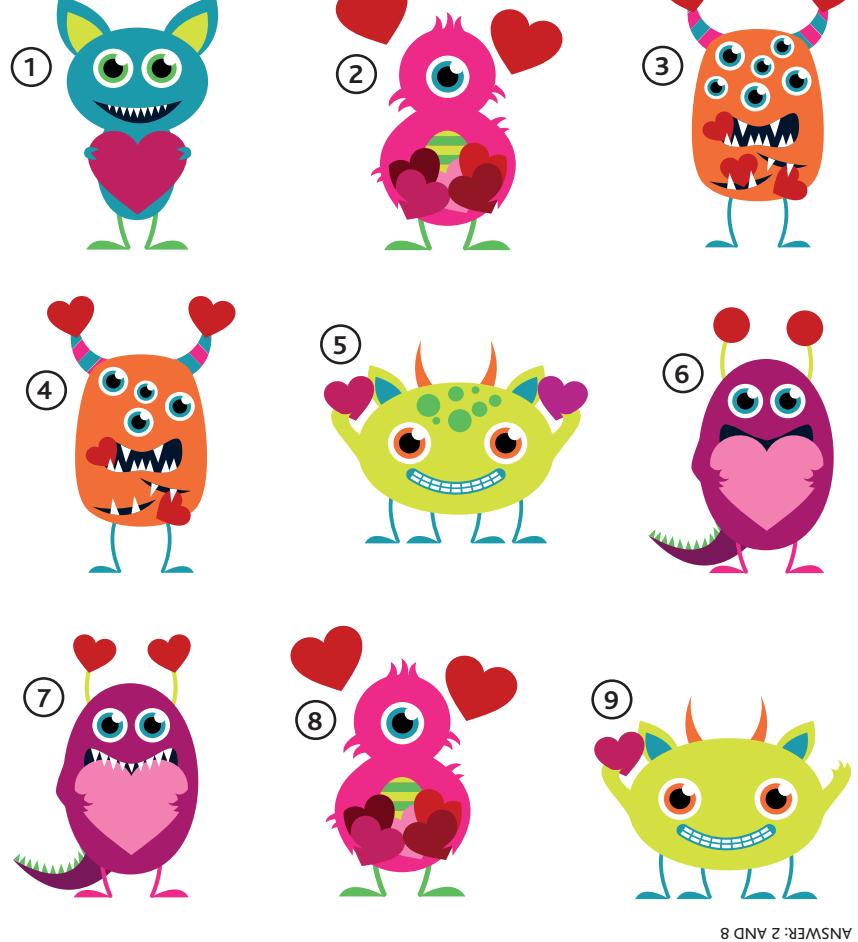
Q: What do you call an alligator in a vest?

A: An investigator!



Which two are exactly alike?

Private eye



ANSWER: 2 AND 8

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Southwest celebrates Homecoming



Senior Olivia Clanton, right, is crowned 2026 Southwest Homecoming Queen by 2025 Queen Laura Jean Henry, left, while 2026 King Lane Hendrix looks on. Kyle Troutman/ktroutman@cassville-democrat.com



Senior Homecoming candidates at Southwest on Friday included Missy Freeman, right, and Seth Duncan. Kyle Troutman/ktroutman@cassville-democrat.com



Junior Lane Hendrix is crowned Southwest Homecoming King by 2025 Queen Laura Jean Henry on Friday. Kyle Troutman/ktroutman@cassville-democrat.com



Student Council Homecoming candidates senior Olivia Clanton, right, and junior Lane Hendrix, react after being named Queen and King on Friday. Kyle Troutman/ktroutman@cassville-democrat.com



Junior Homecoming candidates at Southwest on Friday included Emma Steckman, right, and Charley Ketcher. Kyle Troutman/ktroutman@cassville-democrat.com



Sophomore Homecoming candidates at Southwest on Friday included Ashlyn Taylor, right, and Andrew Day. Kyle Troutman/ktroutman@cassville-democrat.com



Freshmen Homecoming candidates at Southwest on Friday included Brielee Jones, right, and Bently Paul. Kyle Troutman/ktroutman@cassville-democrat.com

City: Working on park

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1A

"Getting water in was no problem, but getting it out is tougher," he said. "A remodel of the [old city hall] will make having bathrooms way more achievable, and it's a net savings compared to the cost of installing new bathrooms and a new sewer line. This allows us to keep bathrooms as a needed piece, but not a focus for the budget."

"We have an open window on pocket park construction because we're not sure of those concrete and demolition costs. We've asked Council to be flexible with a soft timeline so we don't force ourselves into spending money too quickly."

Cassville City Council has approved a resolution to buy the building, at a cost of \$85,000, with the closing date set for March 2.

The pocket park's completion date is yet to be determined, as Asbill said the timeline is fluid for financial purposes.

"In the background, we've been working with architects and looking at qualifications," Asbill said. "There is one out of Bentonville, Ark., that we believe will bring a good perspective on the historical piece, plus

being a civic draw with a small fiscal footprint. Once we begin working with the architect, that will allow us to do bids for concrete work and demolishing the remainder of the south wall next to Wishing Wells before May.

"We are always open to an individual or groups looking at the park as an investment," he said. "A memorial or family naming rights would be an option, and if that happened, we would develop a firmer timeline."

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12 'CATS HEAD TO BUFFALO



Cassville's Kellen Weldy fights for position in a match at the Monett Tournament this season. [Kyle Troutman/ktroutman@cassville-democrat.com](mailto:ktroutman@cassville-democrat.com)

Cassville enjoying best season ever, aiming higher

BY KYLE TROUTMAN

ktroutman@cassville-democrat.com
The Cassville wrestling team took a program record six Wildcats to state last year, and if this year's regular-season success is any indication, the team hopes to beat that record again.

