



DAFFODIL FARM IN PURDY BRINGS FIELDS OF COLOR — PAGE 9A

BULLDOGS FIND SUCCESS IN YOUTH >>>

Team that started 3 underclassmen makes strides forward. — PAGE 1B



CASSVILLE Democrat

MARCH 18, 2026 | CASSVILLE-DEMOCRAT.COM

CITY OF SELIGMAN

What: Seeking \$10 million bond issue
When: April 7 election
For: Water line replacement, addition of a water tower and a well

Seligman floats \$10M bond proposal

2 miles of lines to be replaced; new water tower, well planned

BY KYLE TROUTMAN

kt troutman@cassville-democrat.com
 The city of Seligman is seeking voter approval on April 7 to issue bonds to fund a major water infrastructure project at a cost of \$9.2 million.

The proposal would authorize up to \$10 million in bonding capacity for improvements to the city's water system.

"The actual project itself is estimated at a \$9.2 million cost, and that is inflated to cover any rising costs because you don't know if it's going to start in six months or a year and a half," said Brian Nichols, city clerk.

The project focuses on upgrading key infrastructure and expanding system capacity.

"It will be replacing the primary backbone of our system, which is a 4-inch line, upgrading that to an 8-inch water line," Nichols said. "That will also include the installation of a new water tower, which doubles our system capacity here, and it will include a new well."

More than two miles of water line would be replaced as part of the work.

"It's running north on Main Street — almost all of Main Street is included — and then back over behind Lucky T's on the north side of Highway 37," Nichols said.

Land would also be purchased to accommodate new infrastructure.

"It would include the purchase of roughly about one acre of land on the north end of town to hold the building for the well and the water tower," Nichols said.

That site was chosen to maintain consistent water pressure with the existing system.

"That area matches the elevation of the older tower, so we don't want any pressure issues," Nichols said.

Nichols said the project is designed to increase the system's reliability, particularly during emergencies.

"Right now we have 24-26 hours worth of system capacity," Nichols said. "In the event of a power failure, without having secondary power to turn wells on, our system would go out of water in 24-26 hours. We would double the capacity of our system [after the project's completion], so we'd have 48 hours plus worth of water on hand."

The improvements would
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Cassville man guilty of child molestation

Bench trial in Stone County returns guilty verdict in 2019 assault

BY KYLE TROUTMAN

kt troutman@cassville-democrat.com
 A Cassville man has been found guilty of child molestation in a bench trial held Thursday in Stone County Circuit Court.

Circuit Judge Alan

GUILTY VERDICT

Who: Anthony Sizemore, born 1988, of Cassville
What: Found guilty of third-degree child molestation in bench trial
More: Class C felony is punishable by a prison sentence ranging from 3-10 years in the Department of Corrections

Blankenship found Anthony Sizemore, born 1988, of Cassville, guilty of third-degree child molestation, a Class

C felony.

According to a probable cause statement filed on Sept. 3, 2024, by Det. Abby Parsons, with the Barry County Sheriff's Office, on July 9, 2024, Parsons took a report for a sexual assault that occurred in 2019 at a residence in Barry County.

The victim disclosed that Sizemore sexually assaulted her with his fingers while she was lying in bed. During a forensic interview in 2019,

the victim disclosed Sizemore had placed his hand inside her vagina. At the time of the incident, the victim was under the age of 14.

On Jan. 1, 2020, Sizemore was interviewed by an investigator with the Children's Division, stating he was just wrestling and playing around like any other time.

Sizemore said he did not know if the victim was asleep at this point, but he picked

CONTINUED ON PAGE 3A

LIBRARY BASEMENT OPEN DURING RENOVATIONS



Grooms Moving crews relocate bookshelves in preparation for laying down new flooring on the main level of the Cassville Branch Library. The area is set to reopen to the public in May. Contributed photo

Main level expected to reopen in May

The Cassville Branch of the Barry-Lawrence Regional Library is serving patrons from the basement this spring, as renovations are underway in the main level.

On March 2, the library closed the main doors and took its physical collection out of circulation for an estimated two months, with a reopening planned for May.

While renovations are underway, the library will still be serving patrons with a majority of its normal operations, such as book ordering, printing, faxing and computer access.

The branch's physical collection is unavailable during this time; however, patrons will still be able to pick up books that have been ordered for them at the branch.

Patrons looking for books at the library may temporarily order books on the library's website at <https://blrlibrary.missourievergreen.org>, or have library staff order the items for them by visiting or calling the branch.

Patrons are being asked to use the downstairs entrance on the west side of the building, where staff is set up with temporary accommodations.

Two computers have also been set up in the library basement for limited use. Branch Supervisor Jennifer Cochran said that considering the time of year while people are trying to prepare their taxes, computer access was a must during this project.

Children and adult programs have not slowed down for the renovation at the branch. All regular programs are still ongoing, such as children's story-times and homeschool classes, as well as adult book club and exercise classes.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 3A

3-phase renovation underway at Mercy Cassville

Facilitating increase in outpatient visits a priority

MERCY CASSVILLE

What: Undergoing three-phase renovation project
Why: Make better use of space, hospital navigation and new equipment
More: Increase in outpatient visits played major role in design

By Gwendylan Harmon
 Cassville Democrat Intern
 Mercy Hospital in Cassville is undergoing a multi-phase renovation project on its emergency room, placing a focus on expanding services and improving patient flow.

The Hospital is undergoing renovations for the first time since 2011, when the cafeteria was added. Construction for the new emergency

room is being completed in three phases, with the first phase complete and the second phase now underway. Planning for the project began around 2023, as hospital leadership worked with architects to evaluate how the hospital could better meet growing patient needs.

Helen Luney, director of

nursing and operations, said the project is progressing steadily.

With Phase 1 complete, Phase 2 focuses on remodeling the hospital's main command and entry area to make it easier for patients to navigate when they arrive.

"When Phase 2 opens up, instead of coming into a foyer and getting lost for not knowing where to go, the patient access will be right there," Luney said.

Additional updates during Phase 2 include moving the hospital's stress lab to the radiology department and expanding the nuclear medi-

cine department to accommodate new equipment.

"We already had nuclear medicine, but we're getting a new camera, and the camera didn't fit in our current space," Luney said.

Luney said Phase 2 is expected to be completed by June 10, after which construction will move into the final stage of the project.

"The whole completion

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2A



NEWS BRIEFS

Barry County Community Garden meetings set

The Barry County Community Garden has scheduled its monthly meetings on the first Monday of every month, at Harvick Farms, located at 16062 Hwy. 76 in Cassville. The work in the garden days are from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Garden, located at on 10160 Farm Road 2160. Tentative working days depend on the weather and will be updated on the organization's Facebook page, "Barry County Community Garden," and people may contact the page for more information. Produce from the garden goes to the Cassville Pantry. New members and/or volunteers may come and reserve a plot.

Ozark Country Quilters show April 10-11

O C the Quilts is a judged quilt show presented by the Ozark Country Quilters of Cassville/Monett. In addition to over 200 items displayed, there will be a quilt turning, demonstrations, vendors, boutique, opportunity quilt, special exhibits and knife/scissor sharpening. The event will be on April 10 from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. and April 11 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at Crowder College in Cassville, located at 4020 N. Main. Admission is \$5, and children under 12 are free.

Jenkins voters urged to vote absentee

Due to the bridge closure on Highway 248 over Flat Creek, voters in the Jenkins precinct are encouraged to vote absentee, especially those living on the West side of Flat Creek, due to the long detour that would be needed to get to the polling place on election day. Absentee voting is open Monday-Friday, from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. in the County Clerk's office, located 700 Main, Ste. 2, in Cassville. For more information, people may contact the Clerk's office at 417-847-2561 or by email at jennis@barrycountyclerk.com.

Master Gardeners' spring workshop on Saturday

The Master Gardeners are hosting a spring workshop on Saturday from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Refreshments will be provided. Please note that there is a change of location this year: it will be held at the Methodist Church, located at 601 Gravel St., instead of the Family Life Center in Cassville. People may preregister with the Barry County MU Extension Office by calling 417-847-3161 or emailing Barryco@missouri.edu. Preregistration fee is \$10, and walk-ins will be \$12. Speakers include E.J. Adams on planting for winter interest, Rhonda Rime on dealing with invasive plants, and Lesa Queen and Jack Spurlin on permaculture.

Capps Creek Road District to meet

The Capps Creek Special Road District will meet in regular session on Thursday at noon at the home of Garry and Pam Bartkoski, located at 5086 Farm Road 2057 in Monett. The public is welcome to attend.

Cassville preschool, Kinder Academy, kindergarten screenings in April

The Cassville school district screening dates have been set for preschool, kinder academy and kindergarten students for the 2026-2027 school year. All screenings will take place in the FEMA 1 Building, located next to the football field. Families with an eligible child for either preschool or kindergarten screening should call the Primary Office at 417-847-2445 to make an appointment. Preschool screenings are April 13 and April 15. Preschool screening is for children ages three and four who live in the Cassville school district and will be 3 at the time of screening. Please plan for 30-45 minutes for the preschool screening appointment. Current Cassville preschool students do not need to participate in the screening. Kinder Academy and Kindergarten screenings are April 14 and April 16. Children that are 5 years old on or before July 31 should be screened for kindergarten. Families whose children are being screened for kinder academy or kindergarten should bring the following items to their appointment: Official birth certificate, immunization (shot) record, proof of residency (utility bill with name and address, real estate contract or rental agreement) and parent/guardian's photo ID. Anyone with questions may call 417-847-2445.

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 Saturday 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.

Absentee voting ongoing for April elections

Absentee voting for the April 7 General Municipal Election 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. A photo ID must be presented to vote. Examples include a Missouri Driver's License, Missouri Non-Driver's license, Military ID or Passport. If unable to vote in person, voters may have a ballot mailed to them by sending 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 with mobility issues, like walking or standing in line, are encouraged to send written requests to vote absentee. Those who live in the Monett area may can 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. The last day to request an absentee ballot by mail is March 25. 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

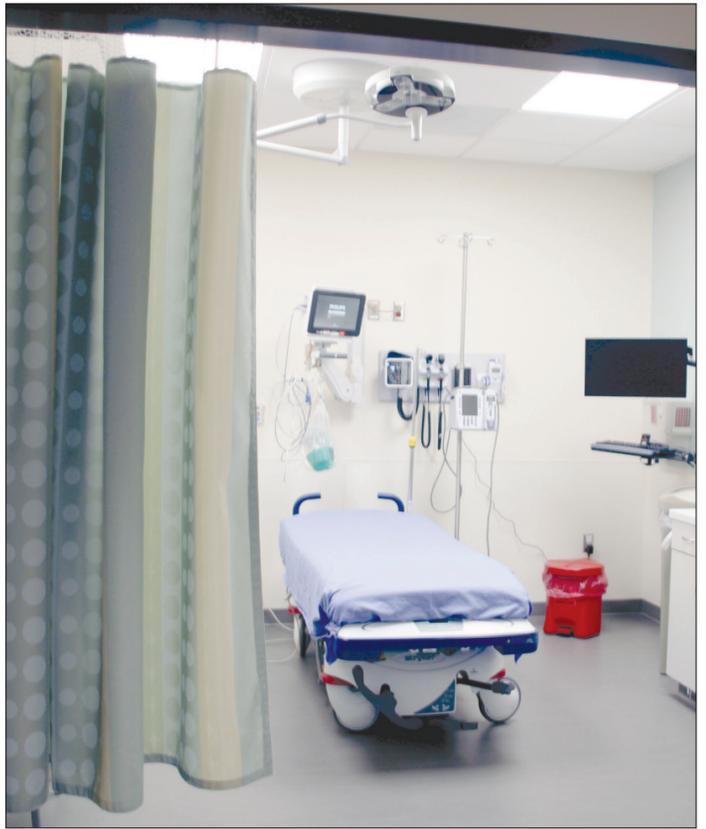
The Cassville Farmers Market is open weekly on Saturdays on the Barry County Courthouse Square, from 8 a.m. to noon. Vendors are offering eggs, vegetables, handmade crafts, baked goods and more. Those interested in becoming a vendor may contact Chad Sprinkle at 417-846-3539.

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.



Pictured is one of the new emergency room treatment areas at Mercy Hospital in Cassville. Gwendylan Harmon/Cassville Democrat Intern



Pictured is the new emergency room entryway at Mercy Hospital in Cassville, which was just completed in Phase 1 of a three-phase hospital renovation project. Gwendylan Harmon/Cassville Democrat Intern



Pictured is the renovated emergency room area at Mercy Hospital in Cassville. Gwendylan Harmon/Cassville Democrat Intern

Hospital: Patient needs key

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1A

[date] is Oct. 24, which is the expectation of our crew," Luney said. "In Phase 3, we're expanding our outpatient area and adding more rooms. Hopefully, that will allow us to eventually add additional services so residents in our community don't have to travel so far."

Ettie Berneking, manager of media relations and communications, said the overall project is designed to support the hospital's growing number of outpatient visits.

"When I was learning about this project, we were seeing an increase in outpatients — people who come to us needing things like wound care, infusions or injections," Berneking said. "As we've seen

an increase in that patient need, this project allows us to add more rooms and enhance the patient experience."

Hospital leaders said many residents in the Cassville and Barry County area rely on the local hospital instead of traveling to larger medical centers in Springfield or Rogers for care. They hope the improvements will allow more services to remain available locally.

Luney said the hospital is grateful for the continued support of the community as the project moves forward.

"We're thankful to our community, because our community is the one helping make this possible for us," she said.

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Trivia Night champs crowned

Threatening weather failed to dampen the enthusiasm of the six teams participating in the 14th Annual Trivia Night fundraiser on March 6.

The team representing Ellis, Cupps, Herrin & Schwartz won both the overall competition and the "Smarty Pants" award for most trivia questions answered correctly. The lively event raised nearly \$1,300 for the Cassville Education Fund, according to a press release.

Groups of co-workers, friends, classmates, family members and church members wracked their brains for the answers to 60 trivia questions over the course of the evening. Minute-to-win-it games enlivened the event with team representatives com-



peting to earn extra points.

Sponsors of the event include: Angel Shorter and Company, Cassville Chamber of Commerce, Cassville Democrat, Cassville R-IV School District, Ellis Cupps Herrin and Schwartz, Freedom Bank, the Kime Family, Security Bank, State Farm Insurance, the United Methodist Church and Willis Insurance.

Emcee Judge Bob Foulke announced four rounds of trivia questions covering a wide range of subjects from history and sports to geography and animals. Nearly 60 people attended the event.

Proceeds from Trivia Night benefit the Cassville Education Fund, a permanent endowment fund for the educational needs of Cassville Schools.

Bond: Public meeting on March 23

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1A

also strengthen water pressure in some areas of the city.

"It increases pressure on the southeast part of our water system and it will have various hydraulic impacts throughout the system," Nichols said. "Primarily, it really helps out the southeast corner."

While pressure issues have not been frequent, Nichols said, the current system can be vulnerable when water levels drop.

"It hasn't really been an issue, but if we get too low in the water tower then there can be some pressure issues on the southeast part of our system," he said. "So, we just make sure to always stay above that level."

Nichols said the existing tower would remain in service alongside the new one.

"At the same time, we would also be able to completely shut that water tower down and go inside and recast the inside to provide maintenance on it whenever that comes up," he said.

Having two towers would also allow the city to perform maintenance without interrupting service.

"It would allow us to fluctuate between the two," Nichols said. "If one of them needs to go down for repairs, then it doesn't put the system out of commission."

The current water tower has been in place for more than two decades, installed in 1998. The water lines being replaced date back even further.

"The old transite line — some of that started to be

put in place around the late 1950s into the 1960s," Nichols said. "The system was just continuously added on to."

Because of its age and southwest's Missouri's rocky terrain can contribute to maintenance issues.

"Because it is an older line, it can be brittle for vibrations or flexing, which can cause leaks," Nichols said. "It's prone to leaking. Our ground is so rocky around here that any shifts in the ground — rocks press on pipes — cause cracks and leaks."

Finance-wise, the city currently carries no outstanding bond debt.

"It was two years ago when we made our last payment on bonds from 1997 and 2001, and those are completely paid off," Nichols said. "If the public votes this into place, that would open us up to qualify for 40% of the \$9.2 million worth of grants."

City leaders have also been saving funds for the project since a rate increase implemented several years ago.

"The rate increase that the city started back in 2018 — we have been saving that money every single year and putting it into certificates of deposit," Nichols said. "We have more than \$1 million in the bank right now."

Nichols said that combination of grants and savings would reduce the amount the city would need to finance.

"Four million coming from grants and paying the other \$1 million out in cash, then we're just financing \$4 million," he said.

Customers would likely see an increase in water rates to cover the project costs.

"They're anticipating it'd be around \$12.48 per customer per month to be the increase that customers would expect," Nichols said. "That doesn't take into account the rising costs of labor, material and everything, and with cost of operation we can't say that rates aren't going to go up afterwards."

Residents will have an opportunity to learn more about the proposal during a public meeting later this month.

"On March 23 at 6 p.m., we have a representative with McLIney and Company who's handling the finances for the bond," Nichols said. "Part of their services is they host public meetings to go through and enlighten the public and answer any questions."

Additional information is also available through the city.

"On the city's website is a full printout of the water system project, which includes the cost breakdown, maps and everything," Nichols said. "I've also got large prints here at City Hall and copies of the primary items people are really looking for."

People may find the engineering report at <https://seligmanmo.gov/documents/> by clicking "Water Department" and "Water System Upgrade - Current Project."

The bond issue will appear on the April 7 Municipal Election ballot, and it requires a four-sevenths (57.1%) majority to pass.

Guilty: Sentencing on May 15

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1A

her up by her neck and leg, and his hand on her leg had slid down and he hit her in the vagina by accident.

