



Making History

**Sarah Huckabee Sanders is
Arkansas' first female governor**

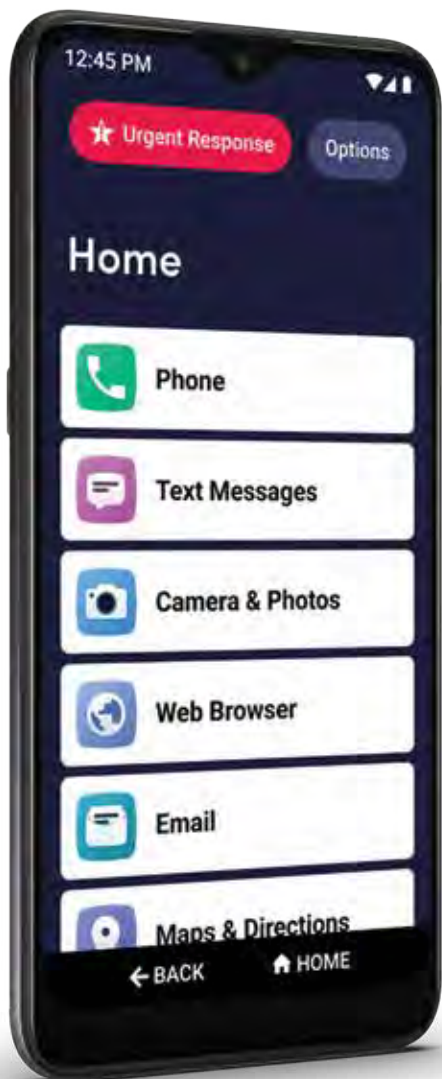
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Photo by Amy Bell



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Hello, Dolly!

BY JENNIFER CHRISTMAN CIA



March is Women's History Month. It's also National Reading Month.

So, what better time to check in with a woman who is making history as a literary advocate, Dolly Parton?

"I beg your 'Parton?'" you might be thinking. "Dolly Parton, *the entertainer?*"

Yes, the singer, songwriter, actress, businesswoman, philanthropist and author (she co-wrote her first novel "Run, Rose, Run" with James Patterson last year and has written two childrens books) is the founder of Dolly Parton's Imagination Library, described as "the world's preeminent early childhood book-gifting program."

"I didn't really start a literacy foundation but rather wanted to get something going for the children in my home county," Parton explains in press materials. "Over the years, we learned a lot about what works. But the one thing I knew for sure is that to have even a remote chance for success, you have to know how to read and write. And the best way to learn is to love books and love reading.

"My Daddy could not read or write, so I grew up with seeing how limiting it can be. I often say he was the smartest man I have ever known, but I always wonder what else he could have done if he knew how to read. The Imagination Library will always be my tribute to him."

The Imagination Library, in partnership with local community affiliates, mails "high-quality, age-appropriate" books to children from birth to age 5 at no cost to families.

Since 2017, Arkansas Imagination Library and its partners have grown the program to all 75 counties in the state. As of press time, over 78,000 Arkansas children were enrolled — a number that continues to grow each month.

Let's grow it even more! If you have a child younger than 5, enroll to receive a free monthly book by visiting imaginationlibrary.com.

For added reading material, we'll continue sending Arkansas Living every month too!

Happy reading!

Jennifer Christman Cia
jennifer.cia@aeci.com



Dolly Parton's Imagination Library has gifted over 200 million books.

The program that began in 1995 with the distribution of books in Sevier County, Tennessee, where Dolly was raised, today distributes more than 2 million books per month, everywhere from the United States to Canada to the United Kingdom to Australia to the Republic of Ireland. The organization expected to gift its 200 millionth book this month.

Decisions, decisions

BY VERNON "BUDDY" HASTEN

President and CEO of Arkansas Electric Cooperatives, Inc., and Arkansas Electric Cooperative Corporation



March is an interesting month, and I have often thought of it as one of renewal and new beginnings.

Almost everyone made New Year's resolutions a couple of months ago and set some goals to achieve in 2023. However, some of that resolve generally starts to fade

in March. Unless good decisions are made this month, there is a high probability that we end 2023 without achieving those goals. I am sharing some decision-making tools that were shared with me and hope that you find them useful.

My Commanding Officer on the USS Scranton (SSN-756), Capt. Chuck Melcher, had rules that we were required to know before he would give us the keys to the submarine and trust us to stand as Officer of the Deck. Rule No. 1: 90% of the decisions you make don't matter, so just make one. You are bound to be right 90% of the time, and a fair decision today is better than a perfect one tomorrow. However, before you think it is that easy, you must know Rule No. 2: 10% of the decisions you make do matter, and that is why we trained you — to know the difference. A corollary to both rules is that delaying a decision needlessly can often turn what was a 90% decision into a 10% decision. Failure to make a decision can have more significant consequences than making the wrong decision 90% of the time. So, just make a decision.

One example of why we were required to know and adhere to these rules is grounded (pun intended) in lessons learned from major collisions of ships at sea. Every time two ships collide, friends who know of my Navy background ask, "How does that happen with a whole ocean out there?" It happens due to failure to make a decision.

Envision two ships traveling toward each other 10 miles apart, with Ship A bearing true North from Ship B. You keep your eye on Ship A, and 15 minutes later, it is now 5 miles away and still bearing true North. This is a situation known

as constant bearing and decreasing range (CBDR), and it is a recipe for disaster. If neither captain acts, the two ships will collide. If either ship speeds up, slows down, turns left or turns right, the geometry will change, and a collision will be avoided. So, why don't they do that?

There are international rules of navigation that dictate which ship has the right of way, the stand-on vessel, and which ship is required to maneuver, the give-way vessel. Imagine a case where the give-way vessel doesn't see the stand on vessel. The stand-on vessel is supposed to maintain course and speed, but it is required to maneuver if the give-way vessel doesn't, as a last resort to avoid collision. Uncertainty and fear could cause the stand-on vessel to delay or fail to act, leading to a collision. You can see where failure to decide is the worst decision to make here, and this is often true in our daily lives.

How do you identify the 10% from the beginning? I use these methods:

Rule of 10/10/10: How will I feel about this decision in 10 minutes, 10 months and 10 years? Conducting a 10/10/10 analysis ensures that all perspectives are present. All three views matter, but impact in the long-term view indicates the presence of a 10% decision. If the decision has little impact in all three timeframes, it is most likely a 90% decision.

Eisenhower Matrix: A great prioritizing tool is the Eisenhower Matrix, named after Dwight D. Eisenhower, World War II five-star general and 34th president of the United States. His system separates all activities into four priority levels based on importance and urgency.

Spend your time on the Important tasks, and find ways to reduce the number of Important/Urgent tasks using better planning to ensure you don't live in crisis mode.

Evaluate Risk/Opportunity Spread: I ask myself four questions:

1. What is the **worst** that could happen if I **do** take an action?
2. What is the **best** that could happen if I **do** take an action?
3. What is the **worst** that could happen if I **don't** take an action?
4. What is the **best** that could happen if I **don't** take an action?

If none of these questions have interesting outcomes, ►

DECISIONS continued on page 24



The Eisenhower Matrix prioritizes decisions into four levels based on importance and urgency.

Download the Electric Cooperatives of Arkansas' Legislative Guide app

The Electric Cooperatives of Arkansas recently launched the 2023 digital version of its popular Arkansas Legislative Guide. The digital directory is free and offered to iPhone and Android users.

"The Electric Cooperatives of Arkansas' Legislative Guide provides an easy-to-use tool to allow Arkansans to contact their state and federal elected officials," said Vernon "Buddy" Hasten, president and CEO of the Electric Cooperatives of Arkansas. "It is important that electric cooperative members stay in contact with their elected officials, and our app simplifies the process."

The app provides names and detailed profiles of officials, interactive contact links with telephone numbers and addresses, detailed district maps and other pertinent information.

"Arkansas' electric cooperatives are advocates for our members," said Bill Gossage, vice president of governmental affairs with the cooperatives. "As always, by working with our members, we ensure that policies and laws are fair and in the best interest of Arkansans."

Visit aecc.com/government-affairs/legislative-guide/. Or use either the iPhone/Apple or Android/Google Play QR code provided here to download the app to your device by following these steps:

1. **Open your camera on your phone or tablet (select the rear-facing camera).**
2. **Hold your device so that the QR code appears in viewfinder. When your device recognizes the QR code, tap the notification to open the link.**
3. **Download the free app on your device.**

The Arkansas Legislative Guide app is one more way that the Electric Cooperatives of Arkansas are staying ahead of Arkansas' energy needs and leading the way for a balanced approach to providing affordable, reliable and responsible power.



iPhone



Android

Arkansas Youth Tour delegate chosen as national spokesperson

The National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) recently announced Rukaya Alrubaye of Fayetteville as the 2023 national spokesperson for the Electric Cooperative Youth Tour program.