Nathan Fortner, Cassville boys wrestling coach, said the team has put together its strongest season during his tenure and is entering the Class 2, District 3 Tournament, at Buffalo High School on Friday and Saturday, focused on daily improvement and effort.

"I think the season has gone really well," Fortner said. "It is the best season we've had since I've been here. We went 12-1 in duals and placed in seven out of eight big-time tournaments. We've focused on continually getting better every day and stacking good days."

Fortner said the program sets both team and individual goals at the start of the season, with seniors helping define this year's targets.

"We always fill out goals at the beginning, three individual and three team," Fortner said. "I met with the seniors and we talked about what we wanted our team goals to be, and they came up with three really good ones."

Fortner said those goals included major benchmarks the program has yet to reach.

"They said an undefeated dual season, conference champs and state champs," Fortner said. "We would have won all 13 duals but had some kids out for injuries and sickness, so the one we lost as to a team we had beaten earlier in the season. We took second at conference, and the state champs goal is still to be determined."

Fortner said the coaching staff also meets with each grade level about personal objectives.

"I told them it's our job as a coaching staff to help them reach their individual

goals, and that usually helps with the team goals," Fortner said. "I've seen a lot of growth top to bottom through the lineup, and we're peaking right now."

As a team, the team mantra centers on daily gains.

"We talk about Kaizen, which is continuous improvement every day," Fortner said. "We've told them to find one thing you can get better at every day, and they've bought into it."

Cassville will bring 12 wrestlers in the varsity lineup to districts, with two weight classes open.

"One is injured and one didn't make the scratch weight, so we're open at two weights, but the rest have a chance to advance to state," Fortner said. "Some top-seeded guys should be Boni Lopez at 106, Rylen Holman at 126, Kole Fry at 132, Kellen Weldy at 138, Braydyn Sizemore at 150, Tristan Thompson at 165, Colton Roark at 175, Zach Myers at 190, Riley James at 215 and Ethan Sizemore at heavyweight."

Fortner said two others could outperform their projected seeds.

"Logan Parsons and Tyler Hodge, at 144 and 157, are probably in the six, seven or eight seed range, but they have a shot to upset some kids," Fortner said. "They're close to the guys above them in wrestling ability."

During the late-season break from competition — 15 days between the last dual and districts — Fortner said the team has increased its effort.

"We're working really hard right now," Fortner said. "Since January, we've had morning open mat from 6-7 a.m. on Tuesdays and Thursdays for extra technique, video and weight management, and a lot of guys are showing up consistently."

Fortner said many wrestlers are effectively doubling their sessions.

"They're still practicing after school every day, so they're hitting two-a-days," Fortner said. "They're eating it up consistently."

up."

Looking at the district field, Fortner said one program stands at the top, with several others grouped closely behind.

"Seneca is the top tier, and I think we're right behind them," Fortner said. "Then, you have Owensville, Osage, Sullivan, Nevada and others grouped together, and Monett has some good kids this year."

Asked about state-qualifier goals after setting a program high last season, Fortner said he wants every wrestler to have the opportunity.

"I would like to take all 12," Fortner said. "I want them to wrestle as hard as they can and see what happens."

Fortner said effort, not bracket-watching, is the team's competitive focus.

"If we take six, I'm okay with it as long as we give max effort, and if we take 12, I'm good with that too as long as we give max effort," Fortner said. "We're going to focus on not looking through the bracket and not looking past anybody."

Fortner said the coaching staff is teaching wrestlers to narrow their attention even further during matches.

"I don't want them focused only on the match in front of them, I want them focused on the position," Fortner said. "Start neutral and get the takedown, win the bottom position and win the top position."

Fortner said the team's concentration level has improved entering the postseason.

"Right now they're pretty laser focused," Fortner said. "I'm excited to see what they can do."

Fortner also praised the team's internal culture and how upperclassmen are mentoring younger wrestlers.

"It's a really good team atmosphere, and they get along and root

CONTINUED ON PAGE 6B

LADY WILDCATS WRESTLING

What: One state qualifier in Analeigh Winchell
Team: Tied for 21st out of 38 teams in Class 1, District 3
More: Seven of Cassville's eight wrestlers won at least one match at districts

Solo to state

Winchell 3rd at districts, returning to Mizzou

BY KYLE TROUTMAN

ktroutman@cassville-democrat.com
For the second consecutive season, only one Cassville girls wrestler will be on the mats at Mizzou.

Analeigh Winchell, at 155 pounds, went 5-1 at the Class 1, District 3 Tournament in Buffalo on Friday and Saturday, taking third place and becoming the only Lady Wildcat out of eight to qualify to the Class 1 State Wrestling Tournament on Feb. 25-26 at Mizzou Arena in Columbia.

Winchell picked up two pins and a technical fall in her first three matches before being pinned by district runner-up Addie Davis, of Adrian, while leading in points, 7-4. Despite the loss, a bubble-match win over Marshfield's Abyigail Spencer — a pin in the third period when already up 4-0 — put Winchell through to state.

Winchell also finished the day on a win, pinning Odessa's Wylie Smith in the second period of the third-place bout while leading 8-1. Last year as a sophomore, Winchell finished in sixth place at the state tournament.

Casey Parsons, Cassville girls wrestling coach, said even though she took third at districts, Winchell's potential at state is great.

"Analeigh just got caught in her semifinal match, and that happens sometimes in wrestling," Parsons said. "I know she can beat both of the girls that were in the finals. She wrestled great this weekend, and we are looking forward to state. Her goals are still the same for state and we are going to fine tune a few things this week to accomplish those goals."