Sizemore said the victim looked at him and that he could tell he had hurt her by the look on her face. He said it became awkward and uncomfortable, so he walked out of the room.

On Aug. 15, 2024, Parsons spoke to Sizemore, who stated he would need to speak with his attorney. On Aug. 19, 2024, Sizemore advised Parsons that his attorney advised him he had already given a statement.

Parsons noted in the probable cause statement that Sizemore poses a danger to the victim, community or any other person due to the nature of the crime and the victim being a child.

On March 11, the case came for a bench trial in Blankenship's courtroom. The state was represented by Barry County Prosecuting Attorney Amy Boxx, and the defendant appeared in person, and with coun-

sel, Taylon Summers-Schwartz. The state and defense each made opening statements, and the state presented evidence and rested.

The defendant filed a motion of acquittal at the close of state's evidence, which was denied by the court. The case was then adjourned for the day and resumed on Thursday.

The defendant presented evidence and rested, and the state presented no rebuttal evidence. The defendant moved for judgment of acquittal at the close of all evidence, and that motion was to be taken up with the case during the court's deliberation.

The state and defense made their closing arguments, and the case was deemed submitted. The court, after reflecting on the evidence presented and arguments of counsel, denied the motion for judgment of acquittal at the close of all evidence.

"The court is mindful of the weighty nature of its decision, and is mindful of the burden

of proof instructions it gives to juries regarding the beyond a reasonable doubt standard," Blankenship wrote in the ruling. "The state bears the burden of proof, including the burden of persuasion beyond a reasonable doubt. Applying that standard to the evidence presented in this case, and the court's assessment of the credibility of the witnesses' testimony and evidence, finds the defendant guilty beyond a reasonable doubt."

The case is now set for post-trial motions on April 10 at 10:45 a.m. The court orders a sentencing assessment report prepared and filed by May 11, and the case is set for a sentencing hearing on May 15 at 11 a.m.

Pending sentencing, Sizemore will remain on his 10% bond of \$2,500, paid Oct. 9, 2024.

In Missouri, a Class C felony is punishable by a prison sentence ranging from 3-10 years in the Department of Corrections. Courts may also impose a fine of up to \$10,000.

Library: Aims to add programs

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1A

The branch is still holding both adult and youth paint classes at their regular times, and crochet class is still held every Saturday.

Library staff are going digital, as they recognized that foot traffic may be slower during the renovations as they do not have the same space for patrons to gather for extended periods.

While they are unable to socialize with patrons as normal, staff have been posting updates, questions and challenges to the library's

Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/CassvilleBranchLibrary> to stay engaged with its patrons.

When the branch opens its main doors back up, the public can expect a fresh look with new flooring, refreshed paint, some updated furniture and additional study rooms in store for patrons.

"We are very excited to see all the changes and see what new opportunities and how these renovations will allow us to expand our services to our loyal patrons," a library press release said. "We look forward to adding even more family programs so please let us know if you have any ideas that you would like to see us try."

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COMMENTARY

PUBLISHER'S VIEW



KYLE TROUTMAN

Crime and punishment

When it comes to covering news in small-town America, there are certain categories of stories that draw more attention than others.

Feature stories are my favorite: highlighting the unique accomplishments or experiences, or even inspirational anguishes, that shape who we are as people, community members, friends and neighbors.

Routine news stories are important and impactful, like when your utility bill might go up, what projects a city or school district is seeking bond funding for in the next election, or when a new bridge (like 7th Street) is being constructed.

Sports stories are typically all positive. Who doesn't love a Wildcats football win, or a history-making back-to-back state wrestling champion? Yet, one category of news inevitably rules them all. The most reads. The most talk. The most interest.

Crime. About 90-95% of crime stories are what I would consider ho-hum. Drug busts, burglaries, assaults, theft from public entities and the like are all fairly routine in this industry. They happen, they get reported, and they are unequivocally the most read.

Then, there are the crime stories I hate to report but are my duty to do so, mainly sex crimes and domestics.

I get asked every now and then, yesterday even, "How do you choose what stories you report?" The answer isn't a simple one. The ho-hum crime stories become a bit routine: This person stole a bunch of stuff from this place, or that person was distributing large amounts of meth. In the last dozen years, I have reported week-in and week-out for this publication, those pieces tend to write themselves.

The most difficult are the ones involving children, and in the last two weeks, we've had a couple. In the March 11 issue, my top story was a domestic. As a general rule, I don't write domestics. Most are adult relationships gone south, with an abusive partner acting in ways most would consider unfathomable, but no one is affected outside of the home, which makes them less reportable.

But, when it comes to children involved in domestics — especially when those children are the reported victims — that changes things.

My top story last week was one I hesitated to write, but when I read the probable cause statement — alleging a teenager fled a home and hid in a ditch in the cold for an hour — it seemed like something that should have been at the top of the front page.

Yet, before the papers even hit the racks, I got a call from one side of the story telling me it was all wrong. Later that day, I was approached in person from an individual on the same side saying I didn't have the facts. Even later that day, I got a call from someone on the other side of the story upset with how it was reported.

In these moments, it's difficult to ascertain the truth. I am not the creator of the story. I don't make things up or ignore facts. I am the messenger.

All crime stories are word-for-word from probable cause statements — first-hand accounts from our local law enforcement professionals who were at the scene, took the report, made the assessment and recommended XYZ charges.

There are always three sides to a story: The accused's, the victim's and the truth. It is the prerogative of the public to call for help when they need it, followed by the police recording the information they obtain on scene.

Then, the responsibility is passed to us, to report the information back to the public — full circle. It's a delicate task that inherently requires to fairness to all involved, and it inherently it hurts all involved.

It's a high wire we toe. We attempt to do so with as much neutrality as we can, with initial respect to law enforcement and the victim.

We also understand everyone is innocent until proven guilty — and we empathize with their loved ones while reporting probable cause statements.

Every word of every crime story I write is tied back to probable cause statements, paper trails, as I call them. Probable cause statements are also entirely allegations, that law enforcement officer's assessment of a situation and what charges should be filed. I am never on scene, nor do I have the resources to conduct individual investigations of allegations of crimes on my own.

Yet, I am held accountable of reporting such. And, I take that responsibility very seriously. I use my best judgment and 15 years of total experience to determine what's reportable and what's not.

It's a burden I do not enjoy, but it's part of the job.

One sector of crime I do take very seriously — and hate to report as often as it arrives on my desk — is child sex crimes. The top story this week is exactly that, and the victim is a person who has appeared frequently within the pages of my paper in far more positive light.

Crimes such as reported this week happen more often than they are divulged to authorities, and I've seen over the last decade-and-a-half, even reported ones do not always get the attention they deserve. I've had people come into my office asking to report some, and I have been forced to turn them away because of the lack of a paper trail.

I've also been on both sides of that. I can speak personally to having stories in the paper about relatives of my family accused of heinous acts reportable via probable cause statements.

One thing I have learned over the years, is crime reaps punishment. Punishment for the accused, but even more so punishment for their families — on the alleged perpetrator's side and on the victim's side.

Awful acts are awful for all involved, and all related to all involved. And, in our tight-knit communities, the awful is amplified.

We've taken ample heat in the last week for our reporting, warranted or not, and we very well may take more this week. With crime comes punishment; not necessarily punishment for the accused, but punishment for those related to the accused and the victims.

I was asked last week, "What if someone wrote about you what you've wrote about the person who's been accused?"

The answer: I don't know. I do know a crime that has affected my family has been printed within the pages I publish within the last few years, and it was hard to face.

I hope to never be in that position. But if I am, I'd be a hypocrite if it wasn't reported in our paper..

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.

AMERICAN INSIGHTS

The Courage of Robert Graetz

On Monday night, Dec. 5, 1955, the Rev. Robert Graetz worked his way through a dense crowd of 6,000 people at Holt Street Baptist Church in Montgomery, Ala.

The church was so filled that Graetz had to stand in the crowded fellowship hall and listen to the meeting taking place upstairs; loudspeakers were set up outside so that onlookers could hear.

The meeting began with the singing of "Onward Christian Soldiers" and "Leaning on the Everlasting Arms"; Graetz sang along downstairs, awed by "a mighty ring like the glad echo of heaven itself." One minister offered a prayer, and another read passages from Psalm 34: "The righteous cry, and the Lord heareth, and delivereth them out of all their troubles."

Then the slow, articulate words of one youthful minister brought on a deafening attentiveness. "We are not wrong," Martin Luther King, Jr., preached. "If we are wrong, God Almighty is wrong." He added: "We are determined here in Montgomery to work and fight until justice runs down like water and righteousness like a mighty stream."

When the meeting ended, Graetz was filled with the glory of a good cause.

"I was now part of a [black] movement destined to launch the modern civil rights movement," he recalled.

Earlier in the day, Graetz left his home and drove around Montgomery. The day had arrived: black citizens were boycotting the buses in protest of Rosa Parks' arrest just four days earlier for refusing to give up her seat to a white passenger. The morning of Dec. 5, Graetz saw people "striding along as if they



DAKODA PETTIGREW

didn't have a care in the world, their heads held high, their faces covered with smiles."

In support, Graetz drove many walkers to work and to the store. "A new day had dawned in Montgomery," he recalled. "We didn't know it at the time, but a new day had dawned for America as well."

For the next several weeks, Graetz drove his black neighbors to work from 6-9 a.m., every morning. He and wife, Jeannie, and their children lived in a black neighborhood, and they were neighbors and close friends of Rosa Parks. His support made him popular, at least in the black community.

But Graetz's steadfast support of the Montgomery Bus Boycott came at a cost. As the only white minister in Montgomery to stand with King and the movement, Graetz and his family were treated as traitors by their white peers. Angry phone calls were common, as were threatening letters (one writer suggested that Graetz be hanged like John Brown). One day, the tires on the family car were slashed and sugar poured into the gasoline tank.

But that was only the beginning.

Graetz was harassed by local police; the sheriff tried to charge him for illegally operating a taxi service, but a judge found no legal grounds. Instead, the sheriff lectured Graetz on the error of his ways and

released him. Later, Graetz was indicted along with King.

Klansmen drove intimidatingly past his house.

Then his home was bombed, not once but twice. In the second bombing, a larger bomb — with enough dynamite to flatten the house — failed to explode.

As with the Kings, had one child been in the front room of the Graetz house, they would have died or been seriously injured.

Like Daniel, Graetz was in the lion's den. But the "misguided" white pastor pressed on undeterred.

"We don't want people to think we've started to get panicky," Graetz told the public after the second bombing. "We have not moved, and we do not intend to."

When the Supreme Court ruled bus segregation unlawful in *Browder v. Gayle*, Graetz and King each rode the first ever desegregated buses in Montgomery.

"It was a victory for all of us," he said.

In 1958, the Graetz family moved to Columbus, Ohio. Before they left, the Kings visited and said goodbye. In Graetz's autographed copy of King's memoir of the boycott, King wrote: "In appreciation for your genuine goodwill, your unswerving devotion to the principle of freedom and justice, and your willingness to suffer and sacrifice in order to make Montgomery's stride toward freedom a lasting inspiration. Martin."

Dakoda Pettigrew is a summa cum laude graduate of Liberty University with a Bachelor's of science in political science and history. Pettigrew's father went to school in Cassville, and he lives in Tennessee. He can be reached at pettigrew-dakoda6@gmail.com.

QUOTE OF THE WEEK

"By 2018, I'd grown tired of trying to plant and raise daffodils in rocky soil for our personal enjoyment, even though I still loved them. Finding that sport invigorated me, gave me a new direction."

— GERRY WASS, PROPRIETOR OF THE DAFFODIL FARM IN PURDY, ON DISCOVERING A "SPORT" — A NATURAL MUTATION — OF A COMMON DAFFODIL THAT MYSTIFIED HIM.

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.



Visit us online at:
cassville-democrat.com

50 years ago

March 24, 1976
— INVESTIGATOR FUNDING IN
QUESTIONS FACING COURT

Barry County will or won't have a special investigator, depending on pending decisions from the Missouri attorney general or a change of heart on the county court. That is about what delegations from Shell Knob and Monett learned in a "fuss" session with the court Thursday. The investigator post, funded from both federal and county funds, is scheduled to be eliminated March 31. Court action, by a vote of 2-1, with associates Lige Frost and Dick Sanders voting no and Presiding Judge Nolan McNeill saying yes, brought on the hearing. Groups from Monett and Shell Knob joined the court in their chambers for the session. Principal spokesmen for the groups were Jack Fly, president of the Central Crossing Association, and Jack Fox, representing the Monett C of C. At stake is the job now held by Leo Sellers, assigned by Prosecuting Attorney Dale Burke. In doubt at this point is whether the court can remove funds they had previously approved in a budget that funded the post through this year. Southern Judge Lige Frost told the delegation he believes the sheriff's department has the responsibility of conducting investigations. He also reminded the audience he was concerned about next year's budget. Frost also said he was of the opinion a majority of the people in south Barry County were opposed to the special investigator. Fox, speaking for the Monett area, reminded the court of a lifestyle change in this area. He said that community was even considering a SI for the Monett Police. He continued, "we think the post is important to the entire county." These views were echoed by Dr. Ralph Scott, superintendent of the Monett schools. Fly said the lake area of southern Barry County considered it important to keeping the law enforcement branch of county government at its present strength. He reminded the court they had previously approved the budget. "We think the officer is doing a good job," Fly concluded. Judge McNeill, speaking for his vote on the issue, said he never received the opposition to the SI that associates had. He said, "we approved the budget and I'm willing to go along with the prosecuting attorney's recommendation that cases prepared by the SI are good. I'll stay committed to keeping the officer." Sanders, admitting he had been under the gun on the issue, said he considered a pay increase authorized as excessive and too high compared to other employees. He concluded his remarks with "and besides, I don't like to have things crammed down my throat." Shortly after this group departed, a smaller group with Gerald Predry as spokesman told the court they didn't think the post was necessary. Burke said this week his office was waiting on an opinion from Jefferson City as to whether the court had authority to withdraw funds allocated to the office. He said this opinion or a change of vote on the court would eliminate the post as of next Wednesday. Sheriff Vernon Still commenting earlier said Sellers would probably rejoin his staff if the post is eliminated. This would probably bump a present member of the staff due to funding situations. Of additional concern to those attending was the possibility of two additional deputies being lost to the county at the conclusion of public service employment funding through the federal government at the end of the fiscal year, June 30. Concluding the meeting, opposing judges agreed to meet with the prosecuting attorney in attempts to negotiate a salary on



50 YEARS AGO: U.S. SENATE CANDIDATE HERE — Congressman Jerry Litton, right, a candidate for the Democrat nomination for U.S. Senate, visited in Cassville Saturday morning during a swing through this part of the state. Litton, a former cattleman turned politician, is listening to a point being made by Presiding Judge Nolan McNeill, in checked coat. At the left is Max Hudson, Litton supporter, who arranged the coffee session at Dell's Cafe with party members and Joe Hudson, Jenkins. Between McNeill and Litton is Gene Wiley of the Crane area. Democrat file photo

the SI post that the county could live with. The county was notified March 22 that the Missouri Council on Criminal Justice would expect a refund of approximately \$1,152 in federal funds if the SI post is terminated at the end of this month. Sellers' present salary amounts to \$800 a month, plus slightly over \$200 in mileage allowance.

— HEART FUND EFFORTS NET \$1,017 TOTAL

Cassville residents contributed \$1,017.50 to the 1976 Heart Fund campaign, according to Mr. and Mrs. Tom Cardin, co-chairmen. The residential drive netted \$404.50 and \$613 was contributed to the business and industrial drive. Included in the residential total was \$100 donated by Mr. and Mrs. Fred Vollenweider. Envelopes are still being received from residents who were not home when the Heart Fund volunteers called. Volunteers in the business and industrial drive were Marlee Edie, J.B. Nations, George Simpkins, Steve Burch, Max Cooper, John Bartkoski, Dr. M.A. Kammerlohr Jr., and Doug Samuel. Groups assisting in the residential drive were the Boy Scouts, Future Homemakers of America (FHA) of Cassville High School, and Future Business Leaders of America. Charles Vaughan is scoutmaster. Mrs. Helen Nicoll and Mrs. Lana Couch are FHA co-sponsors, and Mrs. Kathy Dickerson and Mrs. Irma Jean Timmons are sponsors of FBLA. Volunteers from FHA were Lanetta Suttles, Pam Holloway, Janetta Suttles and Barb Bickford, Vera Ray, Shelia Padgett, Lisa Cargile, Debbie Garnatz, Connie Miller, Brenda Moore, Sharon Elliot, Jeannie Russell and Nancy Padgett. Members of the FBLA who assisted with the drive were Sally Blythe, Tracy England, Jerry Yarnall, Marilyn Stringer, Teresa Horner, Jill Rogers, Leslie Kidwell, Jackie Beattie, Tammy House, Judy Smithson, Annette Predry, Patricia Evans, Jerry Beuterbaugh, Samantha Duncan and Debbie Wormington. The drive will remain open for anyone who might have missed giving a contribution. Contributions may be made at either Cassville bank. Mrs. Beverly Carlin of Monett is Barry County chairman.