Rukaya represented Ozarks Electric Cooperative on Youth Tour 2022 in June, and her peers nominated her to serve as the Arkansas Youth Leadership Council Delegate.



Rukaya Alrubaye

At the time, she said, "I am so excited and grateful. ... I hope to make connections with people across the country and improve my speaking and leadership skills."

As national spokesperson,

Rukaya will certainly get that opportunity. She will speak at the NRECA PowerXchange conference in Nashville in early March.

"She is an exceptional young lady, and this is a tremendous honor," says JD Lowery, Youth Tour director and manager of community and economic development for the Electric Cooperatives of Arkansas.

Since the 1950s, the Electric Cooperative Youth Tour has brought high school students to the nation's capital.

This year, Arkansas' electric cooperatives will again send outstanding high school juniors to attend Youth Tour, an all-expenses-paid educational trip to Washington, D.C., from June 16-22. Visit aecc.com/community/youth-tour/ to learn more.

Applications are due soon; contact your local cooperative to apply.

Where Is It?

Welcome back to our hidden object game, "Where Is It?"

In February, we hid a birdhouse for the Great Backyard Bird Count.

Joked one correct reader who discovered it in the Gardening with Janet column: "You needed an 'eagle eye' to locate the Valentine-themed birdhouse on the bottom left of page 30 in your very informative article about crape myrtles. I have a few of those and have been pruning them wrong. Not anymore!"

In a random drawing of correct answers, the following five winners were selected to receive Arkansas Living mugs:

Tammy Bomark, Fayetteville (Ozarks Electric Cooperative)

Wanyoka Dixon, McRae (First Electric Cooperative)

Jerry Jacks, Pine Bluff (C & L Electric Cooperative)

Daniel Stevens, Shell Knob, Missouri (Carroll Electric Cooperative)

Beverly Luck, Evening Shade (North Arkansas Electric Cooperative)

In this issue, we've hidden a kite. And finding it won't be a breeze! Enter via the "Where Is It?" link on the homepage of arkansaslivingmagazine.com, or go directly to arkansaslivingmagazine.com/contest-where-is-it/.

Or mail in entries to:

Where Is It?

Arkansas Living

P.O. Box 510

Little Rock, AR 72203

(We cannot accept entries by email or social media.)

Entries must be received by March 15*. Include your name, address and electric co-op (if applicable; nonmembers also are eligible), plus the correct page number.

** Due to postal delays, some readers don't always receive their magazines in time to enter. If your magazine arrives after the deadline, submit your entry by the 15th of the following month. We'll send a prize to a randomly selected latecomer! January's winner was: Terry Calhoun, Rector (Clay County Electric Cooperative).*

Cooperative).

AECI employees earn certification

Arkansas Electric Cooperatives, Inc. (AECI) employees Dustin Denton, manager of right-of-way services, and Mark Jackson, construction crews safety coordinator, recently completed an intensive program in electric utility safety and loss control.

Denton and Jackson are among a select group of electric utility professionals who have earned the safety and loss control certification from the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA), in conjunction with National Utility Training Safety & Education Association (NUTSEA).

According to the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), nearly 4 million workplace injuries occur each year. A goal of NRECA's certified loss control program is to ensure a safe work environment for electric utility workers and the public.



Dustin Denton



Mark Jackson

- On March 17, 1918, baseball great Babe Ruth hit a 573-foot home run at Whittington Park in Hot Springs that landed inside the nearby Arkansas Alligator Farm. It was baseball's first 500-plus-foot drive.

- St. Patrick was actually British, not Irish.



- "J" was the last letter added to the alphabet.

- Famous architect Frank Lloyd Wright's son, John, invented Lincoln Logs in 1916.

- The lifespan of U.S. paper money varies by denomination. The dollar bill lasts 6.6 years while the \$100 bill lasts 22.9 years, according to the Federal Reserve.

- To win a bet with his publisher, Dr. Seuss penned "Green Eggs and Ham" by using only 50 different words, of which, 49 contain one syllable.

- Forest Mars, the creator of peanut M&M's, was allergic to nuts.



- Wyoming passed the first suffrage law giving women the right to vote in 1869, which was more than 50 years before the 19th Amendment was added to the Constitution.

- A flamingo must eat with its head upside down to filter out mud and water from its food.

- The human brain produces 12-25 watts of electricity, which is enough to power a low-wattage LED light.

- "The secret to staying young is to live honestly, eat slowly and lie about your age."

— Lucille Ball, actress

Making History



Sarah Huckabee Sanders is sworn in as the 47th governor of Arkansas on Jan. 10.

SHEALAH CRAIGHEAD PHOTOGRAPHY

Sarah Huckabee Sanders is Arkansas' first female governor

BY JENNIFER CHRISTMAN CIA

Sarah Huckabee Sanders was sworn in as the 47th governor of Arkansas on Jan. 10.

On the very same day, Leslie Rutledge was sworn in as the state's first female lieutenant governor. Arkansas and Massachusetts this year became the first states to have women in both governor and lieutenant governor roles.

Sanders is the daughter of Arkansas' 44th Gov. Mike Huckabee and wife Janet. Sanders grew up in Pine Bluff and Texarkana, and graduated from Little Rock Central High School and Ouachita Baptist University. A former political adviser, she made history as the first mother to hold the job of White House Press Secretary from 2017 to 2019 under former President Donald Trump.

And Sanders — wife to Bryan and mother to Scarlett, Huck and George — continues making history as the youngest governor currently serving in the country.

During the first icy week of February, not quite a month into her tenure, Arkansas Living interviewed Gov. Sanders about continuing her family's legacy and creating her own.

Have you processed the historical significance of being Arkansas' first female governor? What does it mean to you?

It is an unbelievable honor and an exciting time in our state, certainly, to be the first. But as I've stated before and pointed out in my inaugural address, my goal is not to make history because I'm the first woman or the youngest governor in the country right now. But it's to move Arkansas to the top and to make history with what I think that we can achieve together serving the people of our state.

March is Women's History Month. What woman or women do you most admire?

Certainly, my mom ranks at the top of that list. She's about as tough as it comes and never backs down from a challenge. ... She raised my brothers and me in a home focused on our faith. And my mom has certainly played a huge influence on my life and is somebody that I look up to.

You've outlined education as a main priority for you. What teacher or what subject in school had the most influence on you?

I've had several teachers that had a huge impact at various stages in my life. In high school, I had an amazing American history professor who really made history come to life and made me fall in love with the study of our history.

When I was in college, I had a communications professor who humbled me quite a bit. I turned in a paper thinking that I was going to get an "A," and he was going to tell me how brilliant I was and how great of a job I did. And instead, he brought it back to me with so much red ink, he probably went through three or four pens and basically told me it was not good. It was so bad, but he had confidence I could do better, he was going to give me the opportunity to try again. He became one of my favorite professors, and I learned an extraordinary amount from him. I was always thankful that he was willing to give me a second chance on that paper and that he put me in my place, as I was probably a little bit of a young, cocky freshman. I think we can all use a little of that every once in a while.

You lived in the Governor's Mansion during your youth. What has it been like for you returning as governor?

It's interesting to go back to a place that holds so many memories for me and for my family. I'm pretty sure that's the place that my parents have lived longer than any other house they've been in. We have a lot of really special moments that took place there for our family, both good and bad. And so, it's very interesting to be back there and to share that with my kids. I hope that their experience there is as good as the one that I had there growing up. It's an unbelievable place with great history. I'm excited about being back with my family and my kids getting a chance to grow up there.

What advice has your father given you in your new role as governor?

My dad's really good about not weighing in too often unless I ask him, which I'm happy to do. You know, when you have a resource like that, it would be a shame not to use it. But probably the best advice my dad has given me, both in this role and any other that I've had, is just always be yourself. God created each of us to be special and unique in our own way, so don't try to be anything other than that.

Less than one month into the job, what has been the best part of being governor and the hardest part?

The best part is the impact that I think we get to have on the state. Already, in less than a month, I feel like we've been able to bring about conservative reform to the state, signing executive orders, setting the tone, working closely with our partners in the legislature. I think we'll have

a very successful legislative session; we're off to a really good start. Knowing that the things that we're working on every day are going to bring about real change and reform, and hopefully transformational change that makes a generational impact on the state — that's the driver and the motivation and the good part of the job.

The hard part is just the day in, day out and making sure that we're making the best decisions possible to help the people of the state. With the opportunity that we have, there's a lot of responsibility, and so making sure we live up to that and deliver is something that I really want to focus on and make sure we're able to do.

As governor, how do you and your family maintain a "normal" life? What keeps you grounded?

