

City & Town

APRIL 2007 VOL. 63, NO. 4

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE ARKANSAS MUNICIPAL LEAGUE



<p>Washington County Hospital Revenue Refunding Bonds</p> <p>\$109,380,000</p>	<p>Saline County Jail Construction Capital Improvement Bonds</p> <p>\$8,500,000</p>	<p>Harrison School District #1 Limited General Obligation Refunding</p> <p>\$5,255,000</p>	<p>City of Fayetteville Hwy 71 East Square Project</p> <p>\$3,725,000</p>	<p>City of Tucker Water & Sewer Refunding & Construction</p> <p>\$1,700,000</p>
<p>City of Little Rock Capital Improvement Bonds</p> <p>\$70,635,000</p>	<p>Fort Smith School District Construction Bonds</p> <p>\$8,000,000</p>	<p>City of Pocahontas Water & Sewer Construction Bonds</p> <p>\$4,635,000</p>	<p>City of Little Rock Hilton Little Rock Metro Center Project</p> <p>\$3,135,000</p>	<p>City of Hazen Water & Sewer System Improvement</p> <p>\$1,615,000</p>
<p>Arkansas State University Board of Trustees Housing System Revenue Bonds</p> <p>\$34,000,000</p>	<p>Blytheville School District Construction Bonds</p> <p>\$7,925,000</p>	<p>City of Ward Water & Sewer Revenue Refunding Bonds</p> <p>\$4,360,000</p>	<p>Ozark School District #14 Refunding Bonds</p> <p>\$2,849,933</p>	<p>City of Gravel Sales & Use Tax</p> <p>\$1,600,000</p>
<p>Conway Public Facilities Board University of Central Arkansas Foundation Project</p> <p>\$13,050,000</p>	<p>Saline County Regional Solid Waste Management District Project</p> <p>\$7,840,000</p>	<p>City of Shannon Hills Water & Sewer Revenue Construction Bonds</p> <p>\$4,250,000</p>	<p>City of Jacksonville Library Construction & Improvement Bonds</p> <p>\$2,500,000</p>	<p>White White</p> <p>\$2,000,000</p>
<p>Northwest Arkansas Regional Solid Waste Management District Waste Disposal Refunding & Construction</p> <p>\$12,340,000</p>	<p>City of Decatur Water & Sewer Refunding & Construction Project</p> <p>\$7,715,000</p>	<p>City of Barling Water & Sewer Revenue & Refunding Bonds</p> <p>\$4,195,000</p>	<p>Wynne School District #9 Construction Bonds</p> <p>\$2,296,361</p>	
<p>Johnson County Johnson Regional Medical Center Project</p> <p>\$10,000,000</p>	<p>City of Jonesboro Turtle Creek Redevelopment Project</p> <p>\$7,040,000</p>	<p>City of Rogers Water Revenue Bonds</p> <p>\$4,125,000</p>	<p>City of Haskell Water & Sewer Refunding Revenue</p> <p>\$2,165,000</p>	
<p>White Co. County Medical Project</p> <p>\$1,000,000</p>	<p>City of Searcy Water and Sewer Revenue Bonds</p> <p>\$6,025,000</p>	<p>Arkansas National Guard Camp Robinson Canteen Facility Project</p> <p>\$3,915,000</p>	<p>City of Engle Water & Sewer Revenue Refunding</p> <p>\$1,900,000</p>	

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FEATURES

- 6 City & Town Editor John Woodruff passes away**
We say goodbye to our friend and a friend to Arkansas's cities and towns, John Woodruff, who died in late March after a long and courageous battle with cancer. Read inside what a few of his many friends and admirers have to say about John.
- 10 Arkansas historic properties make the cut**
The *National Register of Historic Places* in the last year or so named nine municipal properties from across Arkansas to its National Register of Historic Places, including a cemetery, a city hall, three water towers and several historic downtowns.
- 12 Little Rock, North Little Rock 'distinctive'**
The National Trust has named the sister cities on its list of "America's Dozen Distinctive Destinations." From historic buildings to museums to bridges, the metro area has a lot to offer heritage tourists.
- 22 League's program 'largely successful' at legislative session**
The 86th Arkansas General Assembly wrapped up their regular session April 3. League-led issues were well received during the session, resulting in several new laws and amendments of which city leaders should be aware.
- 34 Address municipal needs, the NLC urges Congress**
Increased CDBG funding, immigration reform, housing reform and putting a stop to predatory lending were among the issues addressed at March's NLC Congressional City Conference.

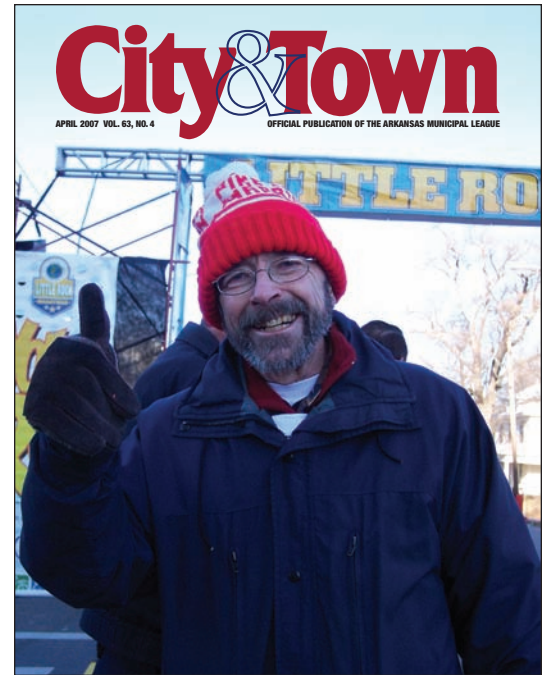


Arkansas's delegates to the NLC Congressional City Conference encouraged Congress to address the issues facing our cities and towns.

City & Town

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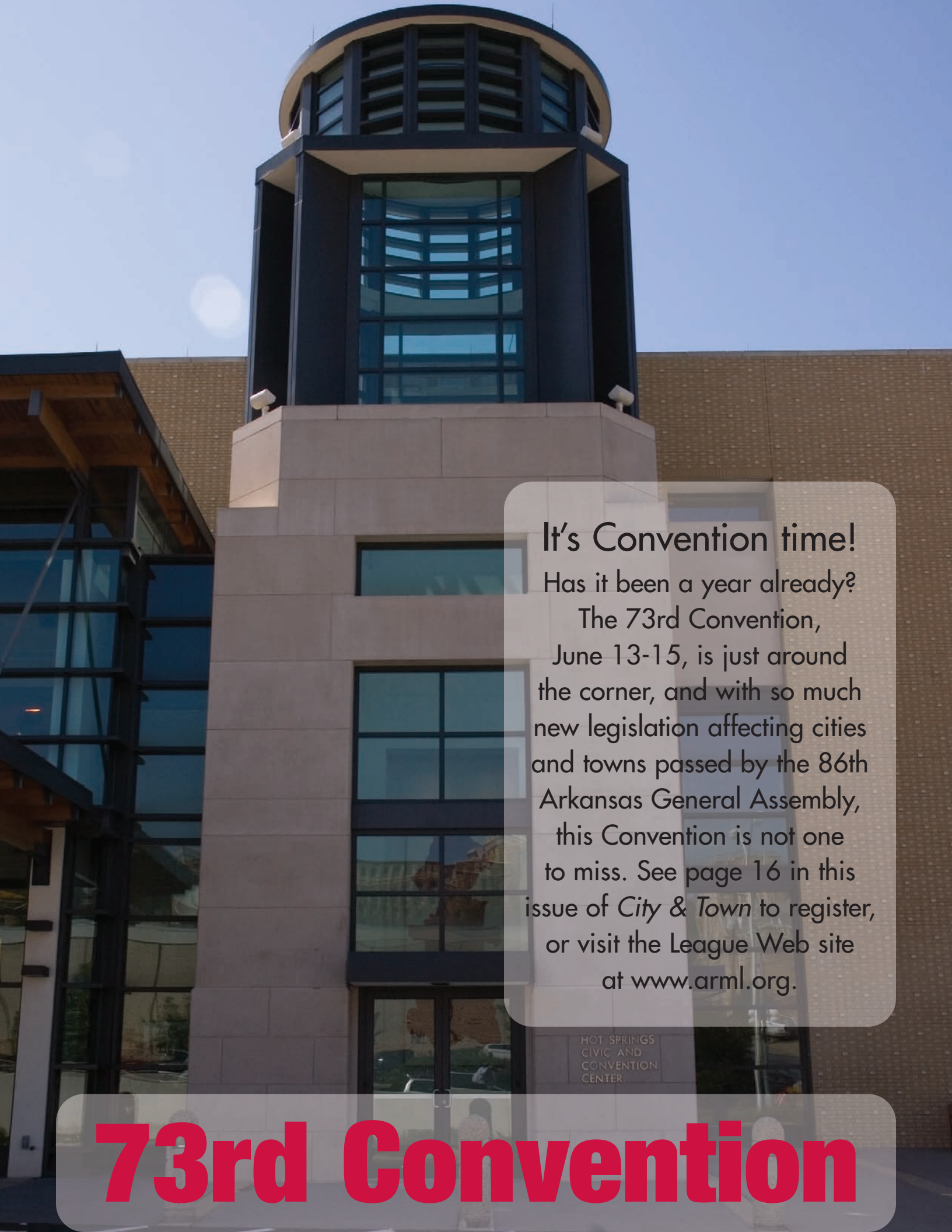
ON THE COVER—It won't surprise those who knew *City & Town* Editor John Woodruff, who passed away March 27 after a long battle with cancer, that even though he couldn't compete in this year's Little Rock Marathon, he volunteered—despite failing health—to call split times and support his fellow runners. That kind of dedication and passion defined John. We continue to mourn John's passing, but the hope and inspiration he gave us outweighs the sadness. We dedicate this issue of *City & Town* to the memory of our friend. And so, to use John's favorite salutation, "Greetings!" In this issue you'll find our tribute to John, along with coverage of the 86th General Session of the Arkansas Legislature, profiles of recent Arkansas additions to the National Register of Historic Places and much more. Enjoy!—atm

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Cover Photo by Tom Singleton

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The background of the entire page is a photograph of the Hot Springs Civic and Convention Center. The building features a prominent central tower with a glass-enclosed upper section and a dark, cylindrical top. The main body of the building is constructed from light-colored stone or concrete blocks. To the left, there is a modern glass-walled structure. The sky is clear and blue.

It's Convention time!
Has it been a year already?
The 73rd Convention,
June 13-15, is just around
the corner, and with so much
new legislation affecting cities
and towns passed by the 86th
Arkansas General Assembly,
this Convention is not one
to miss. See page 16 in this
issue of *City & Town* to register,
or visit the League Web site
at www.arml.org.

73rd Convention

HOT SPRINGS
CIVIC AND
CONVENTION
CENTER

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE: Mayor Bobbie Bailey, **Alpena**; Mayor Tim McKinney, **Berryville**; Mayor Larry Mitchell, **Bryant**; Mayor Chris Claybaker, **Camden**; City Director Gary Campbell, **Fort Smith**; Mayor James Valley, **Helena-West Helena**; Alderman Kenny Elliott, **Jacksonville**; Councilmember Joe Gies, **Lakeview**; Mayor JoAnne Bush, **Lake Village**; Mayor Mark Stodola, **Little Rock**; Mayor Robert Taylor, **Marianna**; Mayor Frank Fogleman, **Marion**; Clerk/Treasurer Regina Walker, **Mena**; Mayor Betty Feller, **Mulberry**; Clerk/Treasurer Linda Treadway, **Newport**; City Clerk Diane Whitbey, **North Little Rock**; Mayor Jackie Crabtree, **Pea Ridge**; Mayor Howard Taylor, **Prescott**; Mayor Belinda LaForce, **Searcy**; Recorder/Treasurer Carolyn Willett, **Smackover**; Mayor Jerre Van Hoose, **Springdale**; Mayor Horace Shipp, **Texarkana**; Councilmember Dorothy Henderson, **Warren**; Mayor Paul Nichols, **Wynne**.

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John K. Woodruff III 1941-2007

Arkansas Municipal League Communications Coordinator and *City & Town* Editor John Woodruff died Tuesday, March 27, in Little Rock after a long battle with cancer. He was 65. His wife Diane, two daughters and a son survive him.