In other results, at 100 pounds, Isabella Bauman went 2-2 and was one match away from the bubble round. Allison Deaver, at 115 pounds, fell in her first match and won two consolation matches before being defeated in the consolation quarterfinals.

At 120 pounds, Gracie Farsungchin went 1-2, as did Hopelyne Thompson at 125 pounds, Myah Dunfee at 130 pounds and Alexis Lands at 170 pounds. Estrella Garcia, at 140 pounds, was the only Lady Wildcat to go 0-2 at the tournament.

"I am proud of how all the girls wrestled," Parsons said. "We won a few we didn't expect

CONTINUED ON PAGE 6B

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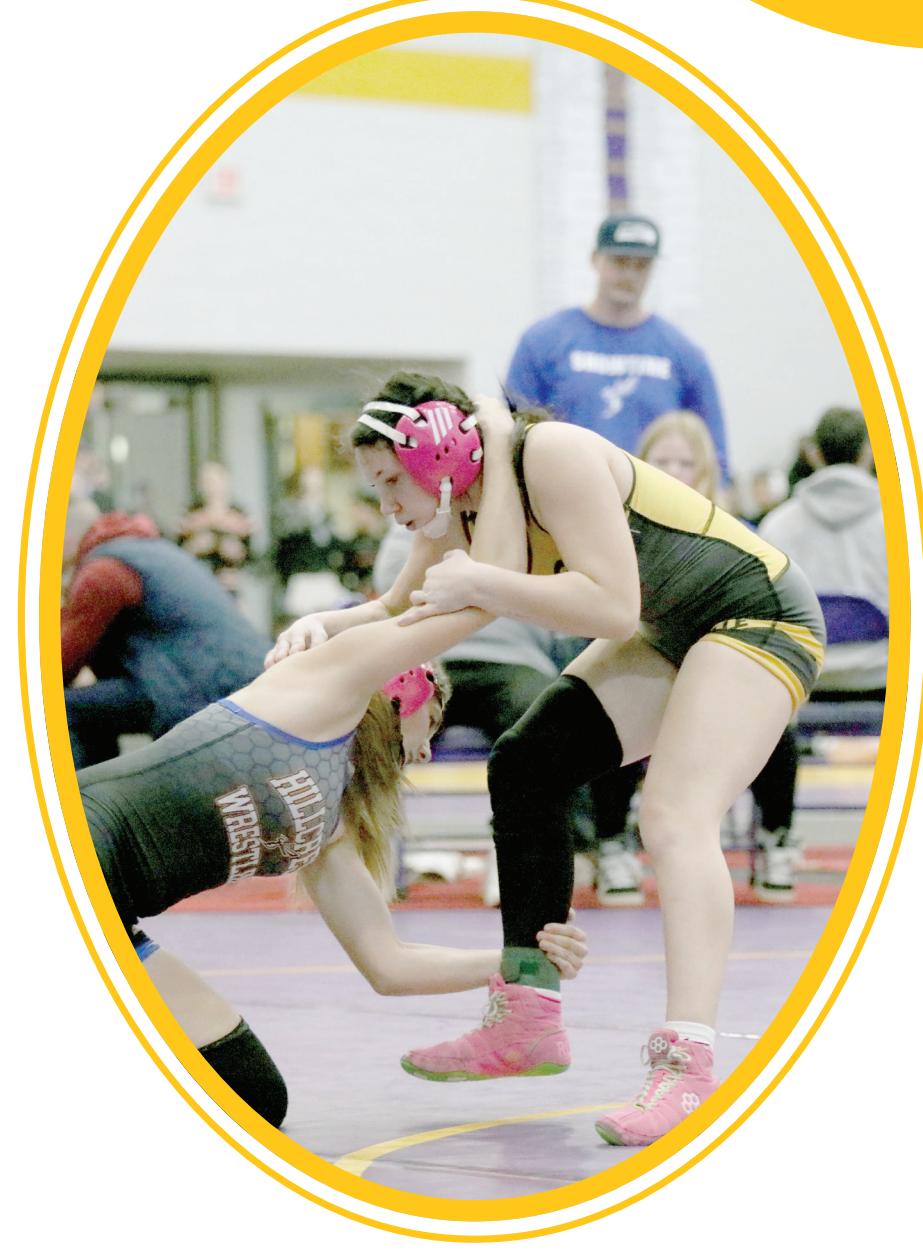
Middle school teams top seeds in Big 8

Cassville Middle School boys basketball teams finished the regular season strong this week and carried their momentum into the opening round of the Big 8 Tournament. In their final two regular season games, both teams earned wins over Monett and Nevada. The eighth-grade Wildcats defeated Monett, 47-32, and followed with a 52-31 victory over Nevada. The seventh-grade team also swept the week, earning a 41-11 win over Monett and a 51-19 victory against Nevada. With the wins, both teams completed conference play undefeated and secured the No. 1 seeds in the Big 8 Tournament. Cassville continued its strong play in Saturday's opening round of tournament action. The eighth-grade team defeated Nevada, 51-19, while the seventh-grade squad earned a 47-10 victory over Monett to advance. Following this week's action, the eighth-grade team improves to 14-1 on the season, and the seventh-grade team moves to 12-3. Round two of the Big 8 Tournament continued on Monday with the eighth-grade playing in Monett and the seventh-grade competing in Mt. Vernon. Results were not available as of presstime.