I think being a parent can keep you pretty grounded. We've got a 10-year-old, a 9-year-old and a 7-year-old. They put us in our place pretty quickly. Kids certainly can keep you humble, and our kids are masters at that. So that helps keep us normal in a variety of ways. Attending their school events and sports events and being part of the everyday rigor of being a parent, I think, helps keep us focused too on everything that's at stake. And the reason that my husband and I decided to jump into this in the first place is because we want to make sure that the Arkansas that our kids grow up in is the Arkansas I got to grow up in. I want to make sure that we are not taking any of those things for granted. And so, being parents, I think, helps keep our life in perspective and certainly normalizes things. We're rushing out the door, and picking up messes from our kids and spilled syrup on our counters, and doing homework in the afternoons — just like every other parent in the state. That certainly gives us a very good and regular dose of reality every minute of every day. ➤



The first family of Arkansas: Gov. Sarah Huckabee Sanders with husband and first gentleman Bryan and children George, age 7; Huck, age 9; and Scarlett, age 10.

The Cooperative Connection

The Electric Cooperatives of Arkansas provide electricity to more than 600,000 members in Arkansas and surrounding states. Arkansas Living asked Gov. Sanders questions from President and CEO Vernon “Buddy” Hasten about power, broadband and bettering life for rural citizens.

The Electric Cooperatives of Arkansas’ mission is providing reliable, affordable and responsible electric power to our members. We know you are keenly focused on reliability and affordability. What can the cooperatives do to help you with those identical goals?

You guys have hit the nail on the head that the two biggest priorities are certainly making sure we have reliable energy for all of the citizens across the state and also the affordability component. We’ve talked a lot with your organization, Buddy and the co-ops about making sure that those two things are addressed. One of those things we’ve experienced (in early February) were difficult winter storms; we want to make sure we have good reliability. And so, I think one of the biggest and most important things is to have an ongoing relationship and constant communication with all of the stakeholders in providing that reliability and affordability to the people across the state. We have had that and want to continue to make sure there’s constant coordination and communication between the state, as well as all of the stakeholders that provide those services to the people.

The Electric Cooperatives of Arkansas seek to improve the quality of life for our members, rural Arkansans. Do you see areas where we can partner with state government to help us both better achieve that goal?

I think the partnership is key. That partnership is a big piece of the puzzle. And making sure that cooperation and coordination is constant and that there’s a good working



Gov. Sanders delivers her inaugural address at the Arkansas state Capitol.

relationship, I think, is going to determine whether or not we can really provide reliability and affordability across the state.

Arkansas is challenged from a broadband connectivity perspective, which limits rural Arkansans and puts them at a significant disadvantage. Do you see areas where we can partner better in making Arkansas No. 1 in this category?

Absolutely. My goal is to make Arkansas No. 1 across the board, whether it’s in energy, education or workforce development. We want to move Arkansas to the top and set the standard and be an example for other states around the country.

What else would you like to say to our members?

I’m hopeful that we can do amazing things for the state. We want to be a great partner across the board and really bring about that transformational change to the people of Arkansas, and we’re looking forward to doing it.

Food and Fun *We asked Gov. Sanders about everything from eating to streaming.*

What’s your favorite Arkansas food?

I think that I’m going to have to cheat a little bit and pick two. I think one would certainly have to be duck gumbo. There are very few items I can think of that are more representative of Arkansas; you’ve got duck, chicken and rice, some of our biggest industries. And it happens to be absolutely delicious. I was really excited we got to serve that at the inauguration. And the other one would be

Arkansas cheese dip; you can’t leave that off the list. We like to claim that we invented that here, and I know Texas likes to fight with us, but I’m pretty sure we were first.

What’s your favorite Arkansas restaurant?

Oh, that one is hard to narrow down. One of the things I love about the state is every community you go to has a great little local spot. During the campaign, we tried ➤

to stop into different places and local restaurants all over Arkansas. ... If I picked one, I think I'd get myself into a lot of trouble. But one of my favorite things is certainly finding those good local places that we have kind of mixed in all 75 counties.

What is your favorite thing to cook if/when you have time?

Cooking or baking, sometimes people argue over whether or not those are the same thing. But my kids would certainly love if it was all sweets all the time. I make a pretty good Bourbon Chocolate Pecan Pie (see recipe on next page) and have even become a little bit famous for the controversy around whether or not I actually made it. But that has to be at the top of the list. It's something I do with my kids over the holidays and something that's become a tradition and a really fun thing for us to all do together.

What is your favorite place in Arkansas for a getaway or staycation?

Arkansas is blessed with a lot of amazing outdoor spaces. And so you've got everything like amazing lakes and rivers. The Buffalo River is second to none. Lake Ouachita, Greeson, Beaver Lake — all beautiful spots — Greers Ferry. And then we've got great mountains, I mean the views at Petit Jean and Magazine and Mount Nebo. My family's pretty active, and my husband is a big advocate for getting outside and enjoying every bit and piece of The Natural State. We enjoy a lot of different parts and places around the state, but usually something that has an outdoor component to it.



Arkansas' first gentleman Bryan Sanders with Gov. Sarah Huckabee Sanders and her parents, former first lady Janet Huckabee and former Gov. Mike Huckabee.

What's the last show/movie that you streamed?

Let me think about a show that's not an animated kids show; that is generally what I have time and get to watch! The last really great movie we watched was the new "Top Gun: Maverick." It's very rare when a sequel lives up to the hype, and it's as good as the original. And I have to say, I think they did a pretty great job.

What is your usual coffee order?

Black coffee. Nothing in it. Very plain.

What is your most prized possession?

Pictures. I have lots and lots of pictures, certainly of my kids, early years of marriage. All my photos would be my most prized possession; they're the one thing I can't replace.

What are your hobbies?

I love to travel, especially with my family; I love to explore new places. ... I like to play tennis. I'm attempting and hoping to get a little better at pickleball, though not sure that's going to happen anytime soon, given that we're right in the middle of the legislative session. Maybe after we get everything done this session, I'll have a chance to pick that back up.

Do you have any useless talents?

No, all of my talents are very useful. I can't sing. I don't have any special party tricks or any fun thing like that. So, no, only useful talents that I have, I suppose.

What is your guilty pleasure?

Really hot, salty McDonald's french fries.



Gov. Sarah Huckabee Sanders pauses to pose for a selfie.

Gov. Sanders' Bourbon Chocolate Pecan Pie

- 4 eggs
- 1 cup light corn syrup
- 6 tablespoons butter, melted
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 1/4 cup brown sugar
- 2-4 tablespoons bourbon
- 1 tablespoon flour
- 1 tablespoon pure vanilla extract
- 1 cup pecans, finely chopped
- 1 cup milk chocolate chips
- 1 prepared pie crust

Heat oven to 350.

In a large bowl, stir eggs, corn syrup and butter together. Add remaining ingredients one at a time, stirring each as you add them. Pour into pie crust.

Bake on lowest rack for 1 hour. Watch it closely starting at 50 minutes because every oven is different. If it's browning too much on the edges, you may want to take out early.

Best served warm with vanilla ice cream on top and shared with friends and family!

Gov. Sanders' notes:

Pie crust: Either make your own crust, or you can use frozen deep-dish pie crust (it saves a ton of time to just get the pre-made ones!).

Bourbon: I typically use Blanton's, Maker's Mark or Woodford Reserve (if you use really cheap bourbon you can tell, so don't do that!).

Vanilla: Try vanilla bean paste if you can find it — so good!

Pecans: It turns out best if you put pecans in a Ziplock bag and crush them with a hammer. Less mess than a food processor and a great stress reliever! This is my kids' favorite part to help with! ■

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Champion Trees standing tall in Arkansas

BY JACK SCHNEDLER

PHOTOS COURTESY OF ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE'S FORESTRY DIVISION

Arkansas takes pride in its trees. The Natural State even has a hall of fame paying tribute to the largest specimens of over 100 species.

Arkansas Champion Trees is an honor roll curated by the Arkansas Department of Agriculture's Forestry Division. The distinguished specimens are chosen based on a formula involving three measurements: trunk circumference, tree height and average spread of the leafy crown.

March is a prime month to celebrate these trees, as awesome in real life as the mythical Treebeard was in "Lord of the Rings." That's because March 20 marks the date of Arkansas Arbor Day, which gets a month's jump on April 28's National Arbor Day.

Legendary Northwoods lumberjack Paul Bunyan and his pal, Babe the Blue Ox, never made it as far south as Arkansas. So, our Champion Trees were spared Paul's mighty ax. Three species (American holly, red mulberry, Nuttall oak) in Arkansas have grown large enough to rank as overall champions for the United States. A fourth (water tupelo) is a U.S. co-champion on a nationwide roster (americanforests.org) that tallies more than 500 species.

The website agriculture.arkansas.gov/forestry/champion-trees/ lists the state's prize trees alphabetically, from American basswood to yellowwood. The details include locations and owners. About three-fourths of the trees stand on private property. The rest can be found on public lands, such as national forests, state parks and wildlife management areas.



This Nuttall oak, located in Deshea County in the Dale Bumpers White River National Wildlife Refuge, is ranked as both a national and state Champion Tree.