Prior to joining the League staff, John worked for the *Arkansas Gazette* and continued there until the paper's closure in 1991. He started in 1969 and covered North Little Rock for 21 of his 22 years at the *Gazette*.

"He knew how many feet of pipe were bought every week for road work," said Max Brantley of the *Arkansas Times*, who worked with John at the *Gazette*. "He came early, he stayed late, and nobody did a more thorough job. He got every last detail!"

John began at the League in 1992 editing *City & Town*, the League's official magazine. His dedication to journalism and his passion for Arkansas's cities and towns shined in

John's informative and down-to-earth writing and lovely photography in the magazine, which, for many years, he ran without assistance.

John also was an avid runner, logging over 41,000 miles on the road and completing 48 marathons, including six while undergoing chemotherapy. He ran the grueling Pike's Peak Marathon 11 times.

"He was the toughest person I ever knew," League Executive Director Don Zimmerman said of John, who until the end still parked, as was his routine, at the farthest corner of the League's parking lot in order to maximize his exercise.

Under his care, *City & Town* went from being a glorified newsletter to one of best looking and well written municipal magazines in the country. He was a true professional, a kind and humble teacher, and was a student of life whose faith was always evident. He was irreplaceable. And so, with sadness and hope, we dedicate this issue of *City & Town* to John.

When I hired John Woodruff to work for the League, effective Jan. 1, 1992, I knew it was a good decision. It was in the years that ensued that I realized what he brought to the job went over and above his skills as a journalist. Yes, he took *City & Town* to a whole new level as the League's official monthly publication. But what I hadn't realized was his spirit and the potential he had to deal with the challenges and obstacles that would confront him.

The medical problems he faced—ones most people would have succumbed to years earlier—caused me after time to tell him that he was my candidate for the Tough Man Contest. Tough, strong, inspirational, determined, kind, humble and loved are just a few of the terms used to describe him since his death. It was a rainy, dark day at his funeral on March 31. Not too long ago, John would have been out for a long run on such a day. It would have been a beautiful day to him, one of which to make the very most. What an inspiration was the toughest man I've known.

—Don Zimmerman, *League executive director*

Many do not realize that John had been very ill for several years, but you never heard him complain about his situation or the cards he had been dealt. All I can say about John is the world is a better place because of his endeavors and perseverance in his daily life.

—Jimmy Wallace, *League staff and former England mayor*

The Municipal League has been a cornerstone in supporting the Delta Grassroots Caucus, and much of the credit for that should go to John Woodruff. John's thorough and perceptive reports on all of the Delta Caucus meetings were invaluable in helping our organization communicate its message. I frequently spoke at meetings across the Delta where I would always bring copies of John's articles, which were so effective in communicating the economic problems as well as the great potential for our region. The Grassroots Caucus, Arkansas and the entire Delta region has lost a great writer and a great friend.

—Lee Powell, *Mississippi Grassroots Caucus*

John was always kind, gentle and a true gentleman. John was a friend to everyone. We will miss his smile and kind, soft voice. John was an asset to his profession.

—Charlotte Goodwin, *Ash Flat recorder/treasurer*

John was the best there is in a human being, and I know that everyone he came into contact with at our meetings and conferences just thought the world of him.

—Scott Morris, *National League of Cities*

When I went to my first League meeting, like most new people I felt pretty much lost with so many new faces. When I saw this guy taking pictures, I knew I had found someone I could strike up a conversation with over photography.

After I started getting more involved in the League, I was going to meetings of one kind or another at the League building between the summer and winter meetings. If I was going to stop by, then I might as well go by and say hi to that photographer that I met at the big meetings. John and I shared a love of photography, reporting, and we were both

Methodists. We did not share a love of running; I was then a bicycle rider.

The only time that John and I ever disagreed was his love of film and mine for the emerging digital photography. I even let him use my digital camera a couple of times, but he still wanted to go back to film. I think the running back and forth to the lab to get his film processed with the deadline for *City & Town* over his head finally broke him from the old world. I kept telling John that when Don Zimmerman sees how much money he can save, he would love to buy you a new camera.

In all of the times that I talked to John before his chemo and after, I never heard a bitter word about any person or his fate in life. John took his zest for life seriously, and he gave it 100 percent. I never heard him run anyone down. Now, that is not to say that he didn't hold some political people's feet to the fire! He was always positive. It might have been that I went to see John to pick myself up. When you meet people that surround themselves with that positive feeling you want to take a little of that back yourself.

The Wednesday before John passed away, I was in Little Rock for a little lobbying at the Capitol, and even though I was retired from politics and the League, I couldn't help going by to see John. I had tried for three or four weeks before and he had been out of town, but that Wednesday he was in. He shared with me that his treatments in Texas hadn't worked, but he was not going to give up hope. He paused a minute and said—kind of to himself—that he was going to have to get with Don so that there would be a smooth transition if his treatments didn't work. I don't think I have met or had occasion to work with a bigger man or one that I couldn't have more wanted to be like. I don't think I can ever



Seen here a few Christmases past, John hams it up in the role of Santa during a skit. He always managed to draw laughs from his co-workers during the annual League Christmas luncheons. Opposite page: John in 2005 was inducted into the Arkansas RRCA Road Running Hall of Fame, Arkansas's most prestigious running honor.

go by the League building and not think of John. He was a man dedicated to his faith, his family, his life and living life to the fullest.

—*Stewart Nelson, former Morrilton mayor and League president*

He always helped me with anything I needed while [former Bentonville] Mayor Terry Coberly was president of the Arkansas Municipal League. He was a very nice man.

—*Suzanne Grider, Bentonville clerk*

My husband and I are regular blood donors. John had at least two blood transfusions last summer, but it was not at a time that we had donated, so we were not able to help him directly. However, John was so grateful that we consistently gave to the Red Cross to anyone who needed it that he treated us out to dinner to show his appreciation. We had a delightful meal at Trio's and shared a lot of stories and laughs.

I wrote this poem years ago. It is not specifically about John, but I believe it embodies some of his personality.

Dying free

When I die,

I want to be the wind sneering at the ragged ground that can't move.

I'll hop-scotch over stiff-necked ridges,

and thumb my nose at rocks caught in the cracks.

I'll kiss the ground, leaving lip prints on its dirty coat, then soar away with a cold face.

So, never look in the dirt for my name.

I'll not resign a single particle of me to the mud.

Instead,

watch the next breeze taunting a cliff with traces of satire sharp as flint.

If it sweeps by without a thorn of regret, then, I am there.

—*Cathy Moran, League staff*

John was a great friend and truly an example for living life at its best.

—*Jerry Montgomery, former Mena mayor*

Back in the '80s, he hiked the Five Mile Creek in North Little Rock along with members of the Sierra Club. He wrote an article with photos in the *Gazette* about the need for preserving this urban treasure as open space. He commented in an e-mail in 2005, "That Five Mile Creek trek was a lot of fun! I still look for Indian Paint Brushes at the sides of roads. That's one of those things (a trail in a metro area) that can really enhance cities."

—*Bill Fortson, Little Rock*

It was my pleasure to know and work with John over the years he worked for the Arkansas Municipal League. I never saw John when he was not positive. I will miss him.

—*Paul Nichols, Wynne mayor*

I will always remember John for his meticulous work habits, his sincere love for the municipal officials of Arkansas, his dedication to the Municipal League, his unique sense of

humor and his genuine concern for people. John got along with everyone. People with character and integrity like John are rare. He was an inspiration to us all.

—*Ken Wasson, League staff*

Once he told me a story about spending some time with his son in New York (I believe) and how he had befriended several of the "locals." One lady who was blind was walking to church and he helped her and, of course, a friendship was formed between them. He said by the time his visit was over, his son said he knew more people in New York than he did! Now isn't that just like John? If I were to list my blessings, the opportunity of knowing John would have to be on that list. John left the world a much better place. I know I'm a better person for having known him.

—*Jamie Adams, League staff*

John had a great respect for words. When he spoke, he chose his words carefully and spoke them in true sincerity. John had a great respect for people. I never heard him speak an unkind word about anyone. I never heard him grumble or complain. John had a great sense of humor. During our League Christmas parties, John would act out his characters with gusto, making us laugh at his antics. He was always cheerful and kind. John had a great respect for his work. The League's *City & Town* magazine is a reflection of the many hours he spent to make sure each issue was one to be proud of. John had great strength of character and was a man of great faith. John had a great love for running. He was our "marathon man" in more ways than one. In more ways than one, John Woodruff was a great man.

—*Pat Planek, League staff*

John needed no "pat on the back" because he knew that he was good at what he did. This man had been involved in the reporting and editing business all his life and enjoyed every minute. ... John Woodruff literally worked for the good of the municipalities of Arkansas until the day he died. The Friday before he passed away ... John emailed me ideas about a subject that needed coverage.

—*Al Johnson, League engineering consultant*

A person wouldn't know it to look at me now but in the 1970s, John Woodruff and I used to run together quite a bit. Our jogging partnership reached its peak on March 1, 1980, when we ran the Arkansas Marathon together—at least the first 20 miles or so, whereupon I slowed to a waddle and watched him trudge away to complete the race a good 30 minutes before me. It was 15 degrees outside that day with the wind popping the edges of the flags along the route. I still shiver when I recall the ice in John's beard as he cheered me across the finish line. Gosh, those were good times. Youth and insanity beats money and power any day of the week. I think John would agree.

I bring this up because our running created the only disagreement John and I ever had. You see, I was an "I.D. Man." When we would leave our downtown Little Rock neighborhood and start out for some destination 10 miles away, I insisted on wearing identification in case of an

accident. You know ... so they would know who I was.

Well, John was an "anonymist." He refused to wear any identification because he didn't want someone to know that his family was home alone in case something happened. One can only imagine the miles we spent on the topic.

"But John," I would argue, "You might lay up on a hospital bed for days without anyone there knowing who you were."

He would look at me with that funny little way he had of cocking his head to one side when he talked. "Surely someone would miss me eventually."

I guess if he were here today, I would still argue with him concerning the merits of carrying identification. But I would never doubt for a moment that John would indeed be missed—and so very badly.

—Jim vonTungeln, League planning consultant

I first met John in the late 1970s, when I was one of the reporters assigned to cover North Little Rock for the *Arkansas Democrat*. It was my first "hard news" job. ... He always treated me like an equal, even though he obviously knew a lot more about the news business than I did. John was serious about his work and about the competition between the two newspapers, but he never treated me, or any other reporter I know of, with anything less than respect and courtesy.

—Emily Sneddon, Maumelle

John was such a supporter of all the Arkansas city clerks and all of us "little" towns. He made our town feel special with his in-depth coverage of our new city park in 1994 and with the photos and stories of our centennial last year and our Volunteer City of the Year in 2003. I was amazed that John never forgot my name when he saw me at any event.

—Marla Wallace, Gillett recorder/treasurer

FREE

Vol. 4
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The Spirit

magazine

Little Rock Marathon competitor

**64-year-old
John Woodruff
doesn't let
cancer and
heart ailment
slow him down**

page 12



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Reader writes of
God's healing
power in his life



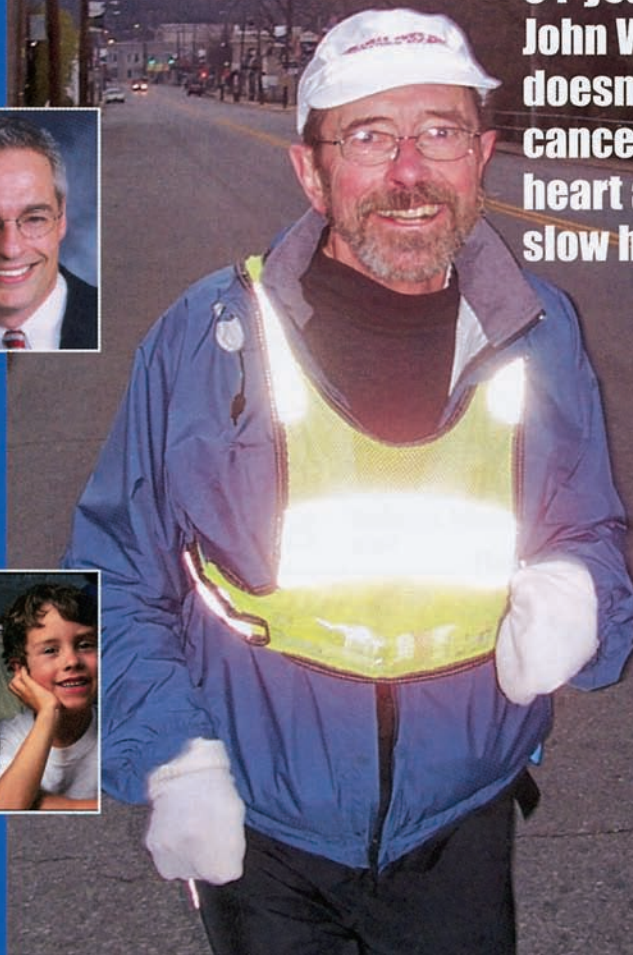
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Investing Wisely:
We all have
needs; God has
the answers



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Pastor Chuck
writes about
prejudice



"Woodruff learned at a very early age to rely on his faith to see him down the rough roads," Julie Mayberry wrote of John. His inspirational story made the cover of the March 2006 issue of *The Spirit*, a spiritually uplifting magazine published in Little Rock.