Trap team celebrates title



The Southwest High School trap team held a ring ceremony during halftime of the Homecoming game on Friday. The ceremony honored the team's AIM Grand National Championship victory in Sparta, Ill., in July 2025, where the team won first place by one target



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2/25-26

Class 1 State Tournament

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Boys Basketball

2/20

2/26

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Away 7:00 pm

Nevada Forsyth

Girls Basketball

2/20 Nevada
2/24 Neosho
2/26 Carl JunctionHome 7:00 pm
Away 7:00 pm
Home 7:30 pm

Boys Wrestling

2/20-21
2/25-26Class 2, District 6 Tournament
Class 1 State TournamentBuffalo High School
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CASSVILLE AREA DEVOTIONAL PAGE

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Ash Wednesday, Lent and Easter

From the discovery of the empty tomb, the first news on the day of Jesus' resurrection, on the part of Mary Magdalene, was, "They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid him." (John 20:2).

The development of the message happened rapidly. After the report of Mary Magdalene, from among the disciples who heard Mary's report, Peter and John ran to the tomb. Upon entering, we hear the report about John, "He saw and believed." (John 20:8). Later the same day, Jesus appears to Mary Magdalene (John 20:11-18) who reported to the disciples (John 20:18). The evening of



WILLIAM HODGSON

that same day he appeared to 10 of the 12 apostles (John 20:19-23) and then a week later to the same 10, plus Thomas was with them.

St. Luke adds an account of two other disciples coming to recognize Jesus in the "breaking of the bread." (Luke 24:13-35). Later on, Paul would list the various times Jesus had appeared to

others and lastly, to himself, "As to one untimely born." (1 Corinthians 15:1-10).

By this time, the proclamation of Jesus as risen and Lord had developed among them to a message that had been received and was being handed on.

As Christians began to commemorate the resurrection, they did so in the context of the Passover, when Jesus had suffered, and which was calculated each year according to the lunar calendar. The solar calendar had been introduced by Julius Caesar in 45BC, which gave people living in the empire a dual calendar, one for Judeo-Christian celebrations and another for civil use. This

resulted in the variable date of Easter that we still observe today.

As time went on, Christianity began to consider other events in the life of Jesus, worthy of celebration. Those associated with Easter continued to follow in relation to the Passover. The emergence of Lent commemorated Jesus' 40 days of fasting in the wilderness (Matthew 4:1-11, Mark 1:12-13, Luke 4:1-13). Beginning the season with "Ash Wednesday" became popularized around 601 AD., and was associated with God's word to Adam, "for you are dust and to dust you shall return." (Genesis 3:19). In a similar vein, Jesus referred to the Old Testament custom

of sackcloth and ashes as a manifestation of repentance." (Matthew 11:21).

Finally, in the sermon on the mount, Jesus refers to three practices commonly thought to be associated with both repentance and growth in holiness: prayer, fasting and almsgiving (Matthew 6:1-18).

Over the course of time, Christian celebrations have become synchronized with the seasons of the year and blend to help us internalize the messages of faith.

Pastor Fr. William Hodgson is the priest at St. Edward Catholic Church in Cassville. He may be reached at 417-847-4948 or stedwardcassville@gmail.com.

**Find all of our devotionals, guest written by local pastors, online at:
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BIBLE VERSE:

"This is the message you heard from the beginning: We should love one another."

— 1 JOHN 3:11

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107 17th St., Cassville
847-4948

CHURCH OF CHRIST

CASSVILLE CHURCH OF CHRIST

404 State Hwy 248 Cassville, MO 65625

Normal worship time, 10 a.m.
916-539-4708

cassvillechurchofchrist.com

CHURCH OF CHRIST

Hwy. 90 E., Washburn
826-5890

CHURCH OF CHRIST

39 Lake Rd., Shell Knob
858-3839

CHURCH OF CHRIST

Goosetree Hwy. 86, Wheaton
652-3873

CHURCH OF CHRIST

1104 Mill St., Cassville
847-2374

CHURCH OF GOD

APOSTOLIC FAITH

GOLDEN CHURCH OF GOD

Hwy. 86, Golden
271-3134

SPIRITUAL STREAMS FELLOWSHIP

Hwy. 112, Cassville
846-6339

EPISCOPAL

ST. THOMAS Á BECKET

Hwy. 112 and State Hwy. AA, Cassville
846-2155

LUTHERAN

COMMUNITY LUTHERAN

Hwy. 86, Eagle Rock
271-4383

PEACE LUTHERAN

N. Hwy. 39, Shell Knob
858-3900

METHODIST

ALL FAITH UNITED METHODIST

Hwy. 86, Eagle Rock
271-3737

CLASSIFIEDS/LEGALS

Cassville Democrat

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 inquiries 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. 7 months old. \$500 each. Call 316-519-6316.

MISCELLANEOUS

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 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 Vloyd 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 and 3202 county Farm Rd Cassville, MO 65625

1st insertion 01/21/26
2-6

IN THE CIRCUIT
COURT OF BARRY
COUNTY, MISSOURI AT
CASSVILLE

JOSILYNE CREASON,
Plaintiff,
VS.
JASON MAYBERRY
d/b/a MAYBERRY
CONSTRUCTION, INC.,
Defendant.
Case No.
25BR-CC00085

NOTICE UPON ORDER
FOR SERVICE BY
PUBLICATION

The State of Missouri
to JASON MAYBERRY,
d/b/a MAYBERRY
CONSTRUCTION,
LLC.

You are hereby notified
that an action has
commenced against you in
the Circuit Court of

Barry County, Missouri,
the object and general
nature of which is a Petition
in Damages.

The names of all parties
in this action are Josilyne
Creason, and the name
and address of the attorney
for the Plaintiff is J. Michael
Riehn, Attorney at Law,
P. O. Box 324, Cassville,
Missouri 65625.