40 years ago

March 26, 1986
— GARRETT MFG. PHASE OUT; 76
JOBS WILL BE LOST

A Cassville industry, Garrett Manufacturing, will phase out operations here over a four month period. Employees of the MASCO Industries Company specified Friday that operations leading to a permanent shutdown of the facility are underway. J.E. Greuel, president and general manager of the plant here owned by the Taylor, Michigan firm, said the industry now employs about 76 persons. Manufacturer includes custom machined products for the construction machinery and oilfield equipment lines. During boom years in the oil industry, the plant employed as many as 220 persons. Located at County Road in the west edge of Cassville,

Garrett's plant includes 40,000 square feet and highly modern computer-type driven machine equipment. Greuel said the company, MASCO, had experienced substantial losses in recent years. "The decision to close was made only after our efforts to turn things around failed. Although we were able to reduce costs and find some new customers, the recent severe drop in world oil prices created a situation in which we could no longer justify staying in business," he commented. The company president said contracts with customers and phase-out plans would take about four months at a maximum. His announcement Monday put in motion a Chamber of Commerce and Cassville Industrial Development Corporation contact with Missouri officials about possible sale of the building and equipment to a successor company. Greuel said the company will be working closely with its employees, customers and the community during the phase-out period to minimize the impact of the shutdown. The company will develop a program to assist interested employees in finding new employment. "We are inviting all employers to call us if they are hiring," said Greuel. "We have a lot of very fine people with valuable skills that we are anxious to help place in new employment." Formerly known as Cassville Tool and Machine, the company was purchased and renamed in October 1973 by Glen Garrett. In July of 1984, the company became a subsidiary of MASCO Industries, Inc., in Michigan.

— TABLE ROCK AT TOP SW DISTRICT LAKE ATTRACTIONS

As she has done since the initial years of impoundment, Table Rock Lake assumed a position of leadership in the Southwest District of Army Corps of Engineers projects during 1985. In fact, Table Rock Reservoir, once again going above the six million visitor mark, led all projects in visitation. That's the word this week from Rick Hightower of the Branson office of the Corps. Hightower said this week, after inquiry from the Democrat, there were a total of 6,045,800 visitors recorded at the reservoir this year. Figures for 1985 for the reservoir were down slightly from the previous year, which had 6.7 million visiting public facilities around the more than 850 miles of shoreline. The 1985 statistics included just under 400,000 from seven public use areas in the Barry County or just adjoining Arkansas portion of the lake. These statistics broken down include: Campbell Point Boat Dock and Marine 101,462; Big M Boat Dock 59,919; Viola Boat Dock 56,361; Kings River Public Use Area 11,660; Eagle Rock Landing 102,849; Big Indian Public Use Area 9,913; Beaver Public Use Area 54,498. All are boat dock facilities except Big Indian and Kings River. Actually, the local area portion would be considerably higher since visitor numbers at Viney Public Use Area in the Golden community were not

included in the released figures. Growth of the reservoir in popularity is traced in comparable figures for past years. In 1981 the visitation number stood at 39.8 million. For 1982 the figure was 43 million. Normally, survey information from the visitors ranks fishing the top reason for visiting the reservoir, with sight-seeing a close second. Swimming in the clear water ranked third, boating fourth. Camping edges out picnicking for the fifth most popular project as a rule. In a six million visitation year, the Corps would collect approximately \$200,000 in use fees from the public. Fees are charged at those public use facilities that provide services. All those in Barry County are in this category, excluding Kings River, which is listed as a primitive area. Hightower said the corps did not have figures to date on Table Rock's ranking in national projects.

30 years ago

March 20, 1996
— A HOMECOMING TO REMEMBER...

Warm sunshine, a bright blue sky and a homemade banner proclaiming "Welcome Home Josh" greeted the crowd of about 100 well wishers who gathered at Memorial Park Sunday in honor of Josh Carlisle Coffey's long awaited homecoming and eventual reunion with his canine protectors, Baby and Angel. "I'm back!" Josh said to the cheering crowd as he was taken out of the car and placed in his wheelchair. Josh's grandfather, who had been patiently waiting for Josh's arrival, tearfully hugged his grandson and said "I love you." Before reuniting Josh with his dogs, the Coffey family and others spoke to the crowd encircling Josh. "We have really been waiting for this opportunity to thank each and every one of you who were out in those hills," said Johnny Sue Coffey, Josh's mother. "Despite extremely cold weather, you kept going and kept going. We can't even begin to tell you how much we appreciate it." "We appreciate each effort that was made. We just love you all," said a tear-

ful Coffey. Josh's stepfather, Lynn Coffey, echoed his wife's sentiments by adding, "I want to thank everybody for bringing our boy home." Barry County Sheriff Ralph Hendrix presented Josh with donations collected by his department. Hendrix also presented Josh with a badge and declared him junior deputy of Barry County. Hendrix, who was obviously touched by the reunion, thanked the many volunteers who helped in the search and rescue effort. Josh proudly showed off his deputy badge, a guardian angel and a "Top Dog" videotape to the crowd of onlookers. Finally after speeches were completed, Dana Kammerlohr reunited Josh with the two dogs that are credited with keeping Josh warm and protected while lost for 72 hours in freezing weather and rough terrain a week and a half ago. Baby, a dachshund-beagle mix, and Angel, an Australian heeler, were brought through the crowd of reporters, family and friends surrounding Josh. Frightened at first by the excited voices and bursts of flashbulbs, the dogs seemed to calm down when they approached Josh. A shy Angel laid on the floor near Josh's wheelchair while Baby sniffed around the crowd and posed for pictures. As Josh held onto the dogs' leashes, he said, "I love you dogs." After playing with the dogs, Josh thanked the crowd and said how happy he was. "I love you," he said. "I love my dogs. They made me better." The afternoon ended for Josh with a chance to thank the cowboy who found him alive on March 9. According to Mrs. Coffey, Josh has constantly worn a black cowboy hat given to him by Oscar Nell of Springfield. Josh showed the crowd some hat tricks Nell had taught him and allowed himself to be pulled behind Perfections Toot Toot, the horse that Nell was riding the day he found Josh. An ordeal that began during some of the coldest days on record ended with a warm homecoming that will be remembered for years to come. The men and women who braved freezing temperatures and rugged terrain without giving up were rewarded with smiles, tears and heartfelt thanks during a nice, sunny day at the park.

— MEDICAL UPDATE ON JOSH'S CONDITION

In a phone interview with the Cassville Democrat, Johnny Sue Coffey reported that her son, Josh, was getting his strength back, and the family was trying to get their life back to "normal." According to the final doctors' report, Josh will not lose any of his toes, which were severely frostbit-ten during his 72-hour ordeal. The doctors said it will be at least three months before Josh can walk without pain. In the meantime, he will continue to move around in

a wheelchair. Mrs. Coffey said a home health nurse will be coming to the house in the next couple of days to show her and her husband how to care for Josh themselves. Josh's famous friends, Baby and Angel, are staying with neighbors until the Coffeys can build the dogs a pen. Mr. Coffey was purchasing materials on Wednesday. Purina has donated a lifetime supply of dog food, which the Coffeys say will be a big help. The family already has three dogs as pets. Mrs. Coffey said she will continue to teach Josh at home. He does plan to visit his old classroom at Aurora to thank his former classmates for cards they sent to the hospital. "It's quieted down some for him," Mrs. Coffey said. "Now we just have friends calling us. It's relaxing." Mrs. Coffey added that the homecoming on Sunday was a very positive experience for her family. "We were very excited to get to the homecoming in Cassville," Mrs. Coffey said. "Everybody was so warm and friendly and genuinely caring. I loved it." Josh continues to get "loads" of mail every day from across the country. A media specialist in Springfield is still fielding calls from the media.

— LOCAL ANGLER CATCHES FIRST IN PRO TOURNEY

A local pro fisherman who hails from Washburn captured first place at Central Pro-Am Association's 1996 Table Rock Pro-Am Bass Tournament held March 9 and 10. Randall Hutson kicked off his tournament season with a resounding victory. Hutson, a four-time Pro Division Championship Qualifier, took the lead on day one with five fish that totaled 17.45 pounds. Although a blast of cold had both anglers and bass in a withdrawal mode on day two, Hutson managed to catch four bass weighing 11.15 to solidify his first pro division title victory. His two-day total weight of 28.60 pounds earned him \$12,500 cash and a Hummingbird Wide Vision LCR. Hutson claimed the win by finding a concentration of bass in the White River arm of Table Rock and using jerk-baits to entice the nine bass to bite. The local fisherman accepted his first place prize in front of camera crews filming for the "Fishin' Magazine" television series that airs on Prime Sports Network. Hutson told his audience that diligence and perseverance were the keys to success. "I stayed in the same area both days, and literally wore out the spots I had found," Hutson said. "I just kept throwing the stickbait and literally never gave up." Another local finisher in the pro division was Mike Roller of Purdy. Roller finished eighth with 16.85 pounds. He won \$2,000 for his efforts. Luck "E" Strike of Cassville is one of Central Pro-Am's sponsors for 1996.

Haven of the Ozarks Pet of the Week

Scoobie is a gorgeous German Shepherd mix. His date of birth is Aug. 14, 2024. Scoobie is a hit with our lady dogs in playgroups, and us humans agree that he is a good-looking dude! Scoobie is kind and very gentle and rarely barks. He is good with other dogs, but not good with cats or livestock. He is house trained. He will be a wonderful new family member for a lucky adopter. Adopters can complete an application at www.havenoftheoazarks.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 micro-chipped. For more information, people may email havenozarksanctuary@gmail.com, or call at 417-835-3647. Contributed photo





**DONALD LEE
"DON" COOPER**

Donald Lee "Don" Cooper, 89 of Shell Knob, Mo. passed away Wednesday, March 11, at his home.

He was born April 14, 1936 in Shell Knob, the son of Arl and Ida (Whisman) Cooper, who preceded him in death.

Also preceding him in death was his wife, Sonja Sanders, and sister, Penny Cooper Bailey.

Survivors include his son, Russell Arl Cooper of Shell Knob; daughter, Julia Donetta Cooper Riggs and husband John of Blue Springs, Mo.; sister, Arlene Garland and husband Sanford of Shell Knob; six grandchildren and three great grandchildren.

He graduated from Cassville High School with the Class of 1954 and went on to proudly serve his country in the United States Navy. After his military service, he devoted 28 years to protecting and serving others as a firefighter with the North Kansas

City Fire Department until his retirement. While working as a firefighter, he also ran his own business pouring concrete, as well as helping his mom run her farm whenever time would allow.

After retirement from North Kansas City Fire Department, he moved back to Shell Knob and became a full-time cattle farmer. He was a member of Lohmer Full Gospel.

Services were held Monday, March 16, 2026 at Lohmer Full Gospel in Shell Knob. Pastor David Donaldson conducted the services. Burial with military honors was at Painter Cemetery in Shell Knob, Mo.

FOHN FUNERAL HOME
Cassville, Missouri
417-847-2141

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



**PATRICIA KAREN
"PATTI" DOYLE**

Patricia Karen "Patti" Doyle, 75, of Branson,

Mo., passed away on Wednesday, March 11, 2026, surrounded by family after enduring multiple health issues.

She was born in Torrance, Calif., on November 10, 1950, to Hubert & Edith Alford, who preceded her in death.

Also preceding her in death was her brother, Mike Alford.

Survivors include her son, Michael Doyle and wife Amy; siblings, Janet Duryea, Tim Alford, and Lynda Arnett; four grandchildren, and many friends who loved her dearly.

She dedicated her life to her son, her joy was found in cruising with him and his wife. She was a loving mother and sister known for her great ideas, her unique sense of humor, crafty projects and her love of cruising.

She enjoyed her career in California where she worked in the accounting field in aerospace and computers. She also enjoyed selling on eBay in her later years.

No services are scheduled at this time. Cremation arrangements are under direction of Fohn Funeral Home in Cassville.

FOHN FUNERAL HOME
Cassville, Missouri
417-847-2141

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

RG EDMONDSON

RG Edmondson, age 92 of Cassville, Missouri, passed away March 14, 2026, in Wheaton, Missouri. Visitation will be held Tuesday, March 24, 2026, from 5:00 pm to 8 pm at White Funeral Home and Crematory. A graveside will be held Wednesday, March 25, 2026, at 1:00 pm at Oak Hill Cemetery.

White Funeral Home and Crematory
Online condolences and webcasting of the funeral services may be found at www.whitefuneralhome.org
417-847-8100 or 417-858-8400



CHLOE GIBBONS

Chloe Gibbons, 92, of Shell Knob, Mo., passed away Thursday, March 12, 2026, at her home, surrounded by her loving family.

She was born September 16, 1933, in Cape Girardeau, Mo., to Elmore and Neva (Ford) Kassel, who preceded her in death.

Also preceding her in death by her husband, John E. Gibbons, and one brother EW Kassel.

She was a member of Central Community Methodist Church in Shell Knob.

She was a retired schoolteacher and a former resort owner.

She participated in many solar car races across America, and helped handle the fish at the Homer Sloan Bass Tournament, danced with the Table Rockettes line dancers, and worked the boat shows for the Shell Knob Chamber for many years.

Survivors include three sons, Dirk Dietz and his wife Janice of O'Fallon, Mo., Drew Dietz and his wife Melinda of Jackson, Mo., and Drake Dietz and his wife Denise of Bloomington, Minn.; six grandchildren; seven great grandchildren; and one sister, Ruth Jean Lange of Jackson, Mo.

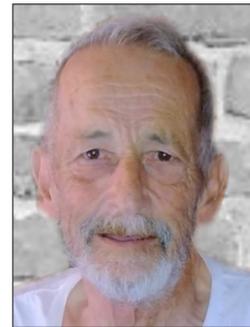
A Celebration of Life will be held Saturday, March 21, 2026, at Central Community United Methodist Church in Shell Knob, Mo. at 4:00 pm with Pastor Bill Kenagy. A visitation will be held one hour prior to service.

Memorials may be made to the United

Methodist Church Food Pantry in Shell Knob and entrusted to White Funeral Home and Crematory.

Arrangements are under the direction of White Funeral Home and Crematory in Cassville, Mo.

White Funeral Home and Crematory
Online condolences and webcasting of the funeral services may be found at www.whitefuneralhome.org
417-847-8100 or 417-858-8400



**WILLIAM
"EUGENE" HAASE**

William "Eugene" Haase, 67, of Wheaton, Mo. passed away Monday, March 9, 2026 at his home.

He was born September 26, 1958 in Joplin, Mo., the son of William Andrew and Waunetta (Endicott) Haase, who preceded him in death.

Also preceding him in death was his wife, Doris Pierce; daughter, Chasity Donica; grandsons, Chevy Babb and Allen Donica; brothers, Ed, Donnie, J.D., Danny, and Charles and sisters, Barbara, Doris, Pat, and Alice.

Survivors include his sons, Andy Haase of Wheaton, Luke Haase of Wheaton and Cody Haase and Nancy of Wheaton; daughters, Melissa Hunsaker and Leland of Pryor, Okla., Kim Crow and Daniel of Pryor, Okla., Sam Babb and Ben of Cassville and Nikki Haase of Wheaton; 13 grandchildren and two great grandchildren.

He attended school in McDonald County, Mo. He owned and operated Haase Masonry for 30 years and took great pride in his work.

Services will be held at 2:00 P.M. Wednesday, March 18, 2026 at McQueen Funeral Home in Wheaton. Pastor Hap Anders will conduct the

services. Burial will be at Muncie Chapel Cemetery in Wheaton, Mo.

The family will receive friends from 12:00 P.M. until service time Wednesday at McQueen Funeral Home in Wheaton.

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

McQUEEN FUNERAL HOME
Wheaton, Missouri
417-652-7268

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



**STANDARD PAYNE
"STAN" NELSON**

Standard Payne "Stan" Nelson, 83, of Seligman, Mo. passed away Saturday, March 7, 2026 at Cox Medical Center Branson in Branson, Mo.

He was born August 28, 1942 in Louisville, Ky., the son of Noah and Dorothy Nelson, who preceded him in death.

Also preceding him in death was his wife, Betty Nelson; son, Robert Nelson, and stepson, Mike O'Conner.

Survivors include his adopted daughter, Andrea Evans; stepdaughter, Marla Nelson; step daughter-in-law, Rosiris O'Conner and step grand-son, Michael O'Conner, Jr. and numerous other family and friends.

He attended school in Anderson, Mo., graduating from Anderson High School. Following graduation, he proudly served in the United States Navy from 1960 until 1963 when he was honorably discharged. After returning home, he found his calling as an over-the-road truck driver, a career he dedicated 42 years to before retiring. In addition to his work on the road, Stan also served as a safety driving instructor, sharing his knowledge and experience with others.

Private services will be held at a later date. Cremation arrangements are under direction of Fohn Funeral Home in Cassville.

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CONTINUED ON PAGE 7A

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CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6A



ETHAN JOE OWENS

Ethan Joe Owens, 21, of Aurora, Mo., passed away Thursday, March 12, 2026 at his home.

He was born April 26, 2004 in Aurora, Mo. the son of Denny and Patricia Joanne (Brown) Owens, who survive.

Also surviving are his brothers, Denny Owens of Greenfield, Daniel Castaneda of Monett, Jacob Castaneda of Aurora, Shilo Owens of Aurora, Luize Castaneda of Monett, Alfrado Perez of Reeds Spring, and Brady Forrester of Reeds Spring; sister, Mya Owens and fiancé Kemperton Collins of Aurora; niece, Olivia Collins of Aurora and several aunts, uncles, cousins and other extended family.

He grew up and attended school in Aurora. He was employed by PlayPower, Incorporated in Monett, Mo. He was a member of Pleasant Ridge Baptist Church.

A celebration of life will be held at 1:00 P.M. Saturday, April 11, 2026 at Pleasant Ridge Baptist Church in Verona, Mo.. Brother Tony Martin will conduct the service. Cremation arrangements are under direction of Fohn Funeral Home in Cassville.

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SABRINA REED

Sabrina Reed of Exeter, Mo., passed away Monday,

March 9, 2026.

Sabrina was born on December 23, 1979, in Springfield, Mo., to Randy and Brenda (Periman) Swearingen.

She was preceded in death by her father, Randy Swearingen; her grandparents, Cotton and Bonnie Periman, and Dayton and Barbara Swearingen; her uncle, Rick Swearingen; and her aunt, Teresa Addison.