"This program is a success because it allows any Arkansans, from schoolchildren to professional arborists and foresters, to nominate a tree they think may be the largest of its species."

— Harold Fisher

The campus of Crystal Bridges Museum in Bentonville hosts champions in two species: blackgum and eastern white pine. Burns Park in North Little Rock is site of the No. 1 black willow. The top red buckeye stands along the access road to Clinton School of Public Service in Little Rock. Historic Washington State Park has the biggest southern catalpa. A co-champion sugar maple can be seen in Fayetteville's Confederate Cemetery.

Most listings include one or more photographs of the champion, often with the owner posing next to it — emphasizing its accolade-winning size by contrast with the human figure. In a few instances, the owner has added a touch of whimsy by wrapping arms a little way around the great trees.

Urban Forestry Partnership Coordinator Harold Fisher, who manages the project says, "This program is a success because ➤



With a height of 86 feet, crown width of 51 feet and a circumference of 206 inches, this Pike County post oak is co-champion with another tree in White County.

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it allows any Arkansans, from schoolchildren to professional arborists and foresters, to nominate a tree they think may be the largest of its species. That helps cultivate a sentiment of ownership, whether the champion is growing on private or public land. Most private owners are thrilled by the honor."

The program, like the trees themselves, is ever-growing and ever-changing.

"Our champion trees program began in the late 1970s," Fisher says. "Since then, we've often had larger trees displace previous champs. There have been a few instances where a new champion was named within a week of a previous champion having been declared."

About 20 champion applications are submitted in a typical year. Fisher explains that "if measurements are not included in a nomination, then Forestry Division personnel will always go out to obtain them. Sometimes nominations do include measurements taken by the owner. If those indicate the tree will be close to or larger than the current champion in that species, Forestry Division staff members will go out to verify the measurements."

With nearly 3 million acres in its three national forests (Ozark, Ouachita, St. Francis), Arkansas remains a widely forested state. Fisher cites the important role played by Hot Springs artist Linda Williams Palmer in promoting the champion trees.

"She was so inspired by the program that she created a collection of artwork featuring large, colored pencil drawings to artistically interpret some of the trees," he says. "Her work has captured in intricate detail and splendor the trees she depicts, so that even as they age, their memory does not."

Palmer's art is pictured in "Champion Trees of Arkansas," a book published in 2016.

Pride resides with all the owners, present and past, of Arkansas Champion Trees. That's true even for those species of lesser stature. A sparkleberry tree in Washington County stands tallest among its kin at only 10 feet high. A pagoda dogwood in Benton County is a biggest-circumference champ at merely 11 inches, easy to wrap an arm around.

A champion is a champion, so long as it measures up.



Tree huggers: Arkansans take pride in Champion Trees, which grow on both private and public land. Occasionally, a Champion Tree will fall to stormy weather, as happened a few months ago to this beloved blackjack oak in Springdale.



Arkansas Champion Trees, like this cherrybark oak in Perry County, are chosen based on a formula measuring trunk circumference, tree height and average spread of leafy crown.



Arkansas Champion Trees by the Numbers

Overall Champion

Applying the Forestry Division's measurement index, the state's overall champion tree is a bald cypress in Arkansas County. No. 2 is a water tupelo in White County, followed by an American sycamore in Crittenden County.

Tallest Champion

A pignut hickory is the tallest champion, towering 145 feet in White County. Second tallest is a loblolly pine in Howard County at 144 feet. Third is a black willow in Pulaski County at 134 feet.

Circumference Champion

Largest in circumference is the Arkansas County bald cypress at 523 inches, followed by the White County water tupelo at 451 inches and a red mulberry in Ashley County at 305 inches.

Crown Spread Champion

The title for average spread of leafy crown is held by a southern red oak in Clark County at 134 feet. Second largest provider of shade is a Yell County eastern cottonwood at 131 feet, followed by a cherrybark oak in Perry County spanning 129 feet.

To read more about Arkansas Champion Trees and find locator maps, visit agriculture.arkansas.gov/forestry/champion-trees/. ▀

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Farm Escape

Harriet farmstead welcomes guests from around the globe for the ultimate, authentic farm experience

BY KAT ROBINSON

Dogwood Hills Guest Farm sits on the side of a rocky slope in Searcy County, a few miles north of the intersection of Arkansas 14 and 27 in Harriet. The working dairy farm boasts cows, chickens, goats, ducks, geese, a lemur, working dogs and a mother-and-daughter team that are spearheading a budding new industry in Arkansas — agritourism.

Any given morning, you can find Petit Jean Electric Cooperative members Ruth and Grace Pepler performing the acts that keep this farm going — milking cows, gathering eggs, feeding the fowl and taking care of the many tasks you'll find on any farm. The difference is they're often accompanied by guests — from throughout the United States and from as far away as Europe and Australia — who visit year-round for the hands-on experience.

"From the moment they arrive, they begin the adventure," says Ruth, who started the farm along with her husband, Thomas, when Grace was young.

When guests arrive, usually in the afternoon, the Peplers and their sweet, fluffy Great Pyrenees dogs greet them and show them around. Farm-stay visits are limited to just one group at a time,

"When you hand a child an egg from under a chicken and it's still warm, they're like 'Whoa!'"
— Ruth Pepler

and members stay in a spacious three-bedroom, two-bath guesthouse with country touches and extraordinary Buffalo National River Valley views. But this is much more than a standard vacation.

"After they are settled into the guesthouse, many of them come to the barn loft for dinner their first night," Ruth says. "Afterward, there is an orientation, and they can finish their evening on the deck, enjoying the starry skies from the hot tub."

Guests aren't required to get up early, but many are compelled to rise and join Ruth and Grace in the milk stand, where they're shown how to properly milk a cow — an experience surprisingly hard to find for folks living in urban settings. Once the cows are milked, guests come upstairs, where Grace expertly flips omelets and serves a breakfast that includes fresh vegetables, fruits and meats, most sourced from Searcy County. The kitchen is



Ruth, Thomas and Grace Pepler created Dogwood Hills Guest Farm, allowing guests to have an authentic farm experience.

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KAT ROBINSON

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The day is often spent fulfilling “bucket list” experiences, such as hand-feeding the cows barley fodder, which is hydroponically grown in a special facility Grace originally designed as a 4-H project when she was a teenager. The facility allows Dogwood Hills’ cows to be fed fresh food that does not have to be brought in from elsewhere, since it’s grown on an eight-day rotating schedule right on the farm.

Kids in particular love the hands-on nature. “When you hand a child an egg from under a chicken and it’s still warm, they’re like ‘Whoa!’” Ruth shares. “They’re surprised when they milk a cow, and the milk is warm.” With supervision, children and adults are allowed to cuddle chickens and hold baby goats, too.

Dogwood Hills offers a marvelous location to act as a home base as guests explore Searcy County, float the Buffalo National River and take in attractions. The Peplers also offer hands-on demonstrations and classes, such as wool felting and making pizza or gnocchi. There are activities throughout the year, from farm-to-table dinners to the State Youth Cast-Iron Cookoff, which happens annually the first Saturday of November. A vibrant store on-site offers all-local products, from quilts to spoons, locally raised produce and meat, and products from Dew Line Dairy, Grace Pepler’s micro-dairy.

To learn more or to book your stay, visit TheFarmEx.com or call 870-448-4870. 🍀



KAT ROBINSON

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP Located in Searcy County, Dogwood Hills Guest Farm is near the Buffalo National River and other attractions.

The working dairy farm also has goats, chickens, ducks, geese and even a lemur.

Grace Pepler demonstrates milking a cow, a popular activity for farm guests.



KAT ROBINSON

WEB EXCLUSIVE! Read an expanded version of this story at: arkansaslivingmagazine.com

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From Your Board Chairman Rick Love

How many of you have watched the movie “A Few Good Men,” which stars Tom Cruise and Jack Nicholson? Lt. Daniel Kaffee (Cruise) is a military lawyer defending two U.S. Marines charged with killing a fellow Marine at the Guantanamo Bay Naval Base in Cuba. However, the Marines were most likely carrying out a “code red” order from a commanding officer. Kaffee takes a risk by calling Col. Nathan R. Jessep (Nicholson) to the stand to uncover the conspiracy.

There’s an iconic scene that still lives today in pop culture. Lt. Kaffee is cross-examining Col. Jessup about the code red that was issued. Col. Jessup finally breaks and blurts out one of the most famous lines in movie history, “You can’t handle the truth!”

In order to handle the truth, you must know the truth. Here’s the truth about solar:

Claim: Have an electric bill as low as \$15 a month!

Fact: First Electric has a Service Availability Charge that is currently \$25 a month. A fixed charge designed to recover the basic monthly costs of providing poles, wire, transformers, meters, billing, etc.

Claim: The out-of-pocket cost to YOU is ZERO DOLLARS!