You are further notified
that, unless you file an
answer or other pleading
or otherwise appear and
defend against this action
within 45 days after January
28, 2026, judgment by
default will be entered
against you.

It is ordered that a
copy hereof be published
according to law in the
Cassville Democrat, a

newspaper of general
circulation published in the
County of Barry, State of
Missouri.

A true copy from the
record.

Witness my hand and the
seal of the Circuit Court this
22nd day of January, 2026.

Craig Williams
by Kami Stanton
First publication:
January 28, 2026
Second publication:
February 4, 2026
Third publication:
February 11, 2026
Fourth publication:
February 18, 2026
1st insertion 01/28/26
3-6

IN THE 39TH JUDICIAL
CIRCUIT COURT
JUVENILE DIVISION
AT BARRY COUNTY,
MISSOURI

In the Interest of:
G. G. H. (M.)
DOB: 06/11/2024
Case No.
25BR-JU00079

NOTICE UPON ORDER
FOR SERVICE BY
PUBLICATION

THE STATE OF
MISSOURI TO
Mackenzy Gail McCarley,
Legal Mother of G.G. H.
(M.)

You are hereby notified
that an action has
commenced in the Circuit
Court of Barry County,
Missouri, the object and
general nature of which is
the Termination of Parental
Rights for the above-
mentioned child under
Chapter 211 of the Revised
Statutes of Missouri.

The number assigned
to said action is stated in
the caption above, and
the name and address of

the attorney for Petitioner,
Missouri Children's
Division, is: Sheena Garvin,
601 Commercial Avenue,
Joplin, Missouri, 64801,
Telephone Number
(417) 625-9924.

To be published in the
newspaper that is circulated
in Barry County, this being
the Cassville Democrat.

You are hereby notified
that, unless you file an
answer to the Petition or
other pleading or otherwise
appear and defend against
the aforesaid Petition within
forty-five (45) days after the
28th day of January, 2026, or
appear and defend against
the aforementioned action at the

Barry County
Judicial Center,
102 West Street #2,
City of Cassville,
State of Missouri,
judgment by default will
be rendered against you,
and Judgment Terminating
Parental Rights will be
entered.

The next hearing for
this matter is scheduled to
occur on March 06, 2026 at
9:00 a.m.

Witness my hand and the
seal of the Circuit Court this
22nd day of January, 2026.

Craig Williams
Circuit Clerk
by Kami Stanton
Deputy Clerk

1st Publication:
January 28, 2026

2nd Publication: February

4, 2026

3rd Publication:
February 11, 2026

4th Publication:
February 18, 2026

1st insertion 01/28/26

3-6

IN THE CIRCUIT
COURT OF BARRY
COUNTY, MISSOURI AT
CASSVILLE

TIM REAL AND JUDY
REAL,
PLAINTIFFS,
VS.

EDWIN L. OREM,
EDNA L. OREM their
heirs, grantees, devises,
successors, consorts, and
assigns,

DEFENDANTS,
Case Number:
26BR-CC00007

NOTICE UPON ORDER
FOR PUBLICATION OF
NOTICE

THE STATE OF
MISSOURI TO:

Defendants,
Edwin L. Orem
and Edna L. Orem
if they shall be deceased,
then their

unknown heirs, grantees,
consorts, spouses or
successors of those of them
who shall be deceased.

YOU ARE HEREBY
NOTIFIED that an action
has been commenced
against you in the

Circuit Court for the

County of Barry, Missouri,
the object and general
nature of which is to

quiet title to the following
described property in Barry
County, Missouri:

Lots 65 and 66, Elmo's

Subdivision No. 2, Table

Rock Lake, Barry County,
Missouri as platted in

Plat book 5, Page 200,

Recorders' Office of Barry

County, Missouri.

The names of all the
parties to said suit are stated
above in the caption hereof
and the name and address
of the attorney for Plaintiff is

Harry D. Schwartz,

P.O. Box 276,

702 West Street,

Cassville, Missouri 65625.

YOU ARE FURTHER
NOTIFIED that, unless you file
an answer or other pleading
or shall otherwise appear and
defend against the aforesaid
Petition within 45 days after the
28th day of January, 2026 judgment
by default will be rendered
against you.

IT IS ORDERED that a
copy hereof be published
according to law in the

Cassville Democrat, a

newspaper of general
circulation published in the

County of Barry, State of
Missouri.

A true copy from the

record.

Witness my hand and the

seal of the Circuit Court this

27th day of JANUARY 2026.

by Katie Correia/DC

Craig Williams

Circuit Clerk

First publication:
FEBRUARY 04, 2026

Second publication:
FEBRUARY 11, 2026

Third publication:
FEBRUARY 18, 2026

Fourth publication:
FEBRUARY 25, 2026

1st insertion 02/04/28

4-7

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT
OF BARRY COUNTY,
MISSOURI CASSVILLE

4, 2026

3rd Publication:
February 11, 2026

4th Publication:
February 18, 2026

1st insertion 01/28/26

3-6

DISTRICT COURT
EUREKA COUNTY,
NEVADA

NICOLETTE JOY HAYES

Plaintiff,
VS.

JOSHUA SHAWN

HAYES

Defendant.

CASE NO.:
CV 2601-276

DEPT:

District Court

ORDER FOR SERVICE BY
PUBLICATION

Upon reading the Ex Part
Motion for Publication and
corresponding declarations,
it appearing that a verified
complaint has been filed
and a summons was issued
directed to the Defendant;

that Defendant is a
necessary party; that the
Defendant cannot be found
after due diligence, or by
concealment seeks to avoid
the service of summons
and complaint, and that
the Defendant cannot be
served by other means:

THEREFORE, IT IS
ORDERED that Defendant
may be served by
publication of the

summons in the (name
of newspaper) McDonald
County Press, and Cassville
Democrat

Publication shall run at
least once a week for a
period of 4 consecutive
weeks.