Survivors include her husband, Jerry Reed of the home; one son, Jeremiah Reed of Exeter, Mo.; one daughter, Destiny Reed of Exeter, Mo.; three stepsons, Chris Stogdill and wife Tamara of Longview, Mo., Jonathon Reed and wife Amber of Cassville, Mo., and James Reed and wife Sarah of Cassville, Mo.; her mother, Brenda Swearingen; and one sister, April Ash.

A celebration of life was held Friday, March 13, 2026, at 1:00 pm at White Funeral Home and Crematory with Brother Darrel Merriman officiating.

Memorials may be made to the children and entrusted to White Funeral Home and Crematory.

Arrangements are under the direction of White Funeral Home and

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CHARLES EVERTT "CHUCK" SHAW

Charles Evertt "Chuck" Shaw, passed away on Wednesday, March 11, 2026, in Cassville.

He was born March 10, 1941, to Mildred E. (Barnes) Shaw, and Evertt R. Shaw in Bassett Neb., who preceded him in death.

Also preceding him in death were his sisters, Joan and husband Lloyd Vogt of Elmwood, Neb., and Jean and husband Bob Mason of Cheyenne, Wyo.

Survivors include his wife, Ann; son, Tim and wife Penni of Bassett; son, Tom and wife Angie of Memphis, Tenn.; daughter, Wendy and husband Tim of Bassett; daughter, Connie and husband Chad of Bentonville, Ark.; brother-in-law, Rex Schubert and his wife Cindy of Bella Vista, Ark.; 14 grandchildren and eight great grandchildren.

He was raised on the family ranch southeast of Bassett, and he attended the one room school at Sybrant District 77 through eighth grade and then attended Rock County High School in Bassett, graduating with the class of 1959. In high school he was active in sports and very active in the Future Farmers of America attaining the State Farmer Degree in 1959 and the American Farmer Degree in 1961.

He was a fourth-generation rancher in Neb., until his retirement in 2019. During his lifetime he was active in many organizations including the KBR Rural Public Power Board for 50+ years, Newport Volunteer Fire Department, Valley Grove Community Church Board, Sybrant

Community Church Board, Rock County Farm Bureau, Sandhills Cattle Association Board, and Steer Incorporated.

He was very active in the church in many capacities including Youth Group Leader, Morning Worship Leader, and Sunday School Teacher.

He enjoyed many friends and organizations in Cassville, Missouri including the First Baptist Church, Cassville Car Club, and the Cassville Senior Center.

Graveside services will be held at 2:00 P.M. Thursday, March 19, 2026, at Bassett Memorial Park Cemetery in Bassett, Nebraska, under direction of Hoch Funeral Home in Bassett. Pastor Joel Wentworth will conduct the service.

The family will receive friends from 10:00 A.M. until 12:00 P.M. Saturday, March 14, 2026 at Fohn Funeral Home in Cassville.

In lieu of flowers the family wishes memorials to be made to the Sybrant Community Church or STEER, Incorporated in memory of Chuck.

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Community Care Coalition cuts ribbon at brick-and-mortar



The Cassville Area Chamber of Commerce was honored to celebrate a new brick-and-mortar location with a special ribbon cutting surrounded by board members, volunteers, community partners, and supporters who believe in their mission. "Having a permanent location marks an exciting new chapter — one that allows them to expand services, increase accessibility, and better serve those in need. This milestone is more than just a new building — it's a symbol of growth, partnership, and a continued commitment to caring for our neighbors," a Chamber press release said. Front row, from left: Danny Boyd, Fran Boyd, Kiley Stringer, Teresa Phillips, Dean Ferguson, Cheryl Williams and Kevin Phillips. Contributed photo

Purdy Council considering new deposit rules

Contract awarded to reroof current city hall

BY MURRAY BISHOFF

Special to the Cassville Democrat

The Purdy City Council discussed a revision to city ordinances that raised concerns during the monthly meeting on March 11.

City Attorney Toni Hendricks followed up on the February discussion about returning deposits for utilities after 12 months. Current practice, contrary to the written ordinance, had the city applying deposits to ongoing billing, rather than holding the money or issuing a refund. Hendricks said the best practice would be to return deposits outright rather than hold them and pay interest on the amount. Hendricks proposed putting deposits into a separate bank account.

The city's practice has been to charge a deposit of \$180 for utilities, but those customers who have bad credit or a track record of not paying bills are charged \$280. This went into effect after Hendricks encouraged the city against charging renters as a group a dif-

ferent deposit amount than homeowners. Mayor Brian Bowers noted homeowners seldom fail to pay their bills, and public works foreman Kevin Cook, who disconnects overdue customers, said those who fail to pay their bills are "the same people" repeatedly.

To address the situation more directly, Hendricks recommended charging a new deposit of \$280 to customers who don't pay their bills, in addition to the \$100 reconnect fee.

While council members and City Clerk Sasha Gomez generally liked the idea, none were sure exactly how Utilities Clerk Teri Garrison was handling such situations. Hendricks said there were no written guidelines for Garrison, or for how someone else could do her job if she was absent.

Council members decided to hold a workshop with Garrison prior to the April 8 monthly council meeting. That session, Hendricks said, should clarify procedures and lead to consensus on whether the higher cost of an additional deposit is the proper course to take.

The city has until May to make changes to the city code, undergoing codification by an outside firm, before the new version goes online for the first

time. Hendricks said the new e-code will be more user-friendly, offering the ability to access multiple ordinances referring to the same topic at the push of a button. Hendricks has spoken repeatedly about ordinances that have disappeared or rules that popped up in different versions that the latest editing effort has addressed.

One such change came up last month when, as the city looked at revising the livestock ordinance to allow chickens, Police Chief Jackie Lowe had a top number of five in his marching orders, while another ordinance set the number at 20. This month, Hendricks and Lowe agreed on the number of 20. City regulations continue to ban other livestock, including cattle and goats.

In council action, aldermen approved a bid to replace the roof on the city hall building, erect-

ed in the mid-1970s as a community building and library branch. Cook reported, "It only leaks when it rains." The roof appears to have the gutters, which have "rusted out," molded into the metal roofing. Remodeling done six years ago when the city offices moved addressed some issues, but there remained cooking vents from the kitchen not connected to anything, and uncertainty about where any of the venting goes.

After reviewing five bids, council members approved a bid from Like Father Like Son Roofing and Construction of Purdy for \$13,128 for a metal roof. Cook spoke well of several bidders. Others started at \$26,000 and up. The difference, Gomez explained, was Like Father Like Son has their own machinery to cut metal roofs to fit, rather than buying metal sections from a supplier.

All the bidders offered 10-year warranties. Work was expected to start within two months.

Council members also approved a bid from WordPress Hosting to manage a new website for the city. Discussion in February raised concerns about the city dealing with a website that met compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act. Gomez reported speaking to both the Missouri Municipal League and the director of the GO CAPS program in Monett, whose students were designing the website. Both advised having someone other than the city manage the website, as that was becoming standard practice. Cost was \$1,011.08. The website itself is still under construction and should be finished by the end of the current school year.

In department reports, Cook reported general-

ly normal activity for a February. He noted helping the school district dig a ditch for their batting cages to avoid puncturing a water main right below it. Several applications have been received for an open public works position. Water efficiency for the month was 79 percent.

Chief Lowe reported more dog problems, issuing a fifth offense to one owner for repeatedly failing to secure dogs. In one incident, a sheriff's deputy had to use a taser on an attacking dog.

Lowe responded to three suicide attempts by the same party at the Autumn Woods apartments. On Feb. 23, Lowe made a well-being check on a resident on the utility shut-off list. With help from the fire department, he found the property owner deceased and an emaciated dog inside. The coroner indicated the res-

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ELECTION 2026



WHEATON SCHOOL BOARD



Publisher's note: The following Q&As represent the candidates' views verbatim, as submitted via email in response to our questions, and have not been edited. The election will be held April 7, with voters allowed to select three of the six candidates. The top three vote-getters will be elected. - KT

1. Why do you want to win this position?

Having grown up in this community, I have a deep connection to Wheaton and the School. I feel it is important to advocate for public education and the needs for the students in our district. I believe serving on the school board is an important way to serve our students and community.

2. If elected, what is your number one goal on the school board?

If re-elected, my goal would be to continue to work with the other board members through governance by policy and budgeting oversight, and Superintendent oversight.

3. What areas of the school district do you think need improvement?

I think the ever changing funding debate for public education puts us in a position of financial uncertainty from year to year. Having a Superintendent who keeps the board informed of state and federal funding, along with the budgetary constraints that places us in, is one of the most important areas in which the board deals. Financial health of the district touches all corners of the school and any improvement is always needed.

4. What capital projects



Lewis Royer

AGE: 49
CURRENT OCCUPATION: CATTLE PRODUCER
PAST EXPERIENCE: BROILER MANAGER, TYSON FOODS; SALES MANAGER, QC SUPPLY
EDUCATION: B.S. ANIMAL SCIENCE, MISSOURI STATE UNIVERSITY

do you believe the district should pursue?

We have some existing infrastructure items such as heat and air units that are on a proposed schedule to start replacing due to age causing expensive repairs and obsolete parts. Also, there is one more roof replacement that is needed. I think keeping facilities up to date and in good repair is ever ongoing and is another focus of the administration and school board.

is most important for raising the quality of education provided by Wheaton schools?

I think the easy answer is more money to attract teaching talent, development and retention, but when that is maximized to the ability of the district, I think we have to have a safe educational environment and strong culture of community inside the school. This being led by strong administrators and supported by the school board. GO BULLDOGS!

5. What do you feel

1. Why do you want to win this position?

I want to win this school board position because I care deeply about the future of our school and the families in our community. As a parent and a proud alumni of this district, I understand the importance of having a strong school with solid leadership. Our teachers deserve support, our students deserve every opportunity to succeed, and our parents deserve to have their voices heard. I want to serve on the board to help make thoughtful decisions that keep students first, support the teachers in our classrooms, and strengthen the connection between our school and our community. This isn't about a title for me—it's about giving back to the district that helped shape me and working to ensure the next generation of students has the same opportunities to learn, grow, and succeed.

2. If elected, what is your number one goal on the school board?

If elected, my number one goal is to keep students at the center of every decision the board makes. That means supporting our teachers so they have the resources they need in the classroom, focusing on strong academic outcomes, and making sure our schools continue to prepare students not just for graduation, but for life. I also believe it's important that parents and community members feel heard and involved. When the school, families, and teachers work together, students have the best chance to succeed. My goal is to help strengthen that partnership while always keeping the focus on what's best for our kids.

3. What areas of the school district do you think need improvement?

Our district has many strengths, including dedicated teachers, supportive families, and a community that cares deeply about our school. One area where I believe we can continue to improve is communication and collaboration between the district, parents, and



Nikki Allen

AGE: 40
CURRENT OCCUPATION: SELF EMPLOYED/FARMER
PAST EXPERIENCE: NO PAST EXPERIENCE ON THE SCHOOL BOARD
EDUCATION: GRADUATED FROM WHEATON HIGH SCHOOL IN 2003

the community, while also focusing on teacher retention. Our teachers play a critical role in student success, and supporting them helps create stability in our classrooms. When teachers feel supported and valued, they are more likely to stay and continue investing in our students and our community. Strengthening communication and continuing to support and retain quality teachers will help ensure our district remains strong and continues moving in a positive direction.

4. What capital projects do you believe the district should pursue?

When considering capital projects, my priority would be making sure our existing school facilities are safe, well maintained, and able to support a strong learning environment for students and teachers. Before pursuing large new projects, I believe it is important for the board to carefully evaluate the condition of our current buildings, address necessary maintenance, and ensure classrooms have the resources and infrastructure they need to support learning. This includes things like building safety, updated facilities, updated security system and spaces that support both academics

and student activities. Any capital project should be approached responsibly, with transparency and input from the community, to make sure we are making decisions that benefit students while being good stewards of taxpayer dollars.

5. What do you feel is most important for raising the quality of education provided by Wheaton schools?

I believe the most important factor in raising the quality of education in Wheaton Schools is supporting and retaining strong teachers while keeping students at the center of every decision. Great teachers are the foundation of a strong education system. When educators feel supported, valued, and have the resources they need in the classroom, they are better able to help students succeed. Focusing on teacher retention and classroom support helps create consistency and stronger learning environments for students. It is also important to maintain high academic expectations while supporting opportunities that help students grow both in and out of the classroom. When teachers, families, and the community work together, it creates a stronger school system that benefits every student.

1. Why do you want to win this position?

I want to win this position because the Wheaton community and school are important to me. I am a Wheaton Alumni, as are my parents and grandparents. I feel as though I received a good education that prepared me for the next steps in my life and professional career. I want to ensure the same is the case for my kids and generations to follow. I have two children in school district currently in 4th and 1st grade as well as a 3-year-old, so I am committed to the future of our school and community.

2. If elected, what is your number one goal on the school board?

I really just want to be more involved with our school at a higher level. I would say that my number one goal is to be committed to continuous improvement and creating additional opportunities for our students as much as possible to keep up the pace of some of the larger schools in our area. There are several major items going through legislature right now that will not benefit smaller schools such as open enrollment. We need to have activities and options for students and staff alike that will make Wheaton a place that is appealing to work and stay.

3. What areas of the school district do you think need improvement?

Something that really stuck out to me regarding our new superintendent for the upcoming school



Elizabeth Goetz

AGE: 33
CURRENT OCCUPATION: NURSE PRACTITIONER
PAST EXPERIENCE: NO PREVIOUS SCHOOL BOARD EXPERIENCE
EDUCATION: MASTER'S OF SCIENCE IN NURSING-FAMILY NURSE PRACTITIONER

year is teacher retention. Her doctoral dissertation was in teacher retention. I think that being able to build anything successful comes from the continuity of relationships. The same is true for healthcare. I feel that as a board member it is important to be able to hear the voices of the teachers and staff and see what needs they feel arise. I hope to encourage a culture of teamwork on the board as well as in the school between staff members.

4. What capital projects do you believe the district should pursue?

I would love to see Wheaton have a new gym; however,

I don't think that we are monetarily equipped to do this right now. The biggest issue at hand is the passing of the new bond issue that will also be on the April 7th ballot. This will heavily influence the future of our school.

5. What do you feel is most important for raising the quality of education provided by Wheaton schools?

Again, I feel as though teacher retention is important as well as cultivating an environment where staff feel safe, heard, and supported is important. Everyone performs better when they feel appreciated and supported!

1. Why do you want to win this position?

I want to win this position to be able to help the Wheaton School District to look to the future with the best interest of the students and faculty alike in mind while providing a safe and comfortable environment for our children to further their education.

2. If elected, what is your number one goal on the school board?

My number one goal if elected to the school board will be to focus on the retention of our valued Educators as well to help find ways to better facilitate our Educators with Advocate resources to ensure our children are given every opportunity to receive the education they deserve.

3. What areas of the school district do you think need improvement?

The area I feel the school district needs to improve in would be the support and development of our teaching staff. Focusing on a balanced teacher / student ratio to ensure our children are receiving the attention required to promote their learning process.

4. What capital projects do you believe the district should pursue?

Though I do believe capital projects can and



Rodney Allen

AGE: 39
CURRENT OCCUPATION: MISSOURI DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
PAST EXPERIENCE: NO PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE WITH THE SCHOOL BOARD
EDUCATION: GRADUATED FROM WHEATON HIGH SCHOOL 2004

do play a vital role in the development and growth of a school district. I believe that with the previous and proposed budget cuts our education system has suffered, the attention would be better utilized with focus on our teachers and supplying them with the tools and resources they need to educate our students without the added stress of funding limitations suppressing the availability of essential supplies that should be

common nonissue items within the classroom.

5. What do you feel is most important for raising the quality of education provided by Wheaton schools?

I believe the key to raising the quality of education stems from a supported, well-equipped, qualified educating staff with a combined goal in mind to provide an inclusive learning atmosphere for our children.

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1. Why do you want to win this position?

I've been a board member for 12 years. I would like to continue working to make Wheaton school the best it can be, to follow through with projects in progress, and to work to maintain quality of education for our students, quality teachers, administration and staff.

2. If elected, what is your number one goal on the school board?

I will work to be a voice for proper, back to basics education for our students to succeed, and the financial stability to maintain that.

3. What areas of the school district do you think need improvement?

I think we are strong throughout the district, and you always want to continue to improve.

4. What capital projects do you believe the district should pursue?

There have been several capital projects over recent years that are much needed and being fully utilized by our students



Tony Ball

AGE: 70
CURRENT OCCUPATION: FUNERAL DIRECTOR
PAST EXPERIENCE: 12 YEARS ON THE WHEATON SCHOOL BOARD, PASTOR, FUNERAL DIRECTOR, LABORER, SUBSTITUTE TEACHER, COACH
EDUCATION: MASTER'S DEGREE

and community. There is aging equipment that will need to be replaced and upgraded: HVAC, roofing, watershed, playground, etc.

5. What do you feel is most important for raising the quality of education provided by

Wheaton schools?
 Wheaton schools have produced good quality students that have gone on to be productive citizens, students and workers. To continue to provide the best for our students requires proper and quality curriculum, resources and good long-term teachers.

1. Why do you want to win this position?

To continue working with, and supporting the Superintendent, in maintaining the financial stability of the district along with being a voice for the community.

2. If elected, what is your number one goal on the school board?

The role of a school board member is to work with the Superintendent to determine the best, and most responsible usage of the schools funding to support the students. This can be anything from facilities, staffing or educational needs.

3. What areas of the school district do you think need improvement?

We will always need to continue updating, improving, and streamlining our curriculum to ensure that students are getting the best education possible. Facility improvements will always be required as well.