Historic city properties win National Register listings

Nine municipal properties in Arkansas are among 62 properties named in the last year to the National Register of Historic Places.

By Andrew Morgan, League staff

Nine municipal properties from north to south Arkansas have been added to the *National Register of Historic Places*, most of them in 2006.

The Arkansas Historic Preservation Program in its annual report lists the properties especially significant to municipalities, including a city-owned cemetery, a city hall, three water towers and historic downtowns.

Here are the new additions to the *Register*.

Hardy Cemetery Historic Section

The first marked burial in the Hardy Cemetery took place in 1888, but since it is unknown when the first unmarked burial took place, the cemetery may be even older. At the eastern end of Main Street, the Hardy Cemetery Historic Section is the final resting place of many of the city's founders, landowners, business people and their families.

Eudora City Hall

By the early 1930s, Eudora had grown enough to need a proper city hall. City leaders turned to the federal Public Works Administration (PWA) for help and secured loan and grant money totaling about \$16,000 to complete the building.

Little Rock architect A.N. McAninch designed the building, and construction began on June 30, 1936.

Eudora's city hall remains the best example of Art Deco architecture in the city and is a living reminder of Arkansas's PWA and New Deal-era history.

Blytheville commercial historic district

During Blytheville's peak in the 1950s, the city's population topped 50,000. Downtown on Saturdays was bustling with people and business, according to recollections. Main Street boasted several department stores, including a Kress, J.C. Penney and a Graber's, along with all kinds of other businesses, such as an ice cream shop, bakeries, pool halls, banks, clothing, hardware, grocery stores and more.

For nearly 50 years, the Blytheville Air Force Base—renamed Eaker Air Force Base in 1988—helped define the city and boosted its economy. The nearly 4,000-acre base over the years served as a WWII-era pilot

training field, a military records storage facility and was home to several squadrons of bombers, including the B-57 and B-52. At its height, Eaker was home to more than 3,000 military personnel. Blytheville has managed to not let the facility go to waste since the base closed in 1992. Touting the 11,600-foot runway, the city has attracted

new shipping and transportation business to the facility, now known as the Arkansas Aeroplex.

Blytheville's fortunes and population declined after its peak in the 1950s. The city has made efforts to restore and rejuvenate its downtown, which includes that delightful draw of book lovers and the curious, That Bookstore in Blytheville.

Mary Gay Shipley opened the bookstore at 316 West Main in 1976. Its reputation, as the store boasts, has made it "a unique Mid-America landmark." Folks drive out of their way just to meet authors, have them sign their books



Responding to the need for a public water supply, Bearden in 1935 secured loan and grant money totaling \$47,394 through the PWA. The water tower, seen here, and waterworks were completed in 1936 and are still in use today.

and browse the more than 25,000 titles in stock while sipping a cup of the store's own blend of coffee, Special Edition. Here is what the store has to say about itself: "You can relax in a rocking chair next to a wood stove, engage in conversation about the book you've just read or enjoy a spontaneous reading of the new favorite children's book of the day."

With the bookstore being an exception, most new development has been next to nearby Interstate 55.

Blytheville's heritage is, however, still alive downtown.

Clinton commercial historic district

At the turn of the 20th century, Clinton was still a fairly undeveloped community with just a handful of businesses and structures. The construction of the Missouri and North Arkansas Railroad, however, brought change. The timber industry moved in to the community whose residents were previously mostly self-sustaining subsistence farmers.

As Clinton grew, its courthouse square remained essentially the same. That changed, however, when in 1926 a fire destroyed several businesses. New "fireproof" stone and brick buildings went up, and the face of downtown changed.

While Clinton's population has declined over the years and businesses have moved away from downtown, the city's historic commercial district has survived and maintains the charm of an earlier time, reflected in Clinton's annual National Chuckwagon Races.

Marianna commercial historic district

In the 1870s, Marianna's access to the Mississippi River made it a hub for trading and shipping cotton and timber. Its downtown, which was very near the boat landing, quickly became the business and social heart of the city.

Marianna and its downtown continued to grow in the early years of the 20th century, despite fires and other hardships, and during the 1930s and '40s downtown prospered. For a time, every building was occupied and businesses would stay open until midnight on Saturdays to accommodate shoppers.

Like many places, Marianna saw its downtown decline after the '50s, but the city has made efforts to preserve its historic downtown and most of its buildings are still in use. Housing for the elderly has been built on the square where fires had left vacant lots. Its brick streets around the square are a carefully preserved reminder of Marianna's past.

Bearden, Hughes and Mountain View water towers

By the early 20th century, Bearden in Ouachita County, Hughes in St. Francis County and Mountain View in Stone County were all growing communities in need of reliable public water supplies. Each city in the 1930s took advantage of loan and grant assistance programs available through the PWA, a program of President Franklin Delano Roosevelt's New Deal program. In each of these cities, the waterworks and those towering tanks on spindly legs continue today to serve residents and remain testaments to the PWA's efforts to improve cities' infrastructures during the Great Depression.

Warren's brick streets

Warren's streets, like those in numerous Arkansas towns, remained unpaved until the 1920s. But as automobile traffic increased, the dirt and gravel roads became increasingly impractical, especially during wet weather.

Warren in about 1927 began paving its high-traffic downtown streets with brick and by 1931 had laid about seven miles of brick and concrete streets throughout the city.

Today, less than one mile of the original brick streets remains on portions of Cedar, Myrtle, Chestnut, First, Walnut, Elm and Cypress streets. The brick streets



Seen here in front of the Warren Municipal Building on a recent evening, Warren's surviving brick streets, completed in 1927, remain in good condition even after years of use. It is likely the city purchased the bricks from an Arkansas brick manufacturer operating at that time, such as the Acme Brick plants at Malvern and Perla.

are a rare surviving example of a once-common paving technique and, though costly to maintain, continue to provide excellent service to residents. Warren's brick streets were listed on the *National Register* in January 2007. They are the foundation for the popular annual Bradley County Pink Tomato Festival.

The *National Register* in Arkansas is administered by the Arkansas Historic Preservation Program, an agency of the Department of Arkansas Heritage. In addition to representing a community's devotion to the preservation of its historic resources, properties listed on the *Register* become eligible for federal tax benefits and qualify for federal assistance for historic preservation. 🏛️

Information for this article was provided by the Arkansas Historic Preservation Program, www.arkansaspreservation.org.

Historic group says Little Rock, North Little Rock 'distinctive'

National Trust names two cities as a distinctive destination.

By Andrew Morgan, League staff

The National Trust for Historic Preservation in March named Little Rock and North Little Rock one of “America’s Dozen Distinctive Destinations,” the organization’s annual list promoting heritage tourism.

To make the announcement, the two cities’ mayors chose the middle of the Main Street Bridge, which connects the cities. Traffic was halted for the occasion, but the Central Arkansas Transit trolley car shared the bridge.

Little Rock Mayor Mark Stodola, North Little Rock Mayor Patrick Hays, National Trust Southwest Office Director Daniel Carey and other community leaders announced the honor March 7.

Carey called the last decade or so of rejuvenation on each side of the Arkansas River a “remarkable transformation.”

To many, Little Rock will forever be linked with the Civil Rights struggles of the mid-20th century, especially Governor Orval Faubus’ deployment in 1957 of the National Guard to block nine black students from entering Little Rock Central High School. While no trip to Little Rock would be complete without visiting the Central High Visitor Center, the National Trust says, Little Rock offers a wide range of attractions.

The National Trust praises Little Rock’s rich history reflected in its antebellum and Victorian structures, which stand near modern skyscrapers. The private, nonprofit preservation organization cites many of the city’s historic and unique cultural offerings, including the Old State House, a 19th century Greek revival building, now a museum; the distinctive Capitol, which is a downscaled replica of

the U.S. Capitol; the Historic Arkansas Museum; and the William J. Clinton Presidential Center, which opened in



Located across the street from the school (visible in the background), this Mobil service station, restored to its 1957 appearance, houses the Little Rock Central High School National Historic Site Visitor Center. 2007 marks the 50th anniversary of the desegregation events at Central High.

PHOTOS BY ANDREW MORGAN, LEAGUE STAFF



Built in the early 1930s in what is now North Little Rock's Lakewood area, The Old Mill was never a working grist mill. Rather it was built as a tribute to Arkansas pioneers and mills of an earlier time. About 200 couples a year choose the photogenic mill as the site for their weddings.

2004 and has become a popular tourist destination and an anchor of Little Rock's River Market district.

The National Trust also names sites on the North Little Rock side of the river, including WWII-era subma-

rine the *U.S.S. Razorback*; The Old Mill, which appears in the opening moments of the classic film *Gone With the Wind*; and the recently completed Pulaski County Pedestrian and Bicycle Bridge, known locally as the Big Dam Bridge, which links the two cities and is the world's longest pedestrian bridge built for that purpose. The North Little Rock riverfront is also a significant site along the Trail of Tears, the forced exodus in 1838 of thousands of Native Americans.

"Little Rock offers so many exciting attractions for the eager visitor," Richard Moe, president of the Trust, says in a media release. "From a world-renowned presidential library to a site that changed the course of history, there is something for every age and interest to experience. This outstanding city has a rich past that is celebrated by residents and visitors alike."

Little Rock is the second Arkansas city to make the list. The National Trust named Eureka Springs a Distinctive Designation in 2002.

Other cities on the 2007 list of America's Dozen Distinctive Destinations include Charlottesville, Va.; Chatham, Mass.; Chestertown, Md.; Durango, Colo.; Ellensburg, Wash.; Hillsborough, N.C.; Mineral Point, Wis.; Providence, R.I.; West Hollywood, Calif.; and Woodstock, Ill.





Municipal Notes

West Memphis clerk honored

The International Institute of Municipal Clerks (IIMC) has accepted West Memphis Senior Deputy City Clerk Cindy Greenwood, CMC, into the Second Level Membership of the IIMC Master Municipal Clerk Academy.



Greenwood

Greenwood has worked in city government for 30 years, starting as a secretary in the West Memphis Public Works Department. She has been a city clerk for 25 years and has been a senior deputy city clerk since 1991.



'Fair Housing Month' in Little Rock honors Title VII

Little Rock Mayor Mark Stodola at the April 3 meeting of the city's board of directors proclaimed April 2007 "Fair Housing Month" in Little Rock, the city announced in a media release.

This month marks the 39th anniversary of the U.S. legislature's enactment of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1968, generally referred to as the Federal Fair Housing Act. Title VII, which was amended and expanded in 1988, made it federal policy to assure that fair housing becomes a reality throughout the United States. The law prohibits discrimination in the sale, rental or financing of housing on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, handicap, familial status or national origin.



Municipal Clerks Week is April 29-May 5

Increase public awareness of municipal clerks and the valuable services they perform for our cities and towns by saying thank you to your clerk during the internationally celebrated 38th Municipal Clerks Week, April 29-May 5.

The International Institute of Municipal Clerks (IIMC) since 1969 has sponsored the week. The IIMC has 10,000 members in the United States, Canada and 15 other countries.

Presidents Ronald Reagan and Bill Clinton, in 1984 and 1994 respectively, signed proclamations officially declaring Municipal Clerks Week the first full week of May, recognizing the role municipal clerks play in local government. During this week, municipal clerks throughout the world will host open houses and tours of the municipal clerks' office, visit local schools and participate in other events.

Clerks prepare agendas, take minutes, maintain ordinance and resolutions files, keep historical records, process permits and serve as the clearinghouse for information about the local government. Many clerks serve as financial officers or treasurers and, in small municipalities, may act as chief administrative officers.