1st insertion 02/04/28

4-7

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT
OF BARRY COUNTY,
MISSOURI

BRIAN L. O'NEILL,
and

KIMBERLY L. O'NEILL,
and

TRENTON LEE

WHITTINGTON,
Petitioners,

vs.

SCOTT WHITTINGTON,
Respondent.

Case No. 25BR-JU00090

NOTICE UPON ORDER
FOR SERVICE BY
PUBLICATION

The State of Missouri to
SCOTT WHITTINGTON

You are hereby notified
that an action has been
commenced against you in
the Juvenile

Court of Barry County,
Missouri, the object and
general nature of which is

adoption TRENTON LEE
WHITTINGTON.

The names of all parties
in this action are

BRIAN L. O'NEILL,
KIMBERLY L. O'NEILL,

and

TRENTON LEE

WHITTINGTON,
and the name and

address of the attorney for

the Petitioners is

J. Michael Richn,

CLASSIFIEDS/LEGALS

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4B
 Prairie Berlie Crawford-
 McDonald
 Glen Johnson- Mountain
 Randy Wormington-
 Purdy
 Thomas Bromwell- Shell
 Knob/Viola
 Water Districts-Board of
 Directors
 Barry County Public
 Water Supply Dist. 2
 Brad Porter-Southwest
 Rural Water Dist. 1
 South Barry County
 Hospital
 Eddie Davidson- 6 yr.
 term
 Only insertion 02/18/26
 6

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

In Re the Estate of:
 Leslie H. Lindsay,
 Estate No.
 25BR-PR00091
 Deceased

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

To all persons interested
 in the above referenced
 estate:

You are hereby notified
 that the undersigned
 personal representative will
 file a

petition for an order
 approving final settlement
 of the estate together with
 a final

settlement and proposed
 order of distribution in the
 Probate Division of the
 Circuit Court

of Barry County, Missouri,
 on March 12, 2026, or as
 may be continued by the
 court.

If no objections to the
 settlement or proposed
 order of distribution are filed
 within

(20) days after the date
 of the filing thereof, the
 court will consider said
 settlement and

proposed distribution
 and, upon their approval,
 the court will determine the
 persons

entitled to decedent's
 descendible interest in the
 estate and the extent and
 character of
 their interest therein.

Upon proof of compliance
 with the court's order of
 distribution by the personal
 representative, the court
 will discharge the personal
 representative and her
 sureties, if

any, from further claim or
 demand by any interested
 person.

Dated: 2/9/2026
 Lydia Raska,
 Personal Representative
 James A. Pettit,
 Bar No. 66147
 P. O. Box 148
 Aurora, MO 65605
 417-678-2187
 james@pettitlawoffice.
 com

Attorney for Personal
 Representative
 For Publication:

2/11/26,
 2/18/26,
 2/25/26,
 3/6/26
 1st insertion 02/11/26
 5-8

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

Case Number:
 25BR-PR00190
 In the Estate of
 VIRGINIA RUTH MAYER,
 Deceased.

NOTICE OF LETTERS
 TESTAMENTARY
 GRANTED
 (INDEPENDENT
 ADMINISTRATION - NON-
 RESIDENT FIDUCIARY)

To All Persons Interested
 in the Estate of
 VIRGINIA RUTH MAYER,
 Decedent:

On January 30, 2026, the
 last will of Decedent having
 been admitted to probate,
 the following individual was
 appointed the personal
 representative of the estate
 of

LILY ANN PETERSEN, decedent, by the Probate
 Division of the Circuit Court
 of Barry County, Missouri. The personal representative
 may administer the estate
 independently without
 adjudication, order, or
 direction of the Probate
 Division of the Circuit
 Court, unless a petition for
 supervised administration
 is made to and granted by
 the court. The name and
 business address of

direction of the Probate
 Division of the Circuit
 Court, unless a petition for
 supervised administration
 is made to and granted by
 the court. The name and
 business address is:

DAVID MAYER, 7146 S.
 UKRAINE ST. AURORA,
 CO 80016

The personal
 representative's attorney's
 name, business address
 and phone number is:

FARES MASRI,
 405 BROADWAY
 P.O. BOX 151
 MONETT, MO 65708,
 417-235-8688

The non-resident
 personal representative's
 designated agent's
 name, business address,
 and phone number is:
 SAMANTHA PRESCOTT,
 405 E BROADWAY,
 MONETT, MO 65708,
 417-235-8688

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:
 29-DEC-2025

Date of first publication:
 February 11, 2026

Date of second
 publication:
 February 18, 2026

Date of third publication:
 February 25, 2026

Date of fourth publication:
 March 4, 2026

BARRY COUNTY
 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.

Date of the decedent's
 death:
 26-DEC-2024

Date of first publication:
 February 11, 2026

Date of second
 publication:
 February 18, 2026

Date of third publication:
 February 25, 2026

Date of fourth publication:
 March 4, 2026

BARRY COUNTY
 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 02/11/26
 5-8

MONETT, MO 65708,
 417-235-8688

The non-resident
 personal representative's
 designated agent's
 name, business address,
 and phone number is:
 SAMANTHA PRESCOTT,
 405 E BROADWAY,
 MONETT, MO 65708,
 417-235-8688

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-JAN-2026

Date of first publication:
 February 18, 2026

Date of second
 publication:
 February 25, 2026

Date of third publication:
 March 4, 2026

Date of fourth publication:
 March 11, 2026

Craig Williams,
 Circuit Clerk
 by S. Parker,
 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.