4. What capital projects do you believe the district should pursue?

Over the past few years, we have been able to build a new cafeteria/tornado shelter to help protect students in inclement weather. We



Josh Kinnaman

AGE: 41
CURRENT OCCUPATION: CITY OF WHEATON UTILITIES SUPERINTENDENT
PAST EXPERIENCE: 6 YEARS AS WHEATON SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER
EDUCATION: WHEATON GRADUATE, AND MULTIPLE DIFFERENT KINDS OF CONTINUING EDUCATION

have also been able to add a field house to help with scheduling practices and other community uses. Our next projects would need to be maintenance and upkeep of our existing facilities. Updating heating and cooling, roofing, etc.

5. What do you feel is

most important for raising the quality of education provided by Wheaton schools?

Teacher retainage and keeping class sizes as small as possible. This is not always easy to do, especially in small districts where we rely heavily on state and federal funding.



Gerry Wass inspects the daffodils that bloomed on his and his wife Neal's farm, north of McDowell, in April 2023. Since then, Wass and team members' cooperative daffodil project has expanded to include 475 different cultivars. Sheila Harris/sheilaharrisads@gmail.com



Ice Follies, a popular daffodil cultivar, bloom in profusion at the lot in Purdy where Gerry Wass and fellow cooperative members grow daffodils for a Virginia bulb supplier. Sheila Harris/sheilaharrisads@gmail.com



Ceylon daffodils soak up the sunset at the lot in Purdy where Gerry Wass and fellow cooperative members grow daffodils for a Virginia bulb supplier. Sheila Harris/sheilaharrisads@gmail.com

Daffodils from the heart

475 different cultivars of daffodils included in Purdy project

BY SHEILA HARRIS

sheilaharrisads@gmail.com

Everything's coming up daffodils on a farm north of McDowell and on a plot of land in Purdy — the result of a cooperative effort by Barry County resident, Gerry Wass, and a handful of young gardeners from the Purdy area.

Unseasonably early spring temperatures, recently brought forth a spectacular, blooming show of the 475 different cultivars of daffodils planted by the cooperative on a two-year, rotating basis.

For Wass, raising daffodils is a labor of love, one that reconnects him with his childhood and teen years in Gloucester, Va., where he worked for The Daffodil Mart, a 28-acre flowering paradise near the Chesapeake Bay.

"I started working for Brent Heath and his mother (then-owners of the business), when I was 12 years old," Wass said. "I liked it so much, and it was such a great part-time job for a school kid, that I worked there until I graduated from high school."

After Heath married a woman named Becky, the name of the business changed, in later years, to Brent and Becky's Bulbs. Along with the name change, the business grew to include not only daffodil bulbs, but a wide array of flowering bulbs of almost any variety a person could ask for.

Due to his early exposure, daffodils have long held a soft spot in Wass's heart. They've also provided an endless source of fascination. When he was young, the Royal Horticultural Society's Book of Registered Daffodils was his go-to choice of reading material.

"I studied it on work breaks and carried it around with me into the fields," Wass said.

The book, a standard

for research among growers, lists breeds of daffodils that date back to the 1800s — most grown in The Netherlands and the British Isles, Wass said.

"They're all descended from wild species grown in southern Europe and across the Mediterranean region," he said.

After his high school graduation, college and career took Wass far from Virginia, but the seeds implanted at The Daffodil Mart remained rooted in his heart, where they recently sprouted with spectacular results.

Even though Wass retired 10 years ago as a Spanish teacher at Purdy High School, he wasn't ready to put his feet up.

During his teaching years, Wass and his students initiated the Purdy Recycling Project, designed to involve willing students and area adults in a joint project for the betterment of the community. The recycling project is a continuing effort, one that recently marked its 20th year.

"In its heyday, the recycling center made good money for the Purdy High School Spanish Club," Wass said.

Last year, the recycling project, for the first time, achieved the ability (through a legal worker's cooperative) to pay small dividends to young members in remuneration for a portion of the labor they donated.

Then, Wass said, prices paid for recycled materials dropped.

Undaunted, Wass began looking for new ways to involve community members in the paying cooperative project.

"We had pondered an agricultural project for years," Wass said. "And, we even tried a gardening project that failed."

Then, one day in 2018, while tending the river of daffodils he'd planted down the sloping lawn in front of his and his wife Neal's home north of McDowell, Wass discovered a "sport" — a natural mutation — of a common



daffodil that mystified him. "By 2018, I'd grown tired of trying to plant and raise daffodils in rocky soil for our personal enjoyment, even though I still loved them," Wass said. "Finding that sport invigorated me, gave me a new direction."

The following year, Wass decided to begin converting his and Neal's river of flowers into straight rows (yes, digging and replanting was involved) and call his field a "daffodil farm." He single-handedly planted one row that year, and two the next.

"In 2022, I hired some willing students to help me," he said. "Somewhere during that time, I realized that I could become a collector of the daffodil bulbs that Brent and Becky Heath had hybridized — a keeper of their legacy."

"When Brent learned that I wanted to preserve their business's legacy, and saw evidence that the bulbs I'd planted were growing well, he and I started talking about what it would take for me to grow for them, and to get Brent and Becky's own bulbs back on the market, because many of them were no longer commercially available."

With hired student labor lined up, Wass was prepared to begin his daffodil experiment on his and Neal's front lawn. Between 2022 and 2025, he made four trips to Virginia to dig many of Brent and Becky's bulbs from their collection to replant in southwest Missouri, to study their growth and to talk to workers about raising daffodils for the co-op.

By 2025, Wass and Brent Heath were ready to share their idea with Becky

Heath and her son and daughter-in-law, who are now partners in the flowering bulb operation. When they all met with Wass and listened to his plan for the preservation and promotion of their heirloom daffodil bulbs, Wass was given the go-ahead, and Becky stressed the importance of moving forward in time to promote the bulbs for the business's 125th anniversary in 2025.

From the one row of daffodils Wass replanted in 2019, the Wass daffodil farm is now home to 21 rows, each 60-foot long, Wass said. A rented, formerly-fallow plot of land in Purdy plays host to another 11 rows, each 80 feet in length.

Each row is planted with separate, carefully-labeled sections of some 475 different cultivars of daffodils. "Labeling the sections and keeping the varieties apart is tricky, especially in the rocky soil," said Wass, who is able to distinguish many, if not most, of the cultivars by sight.

In early Spring, when multi-hued daffodils burst forth in riotous color, Neal and Gerry enjoy the visual rewards of the cooperative's fall planting while sipping their morning coffee.

Turning beauty into monetary remuneration, however, is a task that requires much time spent with a shovel and on one's knees. Wass is thankful for the young cooperative participants who are willing to help with those endeavors. "After the daffodils bloom, we leave the bulbs in the ground until May, when the leaves start to turn brown and die back," Wass said. "Then, we dig

those that have been in the ground for two years and allow them to dry in a climate-controlled environment until October."

Wass has access to a storage building he uses for that purpose.

After the bulbs are dug, cleaned and inspected for quality, Becky Heath decides which, and how many, bulbs she'd like to stock for prospective sales. The bulbs are then packaged and shipped to Virginia.

In the fall, the cycle begins again, when the bulbs held in storage are re-planted.

Among Wass's current 475-cultivar collection are familiar names such as Barrett Browning, Ice Follies and Ceylon. He recently registered his own unique cultivar last year, a sport that he named 'Consent.'

"In the 1960s, there were about 10,000 different types of daffodils," Wass said. "Now there are over 32,000."

As a collector, Wass has a soft spot for cultivars registered between 1890-1924 by Great Britain's Reverend George Engleheart and the mysterious Sarah Backhouse, who developed many red-cupped varieties and the first pink daffodil.

Wass acquired many of the bulbs in his daffodil collection from The Greater St. Louis Daffodil Society, which hosts regular bulb exchanges.

All varieties of daffodils, Wass said, are members of the Narcissus family. Jonquils are a specific division of daffodils, while Easter Lilies and Lent Lilies are nicknames.

According to Wass, most of the daffodils spotted alongside country roads where old homesites once stood are the same variety: a cultivar that dates back to the Cherokee Nation.

"Spanish explorers first brought daffodil bulbs to the US, to trade with the Cherokee," he said. The bulbs spread from there.

Wass's cooperative daffodil experiment is reaping dividends.

"We made more money selling bulbs last year than what the recycling center made by selling recycled materials," Wass said.

The cooperative divided the money made from bulb sales among its members, with each member's dividend based on the logged time they put into the project.

While Wass is pleased with the financial compensation the group received in return for their labor, Wass also gains satisfaction from watching another generation of young growers developing the love and know-how for gardening that he learned from his own mentors over 50 years ago.

No dollar amount can be attached to that type of lesson, he said.

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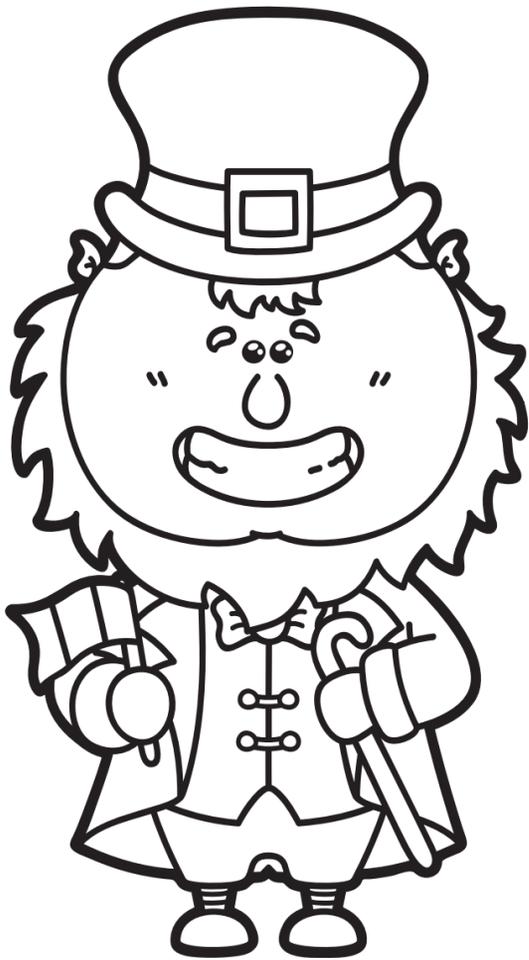
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Q: Why did the cookie go to the hospital?

A: He felt crummy.



JUST kidding

Q: What kind of egg did the bad chicken lay?

A: A devilled egg.



JUST kidding

Q: Where do bulls get their messages?

A: On a bull-et-in board.

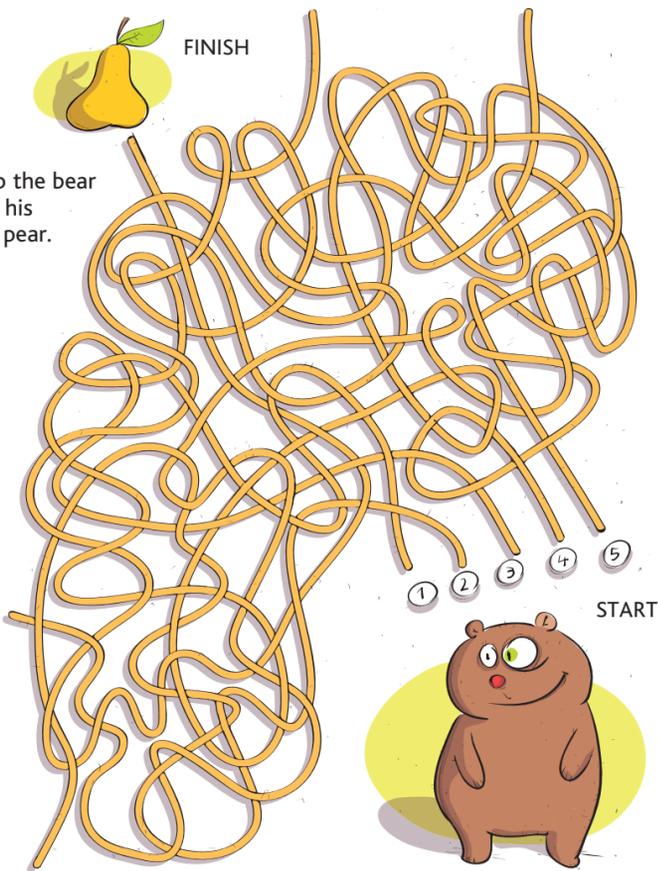


Amazing maze



FINISH

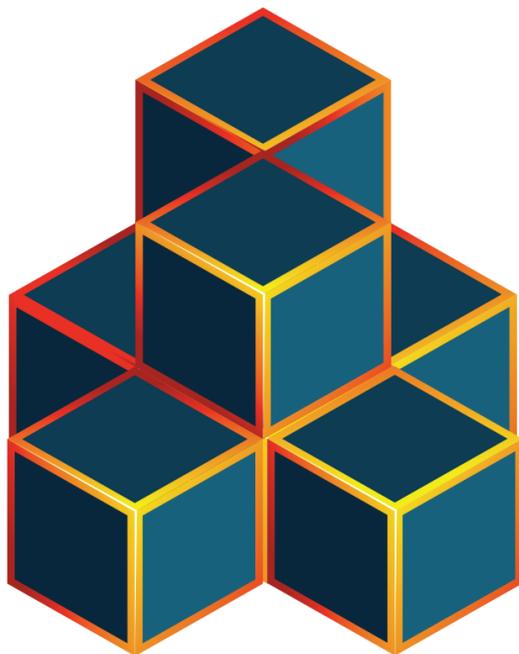
Help the bear find his lost pear.



ANSWER: 4

Private eye

How many blocks can you find in this shape?



- A:
- B:
- C:
- D:

ANSWER: D (8 BLOCKS)

Sudoku 4 x 4

	2		
1			
2			3
		4	

COMPLETE EACH GRID WITH NUMBERS FROM 1 TO 4, KEEPING IN MIND THAT:

- A number can only appear once per row
- A number can only appear once per column
- A number can only appear once in each box of 4 squares

2	4	1	3
3	1	4	2
4	2	3	1
1	3	2	4

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LADY WILDCATS

SOCCER

Returning: Seven starters, 10 letterwinners

Newcomers: Multiple freshmen with club experience

More: Squad hopes to increase offensive output after 12-goal season in 2025

Sights set on scoring

Cassville's 7 returners, newcomers hope to up offensive production

BY KYLE TROUTMAN

ktroutman@cassville-democrat.com

The Cassville girls soccer team enters the 2026 season with a strong returning core, aiming to flip its offensive script from a team that went 6-10-2 while scoring 12 total goals last season.

Jake Forste, Cassville girls soccer coach, said the squad has seven starters and 10 letterwinners returning to the Black and Gold this spring.

"We've got position battles up-and-down the roster, and I can't yet differentiate midfielders from forwards," Forste said. "Junior Libby Corter has played everywhere but goalkeeper for us in her first two years. She is really the queen on our chess board; she can do everything from close out wins as a key defender, cover midfield shifts as a featured playmaker, or chase late-game goals as a forward. While we're not quite sure where she'll be featured this spring, she is a leader and key component for our team."

Senior Tyra Sturgell captained the Lady Wildcats team in 2025 and is a real warrior in the midfield, Forste said. "She has worked as a defensive specialist in years past, and has marked some of the area's toughest players," he said. "Wherever she slots in this spring, she will be a coach on the field for us. Junior Lydia Cupps is a returning starter and All-State cross country runner. She has a high motor, her distribution skills continue to improve, and she looks great with the ball on her foot this spring.

"Junior Kayla Connolley has been a key reserve and spot starter for us in the past. She is competing for a full-time role in the attack this spring. She is a fierce competitor and brings some tenacity to our front six. Junior Anabele Mills was an active participant for us during our offseason agenda, and continues to grow as a player and team leader. We are hoping to put her in the best position to leverage her blazing speed as a weapon."

Newcomers will also feature for Cassville this season in the attacking third.

"Freshman Briley Artherton is a club soccer kid and three-sport athlete," Forste said. "While she will enter this season as a freshman, she is our most physical player on the team and has as much soccer experience as just about anyone on our roster. We will look for her to step in and be a contributor from day one this spring. Raegan Doucet, also a freshman, has been a featured player on our SVSC club teams in the past, along with Briley, even spending last fall and spring as the striker for our U15 co-ed team. She has a strong nose for the net and is looking to leave her mark on the program."

Defensively, Cassville will rely on experience along the back line.

"Senior Diana Arguelles joined us as a sophomore reserve and spot starter," Forste said. "As a junior, she played a full-time role with the defense. We will look to her to help lead from the backfield this spring. Sophomore Anna VanDerhoef is a tough-as-nails wrestling kid who emerged as our Defensive Player of the Year as a freshman last season. We are excited to see what she can do in year two.

"Junior Kendal Allison has spent time at wide back and center back in her first two years," Forste said. "She is looking to feature with the defense

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8B

BULLDOGS FIND SUCCESS IN YOUTH



Wheaton senior Richard Hnin pulls in a rebound during action at the Southwest Holiday Tournament this season. Kyle Troutman/ktroutman@cassville-democrat.com

Strides forward made with 3 underclassmen starting

BY KYLE TROUTMAN

ktroutman@cassville-democrat.com

Experience gained and improvements made over the course of the season have the Wheaton basketball program looking forward with confidence.

Sean Crane, Wheaton boys basketball coach, said the Bulldogs put together a 12-15 campaign, learning a lot along the way.

"We made huge improvements this season," he said. "We played lots of young players that improved throughout the season, and the team improved in all aspects. Experience, though, will be most beneficial improvement. We need to improve defensively going forward."

Crane said three underclassmen started for Wheaton, which put together back-to-back wins three times — including a 63-61 overtime win over Golden City — as well as one three-game streak, besting Thomas Jefferson, Northeast Vernon County and Hurley in mid-January.

Crane said looking back on the campaign, the first win in the three-game streak was a big one.