Gentry Chamber honors longtime public servant

The Gentry Chamber of Commerce in January at the Gentry Main Street Chamber banquet honored the memory of J.D. Smith with a lifetime achievement award, the *Decatur Herald* reported.

Smith served on the city council on three separate occasions, beginning in 1955 until his death in 2005. He served as Gentry's mayor from 1987 to 1990. He also served on numerous committees, including the League's Second Class Cities Advisory Council and was the mayor's designee on the League Resolutions Committee.

North Little Rock scores soccer tourney

The U.S. Soccer Association on April 3 announced that North Little Rock will host the 2008 U.S. Youth Soccer national championship, the country's most prestigious national youth soccer tournament, *Arkansas Business* has reported.

The Arkansas State Soccer Association will organize the event, to be played July 22-27, 2008, at the Burns Park Soccer Complex.

(see **Briefs**, page 20)



It's Convention time again.

June 13-15—Hot Springs, Ark.

See next page for more information.

Register online at www.arml.org.

Exhibitors, contact the League immediately to reserve space for your display. Contact John Thomas at 501-374-3484, ext. 107, or Whitnee Bullerwell at ext. 206. Cost for the exhibit space is \$400.



73rd CONVENTION

Hot Springs Convention Center
June 13-15, 2007

REGISTRATION

Registration and payment must be received in League office by Friday, June 1, 2007, to qualify for advance registration.

Advance registration for municipal officials	\$150
Registration fee after June 1, 2007 , and on-site registration for municipal officials	\$175
Spouse/guest registration	\$75
Child registration	\$75
Other registrants	\$200

- Registration will be processed **ONLY** with accompanying payment in full. Make checks payable to the Arkansas Municipal League.
- Registration includes meals, activities and copies of **Handbook for Arkansas Municipal Officials, 2005-'06 edition** and **2007 General Acts Affecting Arkansas Municipalities**.
- No daily registration is available.
- Registration must come through the League office. No telephone registrations will be accepted.
- **No refunds after June 1, 2007.**
- Cancellation letters must be postmarked by **June 1, 2007**.

HOUSING

To set up direct billing, contact hotel accounting offices.

- **Embassy Suites Hotel—501-321-4413**
- **Austin Hotel—800-844-7275**
- **Arlington Hotel—800-643-1502**

Embassy Suites Hotel (headquarters hotel)		
Single/ Double	\$129	Check-in 3 p.m.
Austin Hotel		
Single/ Double	\$75	Check-in 3 p.m.
Arlington Hotel		
Single	\$77	Double \$87
		Check-in 3 p.m.

- Cut-off date for hotel reservations is **June 1, 2007**.
- Rooms in Hot Springs are subject to a 13.5 percent tax.
- If your 1st choice and 2nd choice are unavailable, the Housing Bureau will assign you to an available facility.
- Rooms will be held until 6 p.m. and then released unless guaranteed by credit card.
- Contact the Housing Bureau at 800-922-6478 (9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. M-F) to make changes or cancellations in hotel accommodations until **June 1, 2007**. Contact the hotel after that date.
- Hotel confirmation number will come directly from the hotel.

TWO WAYS TO REGISTER

2

Complete the steps and **mail with payment** to:

ARKANSAS MUNICIPAL LEAGUE

Attn: 73rd Convention

P.O. Box 38

North Little Rock, AR 72115-0038

1

Register online at www.arml.org
and pay by credit card.

OR

Step 1: Delegate Information

Name: _____
 Title: _____ City of: _____
 Address: _____
 City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____ Telephone: _____
 Spouse/Guest will attend: Yes No Name: _____
 Children will attend: Yes No Name(s): _____

Step 2: Payment Information

• WHAT IS YOUR TOTAL? (see opposite page for fees)

<input type="checkbox"/> Advance Registration	<input type="checkbox"/> Regular Registration	<input type="checkbox"/> Spouse/Guest	<input type="checkbox"/> Child	<input type="checkbox"/> Other Registrants	Total
\$150	\$175	\$75	\$75	\$200	\$

• HOW ARE YOU PAYING?

Check Mail payment and form to: Arkansas Municipal League
 73rd Convention
 P.O. Box 38
 North Little Rock, AR 72115

Credit Card Complete information below and send to address above.

Credit Card: Visa MasterCard

Card Number: _____ Exp. Date: __/200__

Card Holder Name (as it appears on card): _____

Billing address (as it appears on statement): _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

E-mail address (required for credit card payment): _____

Step 3: Housing Reservation Request

Make my hotel reservation as indicated below.

I do not require hotel reservations.

Arrival Date: 06 / __ / 2007 Time: 3 p.m.

Hotel Choices: 1st choice: _____

Type of Accommodations: 1 bed 2 beds

List all people staying in room (include yourself): _____

I prefer a SMOKING room (if available).

I need information for handicapped accessibility.

Departure Date: 06 / __ / 2007 Time: _____

2nd choice: _____

Step 4: Housing Payment

Payment Options: Credit Card Direct Bill Note: only two payment options.

Direct bill my city. Contact hotel to set up an account. See Housing box on previous page for contact information.)

Use my credit card to obtain/guarantee my reservations.

Credit Card: Visa MasterCard Discover AM EX

Card Number: _____ Exp. Date: __/200__

Card Holder Name (as it appears on card): _____

TENTATIVE PROGRAM IN BRIEF

To see an expanded tentative schedule, visit www.arml.org.

WEDNESDAY JUNE 13

3:30 p.m.-7 p.m.
5:30 p.m.
7 p.m.

REGISTRATION AND EXHIBIT HALL OPEN
RESOLUTIONS COMMITTEE MEETING
OPENING NIGHT BANQUET

THURSDAY JUNE 14

7:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.
7:30 a.m.-5 p.m.
7:30 a.m.-8:45 a.m.
9 a.m.-12:30 p.m.
12:30 p.m.-1:30 p.m.
1:30 p.m.-5:30 p.m.
5:30 p.m.-9 p.m.

REGISTRATION OPEN
EXHIBITS OPEN
HOST CITY BREAKFAST
GENERAL SESSIONS
LUNCHEON
CONCURRENT WORKSHOPS
EVENING OPEN—ENTERTAINMENT OPTIONS

FRIDAY JUNE 15

7:15 a.m.-6 p.m.
7:30 a.m.-8:45 a.m.
9 a.m.-10 a.m.
10:15 a.m.-11:30 p.m.
11:45 p.m.-1:30 p.m.

REGISTRATION OPEN
BREAKFAST
OFFICIALS' EXCHANGE
ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETINGS
AWARDS AND NEW OFFICERS' LUNCHEON

RESOLUTIONS

Suggested Convention Resolutions for consideration at the 73rd Annual Convention should be mailed to:

73rd Convention Resolutions
Arkansas Municipal League
P.O. Box 38
North Little Rock, AR 72115-0038

Resolutions must be received at least 30 days (May 13, 2007) prior to Convention.

These resolutions may be drafted by an official of any member city or town and can relate to any matter of municipal concern. See your **2006-2007 Policies and Goals** for resolutions adopted at the 72nd Convention.

WANTED: City officials or employees with 25 years of service in 2007

If you or other officials in your city or town are serving their 25th year of municipal service, the League would like to know.

Special recognition will be given to them at the 73rd League Convention, June 13-15, in Hot Springs.

Call Ken Wasson at 501-374-3484, ext. 211, or Sheila Moore, ext. 218.

Or write: P.O. Box 38 North Little Rock, AR 72115-0038.

Names must be submitted to the League office by May 21.

NOTICE TO EXHIBITORS

At the 73rd Convention a special Exhibit Hall is available for businesses, companies and manufacturers to display their products and services that are available to Arkansas municipalities.

To guarantee your firm's exhibit area, contact the League immediately to reserve space for your display. Your name will be added to the list of exhibitors, and we will reserve a space for your exhibit when you arrive.

The cost this year for exhibit space is \$400. We cannot guarantee space for companies that do not preregister before June 1.

Call Whitnee Bullerwell at 501-374-3484, ext. 206.

Or write: Arkansas Municipal League, P.O. Box 38, North Little Rock, AR 72115-0038

Want the latest information?

Are you a member of the Arkansas Municipal League?
Subscribe to our list servs and be automatically
notified of pertinent municipal information.

How do I subscribe?

Step 1:

Choose the lists from which you would like to receive information.

Discussion lists:

Mayors/City Managers Clerks/Recorders/Treasurers City Attorneys

Announcement lists (choose all that apply):

General Arkansas City Management Association Fire Chiefs Police Chiefs
 Legislative Advocacy Loss Control Meetings Technology
 Municipal Health Benefit Fund Municipal League Workers' Compensation Trust
 Municipal Vehicle Program/Municipal Property Program

Step 2:

Subscribe to the list servs by using one of the following options:

Option A: Visit www.arml.org and click on the Discussion List and Announcement List links.

Option B: Complete Step 3 and fax to 501-374-0541, attn: Whitnee Bullerwell.

Option C: Complete Step 3 and mail to Arkansas Municipal League, attn: Whitnee Bullerwell,
P.O. Box 38, North Little Rock, AR 72115.

Step 3:

Complete the following information:

Name

Title

Member City

E-mail Address

Daytime Phone Number

Briefs continued from page 14

North Little Rock Mayor Patrick Hays attributed the selection of Burns Park to the work of North Little Rock Parks and Recreation Director Bob Rhoads and his staff, the success in 2002 and 2006 of U.S. Youth Soccer regional tournaments hosted by the Arkansas State Soccer Association, and the partnership between North Little Rock and Little Rock in showcasing central Arkansas as a premier location for a prestigious sporting event.

\$1.7 million in disaster loans issued

The Small Business Administration (SBA) has approved \$1.7 million in low-interest disaster loans for 23 Desha County home and business owners affected by Feb. 24 tornadoes, the *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette* has reported.

The loans comprise about \$600,000 for six business owners and \$1.1 million for 17 homeowners in the southeast Arkansas county. The tornado demolished 25 Dumas businesses. The twister ripped through the city packing winds of between 138 and 167 mph.

The SBA issued loans at a 2.875 percent fixed interest rate for homeowners and a 4 percent fixed interest rate for business owners, SBA spokesman Roger Busch said. Area residents have submitted about 65 applications for the loan interest loans. Residents denied loans have six months to ask the SBA to reconsider, Busch said.

SBA representatives remain at the Disaster Loan Outreach Center at First United Methodist Church, 230 Court St. in Dumas.

The federal agency declared Desha County a disaster area after the Federal Agency of Emergency Management on March 8 denied the state's request for a major disaster declaration.

Little Rock chief deputy city attorney honored

William C. "Bill" Mann III, Little Rock chief deputy city attorney, was named the 2007 Mahlon A. Martin Employee of the Year, City Manager Bruce Moore announced during the city's employee appreciation week.

Mann was cited for his outstanding leader-

ship and dedication to the City of Little Rock. He joined the city on Aug. 1, 1991. He was the City Attorney's Office Employee of the Year in 2004 and 2007.

The Mahlon A. Martin Award was established in 2004 to acknowledge Little Rock employees who exhibit a high quality of job performance and significantly contribute to the quality of life in the city. Martin was the first African-American to serve as Little Rock city manager, director of the Arkansas Department of Finance and Administration and manager of Methods and Standards Departments of Systematics, Inc. He also served as president of the Winthrop Rockefeller Foundation until his death in 1995.

Conference offers creative economic growth solutions

"Boast Town or Ghost Town" is the theme of this year's Breakthrough Solutions Conference May 1 in Little Rock, the Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service announced in a media release.

The Cooperative Extension Service offers the conference as part of its VisionWorks community development program. Its mission is to build healthy, sustainable communities from a digital economy perspective. The program is offered in formats tailored to meet the needs of individual communities, organizations and regions.

"We believe our attendees will be inspired by the experiences of others who breathe new life and new energy into their area economies using new technologies and creative solutions," said Mark Peterson, professor of community development for the University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service. "If you want to move your community or region from a ghost town to a boast town, you won't want to miss this conference."

The first 15 registrants from outside Pulaski County will have a chance to see why the National Trust named Little Rock and North Little Rock to its "Dozen Distinctive Destinations" list (see related story on page 12). The 15 on April 30 will enjoy an Arkansas Travelers baseball game, meet North Little Rock Mayor Patrick Hays, tour historic Argenta and walk the Big Dam Bridge.