Date of the decedent's
 death:
 29-DEC-2025

Date of first publication:
 February 11, 2026

Date of second
 publication:
 February 18, 2026

Date of third publication:
 February 25, 2026

Date of fourth publication:
 March 4, 2026

BARRY COUNTY
 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 02/18/26
 6-9

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-JAN-2026

Date of first publication:
 February 18, 2026

Date of second
 publication:
 February 25, 2026

Date of third publication:
 March 4, 2026

Date of fourth publication:
 March 11, 2026

Craig Williams,
 Circuit Clerk
 by S. Parker,
 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.

Date of the decedent's
 death:
 29-DEC-2025

Date of first publication:
 February 11, 2026

Date of second
 publication:
 February 18, 2026

Date of third publication:
 February 25, 2026

Date of fourth publication:
 March 4, 2026

BARRY COUNTY
 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 02/18/26
 6-9

undersigned Trustee will on
 March 17 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:
 17655 Farm Road 1090
 Cassville, MO 65625

Beginning at a point 723
 feet South of the Northeast
 Quarter of Southwest
 Quarter,
 Section 25, Township 23,
 Range 28, Barry County,
 Missouri; hence South 259
 feet to the centerline of a
 20 foot roadway; thence
 West along said centerline
 208 Feet west of the point
 of beginning; thence East
 208 feet

to the of beginning.

ALSO at the Northeast
 corner of the Northeast
 Quarter of Southwest
 Quarter Section 25,
 Township 23, Range 20,
 Barry County Missouri;
 thence South 982 feet
 centerline of a 20 foot
 roadway; thence West
 along said centerline 208
 feet to the point of
 beginning; thence North to
 a point on the South right of
 way line of another existing
 roadway,

which said point is 208
 feet West and 515 feet
 South of Northeast corner
 of said Northeast Quarter
 of the Southwest Quarter,
 thence West along the
 South line of said roadway
 497 Feet; thence South
 to the centerline of the
 20 foot roadway first
 referred to herein above;
 thence Easterly along the
 centerline of said roadway
 to the point of beginning.

LESS EXCEPT:
 Beginning at a point on the
 South right of way of an
 existing roadway which is
 398 feet west and 515

feet South of the
 Northeast corner of the
 Northeast Quarter of the
 Southwest Quarter of
 Section 25 Township 23,
 Range 28; thence West
 along said road right of way
 165 feet, thence South 281
 feet, thence East 165 feet;
 thence North 281 feet to the
 point of beginning.

EXCEPT: Beginning at
 a point 515 feet South of
 the Northeast corner of the
 Northeast Quarter of the
 Southwest Quarter,
 Section 25, Township 23,
 Range 28, being South of
 Private Road 2175 thence
 West 208 feet to the point
 of beginning, thence

South 208 feet, thence
 Southwesterly 74 degrees
 250 feet, thence North 281
 feet to Private Road 2175,
 thence East 200 feet to the
 point of beginning Barry
 County Missouri.

ALSO EXCEPT

Beginning at a point 515
 feet South of the Northeast
 corner of the Northeast
 Quarter of the Southwest
 Section 25,

Township 23, Range 28,
 South of the Private Road
 2175, thence West 550 feet
 for a point of beginning,
 thence South

281 feet thence West
 135 thence North 281 feet,
 thence East 135 feet to the
 point of beginning Barry
 County, Missouri.

LOCAL

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5B
OF BEGINNING, THENCE CONTINUING SOUTH 0 DEGREES 21 MINUTES 46 SECONDS EAST 357.29 FEET, THENCE NORTH 84 DEGREES 53 MINUTES 11 SECONDS EAST 486.87 FEET, THENCE NORTH 29 DEGREES 04 MINUTES 51 SECONDS WEST 278.66 FEET, THENCE NORTH 14 DEGREES 02 MINUTES 15 SECONDS WEST 115.02, THENCE SOUTH 82 DEGREES 44 MINUTES 43 SECONDS WEST 326.45 FEET TO THE POINT OF BEGINNING, AND A TRACT OF LAND 7 FEET WIDE AND 393.68 FEET ALONG THE EAST SIDE THEREOF, AND 15 FEET ALONG THE SOUTH SIDE THEREOF MAKING THE BACK WEST LINE 372.29 FEET AND THE EAST LINE 408.68 FEET AND THE NORTH LINE WILL BE 333.45 FEET.

ACCESS EASEMENT: AN EASEMENT FOR ACCESS PURPOSES BEING 30 FEET WIDE AND HAVING PARALLEL LINES DESCRIBED ALONG THE WEST LINE AS FOLLOWS: COMMENCING AT THE NORTHWEST CORNER OF THE EAST HALF (E1/2) OF THE NORTHWEST QUARTER (NW 1/4) OF SECTION 7, TOWNSHIP 24, RANGE 27, BARRY COUNTY, MISSOURI, THENCE SOUTH 89 DEGREES 55 MINUTES 37 SECONDS EAST 215.0 FEET ALONG THE NORTH LINE OF SAID SECTION 7 TO THE POINT OF BEGINNING, THENCE SOUTH 2 DEGREES 13 MINUTES 09 SECONDS EAST 791.53 FEET, THENCE SOUTH 26 DEGREES 45 MINUTES 32 SECONDS EAST 187.75 FEET, THENCE SOUTH 14 DEGREES 02 MINUTES 15 SECONDS EAST 115.02 FEET, THENCE SOUTH 29 DEGREES 04 MINUTES 51 SECONDS EAST 278.66 FEET TO THE POINT OF TERMINATION.

to satisfy said debt and cost.