"Our win at Thomas Jefferson was huge win in our conference and program builder," he said.

Helping build that program this year was senior Richard Hnin.

"Richard was huge influence for us and battled through injuries this season," Crane said. "He was very important to our programs improvements."

Underclassmen, Crane said, will be key in 2027.

"They will continue to be a huge influence as we started three underclassmen on varsity this past season," he said. "Injuries and sickness hurt the end of our season, but our season as a whole was a huge success. We expect and want to continue improvement for next season."

Crane said the goals are already set to compete for district and conference titles.

The Bulldogs' season came to a close at the hands of neighbor Exeter, a 59-56 loss in the Class 2, District 12 tournament.



Wheaton sophomore David Cunglianhawng hooks a shot toward the hoop during action at the Southwest Holiday Tournament this season. Kyle Troutman/ktroutman@cassville-democrat.com

7th-graders take Big 8 crown



The Cassville Middle School seventh-grade basketball team put together a championship run in the Big 8 Tournament, defeating Monett, 47-10; Mt. Vernon, 39-12; and McDonald County, 38-32 to finish the tournament 3-0 and win the title. "The team played outstanding defense throughout the tournament and finished conference play undefeated, ending the season with an overall record of 14-3," a press release said.

Contributed photo



Baseball

3/19-21	28th Annual Forsyth Tournament	Away
3/26-28	Cassville Classic	Home
4/2	Marionville	Home 4:30 pm
4/3	Forsyth	Away 4:30 pm
4/7	Crane	Home 5:00 pm
4/9	Mt. Vernon	Away 4:30 pm
4/11	Purdy	Home 10:00 am
4/11	Hillcrest	Home 2:00 pm
4/13	Logan-Rogersville	Home 4:30 pm
4/14	Lamar	Away 4:30 pm
4/16	Monett	Home 4:30 pm
4/17-18	Pleasant Hill Baseball Tournament	Away
4/21	East Newton	Away 4:30 pm
4/23	Aurora	Home 4:30 pm
4/24	Diamond	Away 5:00 pm
4/28	McDonald County	Home 4:30 pm
4/30	Nevada	Away 4:30 pm
5/1	Hollister	Home 4:30 pm
5/4	Clever	Home 1:00 pm
5/5	Seneca	Home 4:30 pm
5/7	Reeds Spring	Away 4:30 pm
5/11	Blue Eye	Away 5:00 pm



Track and Field

3/26	Mustang Stampede	Neutral
3/31	Diamond	Away 4:00 pm
4/6	Seneca Track Meet	Away 4:00 pm
4/7	Monett Track Meet	Away
4/9	Mt Vernon Track Meet	Away 4:00 pm
4/14	Clever Track Meet	Away
4/16	East Newton Track Meet	Away 4:00 pm
4/21	Cassville Wildcat Relays	Home
4/30	Big 8 Conference Meet	Away
5/9	District Track Meet	Away
5/16	Sectional Track Meet	Away
5/22-23	Class 3 State Track Meet	Away

Girls Soccer

3/17	Soccer Jamboree @ McDonald County	Away
3/24	Lebanon	Home 4:30 pm
3/26	New Covenant Academy	Away 4:30 pm
3/28	Aurora Shootout	Away
3/31	Monett	Away 5:00 pm
4/2	Bolivar	Away 4:30 pm
4/6	Parkview	Away 5:00 pm
4/7	McDonald County	Home 5:00 pm
4/9	Logan-Rogersville	Away 4:30 pm
4/13	New Heights Christian	Home 4:30 pm
4/14	Aurora	Away 5:00 pm
4/21	Monett	Home 5:00 pm
4/28	McDonald County	Away 5:00 pm
5/4	Marshfield	Home 1:00 pm
5/5	Aurora	Home 5:00 pm
5/7	Fair Grove	Home 4:30 pm
5/11	Greenwood	Away 5:00 pm

Boys Golf

3/26	Reeds Spring Invitational @ Ledgestone	Away
3/31	Monett	Home 11:00 am
4/6	Joplin Invitational @ Twin Hills	Away
4/9	Cassville Invitational	Home
4/16	Aurora	Away 4:00 pm
4/16	Ozark Tiger Invitational	Away
4/20	Carthage Abbiatti's BBQ Invitational	Neutral
4/23	Willard Invitational @ Green Hills	Away
4/28	Marshfield Invitational	Neutral
4/30	Monett Tournament	Away
5/4	Big 8 Golf Tournament	Away 9:00 am

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BIBLE VERSE:

“As God’s chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience.”

— COLOSSIANS 3:12

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 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.

PETS
PUPPIES: 4 female Frenchies for sale. 7 months old. \$500 each. Call 316-519-6316.

LOST & FOUND
LOST WALLET: If you find a wallet belonging to Sandra Molton, please call 417-346-5226. Reward if all contents are included.

MISCELLANEOUS
IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF BARRY COUNTY, MISSOURI AT CASSVILLE

IN RE:
 SHARON GRACE
 BERNARD
 Case No.
 26BR-DR00004

PUBLICATION OF
 NOTICE OF CHANGE OF
 NAME

On the 4th day of March 2026, the Circuit Court of Barry County, Missouri, entered Judgment in Case No. 26BR-DR00004, changing the birth name of Sharon Grace Davis to Sharon Grace Bernard. ELLIS, CUPPS, HERRIN & SCHWARTZ Cordelia F. Herrin Cordelia F. Herrin – MO Bar #42220 P. O. Box 276, Cassville, MO 65625 (417) 847-2734; Fax (417) 847-5643 Attorney for Petitioner Published in: Cassville Democrat
 Dates of Publication: 3/11/26, 3/18/26 & 3/25/26 1st insertion 03/11/26 9-11

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF BARRY COUNTY, MISSOURI AT CASSVILLE
 CHRISTOPHER LEE MAST, Petitioner, REBECCA MORRIS, Respondent. Case No. 26BR-DR000033

NOTICE UPON ORDER FOR SERVICE BY PUBLICATION
 The State of Missouri to: REBECCA MORRIS
 You are hereby notified that an action has been commenced against you in the Circuit Court of Barry County, Missouri, the object and general nature of which is Dissolution of Marriage. 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 Petitioner is:
 J. MICHAEL RIEHN
 104 W. 7 STREET
 P. O. BOX 324
 CASSVILLE, MO 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 11th day of MARCH 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 his 5th day of MARCH, 2026.

Craig Williams
 CIRCUIT CLERK
 BY KATIE CORREIA/DC
 First publication: MARCH 11, 2026
 Second Publication: MARCH 18, 2026
 Third Publication: MARCH 25, 2026
 Fourth Publication: APRIL 01, 2026
 1st insertion 03/11/26 9-12

INVITATION TO BID BARRY COUNTY BRIDGE REPAIR BUNDLE

Sealed bids for the Barry County Bridge Repair Bundle will be received at: Barry County Commission, 700 Main Street, Suite 2, Cassville, MO 65625, until 10:00 A.M. (prevailing local time) on the 9th day of April, 2026, at the office of the Barry County Courthouse, and at that time will be publicly opened and read. All bids shall be submitted as a Hard Copy.

The proposed work includes:
 This project includes repairs to six bridges throughout Barry County. Work generally includes placement of concrete collars around existing abutments, formed and unformed substructure repairs, installation of MoDOT Type 2 Rock Blanket, construction of retaining walls, clearing bridge areas of debris, curb repair, and box culvert slab repair.

A digital copy of the plans and specifications may be purchased through the office of Great River Engineering (GRE), at 417-886-7171 upon payment of \$75.00, which is not refundable. All bidders must purchase plans through Great River Engineering and be on the planholder list in order to bid the project.

All labor used in the construction of this public improvement shall be paid a wage no less than the prevailing hourly rates of wages of work of similar character in this locality as established by the Missouri Department of Labor and Industrial Relations (State Wage Rate). This contract requires payment of the prevailing hourly rate of wages for each craft or type of work required to execute the contract as determined by the Missouri Department of Labor and Industrial Relations, and requires adherence to a schedule of minimum wages as determined by the United States Department of Labor. For work performed anywhere on this project, the contractor and the contractor's subcontractors shall pay the higher of these two applicable wage rates. The applicable state wage rates for this contract are detailed in "Annual Wage Order 32", that is attached to this bidding document. These supplemental bidding documents have important

legal consequences. It shall be conclusively presumed that they are in the bidder's possession, and they have been reviewed and used by the bidder in the preparation of any bid submitted on this project. The Barry County Commission hereby notifies all bidders that it will affirmatively ensure that in any contract entered into pursuant to this advertisement, businesses owned and controlled by socially and economically disadvantaged individuals will be afforded full opportunity to submit bids in response to this invitation and will not be discriminated against on the grounds of race, color, religion, creed, sex, age, ancestry, or national origin in consideration for an award.

All bidders must be on MoDOT's Qualified Contractor List per Section 102.2 of the current version of the Missouri Standard Specifications for Highway Construction. The contractor questionnaire must be on file 7 days prior to bid opening.

Contractors and subcontractors who sign a contract to work on public works projects shall provide a 10-Hour OSHA construction safety program, or similar program approved by the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations, to be completed by their on-site employees within sixty (60) days of beginning work on the construction project.

A certified cashier's check or a bid bond in the amount of 5% shall be submitted with each proposal.

The Barry County Commission reserves the right to reject any or all bids.

The project will be awarded to the lowest, responsive, responsible bidder.

The DBE Goal for this project is 0%.

No 2nd tier subcontracting will be allowed on this project.

Only insertion 03/18/26 10

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF BARRY COUNTY, MISSOURI AT CASSVILLE

Stuart Carson
 Plaintiff
 VS.
 Linda Blakenship,
 Her unknown heirs, spouses, consorts devisees, grantees and assigns
 Defendants
 Case No
 25BR-CC00028

NOTICE UPON ORDER FOR SERVICE BY PUBLICATION

Stuart Carson to Linda Blakenship, her unknown heirs, spouses, consorts, successors, devisees, grantees and assigns:

You are hereby notified that an action has been commenced against you in the Circuit Court of the County of Barry, Missouri, the object and general nature of which is Petition for Quiet Title.

The names of all parties to the said suit are stated above in the caption hereof and the name and address of the attorney for Plaintiff is James J. Randall, Jr. 405 Broadway, P.O. Box 151, Monett, MO 65708.

You are further notified that, unless you file an answer or pleading or shall otherwise appear and defend against the aforesaid petition within forty-five (45) days after the 18th day of March 2026, judgment by default will be rendered against you.

It is ordered that a copy hereof be published according to law in *Cassville Democrat*, a newspaper of general circulation published in the County of Barry, Missouri.

Witness my hand and seal of the Circuit Court, State of Missouri, the 11th day of March, 2026.

Craig Williams
 CIRCUIT CLERK
 By Kami Stanton
 DEPUTY CLERK
 1st Publication: March 18, 2026
 2nd Publication: March 25, 2026
 3rd Publication: April 1, 2026

ESTATE AUCTION
Saturday, March 21, 2026 — 10:00 AM
Location: Golden, MO. (Table Rock AirPort). From Hwy 86 & Hwy J across from Shumaker Tire, take Hwy J, 1 mile, stay left on J Hwy 7/10 mile. Turn left on FR 2274 go 5/10 mile. Stay right for 2/10 mile to auction. (22264 Fr 2274 Golden MO)
REAL ESTATE – BOAT SLIP – GOLF CART – ELEC RECUMBANT TRIKES – TOOLS – FURNITURE & APPLIANCES – HOUSEHOLD & MISC



Real Estate: 1990, 3 bedroom, 2 bath doublewide home on permanent foundation. 1568 sq ft of living area. Enter this home under a covered front deck that overlooks the Table Rock Airport into a nice size family room with vaulted ceiling, ceiling fan and a patio door leading out to the back deck. Also, a freestanding wood stove. To the right of the entry door is a formal dining room. From there on into the kitchen or the master bedroom. The kitchen features double sink, cabinets, countertop space, built in Whirlpool dishwasher, Whirlpool gas range with hood and a very nice SS side by side refrigerator/freezer. The master bedroom has ceiling fan, windows, walk in closet & pass through bathroom with a shower and a door leading into the utility room with outside entry door. On the North end of the home is 2 more bedrooms with ceiling fans, windows and walk in closets and a full bathroom.



Outside Amenities: A covered front deck, back deck, and a 45'x40'x12' steel utility building used as an airplane hanger. All this on (4) nice lots consisting of 2.025 acres m/l on the Table Rock Airport and a view of Table Rock Lake from your front yard. **Boat Slip:** 10'x30' boat slip, slip #8 in Airport Beach Dock, permit #8156. **Golf Cart:** Club Car, gas powered golf cart with back seat, top and windshield. **Trikes:** (2) elect assist traveler, recumbent trikes. **Tools:** Honda 3200 psi pressure washer – roller stands – dolly – misc long handle tools – elect log splitter – elect chain saw – torch for gas bottle – ext cords – fiberglass ext ladder – carry all – folding aluminum ladder – shop vac – saw horses – grinder on stand – sm vice – nuts & bolts organizers – mech creeper – receiver hitch – force vice – misc hand tools – misc sm power tools – portable tool boxes – Shop Smith – Ryobi leaf blower – yard cart – floor jack – 20 lb. propane bottles – Torpedo heater. **Riding Mower:** Husqvarna YTH, 22 hp, 46" hydrostat riding mower. **Furniture & Appliances:** Queen bed – dresser & matching chest of drawers – (2) matching night stands – glider chair – misc end tables - computer desk – bar stool – elect fireplace/TV stand – sofa – ottoman – table lamps – dining table & 6 chairs – wood rocking chair – Daniel Dakota Grandmother clock – wood Deacon bench – flat screen TV's – chest of drawers & matching dresser – queen bed – 4 drawer file cabinet – office chairs – GE matching washer & dryer – Frigidaire upright freezer. **Household & More:** Ninja air fryer – misc sm kitchen appliances – laundry cart – handicap walker & shower chair – wood TV trays – misc linens – elect heaters – fans – card table – cool bucket – fireplace set – kitchenware such as Tupperware, utensils, silverware, knives, microwave, etc. – Big Easy grill – (2) matching wood shelves – wood pantry cabinet – wind chime – iron bench – Cannon copier – Acer computer – misc office supplies – plastic shelving – lawn chairs – Invacare 9805P lift – (2) patio lawn chairs – yard swing – bicycles – horseshoe game – coolers – more household & shop items not listed. **Note:** Own property on Table Rock Airport and just up the street from Table Rock Lake. The best of both worlds. Fly in and store your plane in your own airplane hanger and spend time on Table Rock Lake. We will also be offering separately a very nice 10'x30' boat slip just a short golf cart ride away from the home and hanger. Call to preview the real estate or boat slip before auction day or to pre-register for the auction. 417-847-2507. Go to www.stumpffauction.com to view more pictures and for more information. **Terms:** Cash, good check or credit card with 2 forms of current ID. Must have current driver's license to obtain bidder number. All terms on bidder card apply. All sells as is where is with no warranty expressed or implied. Any announcements made day of auction supersede any and all printed material. **Real Estate Terms:** Qualified buyers only w/pre-approved bank letter of approval. Nonrefundable 10% paid day of auction w/balance due in cash or certified funds within 30-45 days. Buyers and sellers will be responsible for their own portion of their closing cost. Taxes will be prorated to the date of close. Sells as is where is with no warranties or guarantees. Bidders, buyers, or agent of the buyer is responsible for conducting own inspection of property prior to auction and should rely solely upon their own due diligence and inspection. This property is offered with absolutely no contingencies of any kind, no contingencies on financing, surveys, appraisals, or final walk throughs. Seller has the right to accept or reject final bid. A 10% buyer's premium will apply on Real Estate. Any announcements made day of auction supersede any and all printed material.

Estate of Al Hoelscher
 Boat Slip Owner: Jason & Angela Artherton

www.stumpffauction.com
417-847-2507

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

Auctioneer: Parker Stumpff
 AR State Champion
 Auctioneer
 #2352

REAL ESTATE AUCTION
VAN - GUNS - TOOLS
SATURDAY, MAR. 21, 2026 *10:00 AM

LOCATION: 26598 Private Road 1051; Seligman, Mo 65745. Directions from Washburn, Mo. Jct. of Hwy 37 & 90 Hwy go south approx. 2.5mi - OR - from Seligman, Mo. Jct. of Hwy 37 & 112 Hwy go north approx. 2.5mi to Farm Rd 2265. Take 2265 west 0.9mi to auction. Watch for "Holder Auction" signs!

***REAL ESTATE: Sells at noon!** Nice home, shop & outbuilding on 1.9 acres. All metal maintenance free exterior. 1100 sq.ft. home in great shape. 2BR, lg. bath & utility combo-wheelchair/handicap accessible. Outside includes 30x40 metal shop with 12ft overhead door & side shed. Nice loafing shed with storage room & elect. All buildings are in great shape. Property has rural water & propane. **Terms:** Property sells at noon with owner confirmation. 10% (non- refundable) down the day of the auction with balance due upon closing. Qualified buyers only. For inspection call Holders Auction Service - 417-689-5582.

VAN 2005 Chrysler Town & Country van, only 27,000 mi, 3.8 V6 automatic. Van is converted wheelchair/handicap accessible. Automatic doors, fold down ramp, swivel driver seat & hand controls. Sold with owner confirmation.

TRAILERS - BLADE - TEN OR MORE GUNS - HUNTING - WELDERS - TORCHES - FABRICATING MATERIAL - SHOP - TOOLS - ANTIQUES - COLLECTIBLES - HOUSEHOLD
 Don't miss this opportunity to buy quality! Food & restroom available. **Terms:** Statements made on the day of the sale supersede all printed material. ID required to receive buyer number. No debit or credit cards. Cash or good check only. Nothing to be removed until settled for. For pictures, terms & complete listing see our Real Estate/Public Auction ad on AuctionZip. Com- Auctioneer ID #35501.