Fact: Solar isn’t free OR cheap. If you finance your purchase, it comes at an expense. Especially, if you roll the 30% Federal Tax Credit (FTC) into your solar payment. Your payments are calculated using the sale price minus the FTC; however, the FTC is just that – a credit on your taxes. Your payments will adjust to a larger dollar amount, after a period of time, without reducing payment by the FTC credit amount. We strongly encourage you to consult a tax advisor for details.

Claim: The electrical production created from solar panels will help offset your electric bill by reducing our dependency on less eco-friendly means, such as coal and natural gas generators.

Fact: There’s a misconception that we can replace gas or coal (baseload generation which is dispatchable 365/24/7) with solar (intermittent electricity). All forms of energy have their strengths and weaknesses, and we continue to balance all forms of energy to achieve our mission of being reliable, affordable and responsible.

If you have a code red, do your homework. If it seems too good to be true, it probably is. Feel free to reach out to us with questions. We’re happy to help shed some light on it.

Sincerely,
Rick Love

A sidenote: House Bill 1370, also known as the Cost-Shifting Prevention Act of 2023, is being considered for legislation. We need your support to protect all members at First Electric. If you have questions, feel free to contact your local electric cooperative.

Deadlines near for applications

Youth Tour

High school juniors whose parents or guardians are First Electric members may apply for the Youth Tour, an all-expenses-paid trip to Washington, D.C., June 16-22. An application may be completed online or downloaded under the “Community” tab at firstelectric.coop. Applications also are available at any First Electric office. Deadline is March 31.

Scholarships

High school seniors whose parents or guardians are First Electric members may apply for one of nine \$2,000 scholarships that the cooperative awards each year. To be eligible for the scholarships, which are funded through Operation Round-Up, applicants must have a minimum 3.0 grade-point average through their senior year of high school and upon graduation, attend an accredited institute of higher learning in Arkansas on a full-time basis. An application is available under the “Community” tab at firstelectric.coop and at any First Electric office. Deadline is May 1.

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

When was your cooling system last serviced? Most manufacturers recommend an annual tune up for your home’s cooling system. March is a great time to schedule this service so you can beat the summer rush when the pros are busiest.

A qualified professional can check the amount of refrigerant, accuracy of the thermostat, condition of belts and motors and other factors that can impact the efficiency of your system.

Source: Dept. of Energy



Vegetation management vital to providing reliable power

First Electric focuses on right-of-way maintenance near overhead lines to provide safe and reliable service for our members. Right-of-way refers to a strip of land underneath or around power lines that is maintained and cleared.

Trees are one of the major causes of power outages in areas with overhead utility lines. When trees contact live wires, they may become conductors of electricity and cause outages or create dangerous situations for anyone coming in contact with them.

Trees must grow at a distance far enough from conductors, where they will not cause harm to individuals or disruption to electrical service.

In 2022, approximately 12% of First Electric’s power interruptions occurred from trees or other vegetation near lines.

“Ideally, the dripline of a mature tree’s canopy should not be within 15 feet on either side of overhead lines or within 10 feet of our underground transformers,” Tim Felty, right-of-way maintenance supervisor, said.

All trees along fences, roadways and other unmaintained areas will be removed during regularly scheduled maintenance regardless of size or height.

“Before work begins, we try to notify our members with door hanger fliers. Our website is a great way to see where our crews and contractors are working. Cleanup crews follow the right-of-way work three to five days after clearing,” Felty said.

Call 800-489-7405 to report trees near lines, or read more at firstelectric.coop/vegetation-management.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY POLICY STATEMENT: The equal opportunity clause at, 41 C.F.R. § 60-1.4, and the provisions at section 202, paragraphs 1-7, of Executive Order 11246, as amended, are incorporated herein by specific reference, where applicable, and are binding upon the subcontractor or vendor. The equal opportunity clause at 41 CFR 60-300.5(a) is incorporated herein by specific reference, where applicable. This contractor and subcontractor shall abide by the requirements of 41 CFR 60-300.5(a). This regulation prohibits discrimination against qualified protected veterans, and requires affirmative action by covered prime contractors and subcontractors to employ and advance in employment qualified protected veterans. The equal opportunity clause at 41 CFR 60-741.5(a) is incorporated herein by specific reference, where applicable. This contractor and subcontractor shall abide by the requirements of 41 CFR 60-741.5(a). This regulation prohibits discrimination against qualified individuals on the basis of disability, and requires affirmative action by covered prime contractors and subcontractors to employ and advance in employment qualified individuals with disabilities.

DECISIONS continued from page 5

you are likely in the 90%. If one or more of these questions has a significant upside or downside, you may be in the 10%.

Find the Critical Group: Categorize decisions that you must make into three groups, and focus your time on Group C, the riskiest and most uncertain group, since it likely contains your 10%.

- A. Problems that are easy to solve.
- B. Problems that are already solved or generally irrelevant.
- C. Problems that are hard to solve, with important outcomes.

Finally, I always ask, "Who should make the decision?" I identify who is impacted by the decision and whether it is in my 90% or 10% categories.

- My 90% vs. Your 90% – I Decide: Quick Decision.
- My 10% vs. Your 90% – I Decide: Deliberate Decision.
- My 90% vs. Your 10% – You Decide: Delegate.
- My 10% vs. Your 10% – We Decide: Collaborate.

My best example is the "Where do you want to go for dinner?" question. I generally don't care, so I ask my wife where she wants to go. If she says, "I don't care. Anything sounds good to me," I interpret that as a 90% for her. I immediately announce a restaurant. If she doesn't like my choice, I reinterpret that this is not really a 90% for her but a 10%, so I immediately delegate the decision to her. One corollary to this is that my wife can use executive authority to make my 90% a 10% for me, and then we collaborate. Sometimes we will just state, "It's a 90 for me," or "This one is a 10 for me." In either case, it has simplified decision-making and reduced miscommunication.

Hopefully these tools help you with decision-making in 2023, allowing you to make quick decisions when needed and giving you more time for your 10%, so you can achieve what is most important to you this year. ▀



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Many businesses use the word “member” to describe their customers. At First Electric Cooperative, membership really does mean something more than just the right to buy electricity. We are founded on seven cooperative principles that give us guidance and strategic direction.

As a co-op member, you’re not just another customer. You are an owner, which gives you many benefits, including:

VOLUNTARY AND OPEN MEMBERSHIP

Cooperatives are voluntary organizations, open to all persons able to use their services and willing to accept the responsibilities of membership, without gender, social, racial, political or religious discrimination.

DEMOCRATIC MEMBER CONTROL

Cooperatives are democratic organizations controlled by their members, who actively participate in setting their policies and making decisions. Men and women serving as elected representatives are accountable to the membership. In primary cooperatives, members have equal voting rights – one member, one vote – and cooperatives at other levels are organized in a democratic manner.

MEMBER ECONOMIC PARTICIPATION

Members contribute equally to, and democratically control, the capital of their cooperative. At least part of that capital is usually the common property of the cooperative. They usually receive limited compensation, if any, on capital subscribed as a condition of membership. Members allocate surpluses for any or all of the following purposes: developing the cooperative, possibly by setting up reserves, part of which at least would be indivisible; benefiting members in proportion to their transactions with the cooperative; and supporting other activities approved by the membership.

AUTONOMY AND INDEPENDENCE

Cooperatives are autonomous, self-help organizations controlled by their members. If they enter into agreements with other organizations, including governments, or raise capital from external sources, they do so on terms that ensure democratic control by their members and maintain their

cooperative autonomy.

EDUCATION, TRAINING AND INFORMATION

Cooperatives provide education and training for their members, elected representatives, managers and employees so they can contribute effectively to the development of their cooperatives. They inform the general public – particularly young people and opinion leaders – about the nature and benefits of cooperation.

COOPERATION AMONG COOPERATIVES

Cooperatives serve their members most effectively and strengthen the cooperative movement by working together through local, national, regional and international structures..

CONCERN FOR COMMUNITY

While focusing on member needs, cooperatives work for the sustainable development of their communities through policies accepted by their members.