For registration information, go to www.vworks.org, or call Sandy Roberson at 501-671-2072.

Reminder

The deadline
for nominations
to be received
for mayor and
alderman or city
director of the year
awards is
May 16, 2007.
See page 41 of the
February issue
of *City & Town*
for nomination form.



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dwoodring@utilityservice.com

recommend

guidelines for accident prevention
to employees, vehicles and
loss of property.

provide

on-site workplace, vehicle, property
and equipment inspections.

conduct

on-site PowerPoint seminars and
training for employee safety.



FREE! SMALL TOWN OR BIG CITY, LEAGUE LOSS CONTROL EXPERT HELPS YOU
FIND HAZARDOUS PLACES OR CONDITIONS. CALL 501-374-3484, EXT. 103

86th General Assembly Regular Session completes work

Arkansas's legislators increased municipal turnback and addressed court and water issues during the relatively short and "largely successful" session.

By Don A. Zimmerman

The 86th Arkansas General Assembly recessed Tuesday, April 3, after an 86-day regular session. It was the shortest regular session in 16 years. The League's program was largely successful, and state legislators addressed major issues of concern to cities and town.

Grocery tax reduced, turnback increased

Gov. Mike Beebe followed through on his campaign promise to reduce the sales tax on groceries in a manner that does not adversely impact municipalities. The state sales tax on groceries was reduced to 3 percent, or cut in half at the state level. The typical Arkansas family is projected to save \$234 annually on its grocery bill.

Homeowners also will see a \$50 increase in the state property tax credit, which jumped from \$300 to \$350. This \$26.9 million tax credit goes into effect on 2007 property assessments.

Beebe also followed through on his promise to increase turnback to cities and counties by \$4 million each. The money will come from the sales tax that was increased several sessions ago to grant property tax relief.

President Pro Tem Jack Critcher and Speaker of the House Benny Petrus promised municipal officials in January at the League Winter Conference to try to provide even more turnback to municipalities. Their efforts were successful. The Legislature approved a supplemental turnback of \$12 million from the state surplus, approximately \$6.75 per capita to cities and towns. A revised turnback estimate will be prepared upon determination of the distribution schedule, which could be as early as July. The additional \$4 million from the Property Tax Relief Fund will approximate \$2.25 per capita. We are certainly grateful to these state leaders and to the General Assembly for increasing turnback, which had remained basically flat for the last 25 years.

League program well received

The proposed legislation comprising the League's *Policies & Goals* adopted at the 72nd Convention last

summer was, for the most part, warmly received, and several new Arkansas laws resulted. They include the following:

- Act 12 (sponsored by Rep. George Overbey) allows a mayor to designate a voting representative to attend the equalization board selection meeting.
- Act 62 (Reps. Beverly Pyle, Overbey and Tommy Baker) clarifies the procedure for filling a vacancy in the office of recorder/treasurer in a city of the second class.
- Act 63 (Reps. Pyle, Overbey and Baker) repeals the law prohibiting the use of state aid for the operation of certain municipal recreational playground programs.
- Act 71 (Reps. Baker and Overbey) clarifies the reporting duties of city clerks, treasurers and clerk/treasurers.
- Act 100 (Reps. Baker, Overbey, Nancy Blount and others) gives code enforcement officers the authority to remove vehicles abandoned in the right of way and to tag other abandoned vehicles.
- Act 118 (Reps. Overbey and Baker) prevents the incorporation of new towns within the five-mile planning district of existing municipalities exercising that jurisdiction without permission of the municipality.
- Act 137 (Reps. Pyle, Overbey and Baker) allows non-sworn law enforcement personnel to issue citations at an accident scene.
- Act 158 (Rep. Overbey) provides for death benefits to a spouse of any city clerk, treasurer, recorder, clerk/treasurer or recorder/treasurer at the option of cities of the first or second class.
- Act 293 (Rep. Overbey) authorizes cost-of-living adjustments to local retirement programs for mayors, recorders, treasurers and clerks.
- Act 377 (Reps. Baker, Overbey, Pam Adcock, Sen. Sharon Trusty and others) amends the statutes for code enforcement officers, allowing them the authority to enforce laws governing discarded items on public and private property.
- Act 549 (Rep. Overbey) amends the venue statutes,

providing that lawsuits brought against municipalities shall be brought in the county where the municipality is located.

Court, rural water and election issues addressed

The Legislature addressed district and city courts in a manner satisfactory to the League. Act 663, by Sen. Shawn Womack and others, provides for 19 pilot district judges with city courts in those districts becoming departments of the district court. An amendment to the bill prevents court costs from increasing when those city courts become departments of the district court. An additional amendment delays transferring those city courts not in the pilot areas to a department of a district court until Jan. 1, 2012, which allows time to evaluate the pilot projects' effectiveness before the remaining courts are combined.

Sen. Steve Faris sponsored Act 177, which abolishes the District Judges' Retirement System and transfers those judges into the Arkansas Public Employees Retirement System. This should result in a slightly decreased employer cost to the cities and counties supporting those retirements and a better system for the judges.

Act 691, by Rep. Rick Saunders of Hot Springs, addresses rural water districts and their effect on municipalities' growth areas. It provides criteria for the Natural Resources Commission (NRC) to use in assigning service areas where municipalities and rural water districts clash. The Act allows the NRC to authorize private rather than state loans to those needing financing for water districts.

Acts 854, 1036 and 1037, by Sen. Irma Hunter Brown and Rep. David Johnson, promote economic development by providing cities additional authority to address urban blight and nuisance properties.

Act 1049, by Sen. Bobby Glover, sets the filing period for all municipal elections at 70-90 days prior to the general election. Previous municipal election laws allowed for a wide variety of filing periods—most were 90-110 days, some were 60-80 days and some were 40-60 days.

Some bad legislation averted ...

The assembly defeated numerous bad bills on topics such as eminent domain, tax exemptions, mandatory elections on fees and taxes, unfunded mandated pension costs, retiree health insurance benefits, severance packages, vacation days and other issues preempting your authority to operate your municipal government.

One of the most expensive bills that municipalities would have been required to shoulder was HB 1575, the

Trauma System Bill by Rep. Denny Sumpter, which, after passing the House, was thoroughly examined in the Senate under the leadership of Sen. Critcher. The bill as passed by the House would have imposed an additional \$25 fine on moving traffic violations and \$50 on DWI violations. Critcher recognized that very little of this money would be collected and that cities often would end up being responsible for the additional expense. Fine revenue traditionally has been used to provide for public safety programs. The Senate wisely looked to insurance premium taxes as a more reliable source of revenue, but Beebe and the insurance lobby objected. The bill died after a conference committee failed to reach agreement. This issue probably will resurface, and hopefully a more reliable source of funding than traffic tickets will accompany it.

... But not all

Several negative bills passed this session, including Act 292 by Rep. Gregg Reep, which will increase from 25 cents to 30 cents per customer per meter per month the water fee for the water testing program operated by the State Health Department. These inequitable charges should probably be funded with state general revenues.

Act 1206, by Adcock and others, provides for alternative dispute resolution agreements with labor unions if the parties agree. Many feel this bill is an attempt to eventually require collective bargaining for municipal employees. The act is permissive as currently enacted.

Possibly the most damaging piece of legislation is Act 310, by Sen. Dave Bisbee, which retroactively makes connection fees illegal when they exceed the cost of actually connecting that water meter customer to a water system. It is feared that this *ex post facto* type of legislation, which the U.S. Constitution prohibits states from enacting, could result in significant lawsuits being filed against cities across the state.

See the Legislative Bulletin on the League Web site, www.arml.org, for more in depth coverage of the bills the League tracked. A book of new legislation affecting municipalities will be available to all delegates at the 73rd Convention, June 13-15. Explanation and discussion of the new laws will be a major part of the program. Please be sure your city or town is represented.

We congratulate the Arkansas General Assembly and Gov. Beebe for a very productive session. We agree with Gov. Beebe's assessment that the legislators handled themselves in a professional manner and, in very workman-like fashion, completed a large amount of work in a relatively short session. We at the League would like to offer our congratulations and thanks for a job well done for the people of Arkansas.



Honorary code enforcement

It's often a thankless task, but code enforcement can mean the difference between life and death.

By Jim vonTungeln

Perhaps the most valuable and unappreciated municipal employees are our enforcement personnel: code enforcement officials, fire marshals and construction inspectors. We never miss an opportunity to honor those who actively fight fires, and, in the words of Lincoln, it is altogether and fitting and proper that we do so. It remains a mystery, though, why we don't bestow that same honor upon those who work without cease to prevent fires.

As I write this column, we observe the 96th anniversary of the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory Fire in New York City. The fire, which was the city's most tragic event for more than 90 years, instigated a number of changes. Of interest to us is the fact that it became the catalyst for much of the modern emphasis on safety codes. It behooves us to revisit it.

At 4:45 p.m. on March 25, 1911, more than 500 women—mostly immigrants of Italian, Yiddish and German descent—toiled at sewing shirtwaists (now called blouses) at the Triangle Factory in New York City. Their jobs consisted of 14-hour days with 60- to 72-hour weeks. For this, factory owners Max Blanck and Isaac Harris paid them around \$6 a week. Crowded together in cramped conditions, few could speak or understand English. The owners routinely locked all exit doors but one in order to prevent pilfering.

The women occupied the eighth, ninth and 10th floors of the building. When a fire broke out amidst stacks of highly flammable material, it wasn't reported to a fire station just six blocks away for nearly 15 minutes. There were no fire extinguishers—the superintendent usually doused fires of this sort with buckets of water that were scattered around for that purpose. This time it didn't work.

When firemen finally defeated the fire, 146 people—mostly women—had died, some directly from the fire and smoke inhalation, and 50 or so from jumping to their deaths as an alternative.

In the aftermath, Blanck and Harris beat criminal charges but lost in civil court. They ended up paying \$75 for each deceased person.

If asked to defend our modern building and fire codes, we might point out that, at the time of Triangle

tragedy, there was not a fire station in New York City capable of fighting a fire above a building's sixth floor. Doors routinely opened to the inside, making fast exits difficult if not impossible. Local codes never considered sprinkler systems. Most of the safeguards we take for granted lay far in the future.

It's not that building codes were unheard of. They date back to the Code of Hammurabi, circa 1760 B.C. Lewis Mumford in *The City in History* talks about tiffs between Roman officials and the construction techniques of certain slum landlords. Massive fires in the cities of Europe produced ever-increasing attention to building codes. They have been a useful tool for a long time.

So today we follow a long and honored tradition when we improve construction to protect the health, safety and welfare of our citizens. Here are some suggestions for continuing that tradition:

- Budget for enforcement. Enforcement officials are, in my experience, routinely overworked and underpaid.
- Mandate training. Plenty is available.
- Review the Fire Prevention Code—our state building code—to make sure it meets the needs of your individual city. Your city's code can be more stringent than the state code, but not less.
- Insist that all units of government respect the state fire code so that the unscrupulous don't simply move to a location where elected leaders are not doing their job.
- Stand behind your enforcement officials. Code enforcement is not needless bureaucracy; it prevents needless loss of life.
- Finally, work unceasingly to make sure urban areas—and areas that will become urban—provide water services that meet fire protection standards. This is, in my opinion, the single biggest challenge facing our cities.

Recently, while helping the League during the 86th General Assembly of the Arkansas Legislature, I heard a legislator state that one individual's property rights outweigh the public good. I am quite certain that this person has never heard of the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory

fire. But now that we all have, we can act accordingly.

Oh, and as for Blanck and Harris? They netted a \$60,000 profit from an insurance policy following the fire. And so it goes.



Jim vonTungeln is staff planning consultant, American Institute of Certified Planners. Persons having comments or questions may reach him at 501-372-3232. His Web site is www.planyourcity.com. He is available for consultation as a service of the Arkansas Municipal League.

Obituaries

Jack Coggins, 77, a former mayor and justice of the peace of Trumann, died March 31.

Marion Ray Lowe, 75, a former city councilmember of Yellville, died April 2.

John K. Woodruff III, 65, League communications coordinator and editor of *City & Town*, died March 27.

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Take repeat offenders to school

Money talks, but educating municipal code violators may go further than fines in preventing repeat offenses.