MILLSAP & SINGER, P.C.,

Successor Trustee
612 Spirit Drive
St. Louis, MO 63005
(636) 537-0110
File No:
229868.031026.465450 FC

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. 257189-1083611).

1st insertion 02/18/26
6-9

TRUSTEE'S SALE

IN RE: James W King, a married person Trustee's Sale:

For default in payment of debt and performance of obligation secured by Deed of

Trust executed by

James W King, a married person dated November 16, 2022 and recorded in

The Office of the Recorder of Deeds of Barry County, Missouri in Book 22, Page 7057 the

undersigned Successor Trustee, at the request of the legal holder of said Note will on Tuesday,

March 17, 2026 between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. (at the specific time of 10:50

AM), at the East Door of the Court House, City of Cassville, Barry County, State of Missouri, sell

at public venue to the highest bidder for cash the following described real estate, described in

said Deed of Trust, and situated in Barry County, State of Missouri, to wit:

LOT FOUR (4), BLOCK SEVEN (7), GRANDVIEW PLACE ADDITION TO MONETT, BARRY COUNTY, MISSOURI, AS PER THE RECORDED PLAT THEREOF, SUBJECT TO ANY

EASEMENTS, RIGHTS OF WAY, RESTRICTIONS, RESERVATIONS AND COVENANTS OF

RECORD OR FACT.

to satisfy said debt and cost.

MILLSAP & SINGER, P.C.,

Successor Trustee
612 Spirit Drive
St. Louis, MO 63005
(636) 537-0110
File No:
231035.031726.464733 FC

NOTICE

For default in the payment of debt secured by a deed of trust executed by Reva M. Burke, dated

March 29, 2024, and recorded on March 29, 2024, Document No. 202401513, in Book No. 24, at Page

1476 in the Office of the Recorder of Deeds, Barry County, Missouri, the undersigned Successor Trustee

will on March 18, 2026, at 11:00 AM, at the East Front Door of the Barry County Courthouse, Cassville,

Missouri, sell at public venue to the highest bidder for cash:

Lot Fifty (50), Fairway Heights Subdivision to the City of Monett, Barry County,

Missouri, as per the recorded plat thereof, commonly known as 213 Miller Way,

Monett, MO, 65708

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:

February 18, 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. 257189-1083611).

1st insertion 02/18/26
6-9

NOTICE OF TRUSTEE'S SALE

Default having been made in the payment of that certain note secured by Deed of Trust executed by

Brenden Hall and Alanis Hall, husband and wife, dated October 28, 2022 and recorded on October 28, 2022 in Book 22, Page 6725, as Document No. 202206843, Office of Recorder of Deeds, Barry County, Missouri.

The Successor Trustee will on March 16, 2026, between the hours of 9:00 o'clock A.M. and 5:00 P.M. more particularly at 12:00PM, at the Barry County Courthouse, 700 Main, East Front door, Cassville, MO 65625, sell at public venue to the highest bidder for cash the following real estate:

ALL OF LOTS ONE (1) AND TWO (2), BLOCK TEN (10) IN MONETT TOWN COMPANY'S FIRST ADDITION TO THE CITY OF MONETT, BARRY COUNTY, MISSOURI.

For the purpose of satisfying said indebtedness and the costs of executing this trust.

S&W Foreclosure Corporation

Successor Trustee

Pub Commences

February 18, 2026

LLG File No.25-041329

By: LOGS Legal Group

LLP

www.LOGS.com

Servicelink

Purported address: 201

North Elm Street, Monett, MO 65708

Publication Dates:

02/18/26,

02/25/26,

03/04/26,

03/11/26

1st insertion 02/18/26
6-9

TRUSTEE'S SALE

IN RE: James W King, a married person Trustee's Sale:

For default in payment of debt and performance of obligation secured by Deed of

Trust executed by

James W King, a married person dated November 16, 2022 and recorded in

The Office of the Recorder of Deeds of Barry County, Missouri in Book 22, Page 7057 the

undersigned Successor Trustee, at the request of the legal holder of said Note will on Tuesday,

March 17, 2026 between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. (at the specific time of 10:50

AM), at the East Door of the Court House, City of Cassville, Barry County, State of Missouri, sell

at public venue to the highest bidder for cash the following described real estate, described in

said Deed of Trust, and situated in Barry County, State of Missouri, to wit:

LOT FOUR (4), BLOCK SEVEN (7), GRANDVIEW PLACE ADDITION TO MONETT, BARRY COUNTY, MISSOURI, AS PER THE RECORDED PLAT THEREOF, SUBJECT TO ANY

EASEMENTS, RIGHTS OF WAY, RESTRICTIONS, RESERVATIONS AND COVENANTS OF

RECORD OR FACT.

to satisfy said debt and cost.

MILLSAP & SINGER, P.C.,

Successor Trustee

612 Spirit Drive

St. Louis, MO 63005

(636) 537-0110

File No:
231035.031726.464733 FC

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Missouri, as per the recorded plat thereof, commonly known as 213 Miller Way,

Monett, MO, 65708

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SouthLaw, P.C.

Successor Trustee

First Publication:

February 18, 2026. For more information, visit

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The debt collector is attempting to collect a debt and any information obtained will be used for that purpose (Casefile No. 257189-1083611).

PUBLISH ON:

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ALL OF LOTS ONE (1) AND TWO (2), BLOCK

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TOWN COMPANY'S

FIRST ADDITION TO THE

CITY OF MONETT, BARRY

COUNTY, MISSOURI.