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Member Photo Contest Winner



*Old Glory, Erbie Campground Road, Buffalo River Area, AR.
Submitted by Julia Gaiser of Alexander.*



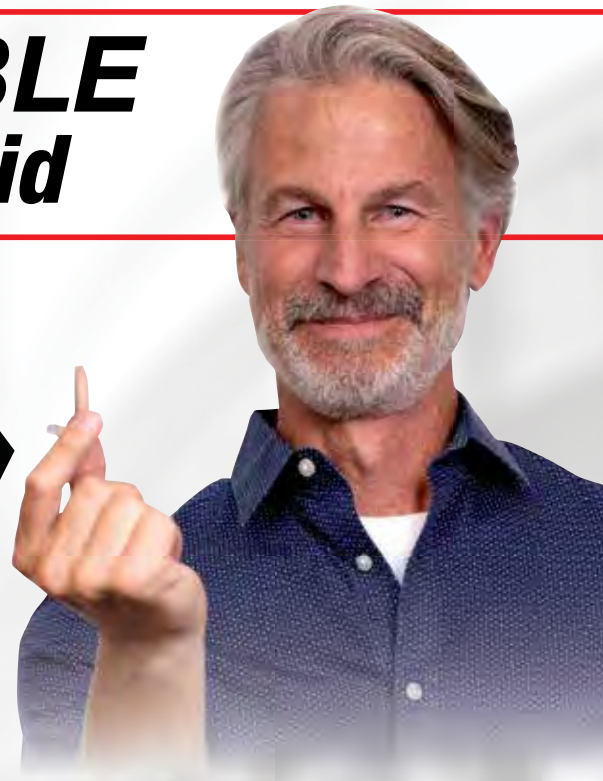
Don Crabbe, President and CEO of First Electric Cooperative, was recognized for his service as Chairman of the Board for Arkansas Electric Cooperative, Inc. (AECI) by Buddy Hasten, President and CEO of Arkansas Electric Cooperative Corporation and AECI.

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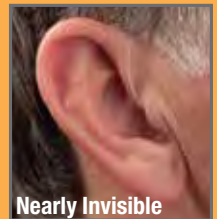
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Reflections



lleigh says, "HELLO, SPRING!"
Cathy Stanley, Hindsville.



Skyler picking flowers for her grandma. Amber Franks, Prairie Grove.



Reeve is smiling, and her goat is laughing. Kassidy Dorrell, Jasper.



That bottle is as big as you are, Maggie!
Heidi Brown, Nelsonville.



Kabir in his Nani's flower garden. Jan McNeil, Rogers.



Are these foxes dancing, or am I dreaming?
Dorothy Zimmerman, Dover.



Tuck feeding gramp's cows. Cary Clayton, Mena.



Eden says, "Bring on the rain!"
Pat Pratt, Paragould.



Emmarie in her magical reading place.
Jeanette Kimes, Elkins.



Perpetua in a beautiful dress with spring
flowers. Sylvia Mason, Witts Springs.



"Hello, beautiful weather," says Beaux
Grace. Jamie Clark, Monticello.

Share your photos with your fellow Arkansas Living readers! Please send high-resolution photos with detailed information about the pictures (who took it, where, who is in it, etc.) to: Dixie.Rogers@aeci.com

Or mail to:
Reflections, Arkansas Living
P.O. Box 510, Little Rock, AR 72203

March starts thyme-line for herbs



BY JANET B. CARSON

Growing herbs and cooking with them has become more popular. With a good selection available at many nurseries, March is a great time to start planting.

As with any gardening, it all comes down to the right plant for the right spot. Also, what herbs do you actually use? Most herbs will not tolerate poorly drained soils, and most need plenty of sunlight. The most popular herbs for the garden include parsley, rosemary, lavender, thyme, chives, sage, cilantro, dill and basil.

Herbs can be planted in the ground near a vegetable garden or can be grown in containers. Planting them within easy access of the kitchen will encourage their use.

Many herbs are easy plants to grow in the garden, if you are aware of their needs. Take a little time to learn what your herbs need to thrive. Not only will they be beautiful, they'll be useful.

Janet Carson is a Little Rock horticulturist. Email: arkansasliving@aeci.com. ■



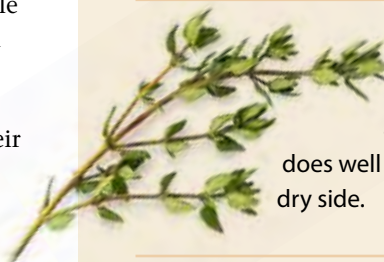
Basil is a summer annual and should not be planted outdoors until all frost is over. Keep harvesting leaves by trimming flowers to keep the plant strong. Sweet basil is the most common type, but other varieties are available.

Parsley is a biennial, so try to plant some in the spring and the fall to have a constant supply. Most cooks prefer the flat-leaf types to the curly, but both add interest in a garden, and are usually evergreen.



Rosemary is a desirable herb as well as an ornamental evergreen, especially in poor, dry sites. It doesn't tolerate heavy or waterlogged soils. It is drought-tolerant and fairly carefree. With upright forms and cascading or prostrate forms, rosemary has gray-green foliage and lovely lavender flowers in the late winter into spring.

Lavender is a much sought-after perennial but can be a bit finicky until it finds the right spot. This Mediterranean native with gray-green foliage prefers a drier site. It has fragrant spikes of blue to purple blooms.



Thyme comes in several different foliage forms with green, yellow, silver and white variegation. It can serve as a groundcover in dry sites or around steppingstones. It also does well in containers. Like rosemary and lavender, it likes it on the dry side.

Culinary sage is in the salvia family, which is a huge family of plants. The most common variety has a silvery green leaf, but there are variegated forms as well. It is a great perennial for the garden in full sun to partial shade and has lovely purple blooms in the spring.



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RECIPES AND PHOTOS
BY JULIANA GOODWIN

Pistachio Pineapple Coconut Cake

Makes 12 or more servings.

Cake:	1/2 cup shredded, sweetened coconut
1 (15.25-ounce) box yellow cake mix	1/2 cup pecans, chopped
1 (3.4-ounce) box instant pistachio pudding mix	Frosting:
1 (20-ounce) can crushed pineapple, undrained	8 ounces whipped cream cheese, at room temperature
3 large eggs	1 (7-ounce) jar marshmallow fluff
1/2 cup plus 1 tablespoon canola oil	1 teaspoon vanilla extract

Heat oven to 350. Grease 13x11 baking pan, set aside.

For cake: In a large bowl, whisk together cake mix and pudding mix. Strain juice from pineapple to make 1 cup of juice (if there's less, add water to make 1 cup). Add juice and eggs to mix. Measure 1 cup drained pineapple, and add it to mix (save remaining pineapple for another use). Add canola oil and coconut, and beat until blended.

Stir in pecans.

Pour mixture into prepared pan. Bake for 30 minutes. Allow to cool.

For frosting: Beat or stir together cream cheese, marshmallow fluff and vanilla extract until smooth. Spread on cake. Refrigerate until time to serve.



Easy Birds' Nests

Makes 18-20 servings.

9 squares chocolate almond bark	1 cup pretzel sticks, broken
3 cups chow mein noodles	Zest from 1 orange
1/2 cup pecans, chopped	Candy-coated chocolate eggs or jelly beans

Line three baking sheets with parchment paper, and set aside.

Break almond bark apart, and place in microwave-safe dish.

Microwave for 60 seconds and stir. Microwave for 30 seconds and stir. Continue microwaving in 15-second intervals until chocolate is melted and smooth.

Immediately stir in chow mein noodles, pecans and pretzel sticks. Add orange zest, and stir. Using two spoons, pick up chunks of mixture, and place on parchment to make nests. Repeat. Once nests have cooled slightly, add candy-coated chocolate eggs or jelly beans to nests (candies will stick better to chocolate that hasn't fully dried).





Herb Pork Loin

Makes 4-6 servings.

- | | | | |
|---|---|-----|---------------------------|
| 1 | (2-pound) boneless pork loin filet, rinsed and patted dry | 1 | tablespoon garlic, minced |
| | | 2 | teaspoons dried rosemary |
| | | 1 | teaspoon dried thyme |
| | | 3/4 | teaspoon dried oregano |
| | | 1/2 | teaspoon onion powder |
| | | 1 | teaspoon salt |
| | | 1/2 | teaspoon pepper |

Marinade:

- | | |
|-----|-----------------------------|
| 1/4 | cup olive oil |
| 1 | tablespoon red wine vinegar |
| 1 | tablespoon Dijon mustard |

Add marinade ingredients to a gallon-size resealable plastic bag. Swirl to combine ingredients before adding pork. Seal bag and rub pork to coat in marinade. Refrigerate for 4 hours; remove from refrigerator about 30 minutes prior to cooking.

Heat oven to 375. Place pork in a baking dish, and cook for 65 to 75 minutes, until done. Remove from oven, and allow to rest for 10 minutes before slicing.



This month's web exclusive recipe:

Caesar Potatoes

More recipes on our website:
arkansaslivingmagazine.com

Juliana Goodwin is a food columnist, cookbook author and avid traveler. If you have a question, email julianalovesfood23@gmail.com.

From our readers

Marvelous breakfast bites to make your mornings sunny side up!

Oatmeal Breakfast Cookies

Makes about 2 dozen.

- 3 ripe bananas, mashed
- 1/4 cup chocolate chips
- 1/4 cup applesauce
- 1 3/4 cups quick oats
- Honey, chopped nuts (optional)

Heat oven to 350.