By Dan Bugg

I have to ask myself these three questions when I read municipal ordinances:

- Is the goal of the municipal ordinance compliance?
- Does it establish a framework for how things are supposed to be?
- Is the ordinance language easily understood for those it affects to follow and understand?

The other side of the question is very simple: Does the ordinance provide also for non-compliance?

In most instances, the ordinances we read and adhere to have most of those items spelled out in one form or another.

However, the true intention of most ordinances is to enact compliance. Court fines and other approaches to resolving code violations tend to take a negative reinforcement approach. I am not sure we have provided guidance to anyone by taking \$50 out of his or her pocket. Do you think there is value in encouraging compliance through a different approach rather than the age-old standard of fines and court costs?

In some cases, money is the only way we are able to get someone's attention. In many other cases, educating a violator about why compliance is needed and necessary may prevent court action and fines.

But do we have the time to steer every code violator toward compliance? We probably do not have the personnel resources to make that kind of effort day after day.

We do, however, have the ability to utilize technology to provide the public with information that will help them become a part of the solution rather than part of the problem.

In animal control work, we often see repetitive code violations in our communities. If we could utilize technology to provide a classroom presentation to a group of folks who have violated city or county ordinances, it would provide them an opportunity to comply without clogging our already full court dockets with yet more cases and more trial dates. I believe this approach can be successful and can have lasting results in a community.

I soon will be introducing an animal control-themed program targeting first offenders. Attendance will be mandatory. In a video presentation, we will cover

the aspects of responsible pet ownership, the warm and fuzzy reasons why we all love our pets. We will also cover the negative aspects of violators' behavior and show the end result of those choices here at animal services. Hopefully, the hour spent in this setting will help folks realize what they do and how they act does make a difference. Most of us share these values, but some of us don't take time to think about them.

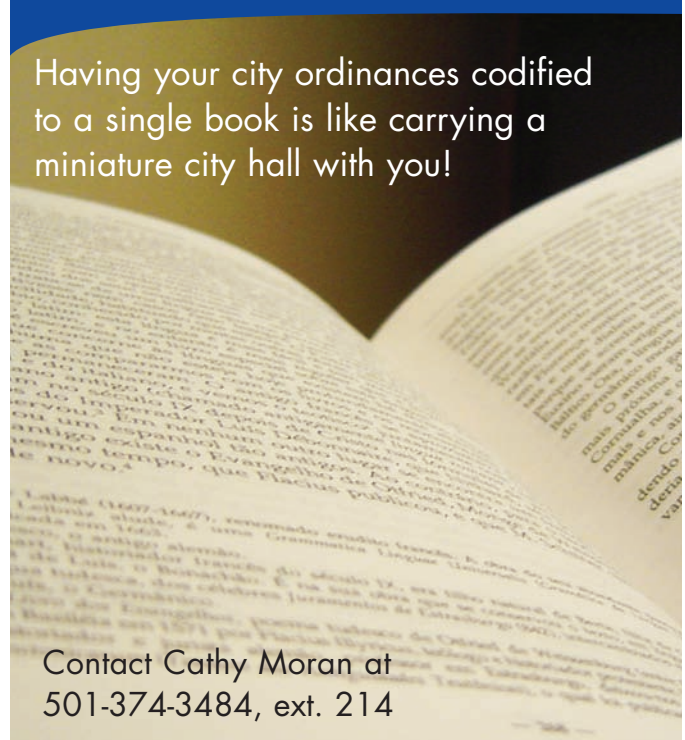
I'm betting that this approach will have folks thinking a bit differently, and not just about how to avoid paying a \$50 fine. It's worth a shot. I'll keep you posted on how it goes in the near future.



Dan Bugg is supervisor of Hot Springs Animal Services.

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For more information, call Linda Montgomery at League headquarters, 501-978-6123 or 501-374-3484, ext. 233.

Mexican consulate and Arkansas a good fit

The consul general aims to prioritize the development of sister city relationships, which will result in continued economic benefits for all involved. This is part one of a two-column series.

By Sherman Banks

Arkansas soon will inaugurate the new home of a Mexican consulate that will serve Arkansas, Mississippi, Tennessee and parts of Oklahoma. During my discussions with the new Consul General, the Honorable Andres Chao, he indicated that one of the priorities of the consulate will be to stress the importance of developing sister city relationships. The consulate also will emphasize economic development between the region and Mexico. To this end, Little Rock will be the first city in Arkansas to sign a sister city agreement with the city of Pachuca, Hidalgo State, Mexico.

The Hispanic population in Arkansas is increasing and projected to account for more than 6 percent of the state's population by 2025. The consulate will help to enhance and enrich both cultures, bridging the gap educationally and economically. Sister Cities International (SCI) can act as the conduit to build meaningful relationships for economic development through the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). Let's take a brief look at NAFTA and how it has eliminated the barrier for economic development between the U.S., Mexico and Canada.

NAFTA took effect in 1994 and made it possible to phase out nearly all of the restrictions on trade and investment among the United States, Canada and Mexico. The United States and Canada were already well into the elimination of the barriers between themselves in accordance with the Canada-United States Free Trade Agreement, so the main new feature of NAFTA was the removal of the barriers with Mexico.

Now, more than 13 years later, most barriers to trade and investment between the United States and Mexico have been dismantled. In 2001, 87 percent of imports from Mexico entered the United States duty free. The average duty on the remainder was only 1.4 percent, for an overall average tariff rate of 0.2 percent, down from 2.1 percent in 1993. The overall average Mexican tariff rate in 2001 was only 1.3 percent, down

from 12 percent in 1993. Enough time has passed and enough of NAFTA's trade and investment liberalization has been phased in that any substantial effects of the agreement are evident by now.

According to the Arkansas Department of Economic Development (ADED), Arkansas has a significant amount of international business activity with about 135 foreign-owned firms. The ADED works with Arkansas companies to encourage and expedite export activity. According to the 2006 Arkansas International Business Climate Report, Mexico imported 11 percent of Arkansas's top export markets in 2005. Canada continues to be Arkansas's largest trading partner, accounting for over \$1 billion in exports in 2005, or 26.4% of total exports. In fact, Canada is the top destination for seven of the state's top 11 commodities.

Mexico is the second largest partner. Trade with Mexico has increased significantly over the last five years. Mexico is the top market for Arkansas rice, followed by Canada, Saudi Arabia, the United Kingdom and Haiti.

A sister city relationship between a city in Arkansas and a city in Mexico allays the fears that have been reported in the media regarding illegal aliens and prospect of jobs being sucked out of Arkansas and into Mexico. SCI promotes strong cultural, educational and student exchanges. Sister cities can further enhance Arkansas's economic development with Mexico through NAFTA.

At its national meeting in March, the National League of Cities recognized the need among U.S. cities for globalization and stressed to the International Council the importance of building sister city relationships for economic development.



For further information about how Sister Cities can help to bridge the gap between public and government engagement, please contact: Sherman Banks at 501-376-8193, Fax: 501-372-6564 or e-mail, sbanks@aristotle.net or surface mail, P.O. Box 165920, Little Rock, AR 72216.

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Speaking in code

International and state building and fire codes may be stringent, but it is imperative that municipalities enforce them.

By A.E. (Al) Johnson Jr.

There is no logical starting point when preparing to discuss building codes. Competing building codes have been around for years. For most cities in Arkansas, the Southern Building Code was once the standard.

In the 1990s a move was made to develop a comprehensive building code. The International Building Code (IBC), first published in 1997, began to receive acceptance near the turn of the century; however, many cities continued to hold on to their current building codes. The IBC does not cover single or double family structures.

Municipal building codes have been accused of contributing to urban sprawl. Reportedly, when people were disgusted with a city's zoning requirements and building code enforcement they would move into an unincorporated area and build what they wanted to their own specifications. This trend was not good for cities.

Nor was the trend good for insurance companies, which were providing homeowner and business policies on inadequate structures. When such structures are annexed by a city, they don't meet codes.

Seeing the problems usually facing the second or third owners of improperly built homes, the state implemented certain statewide codes.

There is a state energy code to ensure that houses are properly insulated and energy efficient. There is a state plumbing code to ensure quality potable water and proper treatment of wastewater. Arkansas also has an electric code to ensure that electric circuits are properly sized and the occupant is protected from electrical shock or fire. These statewide codes apply whether or not a municipal building code is in place. It is the responsibility of the homebuilder to see to it that the requirements in these codes are met.

There is another, much more complicated code in Arkansas. This code is the Arkansas Fire Prevention Code. Not only does it address building codes, it

addresses operation procedures and fire prevention requirements during construction. The fire prevention code is developed around the IBC, but they are separate documents. Due to the size and comprehensive nature of this document, it is a major undertaking to produce an updated version. Consequently, the Arkansas Fire Prevention Code lags several years behind the most recent IBC. There have been attempts to produce a single standard, but all have failed.

It is this writer's opinion that there wasn't really anything wrong with the old Southern Building Code. Like any code, it needed updating occasionally to incorporate newly approved construction techniques and building materials.

There is an old saying: "Any plan is better than no plan at all." Well, any building code is better than no code at all. There is, however, one common problem with all codes: enforcement!

What good is the excellent and comprehensive IBC if you lack the means of enforcement? The first step in enforcing a building code is requiring the builder to apply for a building permit. To acquire that building permit, a builder must submit plans for approval.

How are building codes enforced? It's simple: If a structure does not comply with the IBC, no certificate of occupancy is issued. Without a certificate of occupancy, the owner or builder cannot get permanent utility service.

Finding a good building inspector isn't easy. Good candidates usually need to be trained. Good building inspectors work with builders—not against them—to construct structures that meet code.



Reach Al Johnson, P.E., staff engineer, at 501-374-7492. He is available to consult with member cities and towns for one on-site consultation a year as a service of your Arkansas Municipal League.



April 19-21, **MOUNTAIN VIEW**, 45th Arkansas Folk Festival, 870-269-8068, mvchamber@mvtel.net, www.YourPlaceInTheMountains.com

April 20-21, **COTTER**, 6th Great Cotter Trout Festival, 870-435-6144, chamber@cotterarkansas.com, www.cotterarkansas.com; **STAR CITY**, 4th Star Daze Festival, 870-628-6400, akallen@centurytel.net

April 20-22, **LITTLE ROCK**, 4th Arkansas Literary Festival, 501-663-4321, katie@arkansasliteracy.org, www.arkansasliteraryfestival.org

April 21, **ALMA**, 21st Spinach Festival, 479-632-4127, almachamber@centurytel.net, www.almachamber.com; **HORSESHOE BEND**, 31st Dogwood Days Festival, 870-670-5433, info@horseshoebendar.com, horseshoebendar.com; **RUSSELLVILLE**, Party in the Park, 479-968-2452

April 21-22, **HARDY**, 24th Old Hardy Town Arts & Crafts Festival, 870-856-3571, mainstreethardy@centurytel.net, www.oldhardytown.com

April 27-28, **FORDYCE**, 27th Fordyce on the Cotton Belt Festival, 870-352-2055

April 27-29, **FULTON**, 6th Twin Rivers Festival, 870-896-2281, conway@swat.coop.com; **SILOAM SPRINGS**, 33rd Dogwood Festival, 479-524-6466, info@silamchamber.com, www.siloamchamber.com

April 28, **CABOT**, 5th Strawberry Festival, 501-605-1506, director@cabotarkansas.com, www.cabotarkansas.com

April 28-29, **HEBER SPRINGS**, 20th Springfest, 501-362-2444, chamber@heber-springs.com, www.heber-springs.com

April 30-May 6, **HAMBURG**, 37th World Famous Armadillo Festival, 870-853-8345, hchamber@sark.net, www.armadillofestival.com

May 1-31, **EUREKA SPRINGS**, May Festival of the Arts, 479-253-7333, karen@eurekasprings.org, www.eurekasprings.org

May 4-6, **CONWAY**, 26th Toad Suck Daze, 501-327-7788, toadsuck@conwayarkcc.org, www.toadsuck.org

May 5, **ALTUS**, 29th Springtime Gala, 479-468-4684, altusclerk@hotmail.com, altusarkansas.com;

BLYTHEVILLE, Springtime on the Mall, 870-763-2525, mainstbly@sbcglobal.net;

BROOKLAND, 4th Brookland Downtown Celebration, 870-935-0538, cityofbrookland@yahoo.com;