**OWNER: THE LATE DOUG CATRON
 HOLDERS AUCTION SERVICE**

BRAD HOLDER 417-689-5582	BUTTERFIELD, MISSOURI JEFF HOLDER 417-342-3218	CARL HENDRIX 417-342-4370
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4th Publication: April 8, 2026
 RANDALL, MASRI & RANDALL, P.C.
 405 Broadway, P.O. Box 151
 Monett, Missouri 65708
 Telephone (417) 235-8688
 MoBar No. 58732
 Attorney for Plaintiff
 1st insertion 03/18/26 10-13

Next Friend,
 HAYLEY EARP, and
 HAYLEY EARP,
 individually,
 Petitioners,
 v.
 ROBERT EADE,
 Respondent,
 Case No. 24BR-DR00078

NOTICE UPON ORDER FOR SERVICE BY PUBLICATION

The State of Missouri to: ROBERT EADE
 You are hereby notified that an action has been commenced against you in the Circuit Court of Barry County, Missouri, the object and general nature of which is paternity of H. E. The names of all parties in this action are HAYLEY EARP, and the name and address of the attorney for the Petitioner 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 March 18, 2026, judgment by default will be entered against you. It is ordered that a copy hereof be

Autumn Woods Senior Apartments
 Hwy 37 & Lincoln Ave, Purdy, MO 65734
1 Bedroom Apts. Now Available!
 Income Limits Apply
 Rental Assistance Available
 Laundry Facilities/Community Room
 Resident Pays Only Electric
 *Especially for Seniors 62 and Older or Disabled Households Regardless of Age
FOR MORE DETAILS CALL:
417-442-3805
RELAY #711
 "This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer."

www.bellmanage.com

CLASSIFIEDS/LEGALS

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4B 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 his 12th day of March, 2026.

First publication:
March 18, 2026
Second Publication:
March 25, 2026
Third Publication:
April 1, 2026
Fourth Publication:
April 8, 2026
Craig Williams,
Circuit Clerk
by S. Parker,
Deputy Clerk
1st insertion 03/18/26
10-13

TESTING VOTER TABULATION EQUIPMENT

Barry County Clerk, Joyce Ennis, reports a public pre-election tabulation test of the electronic tabulating equipment for the April 7, 2026 General Municipal Election. It will be held at 9:00 a.m. on Wednesday, March 25, 2026, in the County Clerk's Office.
Joyce Ennis
Barry County Clerk
Only insertion 03/18/26
10

PROBATE

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

In the Estate of **LESLIE MARICE GRYDER SR,** Deceased.
Case Number: 26BR-PR00018

NOTICE OF LETTERS OF ADMINISTRATION GRANTED (SUPERVISED ADMINISTRATION)

To All Persons Interested in the Estate of **LESLIE MARICE GRYDER SR,** Decedent:

On February 17, 2026, the following individual was appointed the personal representative of the estate of

LESLIE MARICE GRYDER SR, decedent, by the Probate Division of the Circuit Court of Barry County, Missouri.

The personal representative's business address is:
LESLIE GRYDER JR, 25655 FARM ROAD 2260, GOLDEN, MO 65658.

The personal representative's attorney's name, business address and phone number is:
MARC EDMONDSON, PO Box 491, CASSVILLE, MO 65625, 417-846-0022.

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 MIO 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 do not extend the limitation period that would bar claims one year after Decedent's death.

26-FEB-2025
Date of first publication: February 25, 2026
Date of second publication: March 4, 2026
Date of third publication: March 11, 2026
Date of fourth publication: March 18, 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.

1st insertion 02/25/26
7-10

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

In the Estate of **WILLIAM VERNON NICHOLS JR,** Deceased.
Case Number: 26BR-PR00017

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 02/25/26
7-10

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

In the Estate of **WILLIAM VERNON NICHOLS JR,** Deceased.
Case Number: 26BR-PR00017

NOTICE OF LETTERS OF ADMINISTRATION GRANTED (INDEPENDENT ADMINISTRATION)

To All Persons Interested in the Estate of **WILLIAM VERNON NICHOLS JR,** Decedent:

On February 10, 2026, the following individuals was appointed the personal representative of the estate of

WILLIAM VERNON NICHOLS JR, decedent,

by the Probate Division of the Circuit Court of BARRY COUNTY, Missouri. The personal representative's business address is:

PATRICIA NICHOLS, 26888 AIRCRAFT LN., SHELL KNOB, MO 65747

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

MEGAN ALFANO, 200 NE MISSOURI RD., SUITE 00, LEE'S SUMMIT, MO 64086, 816-774-1107.

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: **26-FEB-2025**
Date of first publication: February 25, 2026
Date of second publication: March 4, 2026
Date of third publication: March 11, 2026
Date of fourth publication: March 18, 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.

1st insertion 02/25/26
7-10

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

In the Estate of **WILLIAM VERNON NICHOLS JR,** Decedent:

TIMOTHY S. PETERS, Deceased
Estate No. 25BR-PR00095

NOTICE OF FILING OF FINAL SETTLEMENT AND PETITION FOR DISTRIBUTION

TO ALL PERSONS INTERESTED IN THE ESTATE OF **TIMOTHY S. PETERS,** deceased:

You are hereby notified that the undersigned Personal Representative will file a Final Settlement and Petition for determination of the persons who are the successors in interest to the personal/real estate of the decedent and of the extent and character of their interest

therein and for distribution of such property, on or after April 8, 2026, or as may be continued by the Court, and that any objections or exceptions to such Final Settlement or

Petition or any item thereof must be in writing and filed within twenty days after the

filing of such Final Settlement.

HARRY D. SCHWARTZ, Attorney

RUBIE EUBANKS Ellis, Cupps, Herrin & Schwartz

Personal Representative
P. O. Box 276

Cassville, MO 65625
(417)847-2734

Dates of Publication –
2/25/26,
3/4/26,
3/11/26,
3/18/26

THE ABOVE REFERENCED DATE IS NOT A COURT APPEARANCE DATE.

It is an estimated date as to when the Final Settlement can be filed with the court.

1st insertion 2/25/26
7-10

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

In the Estate of **AUSTIN JAMES PRIER,** Deceased.
Case Number: 26BR-PR00022

NOTICE OF LETTERS OF ADMINISTRATION GRANTED (SUPERVISED ADMINISTRATION)

To All Persons Interested in the Estate of **AUSTIN JAMES PRIER,** Decedent:

On February 23, 2026, the following individual was appointed the personal representative of the estate of

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

The personal representative's business address is:

JEFF PRIER, 27524 STATE HIGHWAY J, GOLDEN, MO 65658.

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

HARRY DANIEL SCHWARTZ, 702 WEST ST, PO BOX 276, CASSVILLE, MO 65625, 417-847-2734.

All creditors of said decedent are notified to file claims in court within six months from the date of the first

publication of this notice or if a copy of this notice was mailed to, or served upon, such creditor by the personal representative, then within two months from the date it was mailed or served, whichever is later, or be forever barred to the fullest extent permissible by law. Such six-month period and such two-month

period do not extend the limitation period that would bar claims one year after Decedent's death, as provided in Section 473.444, RSMo, or any other applicable limitation periods. Nothing in Section 473.033, RSMo, shall be construed to bar any action against a decedent's liability insurance carrier through a defendant ad litem pursuant to Section 537.021, RSMo.

Date of the decedent's death: **26-FEB-2025**
Date of first publication: February 25, 2026
Date of second publication: March 4, 2026
Date of third publication: March 11, 2026
Date of fourth publication: March 18, 2026

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

In the Estate of **WILLIAM VERNON NICHOLS JR,** Decedent:

REAL ESTATE & PERSONAL PROPERTY AUCTION

Monday, March 23, 2026 — 10:00 AM

Location: Cassville, MO (Boarders Cassville Golf Club, hole 18) From Cassville go South on Hwy 112 miles. Turn left on FR 2205 Circle. Stay left to auction. (12655 FR 2205 Circle, Cassville MO)

CHEVY CLASSIC LBZ TRUCK – RIDING MOWER (VERY NICE) – MISC – REAL ESTATE WITH INGROUND POOL



Real Estate: 2,870 sq ft of living area, 3 bedroom, 4 bath, split level home with inground swimming pool, Mother in law quarters or separate living quarters for company, etc. Enter this home under a covered front porch into a large open floor plan. Nice big living room open to the kitchen, dual ceiling fans, vaulted ceiling with wood beams, large windows and a glass French door looking out to the pool and overlooking the 18th hole of the Cassville Golf Club. The kitchen features a bar area, GE S.S. side by side refrigerator/freezer, GE smooth top elect range, GE S.S. dishwasher, double deep sink with garbage disposal & a window looking out to the pool and custom oak cabinets. Just off the kitchen is a door leading out to the attached oversized 2 car garage w/a 1/2 bath, utility room w/washer & dryer and a Midwest Storm Shelter bolted to the garage floor (nice) and gas heat. From the front entry go downstairs where you will find a large family room with gas fireplace, large windows & a glass French door leading out to the large back patio that wraps around the pool and leads back to the covered back deck just off the kitchen. Also in the basement is a bathroom with walk in shower and a bedroom with windows and closet. From the front entry go upstairs where you will find the large master bedroom with his and hers walk in closets, ceiling fan, window, a patio door leading out to a big private balcony overlooking the pool and the golf course. Also the master bath with shower, double vanity and jacuzzi tub, upstairs storage closet and a 2nd bedroom with windows, 1/2 bath and sm walk in closet. **Outside Amenities:** Wow, where to start. Covered front porch, just out the back door is a covered back deck that steps right down to the concrete pool deck where you will find a nice inground pool that is fenced. The concrete pool apron leads to a nice big game room. From this game room you can open a door that leads to a separate living quarters, mother in law, company space, etc. Large open room, bathroom and more. From here go on into a nice 26'x40' oversized garage, lots of room for family, entertaining, etc. Room for all your toys and boarder the 18th hole on the Cassville Golf Club. Only 4 miles to Roaring River State Park. This home would also make a great rental, VRBO, etc. This home also has central heat/air, well, septic and a Generac whole house generator, plus a nice big side yard fenced for pets, kids, etc. **Chevy Truck:** 2007 Chevy Classic, LBZ, crew cab, 3/4 ton with 1 ton suspension, 4x4, 328xxx miles. Only 2 owners (nice truck) sells with owner confirmation. **Mower:** 2024 Troy Bilt Pony 42 riding mower (only used 2 times). **Misc:** Ryobi 40v cordless leaf vac (new in box) – Home theater, surround sound system with blue tooth (new in box). **Note:** Don't miss this chance to own property on the Cassville Golf course and only 4 miles to Roaring River State Park. What a place to entertain, your own pool, lots of storage. This is a must see. Buyers are ready to sell. Someone will get a great deal. Call 417-847-2507 to preview the property before auction day. This auction won't take long so be on time. Real Estate sells first thing promptly at 10:00 AM. **Terms:** Cash, good check or credit card with 2 forms of current ID. Must have current drivers license to obtain bidder number. All terms on bidder card apply. If paying with credit card a 5% convenience fee will apply. If paying with a check on large items, items will be held until check clears auction company bank unless arrangements have been made with auction company before auction day. All sells as is where is with no warranty expressed or implied. Any announcements made day of auction supersede any and all printed material. **Real Estate Terms:** Qualified buyers only w/pre-approved bank letter of approval. Nonrefundable 10% paid day of auction w/balance due in cash or certified funds within 30-45 days. Buyers and sellers will be responsible for their own portion of their closing cost. Taxes will be prorated to the date of close. Sells as is where is with no warranties or guarantees. Bidders, buyers, or agent of the buyer is responsible for conducting own inspection of property prior to auction and should rely solely upon their own due diligence and inspection. This property is offered with absolutely no contingencies of any kind, no contingencies on financing, surveys, appraisals, or final walk throughs. Seller has the right to accept or reject final bid. A 10% buyer's premium will apply on Real Estate. Any announcements made day of auction supersede any and all printed material.

Owners: Matt & Pauline Deiner

STUMPF'S
REALTY & AUCTION SERVICE, INC.
www.stumpffauction.com

417-847-2507

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

Auctioneer: Parker Stumpff
AR State Champion Auctioneer
#2352

death: 04-FEB-2026
Craig Williams,
Circuit Clerk
by S. Parker,
Probate Clerk
Date of first publication:
March 4, 2026
Date of second publication:
March 11, 2026
Date of third publication:
March 18, 2026
Date of fourth publication:
March 25, 2026

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

1st insertion 03/04/26
8-11

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

In the Estate of **CHAD C SPRINKLE,** Deceased.
Case Number: 26BR-PR00011

NOTICE OF LETTERS OF ADMINISTRATION GRANTED (SUPERVISED ADMINISTRATION)

To All Persons Interested in the Estate of **CHAD C SPRINKLE,** Decedent:

On February 19, 2026,

Absolute Real Estate Auction

10:00 AM * Saturday March 28* 10:00 AM

Location: 21607 Lawrence 1040 Pierce City, Mo. 65723
Directions: from Pierce City take Hwy 97 north 1 mi. then right on Law. 2220 1/2 mi. then left on Law. 1040 1/2 mi. to Sale.



1600+Sq. Ft. Shop-House plus Garage on 5/10 Acres, 2/3-Bedroom, 1-Bath, Big Closets, Lots of Storage, Living Room, Kitchen/Dining Room, Laundry Room, Nice Covered Front Porch, 1 Car Attached Garage with Steel Storm Shelter, 20'X20' Lean-to on the east side of House, 16'X40' Shed, Private Well & Septic, Propane Heat & Mini Split Heat and Air Units, Pierce City Schools.

This is a Morton Metal Building-Shop House. Leave it like it is or easily change the floor plan to your liking. Would make a nice home in the country. Move in ready or update to your liking.

This property will be offered in Two Tracts and as a Whole.
Tract #1 is 5 Acres with Home, Shed, Well & Septic.
Tract #2 is 5 Acres bare land with road frontage, and joins tract #1

Property Sells Absolute to the highest bidder!
Terms: 10% Down, Balance due at closing 45 days or less.

Property shown by appointment only.
Please Contact Larry Foster at 417-839-6860 or bidnowsold@aol.com

Auctioneer: Larry Foster
Phone: (417) 723-8329
Cell: (417) 839-6860



Foster Auction & Appraisal Service
www.fosterauctionservice.com
Email: bidnowsold@aol.com

the following individual was appointed the personal representative of the estate of

CHAD C SPRINKLE, decedent, by the Probate Division of the Circuit Court of Barry County, Missouri.

The personal representative's business address is:

MAGGIE M SPRINKLE, 130 HODGE DRIVE, CASSVILLE, MO 65625.

The personal representative's attorney's name, business address and phone number is:
ANGELA CHRISTENE ARTHERTON, 10388 FARM ROAD 2172, CASSVILLE, MO

65625, 870-688-0619. All creditors of said decedent are notified to file claims in court within six months from the date of the first

publication of this notice or if a copy of this notice was mailed to, or served upon, such creditor by the personal representative, then within two months from the date it was mailed or served, whichever is later, or be forever barred to the fullest extent permissible by law. Such six-month period and such two-month

period do not extend the limitation period that would bar claims one year

after Decedent's death, as provided in Section 473.444, RSMo, or any other applicable limitation periods. Nothing in Section 473.033, RSMo, shall be construed to bar any action against a decedent's liability insurance carrier through a defendant ad litem pursuant to Section 537.021, RSMo.

LOCAL

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5B
 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
 Craig Williams,
 Circuit Clerk
 by S. Parker,
 Probate Clerk
 Date of first publication:
 March 4, 2026

Date of second publication:
 March 11, 2026

Date of third publication:
 March 18, 2026

Date of fourth publication:
 March 25, 2026

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

1st insertion 03/04/26
 8-11

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

In the Estate of EMMETT LENDELL COCKRUM, Deceased.
 Case Number: 26BR-PR00023

NOTICE OF LETTERS TESTAMENTARY GRANTED (SUPERVISED ADMINISTRATION)

To All Persons Interested in the Estate of EMMETT LENDELL COCKRUM, Decedent:
 On February 25, 2026, the last will of Decedent having been admitted to probate, the following individual was appointed personal representative of the estate of

EMMETT LENDELL COCKRUM, decedent by the Probate Division of the Circuit Court of BARRY COUNTY, Missouri. The name, business address, and phone number of the personal representative is:
 SAM MADSEN,
 102 WEST STREET, SUITE 5,
 CASSVILLE, MO 65625,
 417-847-0541

The personal representative's attorney's name, business address and phone number is:
 HARRY SCHWARTZ,
 702 WEST ST,
 PO BOX 276,
 CASSVILLE, MO 65625,
 417-847-2734.

All creditors of said decedent are notified to file claims in court within six months from the date of the first

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

through a defendant ad litem pursuant to Section 537.021, RSMo.
 Date of the decedent's death:
 22-JAN-2026

Date of first publication:
 March 4, 2026

Date of second publication:
 March 11, 2026

Date of third publication:
 March 18, 2026

Date of fourth publication:
 March 25, 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.

1st insertion 03/04/26
 8-11

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

In the Estate of MARGARET CHARLENE RICKLEFS, Deceased
 Case Number: 26BR-PR00031

NOTICE TO CREDITORS (SMALL ESTATE)

To All Persons Interested in the Estate of MARGARET CHARLENE RICKLEFS, Decedent.

On March 5, 2026 a small estate affidavit was filed by the distributees for the decedent under Section 473.097, RSMo, with the Probate Division of the Circuit Court of BARRY COUNTY, Missouri.

All creditors of Decedent, who died on 23-APR-2025, are notified that Section 473.444, RSMo, sets a limitation period that would bar claims one year after the death of Decedent. A creditor may request that this estate be opened for administration.