Add bananas to a medium bowl; fold in chocolate chips, applesauce and oats until combined. Drop by tablespoonful onto a parchment-lined baking sheet. Bake for 15-20 minutes or until lightly browned. Transfer to a wire rack to cool. If desired, roll cookies in honey and chopped nuts

Note: This recipe was adapted from Parade magazine.

Evelyn Glover, Gurdon



Oatmeal Breakfast Cookies

Quick Danish Coffee Cake

- 2 (8-ounce) cans refrigerated crescent roll dough

Filling:

- 8 ounces cream cheese, softened
- 1 cup sugar
- 1 egg yolk (reserve white for topping)
- 1/4 teaspoon vanilla extract

Topping:

- 1 egg white, beaten
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1/2 cup pecans, chopped

Heat oven to 350.

Unroll 1 can crescent roll dough into a 13x9 dish, pinching seams together.

In a medium bowl, stir together all filling ingredients until combined. Spread filling on dough layer. Unroll second can of crescent roll dough, and place on top of filling, pinching seams together.

Evenly brush egg white on dough. Combine sugar, cinnamon and pecans in a small bowl, and evenly sprinkle on dough. Bake for 30 minutes.

Notes: This is good and so very easy. My sister-in-law served this when I visited once. I use this recipe any time I have company for breakfast or brunch potlucks. It can be made the night before, refrigerated and baked in the morning; add about 10 minutes to baking time.

Diane Eckler, Bardstown, Kentucky

Oven Omelet

- 9 eggs
- 1 cup milk
- 1/2 teaspoon seasoned salt
- 3 ounces Canadian bacon, chopped
- 1/2 cup spinach, chopped
- 1 cup mozzarella or cheddar cheese, shredded
- 1 tablespoon onion, minced

Heat oven to 325. Grease an 8x8 baking dish, and set aside.

In a large bowl, beat eggs, milk and seasoned salt. Add Canadian bacon, spinach, cheese and onion, stirring well. Add to prepared dish, and bake for about 45 minutes.

Jana Barnes, Mountain Home

Submit your favorite recipes! If your recipe is selected for printing, we will send you an Arkansas Living wooden spoon!

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Entries must include your name, phone, address and origin of recipe.

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CROSSWORD PUZZLE

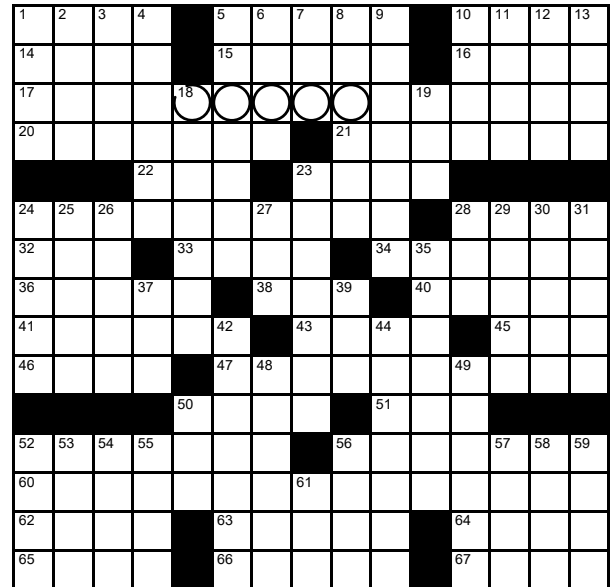
Circles Game *By Victor Fleming*

ACROSS

- 1 Big old pitcher
- 5 Beneficial
- 10 Serling and Lorenzen
- 14 Agatha Christie title
- 15 Snyderman or Pelosi
- 16 Shoe label since 1979
- 17 Software features meant to improve one's writing
- 20 Fencer's cry
- 21 Adjusts (oneself) to new surroundings
- 22 Abbr. under "Nutrition Facts"
- 23 What the ivory-bill pecked
- 24 With 47-Across, [circled letters] Madness event
- 28 Abbr. in an office title
- 32 ___ Kosh B'Gosh
- 33 Wiggly swimmers
- 34 Toss a wrapper out the window, say
- 36 Bawl out
- 38 However, for short
- 40 "Cool beans!"
- 41 Affectionate stroke
- 43 Depose, as a dictator
- 45 Brock or Holtz
- 46 ___ out (declines to participate)
- 47 See 24-Across
- 50 Big name in shirts
- 51 Alias initials
- 52 If all else fails
- 56 Not a saver
- 60 The [circled letters] King
- 62 Seed envelope
- 63 Ham it up
- 64 Rough file
- 65 "Gilmore Girls" daughter
- 66 Discourage
- 67 Part of a vending machine

DOWN

- 1 Defeat, barely
- 2 Raise red flags
- 3 Online periodical, briefly



- 4 Comment
- 5 Having dinner out, perhaps
- 6 Passage charge
- 7 Chapel Hill campus, for short
- 8 Instructional institution
- 9 "Here we go again" look
- 10 Croupier's tool
- 11 Baker's need
- 12 Cleanser target
- 13 Answer with attitude
- 18 1936 Gary Cooper title role
- 19 "El ___" (Spanish hero)
- 23 Complete flop
- 24 Brand of chocolate syrup
- 25 Music-licensing org.
- 26 Not long
- 27 Crisp sandwich, for short
- 28 Put away
- 29 Flat and tasteless
- 30 "Foxfire" novelist Anya
- 31 Fish restaurant offering
- 35 Pipe openings
- 37 ___ Paul (classic guitar)
- 39 Community pronoun
- 42 Hid away
- 44 Fish restaurant offering
- 48 Neither late nor early
- 49 Lordly homes
- 50 Org.
- 52 Slightly open
- 53 Barcelona bull
- 54 Blender noise
- 55 "For Your Eyes ___"
- 56 Web page
- 57 Consisting of two parts
- 58 "Happy Motoring" brand
- 59 Awestruck
- 61 Destiny

CROSSWORD ANSWERS ON PAGE 39

Peripheral Neuropathy WARNING!

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- Pins & Needles
- Numbness & Tingling
- Burning Sensation
- Trouble Walking/Balance

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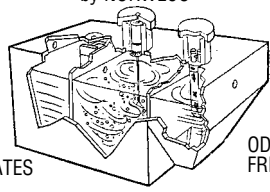
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CROSSWORD ANSWERS
 for puzzle on page 38

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P	S	V	R	E	T	O	E	M	T	I	A	R	
S	O	S	P	I	L	H	P	H	N	H	O	J	
U	S	A	S	T	S	I	P	S	T	O	M	A	
D	E	R	D	E	N	E	S	T	O	M	A	V	
A	K	V	A	K	A	N	G	A	V	A	A		
T	N	E	M	A	N	R	U	O	T	S	P	O	
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Rare find: Gavin's Downtown known for its superb steaks



STORY AND PHOTOS
BY ROB ROEDEL

Chris and Micah Crews had a dream of owning and operating their own restaurant, and in 2018, the couple made it happen when they bought Gavin's Downtown in Harrisburg.

The couple worked in the restaurant business and law enforcement during their careers. Micah continues to work in law enforcement, while working at the restaurant.

"My family has allowed us to make our dream come true," Chris said. "We are very thankful to our community for supporting our restaurant. We



Chris and Micah Crews own Gavin's Downtown in Harrisburg.

THE EATING ESSENTIALS

Gavin's Downtown

117 N. Main St., Harrisburg
870-578-0385
[facebook.com/gavinsdowntown](https://www.facebook.com/gavinsdowntown)

Hours of Operation

Wednesday-Friday: 11 a.m.-2 p.m.
Friday-Saturday: 5-11 p.m.



are very thankful for the friendships we have made."

Gavin's Downtown is in a classic red brick structure built in 1885. Before becoming a restaurant, the building was a drugstore, hardware store and other retail outlets. It has a charming feel, with upstairs seating overlooking the front dining area.

The Smoked Sausage Plate appetizer, featuring slices of smoked sausage sprinkled with a tasty barbecue seasoning, cheddar cheese cubes, pickles and crackers, is a perfect way to start a meal. The homemade spicy pickles are the star of this plate, and according to Chris and Micah, customers often ask to buy jars to take home.

Chris and team make all of the sauces in-house, including the Bang Bang sauce used in the spectacular Bang Bang Shrimp. The appetizer's aroma and presentation was very nice, and the flavor was out-of-this-world

Double the goodness: Gavin's Downtown's double-stacked Classic Cheeseburger and golden fries.

amazing. Be prepared to eat all 12 fried shrimp tossed in a sweet-and-spicy chili sauce!

The Classic Cheeseburger is oh, so good. Chris prepared a double version, which was double the goodness. The french fries were perfectly cooked.

Many northeast Arkansans have recommended Gavin's steaks as a must-try. So, I was excited to finally check the experience off my list. Chris presented me with a 12-ounce certified angus beef ribeye with a baked potato, green beans and a roll. My fork and taste buds were at the ready, as I savored my first taste of the perfectly prepared hand-cut steak. Wow. Just wow. My friends were right, as the beef was outstanding.