EL DORADO, 8th Crawfish Boil/Battle of the Bands, 870-862-4747, mainstreeteldorado@suddenlinkmail.com, www.goeldorado.com; **HUNTSVILLE**, Spring on the Square, 479-738-6000, service@HuntsvilleArChamber.com, www.HuntsvilleArChamber.com; **MAMMOTH SPRING**, 3rd Trout Festival, 870-625-7364, mammothspring@arkansas.com; **NASHVILLE**, 2nd Peach Blossom Festival, 870-845-1262, www.nashvillearkansas.com

May 10-12, **BALD KNOB**, 20th Bald Knob Homefest, 501-724-3140, baldknobchamber@centurytel.net, baldknobchamber.com

May 11-12, **ASHDOWN**, 11th Whistlestop Festival, 870-898-2642, ccastleman@arkansas.net;

DARDANELLE, 19th Yell Fest, 479-229-3328, vsdardchamber@hotmail.com, www.dardanellechamber.com; **HOPE**, 11th Hope Chamber of Commerce Free Bluegrass Festival, 870-777-3640, hopeark@arkansas.net, www.hopemelonfest.com; **KINGSTON**, Fair on the Square, 870-420-3731, mistymtn@ritternet.com

May 12, **MOUNTAIN HOME**, Mountain Home Business Expo, 870-425-5111, salms@enjoymountainhome.com; **MONTROSE**, 2nd Montrose Heritage Festival and Cornbread Cookoff, 870-737-2936

May 12-13, **HOT SPRINGS**, 5th Art in the Park Festival, 501-321-6871, barline@cityhs.net, www.cityhs.net; **TUCKERMAN**, Tuckerman Hometown Days, 870-349-5313; **VAN BUREN**, Old Timers Days, 479-474-4392, vanburen@vanburen.org, www.vanburen.org

May 18-19, **ATKINS**, 16th Picklefest, 479-641-1147, elmo_hanley@yahoo.com; **DERMOTT**, 24th Dermott Crawfish Festival, 870-538-5656, dermottcoc@sbcglobal.net, dermottcrawfishfestival.com; **HARRISON**, 17th Crawdad Days Music Festival, 870-741-1789, www.HarrisonArkansas.org; **MAGNOLIA**, 19th Magnolia Blossom Festival & World Championship Steak Cook-off, 870-234-4352, magcoc@arkansas.net, blossomfestival.org;

PARAGOULD, 18th Loose Caboose Festival, 870-240-0544, mainstr@paragould.net, www.loosecaboose.net

May 19, **BRINKLEY**, 4th Choo Choo Ch'Boogie Delta Music Festival, 870-734-1056, www.cddm.org

Spider's web work leads to epiphany

By protecting green space within cities and towns, municipal leaders can promote physical and emotional well-being.

By John Slater

I am a very lucky man. For more than 30 years, I have been doing a job that I truly love. I have many wonderful memories about what I have done and where I have been. I want to share one of those memories with you.

I started my career as a forest technician with a large timber company. My job was to work in the forest or woods gathering information about timber. I spent many days working by myself, often leaving my truck early in the morning and returning at the end of my

workday. There were few roads, except for old logging roads where trees had grown up until they were impassable. I would walk for miles, surveying the trees.

I felt almost like an early settler, seeing areas that few people had seen. There were clear-running streams from which one could drink, and I did, something I would not do today. I saw old pine stumps cut by a two-man crosscut saw from the old logging days when they still used mules to skid the logs to the banking grounds. Sometimes I saw remnants of old stills and not-so-old stills. When I was coming up on an old home site, I could always tell by the presence of large trees that had shaded the now-deserted home sites. I had to watch out for hand-dug wells into which a person could fall. People who had reared families while trying to scratch out a living farming and raising cattle once called these places home. Timber companies would later purchase that land, probably for a small sum of money or for back taxes.

Sometimes if I had a little time I would look around the old home place for discarded bottles or antiques. I enjoyed collecting the old bottles because of their unique shapes and colors. One bottle I found was a light blue color; you could see air bubbles in the glass. It was an old medicine bottle called Dr. Kilmers Swamproot. Can you imagine what kind of concoction that might have been?

One day, I had worked through my lunch and my workday was nearly over. I came across a clear-running stream with a little waterfall. I decided to stop there to eat my lunch. I could not have asked for a nicer day. It was one of those times when you could lose yourself in the moment. I felt the spring sun, smelled the scent of the woods and heard the sound of the waterfall. I had not been there long when I noticed a spider web about three feet away from me.

This spider knew what he was doing. I



PHOTO BY JOHN SLATER, ARKANSAS FORESTRY COMMISSION

Sometimes it takes a simple spider web, like this one, to remind us of the importance of green space in our communities. Science and common sense both tell us time spent in nature is good for the body and the mind.




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was captivated by the intricacy of his work, amazed that he had designed the web so beautifully. It was then that I saw the spider, camouflaged in a crevice. I wondered what he would do if something fell into his web, so I broke off a tiny piece of bark and threw it in. He immediately perked up like it was dinnertime. He came out of his hiding place and headed straight for the bark. When he realized it was not a meal, he nonchalantly proceeded to cut the bark out of his web and repair the opening. I had never before seen anything like it, nor have I since. I pestered that poor spider for almost an hour throwing pieces of bark into his web. I watched him repair his web over and over again. Knowing I might not ever get to witness a similar event, I reluctantly left him to his work. I did not want to leave.

You're probably wondering what this has to do with urban forestry. Everyone should have the opportunity to observe nature like I did that day. I'm glad we have our National Parks and National Forest Lands, but they are often crowded and not always available to our children due to transportation issues.

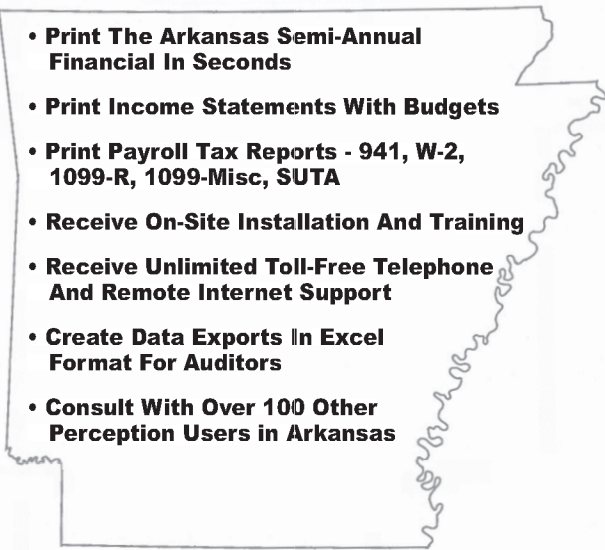
City and town leaders, you can provide these nature-watching opportunities by advancing programs for protecting nature within your boundaries. City parks, even pocket parks and green spaces in subdivisions make it possible for nature to survive. City leaders should jump at the chance to provide them, to expand them or to protect what is already there. Let's protect nature where we live so our children can go out their back doors to embrace the natural world.

Research at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign has shown additional benefits for children who have the opportunity to enjoy nature. Kids with Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder (ADHD) should spend some quality after-school hours and weekend time



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outdoors enjoying nature, researchers say.

"The advantage for green outdoor activities was observed among children living in different regions of the United States and among children living in a range of settings, from rural to large city environments," co-authors Frances E. Kuo and Andrea Faber Taylor wrote in a 2004 article. "Overall, our findings indicate that exposure to ordinary natural settings in the course of common after-school and weekend activities may be widely effective in reducing attention deficit symptoms in children."

The National Urban and Community Forestry Advisory Council, U.S. Forest Service and the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Cooperative State Research, Education and Extension Service supported the project.

Funny how a clear-running stream, a small waterfall, a spring day and a little spider can create such lasting and meaningful memories.

Make a memory ... Plant a tree



John Slater is urban forestry partnership coordinator with the Arkansas Forestry Commission. Contact him at 501-984-5867, or at john.slater@arkansas.gov.



PHOTOS BY JOHN K. WOODRUFF, LEAGUE STAFF

"When you tell your own city's story, you're also telling the NLC story," Indianapolis Mayor and NLC President Bart Peterson told delegates at the Congressional City Conference.

NLC takes local issues to Capitol Hill

Increased CDGB funding and local-federal partnerships were among the priorities at this year's NLC Congressional City Conference.

Washington, D.C.—Creating local-federal partnerships was a major theme at the National League of Cities (NLC) Congressional City Conference, March 10-14 in Washington, D.C.

NLC President and Indianapolis Mayor Bart Peterson encouraged city leaders to partner with the federal government to accomplish the goals of America's cities and towns.

"Some great things are going on in America's cities. Just think what we could accomplish with a real, fair partnership with the federal government," he said. "It's not just about money; it's about seeking a genuine partnership."

Peterson and other local and national leaders throughout the Conference called for partnerships on the NLC's legislative priorities. Preserving and increasing funding for the Community Development Block Grant (CDGB) program is a priority, and thanks to advocacy efforts of local officials, it continues to have strong bipartisan support in Congress. That support should prevent spending cuts, but it may not result in gains.

Sens. Norm Coleman, Hillary Clinton, Christopher Dodd and Joseph Biden, all of whom spoke at the Conference's general session, each expressed support for the CDBG program. Sens. Patrick Leahy and Coleman have authored a letter to the Senate Budget Committee urging increased CDBG funding. In the

House, Financial Services Committee Chairman Barney Frank is leading an effort to seek a 5 percent increase for the program.

Other NLC priorities this legislative session include preserving local authority in telecommunications reform, immigration reform, housing finance reforms, transportation issues and fighting crime.

"We think that it makes sense for local government to have control over our local rights of way," Peterson said of the telecommunications issue. Such decisions should be made locally, not in Washington, D.C., he said.

As the foreclosure rate across the nation skyrockets, and with predatory lending contributing to the problem, attacking our cities' housing problem is urgent, NLC leaders believe.

"We need to do something about this issue. We believe that Congress believes the same thing and we want to work with them," Peterson said. He urged local leaders to lobby their members of Congress on these shared issues.

"When you are lobbying for the National League of Cities, you are also lobbying for your own city," he said.

Information for this article was provided by Nation's Cities Weekly, official publication of the NLC.

Arkansas delegates to the Conference, from left, Jacksonville Alderman Kenny Elliott, Crossett Mayor Scott McCormick, Paragould Mayor Mike Gaskill, North Little Rock Alderman John Parker, Malvern Mayor Steve Northcutt and North Little Rock Alderman Murry Witcher enjoy breakfast before a general session.



Sen. Norm Coleman, a former mayor of St. Paul, Minn., said increased CDBG funding should be a top priority. "I wish there were more former mayors in the U.S. Senate," he said. "We'd be a lot better off."

"I think we should restore the fundamental principle that I grew up with and that I think most of us have tried to live by: You don't spend what you don't have on what you don't need," Sen. Hillary Clinton told the delegates. She encouraged increased investment in CDBG. Clinton also called for better education for home buyers and an end to predatory lending.



Sen. Mark Pryor at a session discussed the Federal Emergency Management Agency's failure after the recent tornado destruction in Desha County. He praised the Small Business Administration, however, for coming through by offering very low-interest disaster loans to area businesses and homeowners.

From left, Star City Mayor Gene Yarbrough, Rep. Mike Ross and Pine Bluff Mayor Carl Redus share a laugh at a luncheon at which Ross addressed delegates. If we're serious about global warming, we must also get serious about energy resources, Ross said, citing the Fayetteville shale natural gas recovery technology.



Playing it safe

Making community playgrounds safer for our children should be a priority, and, with a little cooperation, doing so doesn't have to strain municipal budgets.

By Mary E. Aitken, M.D., and Beverly K. Miller

As communities look for ways to encourage healthier lifestyles among children, there's really no better place to start than with a familiar mainstay: playgrounds!

Public playgrounds can add immeasurable value for any neighborhood, town or city. Not only are playgrounds a great place for imaginative play and exercise, they can help families bond and bring neighbors together.

Fortunately, playgrounds already are embraced as an integral part of community life in most places. Some communities may be looking to add playgrounds or upgrade what they have. Whatever the situation, ensuring that playgrounds are safe should be a priority.

Falls cause most injuries

Naturally, the running, jumping and climbing of children on playgrounds sometimes result in injuries. But the way a playground is built and maintained can make a big difference in the frequency of accidents and the severity of injuries.

More than 200,000 children go to the emergency room each year with playground-related injuries. Most of the injuries are related to falls, and almost half are severe: fractures, internal injuries, concussions, dislocations and amputations, according to the national Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

With that in mind, it's important to ensure that your community playgrounds are safe.