Receipt of this notice should not be construed by the recipient to indicate that the recipient may possibly have a beneficial interest in the estate. The nature and extent of any person's interest, if any, may possibly be determined from the affidavit on this estate filed in the Probate Division of

the Circuit Court of BARRY COUNTY Missouri.
 Date of first publication is March 11, 2026.

Date of second publication is March 18, 2026.

Craig Williams,
 Circuit Clerk
 by S. Parker,
 Probate Clerk
 1st insertion 03/11/26
 9-10

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

In the Estate of: JAMES R. DURHAM, deceased
 26BR-PR00032

NOTICE OF HEARING

To all persons who claim any interest in the property JAMES R. DURHAM, deceased, as an heir of said decedent or through any heir of said decedent: You are hereby notified that a petition has been filed in the above court by Jane Durham Covell, for the determination of the heirs of James R. Durham, deceased, and of their respective interest as such heirs in and with respect to the following described personal property that the decedent owned at the time of his death: Arvest Wealth Management Brokerage Account: #WAB-033358
 Petitioner's attorney is Harry D. Schwartz, whose business address is 702 West Street, P.O. Box 276, Cassville, Missouri 65625.

You are hereby required to appear to answer said petition on April 20, 2026, at 8:45 o'clock a.m., in the Probate Division of the Circuit Court of Barry County, Missouri, at Cassville, at which time and place said petition will be heard. Should you fail therein, judgment may be entered in due course upon said petition.

The Cassville Democrat
 First Publication:
 MARCH 18, 2026
 Second Publication:
 MARCH 25, 2026

Third Publication:
 APRIL 1, 2026
 Fourth Publication:
 APRIL 8, 2026
 Craig Williams,
 Circuit Clerk
 by S. Parker,
 Probate Clerk
 1st insertion 03/18/26
 10-13

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

In the Estate of: JOAN BECK, Deceased
 Estate No. 25BR-PR00104

NOTICE OF FILING OF FINAL SETTLEMENT AND PETITION FOR DISTRIBUTION

TO ALL PERSONS INTERESTED IN THE ESTATE OF JOAN BECK, deceased:

You are hereby notified that the undersigned Personal Representative will file a Final Settlement and Petition for determination of the persons who are the successors in interest to the personal/real estate of the decedent and of the extent and character of their interest therein and for distribution of such property, on April 23, 2026, or as may be continued by the Court, and that any objections or exceptions to such Final Settlement or Petition or any item thereof must be in writing and filed within twenty days after the filing of such Final Settlement.

HARRY D. SCHWARTZ,
 Attorney
 SAM MADSEN,
 P U B L I C
 ADMINISTRATOR
 Ellis, Cupps, Herrin & Schwartz

Personal Representative
 P. O. Box 276
 Cassville, MO 65625
 (417)847-2734
 Dates of Publication -
 3/18/26,
 3/25/26,
 4/1/26,
 4/8/26

THE ABOVE REFERENCED DATE IS NOT A COURT APPEARANCE DATE.

It is an estimated date as to when the Final Settlement will be filed with the court.
 1st insertion 03/18/25
 10-13

TRUSTEE'S SALES

NOTICE OF TRUSTEE'S SALE

For default in the payment of debt secured by the Deed of Trust executed by Christopher Green And Chelsey Green, Husband And Wife, dated 7/6/2023, recorded on 7/10/2023, as Instrument Number 202303387 and in Deed Book 23, Page 3320, in the Office of the Recorder of Deeds for Barry County, Missouri, the undersigned Successor Trustee will on 3/26/2026, between the hours of 9:00 am and 5:00 pm, starting at 2:00 PM at the Barry County Courthouse - East Door - 700 Main Street, Cassville, MO

65625, sell at public auction to the highest bidder for cash (certified funds only) the below described real estate to satisfy said debt and costs. Certified funds must be delivered to the auctioneer at the conclusion of the auction. Purchasers take property as is, without warranty. A Tract Of Land, Consisting Of One (1) Acre, More Or Less, In The Southeast Quarter (SE1/4) Of The Southwest Quarter (SW1/4) Of

The Southwest Quarter (SW1/4), Of Section 36, Township 25, Range 26, Barry County, Missouri, And More Particularly Described As Follows: Commencing At A Point 15 Feet North Of The Southeast Corner Of The Southwest Quarter (SW1/4) Of The Southwest Quarter (SW1/4), Thence North 276 Feet, To A Point On The East Line Of Said Southwest Quarter (SW1/4) Of The Southwest Quarter (SW1/4), Thence West 158 Feet To A Point,

REAL ESTATE AUCTION
Saturday, March 28, 2026 — 10:00 AM

Location: Shell Knob, MO. From Hwy 39 across from Central Crossing Fire Department, take Stallion Bluff Rd 8/10 mile. Keep right on Stallion Bluff Rd and go 1.1 mile to auction on left. (25924 Stallion Bluff Rd, Shell Knob, MO)

MINI EXCAVATOR – ZERO TURN MOWERS – GOLF CART – LOG SPLITTER – TRAILER – GUNS – IMPLEMENTS – KUBOTA TRACTOR – ATV – TOOLS & WOOD WORKING TOOLS – FURNITURE & APPLIANCES – HOUSEHOLD & MISC – 37.5 ACRES M/L THAT BORDERS THOUSANDS OF ACRES OF NATIONAL FOREST, WITH A NICE HOME AND LOTS OF NICE OUTBUILDINGS



Real Estate: Nice, 2 bedroom, 2 bath, berm home, wrap around deck, lots of nice shop & garage buildings, park like setting on 37.5 wooded acres. Borders thousands of acres off of National Forest. Enter this home under a covered front deck, that wraps around to the master bedroom, step into a nice size living room w/vaulted ceiling, ceiling fan & freestanding wood burning stove. Open to the dining area w/ceiling fan, open to the kitchen. Kitchen features a small bar area, lots of cabinets, Corian countertops w/large built in sink, garbage disposal, built in Bosch dishwasher, GE smooth top elect range & Whirlpool refrigerator/freezer. From the kitchen go on into a large utility room & a door leading out to the attached 2 car garage w/automatic garage door opener. The East end of the home has a full bathroom & a bedroom w/window & closet. The West end of the home has the master bedroom & a office area with closet & a door leading out to the covered deck. Large master bathroom w/jacuzzi tub & shower & walk in closet. The home has new windows on the back side of the home & newer shingles. Very nice property. **Outside amenities:** Wrap around deck, park like setting, 24'x24' detached garage, 30'x40', 16' sidewalls, nice shop, 30'x50', 10' sidewalls (nice), 16'x20' shed. Large tall carport for RV, etc. & more. All on 37.5 acres m/l. **Note:** Looking for property with a nice home & outbuildings, deer hunters, turkey hunters, horse back riders, ATV riders, come take a look at this place. Borders thousands of acres of National Forest, trails & hunting deluxe. Lake weekenders come play on Table Rock Lake then put your boat & water toys in your own very nice shop building. This one is a unique property, paved road to drive and only 2 miles to Hwy 39. Call to view the real estate before auction day or to learn how to pre register for the auction. 417-847-2507. **Real Estate Terms:** Qualified buyers only w/pre-approved bank letter of approval. Nonrefundable 10% paid day of auction w/balance due in cash or certified funds within 30-45 days. Buyers and sellers will be responsible for their own portion of their closing cost. Taxes will be prorated to the date of close. Sells as is where is with no warranties or guarantees. Bidders, buyers, or agent of the buyer is responsible for conducting own inspection of property prior to auction and should rely solely upon their own due diligence and inspection. This property is offered with absolutely no contingencies of any kind, no contingencies on financing, surveys, appraisals, or final walk throughs. Seller has the right to accept or reject final bid. A 10% buyer's premium will apply on Real Estate. Any announcements made day of auction supersede any and all printed material.

Estate of Sharon Ott Deal
 Owner: Jack Deal

STUMPF'S
 REALTY & AUCTION SERVICE, INC.

www.stumpffauction.com

417-847-2507

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

Auctioneer: Parker Stumpff
 AR State Champion
 Auctioneer
 #2352

Thence South 276 Feet To A Point, Thence East 158 Feet To The Point Of Beginning. Subject To Easements And Rights-Of-Way Of Record. More commonly known as: 6949 Farm

Road 1182 Verona, MO 65769 Notice To Bidders: Please be advised that the Trustee may require entity or trust bidders at this trustee's sale to provide information, documentation and/or certification of the vesting instructions and the data required to be reported pursuant to FinCEN regulations effective for transfers of residential real property to covered transferees on or after March 1, 2026. The required information must be provided to the trustee before a trustee's deed upon sale will be issued for covered transfers. These federal regulations will require reporting if a trustee's deed is issued on or after March 1, 2026, even if the foreclosure sale is conducted prior to March 1, 2026. Additional information regarding these regulations and the required transferee information and certifications can be found at

https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2024/08/29/2024-19198/anti-money-laundering-regulations-for-residential-real-estate-transfers and https://www.fincen.gov/rre-faqs#D_5
 Nestor Solutions of Missouri, LLC Successor Trustee (888) 403-4115.
 1st Insertion 03/04/26
 8-11

TRUSTEE'S SALE

IN RE: Billy T Sharp Jr and Emily Nicole Sharp, husband and wife

Trustee's Sale:

For default in payment of debt and performance of obligation secured by Deed of Trust executed by Billy T Sharp Jr and Emily Nicole Sharp, husband and wife dated

July 1, 2024 and recorded in the Office of the Recorder of Deeds of Barry County, Missouri as Book: 24

Page: 3322 and modified by Loan Modification Agreement (Deed of Trust) recorded on May 14, 2025 at Book: 25 Page: 2401 the undersigned Successor Trustee, at the request of the legal holder of said Note will on Tuesday, March 31, 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 vendue 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 THIRTY-NINE (39), FAIRWAY HEIGHTS SUBDIVISION, AS PER THE RECORDED PLAT THEREOF, BARRY COUNTY, MISSOURI. SUBJECT TO ANY EASEMENTS, RIGHTS OF WAY, RESTRICTIONS, RESERVATIONS AN 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:
 231008.033126.464687 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.
 PUBLISH ON:
 March 4, 2026

03/11/2026,
 03/18/2026,
 03/25/2026
 1st insertion 03/04/26
 8-11

TRUSTEE'S SALE

IN RE: Harry Edward Lassley and Carole Lassley, husband and wife and Harry E Lassley Jr. a married man

Trustee's Sale: For default in payment of debt and performance of obligation secured by Deed of Trust executed by Harry Edward Lassley and Carole Lassley, husband and wife and Harry E Lassley Jr. a married man dated January 4, 2022 and recorded in the Office of the Recorder of

Deeds of Barry County, Missouri in Book 22, Page 96 the undersigned Successor Trustee, at the request of the legal holder of said Note will on Tuesday, April 7, 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 vendue 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:

PART OF THE EAST HALF (E1/2) OF THE NORTHWEST QUARTER (NW1/4) OF SECTION 7, TOWNSHIP 24, RANGE 27, BARRY COUNTY, MISSOURI DESCRIBED AS COMMENCING AT THE NORTHWEST CORNER THEREOF, THENCE SOUTH 0 DEGREES 21 MINUTES 46 SECONDS EAST 1000.09 FEET ALONG THE WEST LINE THEREOF TO THE POINT 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

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5B
 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: 229868.040726.467569 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.

PUBLISH ON:
 March 11, 2026
 03/18/2026,
 03/25/2026,
 04/01/2026
 1st insertion 03/11/26
 9-12

NOTICE OF TRUSTEE'S SALE

WHEREAS, Clifton O. Mitchell and Melissa G. Mitchell, Husband and Wife, by their Deed of Trust With Future Advance Clause, dated April 5, 2001, and recorded in the office

of the recorder of deeds for Barry County, Missouri, on April 9, 2001, in Book 01 Page 2173, conveyed to Gary Fields,

Trustee, the following-described property situated in the County of Barry, State of Missouri, to-wit: Lot 89 Coral Fountain Shopping Center, recorded in the Recorder of Deeds office, Barry County, Missouri. Subject to a permanent easement for public use as described and shown on or before mentioned plat of Coral Fountains Shopping Center. Subject to any easements, rights of way or restrictions of record or fact.

which conveyance was made to the said Gary Fields, Trustee, to trust to secure the payment of promissory notes in said Deed of Trust described; and WHEREAS, default was made and still continues in the payment

of said promissory notes; and, WHEREAS, Security Bank of Southwest Missouri as the legal holder of said promissory notes has appointed Jon Homer as Successor Trustee under said Deed of Trust; NOW THEREFORE, at the request of the legal holder of said promissory notes and in accordance with the provisions of said Deed of Trust, I, Jon Homer, Successor Trustee, will sell the property above described at public venue, to the highest bidder for cash, at the East Door of the old Barry County Courthouse, at 700 Main Street in the City of Cassville, Barry County, Missouri, on April 3, 2026, at 1:00 pm, for the purpose of satisfying said indebtedness and the costs of executing this trust.

By:
 Jon Homer,
 Successor Trustee

Cordelia F. Herrin
 Ellis Cupps Herrin & Schwartz
 Attorneys at Law
 PO Box 276
 Cassville, MO 65625
 417-847-2734

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.

Publish:
 March 11, 18, 25, and April 1, 2026
 1st insertion 03/11/26
 9-12



Gold: Taylor Lark (Pea Ridge, Ark.) / Grant Varner (Cassville); Silver: Micah Perry (Bentonville, Ark.) / Brian Flores (Bentonville, Ark.); Bronze: Fred Burge (Carthage) / Jonathan Palma (Carthage). Contributed photo



Gold: Cheney Kelley (Cassville) / Kaleb Artherton (Cassville); Silver: Ashton Wheeler (Shell Knob) / Malachi Vincent (Cassville); Bronze: Lawrence Wong (Centerton, Ark.) / Maheswara Rao Lekkala (Bentonville, Ark.). Contributed photo



Gold: Josie Stubblefield (Rogers, Ark.) / Kevin Campbell (Springdale, Ark.); Silver: Beth Bowman (Bentonville, Ark.) / Erik Rasmussen (Springdale, Ark.); Bronze: Maeghan Cavener (Bella Vista, Ark.) / Jeff Colbert (Bella Vista, Ark.). Contributed photo



Gold: Audrey Kennedy (Cassville) / Grant Varner (Cassville); Silver: Dulce Rivera (Cassville) / Victor Guzman (Bentonville, Ark.); Bronze: Claudia Cruz (Monett) / Lawrence Wong (Centerton, Ark.). Contributed photo

Spring Chill Pickleball Tournament overcomes weather

Event raises \$1,500 for CHS Beta Club

Despite stormy weather and chilly temperatures, pickleball players from across the region gathered Feb. 28 at Cassville City Park for the Spring Chill Pickleball Tournament.

The event combined competitive play with community support, raising approximately \$1,500 for the Cassville High School Beta Club. The funds will help students attend the Missouri State Beta Club Convention in Branson.

Heavy thunderstorms moved through the area Friday night and early Saturday morning, leaving the courts soaked just hours before play was scheduled to begin. Several members of the Flat Creek Pickleball Club stepped in early Saturday morning, volunteer-

ing their time to dry the courts and prepare them for competition so the tournament could begin with a one hour delay.

"Players then showed resilience throughout the day, competing through brisk temperatures and windy conditions; weather that proved fitting for a tournament appropriately named 'The Spring Chill,'" a press release said.

Arvest Bank served as the tournament's title sponsor and also provided prize money for the winners of the top brackets, adding extra incentive for players competing in the advanced divisions. The event also received support from Veregy, an energy services company, which helped sponsor the tournament by providing funds for snacks, drinks and other tournament needs throughout the day.

In addition, the tournament was a Selkirk sponsored event, providing Selkirk equipment and gift cards that were

awarded as door prizes. The highlight of the prizes was a Selkirk LUX Control Air Invikta paddle valued at \$280, which was won by Maeghan Cavener, of Bella Vista, Ark.

After a full slate of round-robin matches and medal rounds, the following teams finished atop their respective divisions:

Men's Doubles (3.5 and Above)

Gold: Taylor Lark (Pea Ridge, Ark.) / Grant Varner (Cassville)

Silver: Micah Perry (Bentonville, Ark.) / Brian Flores (Bentonville, Ark.)

Bronze: Fred Burge (Carthage) / Jonathan Palma (Carthage)

Women's Doubles (3.5 and Under)

Gold: Cheney Kelley (Cassville) / Kaleb Artherton (Cassville)

Silver: Ashton Wheeler (Shell Knob) / Malachi Vincent (Cassville)

Bronze: Lawrence Wong (Centerton, Ark.) / Maheswara Rao Lekkala



Gold: Thiare Gripka (Mt. Vernon) / Liz White (Springfield); Silver: Maeghan Cavener (Bella Vista, Ark.) / Beth Bowman (Bentonville, Ark.) Bronze: Tomi Blankenship (Cassville) / Taylor Kennedy (Cassville). Contributed photo

Mixed Doubles (3.5 and Above)

Gold: Josie Stubblefield (Rogers, Ark.) / Kevin Campbell (Springdale, Ark.)

Silver: Beth Bowman (Bentonville, Ark.) / Erik Rasmussen (Springdale, Ark.)

Bronze: Maeghan Cavener (Bella Vista, Ark.) / Jeff Colbert (Bella

Vista, Ark.)

Mixed Doubles (3.5 and Under)

Gold: Audrey Kennedy (Cassville) / Grant Varner (Cassville)

Silver: Dulce Rivera (Cassville) / Victor Guzman (Bentonville, Ark.)

Bronze: Claudia Cruz (Monett) / Lawrence Wong (Centerton, Ark.)



Cassville Democrat

BARRY COUNTY'S BEST NEWS SOURCE

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