And then, Micah presented the fork-tender, melt-in-your-mouth filet



The Bang Bang Shrimp features a dozen fried shrimp coated in a delicious house-made sauce.

mignon. Chris and his team must have some magic seasonings, as this was one of the best filets that I have had. I could go on and on, but just order it during your visit. You can thank me later.

The team at Gavin's is a family affair, which includes Chris and Micah's daughter, Sonni; Chris' parents, Donna and Gary Crews; Micah's parents, Mike and Lana Parks; and Micah's sister, Mallory Long. The rest of the great staff also works to ensure that guests receive friendly service.

Chris' mother, Donna, is a pie queen whose desserts have become well-known in northeast Arkansas. On the day of my visit, I enjoyed a slice of strawberry pie. Desserts vary from day to day, but each one is made with love and care. Some of the more popular items include chocolate, peanut butter, Oreo and coconut pies, homemade banana pudding and Texas Turtle Cake.

Gavin's offers weekday lunch specials that are much loved in the Harrisburg area. Specials range from Mexican



The melt-in-your-mouth filet mignon at Gavin's Downtown is worth the trip to Harrisburg.

dishes to Chinese dishes to Southern comfort foods. Each weekend, Chris and the team offer guests "something a bit different." He mentioned specials like king crab legs, oysters Rockefeller and prime rib. ■

Dining recommendations?

Contact Rob Roedel at rob.roedel@aecc.com.

Road Tripping Across Arkansas IT'S ELECTRIC!

Like most people, we love a good road trip! There's something about the freedom of driving wherever you want and stopping whenever you want. However, driving an electric vehicle can make planning your road trip challenging at best.

Mapping out your road trip is an essential part of the process, whether you're driving a gas-guzzler or an electric vehicle. Specifically with the latter, there is more to consider. That's why we are driving across Arkansas and taking you along with us! First stop, Fayetteville!

As we head out in our Model 3 Tesla, with approximately 310 miles per charge, we make it all the way to Fayetteville from North Little Rock without stopping. Once in town, we pull over at Stonebridge Meadows Golf Club and utilize the level 2 charging station installed by Today's Power, Inc. and Ozarks Electric Cooperative. Level 2 chargers charge at a rate of 12-80 miles an hour, perfect for a round of golf.

Though the idea of traveling across state can seem daunting, level 2 chargers are sufficient in most cases to provide the charge needed for your trip! Follow along as we road trip across Arkansas in various electric vehicles and stop at charging stations TPI has installed in cooperative territories along the way!



Places to visit along the way!

Mount Nebo State Park

Petit Jean State Park

Oark General Store

Stonebridge Meadows Golf Course

Crystal Bridges Museum

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LEARN MORE ABOUT TODAY'S POWER



Calendar



World's Shortest St. Patrick's Day Parade



Little Rock Marathon



Spring Break at the Little Rock Zoo



Wye Mountain Daffodil Festival



Arkansas Derby

PHOTOS COURTESY ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF PARKS, HERITAGE AND TOURISM

March 1-31

Daffodil Days and Tulip Extravaganza
Hot Springs, garvangardens.org

March 3

Arkansas 4-H SeaPerch Challenge
Little Rock, 4h.uada.edu

Arkansas Chamber Singers concert
Little Rock, ar-chambersingers.org

March 3-5

Northwest Arkansas Home Show
Springdale, nawahomeshow.com

Vintage Market Days
Little Rock, vintagemarketdays.com

March 4-5

Little Rock Marathon
Little Rock, littlerockmarathon.com

Orchid Show and Sale
Fayetteville, bgozarks.org

March 4-12

Wye Mountain Daffodil Festival
Bigelow, facebook.com/wyemountainchurch

March 9-11

AAA Basketball State Championships
Hot Springs, hotsprings.org

Mountain View Bluegrass Festival
Mountain View, mountainview-bluegrass.com

March 11

Arkansas State Spelling Bee
Little Rock, aecc.com/spellingbee

March 13-25

Spring Ozark Folk School Classes
Mountain View, arkansasstateparks.com

March 17

World's Shortest St. Patrick's Day Parade
Hot Springs, shortteststpats.com

March 17-19

Jonquil Festival
Washington, facebook.com/jonquilsfestival

March 18

St. Patrick's Day Parade
Eureka Springs, eurekaspringschamber.com

Village People Live on Bridge Street
Hot Springs, shortteststpats.com

March 18-26

Spring Break at the Little Rock Zoo
Little Rock, littlerockzoo.com

March 20-24

Spring Break Week at Petit Jean State Park
Morrilton, arkansasstateparks.com

March 30-April 1

Delta Symposium
Jonesboro, astate.edu/a/delta-symposium

March 31

Arkansas STEM Festival
Little Rock, lisaacademy.org

March 31-April 2

Vintage Market Days
Bentonville, vintagemarketdays.com

April 1

Arkansas Derby
Hot Springs, oaklawn.com

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1 CUTS WATER BILLS AND MOWING BY AS MUCH AS 2/3

Would you believe a lawn could look perfect when watered just once? In Iowa, the state's biggest Men's Garden club picked a Zoysia lawn as "top lawn—nearly perfect." Yet, this lawn had been watered only once all summer!

2 NO NEED TO DIG UP OLD GRASS

Plant Amazoy in an old lawn or bare ground. Set plugs into holes in the soil checkerboard style. Plugs spread to create a lush, thick lawn, driving out weeds. Easy instructions included with every order.

3 ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY

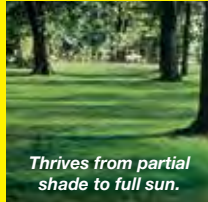
No weeding means no costly chemicals. Amazoy Zoysia lawns naturally resist insects, so you'll save money, while helping to protect the environment. Never expose your family and pets to weed killers and pesticide poison.

4 FOR SLOPES, PLAY AREAS, BARE SPOTS AND PARTIAL SHADE

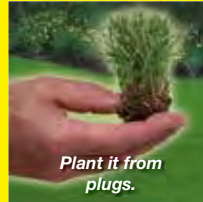
Can't beat Amazoy as the low-cost answer for hard-to-cover spots, play-worn areas, partial shade and erosion on slopes.

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"The hotter it gets, the better it grows!" Amazoy Zoysia thrives in blistering heat, yet it won't winter-kill to 30° below zero. It goes off its green color after hard frosts, and begins regaining its green color as temperatures in the spring are consistently warm.



Thrives from partial shade to full sun.



Plant it from plugs.

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Your established Zoysia lawn grows so thick, it simply stops crabgrass and most summer weeds from germinating!

7 NOW 3 WAYS TO START YOUR AMAZOY ZOYSIA LAWN!

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Freestyle Plugs You decide how big to cut the plugs. Each grass sheet can produce up to 150-1 in. plugs. Plant minimum 1 plug per sq. ft.

Max Plugs	Free Plugs	Grass Sheets	Your PRICE	+Shipping	SAVINGS
450	—	3	\$ 47.50	\$22.00	—
750	+150	6	\$ 72.50	\$27.50	25%
1100	+400	10	\$110.00	\$40.00	32%
2000	+1000	20	\$180.00	\$65.00	46%
3000	+1500	30	\$240.00	\$75.00	52%

Super Plugs Precut plugs 3 inches by 3 inches READY TO PLANT Packed in trays of 15 Super Plugs. Plant minimum 1 plug per 4 sq. ft.

Super Plugs	Free Plugs	Tray	Your PRICE	+Shipping	SAVINGS
15	—	1	\$ 27.50	\$15.00	—
25	+5	2	\$ 42.50	\$20.00	25%
60	+15	5	\$ 97.50	\$32.00	35%
120	+30	10	\$145.00	\$50.00	53%
240	+60	20	\$260.00	\$90.00	59%

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WE'RE ALL BEING SUN BURNED BY HIGHER RATES.

It's time to sunset an Arkansas state government rule that forces utilities to pay more for electricity sold into the grid from private solar installations, and punishing our electric cooperative members with higher rates.

The Arkansas Public Service Commission (APSC) ruled in 2020 that homeowners and businesses that install private solar panels will get paid **more than two times higher than the price we can buy energy from wholesale power markets. This higher price is PASSED BACK TO YOU at the Arkansas Public Service Commission-approved rates.** The average rate of delivered electricity in Arkansas is 12¢ per kilowatt hour, but the value of the excess energy put back on the grid is about 5¢ per kilowatt hour. These pennies add up to millions of dollars each year! It's a huge windfall, and a clear subsidy, to those who can afford to install solar panels—at the expense of every one of our members.



**BALANCE
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It's part of our mission to deliver
Reliable, Affordable, Responsible energy, *Always*



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**Those who installed a net-metering facility before the end of 2022 will remain under the current policy until up to 2040 pursuant to state law.*