Low-cost playgrounds

Building and maintaining a safe playground doesn't have to be expensive. Supplies may be available through small grants from local big box stores, and labor



may come from volunteer parents. For example, to help maintain a nearby school playground, local fifth graders are given a simple inspection checklist developed in our office as part of a partnership between the school and the Injury Free Coalition for Kids at Arkansas Children's Hospital, which provides seed funding for playground improvements. The students' single-page list covers the basics of playground safety, such as what the ground surface is made of, whether sharp points or edges are exposed on equipment, and if platforms and ramps have

guardrails. Students also measure the width between bars on guardrails and steps on slides, check for tripping hazards like large rocks and tree roots, and “S” hooks on equipment that might snag drawstrings on clothing.

Such a list would be valuable for anyone interested in helping ensure that a playground is safe. In addition, communities can help concerned parents by posting signs with a phone number to alert the appropriate office about any safety problems.

While safe design and maintenance are important, especially important is the careful supervision by a parent or other responsible adult. Together, these things can ensure that trips to the park are fun, active and injury free.



Arkansas earns B+

A 2004 national survey of childcare, school and park playgrounds included grades for each state. Arkansas received a B+, up from a C- in the 2000 report by the National Program for Playground Safety at the University of Northern Iowa in Cedar Falls, Iowa. With the exception of Oklahoma, Arkansas’s playgrounds were at least a full grade better than surrounding states. The report measured such factors as supervision, age-appropriate design, falls, equipment and surfacing maintenance.

No states received an A in the national study, and Arkansas was one of just 10 to get a B+. Arkansas communities should be proud of their efforts to make their playgrounds safe. But as parents, citizens and public servants, we must be vigilant to ensure that our playgrounds are safe. Our children deserve nothing less.

More information about playground safety, including a maintenance policy checklist, is available from the National Program for Playground Safety by calling 800-554-PLAY, or online at www.uni.edu/playground. Information also is available from the Injury Free Coalition for Kids at www.injuryfree.org.



Mary E. Aitken, M.D., is section chief of the Center for Applied Research and Evaluation and associate professor of Pediatrics, College of Medicine, University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences.



Beverly K. Miller is coordinator of Injury Prevention Programs, Center for Applied Research and Evaluation, Department of Pediatrics, College of Medicine, University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences.



Support a family on \$20 a week?

Volunteer firefighters who are injured in their firefighter duties receive only \$20 a week for a compensable injury.

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What they get: Weekly temporary total disability benefits based on the MAXIMUM allowed under Arkansas Workers’ Compensation Law; weekly benefits go for 52 weeks; \$10,000 death benefit.

How? Cost is only \$20 a firefighter a year. All volunteer and part-paid firefighters in the department must be covered. The minimum premium for each city or town is \$240.

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Protect your loved ones’ financial security.

Arkansas Municipal League’s Volunteer Firefighters Supplemental Income Program



MUNICIPAL HEALTH BENEFIT FUND

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CHANGES TO THE 2007 MHBF DIRECTORY, AS OF APRIL 1, 2007

Also visit League Programs on League Web site, www.arml.org, for these changes and providers.

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IN-STATE ADDITIONS							
BILYEU, MD	JAMES	WASHINGTON REG. DIAG. CLINIC	3000 NORTHWEST "A" STREET	BENTONVILLE	AR	72712	479-273-2030
DOUGHERTY, DO	CHRISTOPHER	ARK CENTER FOR ARTHROSCOPY	1504 SE 28TH ST	BENTONVILLE	AR	72712	479-273-1111
GRIFFIN, DC	MELANIE	LIFELINE CHIROPRACTIC	5920 HWY 5 NORTH #7	BRYANT	AR	72022	501-847-7026
VITAL LINK		AMBULANCE	274 HIGHWAY 65B	CLINTON	AR	72031	800-549-3351
MCGEHEE, DC	JIMMY SHAWN	MCGEHEE CHIROPRACTIC	2104 HARKRIDER #104	CONWAY	AR	72032	501-329-4664
SHINWARI, MD	JAVED	ONCOLOGY & HEMATOLOGY	3025 FOUNTAIN DR #100	CONWAY	AR	72034	501-329-1700
JENKINS, LPC	STEVEN	MARKALLEN BEHAVIORAL HEALTH	108 S JEFFERSON	DEWITT	AR	72042	870-946-0158
LIFE TOUCH HOSPICE		HOSPICE	2301 CHAMPAGNOLLE RD	EL DORADO	AR	71730	870-862-0337
SHINABERRY, CRNA	STEPHANIE	OZARK REG. ANESTHESIA	3215 N NORTH HILLS BLVD	FAYETTEVILLE	AR	72703	877-898-9892
SHRUM, CRNA	JAMI	GREY FOX ANESTHESIA	3396 N FUTRALL #1	FAYETTEVILLE	AR	72703	479-582-1938
CARTILLAR, DDS	DJUANA	PEDIATRIC DENTISTRY OF E ARK	415 CLEVELAND	FORREST CITY	AR	72335	870-630-1500
KAHN, DC	ANNA	OZARK CHIROPRACTIC ARTS	200 HWY 43 E #2	HARRISON	AR	72601	870-365-0071
BUTLER, PT	DEAN	HOPE PHYSICAL THERAPY CTR.	1405 S MAIN	HOPE	AR	71801	870-777-9359
BIRK, MD	GORDON TROY	ORTHOPAEDIC CTR OF HOT SPRINGS	180 MEDICAL PARK ST #201	HOT SPRINGS	AR	71901	501-321-0555
PINEAU, MD	GREGORY	FAMILY PRACTICE	4517 PARK AVE	HOT SPRINGS	AR	71901	501-623-7900
OLIVER, DDS	MICHAEL	PEDIATRIC DENTISTRY	809 WINDOVER DR	JONESBORO	AR	72401	870-931-3337
DILLER, MD	TIMOTHY	ARKANSAS VASCULAR	9601 LILE DR #950	LITTLE ROCK	AR	72205	501-227-4787
NESTRUD, MD	RICHARD	PEDIATRIC MEDICAL GROUP	18 CORPORATE HILL #203	LITTLE ROCK	AR	72205	501-225-8821
OUTPATIENT SURGERY CENTER		OUTPATIENT SURGERY CTRS.	160 HWY 201 NORTH	MTN. HOME	AR	72653	870-508-2100
VITAL LINK		AMBULANCE	105 HIGHWAY 5	MTN. VIEW	AR	72560	800-549-3351
ASHCRAFT, DDS	MICHAEL	MONARCH DENTAL	4909 WARDEN RD	NO LITTLE ROCK	AR	72116	501-771-5105
BAPTIST HEALTH IMAGING CTR		MAGNETIC RES. IMAGING	3600 SPRINGHILL DR	NO LITTLE ROCK	AR	72217	501-202-6999
SIMPSON, MD	P. B. JR	SA NEUROSURGERY ASSOC	1220 W 42ND AVE	PINE BLUFF	AR	71603	870-536-8547
ROBERTSON, OD	JILL	BRANDON EYE CLINIC	1600 W SUNSET	SPRINGDALE	AR	72762	479-756-1234
IN-STATE UPDATES							
DUNN, DO	JAMES	WASHINGTON REG. DIAG. CLINIC	3000 NORTHWEST "A" ST	BENTONVILLE	AR	72712	479-273-2030
MARSHALL, MD	ROXANNE	MARSHALL MEDICAL CLINIC	#3 MEDICINE DR	CLARKSVILLE	AR	72830	479-754-6777
NOONAN, MD	ROBERT F.	CLARKSVILLE FAMILY MED. CTR.	1 MEDICINE DR	CLARKSVILLE	AR	72830	479-705-8181
PARKER, PHD	BECKY	PARKER PSYCH. & COUNSELING	2755 KANTZ DR	FAYETTEVILLE	AR	72703	479-444-8989
SWINDLE, MD	JAMES S	NWA PEDIATRIC CLINIC	3380 N FUTRALL	FAYETTEVILLE	AR	72703	479-442-7322
SWOGGER, CRNA	KENT	GREY FOX ANESTHESIA	3396 N FUTRALL #1	FAYETTEVILLE	AR	72703	479-582-1938
LOPEZ, MD	RAMON	ORTHOPAEDICS SURG. & SPORTS	902 HOSPITAL DR. #102	FORREST CITY	AR	72335	870-633-3530
SELECT SPECIALITY HOSPITAL		HOSPITAL	1001 TOWSON AVE 6TH FLOOR	FORT SMITH	AR	72901	479-441-3960
LANE, MD	JOHN	UROLOGY	1500 DODSON AVE.	FORT SMITH	AR	72901	479-709-7416
DWYER, MD	JOSEPH C.	BRANSON HEART CENTER	425 N WALNUT ST #2	HARRISON	AR	72601	870-741-6599
MELTON, CRNA	GARRY M.	N. ARKANSAS ANESTHESIA SVCS.	620 N WILLOW	HARRISON	AR	72601	870-365-2071
WATERS, MD	JAMES D.	N. ARKANSAS ANESTHESIA SVCS.	620 N WILLOW	HARRISON	AR	72601	870-365-2071
RED RIVER PHYSICAL THERAPY		PHYSICAL THERAPY	2000 HWY 25B NORTH #A-1	HEBER SPRINGS	AR	72543	501-362-7195
DICKSON, MD	D. BUD	DICKSON ORTHOPAEDIC CENTER	2001 S MAIN ST #3	HOPE	AR	71801	870-777-3020
SOELLER, MD	CLEMENS EUGENE	COLLOM & CARNEY CLINIC	114 MEDICAL PARK DR	HOPE	AR	71801	870-777-0000
ST. PIERRE, OD	LEE A.	NE ARKANSAS EYE CARE	2917 BROWNS LANE	JONESBORO	AR	72401	870-802-2020
BENTON, MD	WILLIAM H.	PEDIATRIC MEDICAL GROUP	#18 CORPORATE HILL #203	LITTLE ROCK	AR	72205	501-225-8821
CASTEEL, MD	HELEN B.	PEDIATRIC GASTRO. ASSOC	1515 S BOWMAN RD #B	LITTLE ROCK	AR	72211	501-228-7171
CONLEY, MD	THOMAS D.	ARKANSAS CARDIOLOGY	9501 LILE DR. #600	LITTLE ROCK	AR	72205	501-227-7596
GARNER, MD	WILLIAM L.	AR. WOMENS CTR.	9500 KANIS RD #200	LITTLE ROCK	AR	72205	501-224-6699
HAMPTON, MD	JOHN R.	LR INTERNAL MEDICINE	1100 N UNIVERSITY	LITTLE ROCK	AR	72205	501-664-2500
HERBERT, MD	R. WAYNE	LR CHILDRENS CLINIC	9600 LILE DR. #360	LITTLE ROCK	AR	72205	501-227-6727
HUTCHINSON, MD	CLINTON	AR. WOMENS CTR.	9500 KANIS RD #200	LITTLE ROCK	AR	72205	501-224-6699
KEATHLEY, MD	SUSAN A.	LR CHILDRENS CLINIC	9600 LILE DR. #360	LITTLE ROCK	AR	72205	501-227-6727
KUMARI, MD	REKHA	ST VINCENT ENDOCRINOLOGY CLN.	ONE ST VINCENT CIRCLE #450	LITTLE ROCK	AR	72205	501-552-4763
LAMBERT, MD	ROBERT A.	ARKANSAS CARDIOLOGY	9501 LILE DR #600	LITTLE ROCK	AR	72205	501-227-7596
LEDBETTER, MD	JOHNNY R.	LR CHILDRENS CLINIC	9600 LILE DR. #360	LITTLE ROCK	AR	72205	501-227-6727
PARK, MD	JOSEPHINE	LR CHILDRENS CLINIC	9600 LILE DR. #360	LITTLE ROCK	AR	72205	501-227-6727
SEGUIN, MD	ROSEY	AR. WOMENS CTR.	9500 KANIS RD #200	LITTLE ROCK	AR	72205	501-224-6699
SOTOMORA, MD	RICARDO	PEDIATRIC MEDICAL GROUP	#18 CORPORATE HILL #203	LITTLE ROCK	AR	72205	501-225-8821
STEWART, MD	TRACY D.	LR CHILDRENS CLINIC	9600 LILE DR. #360	LITTLE ROCK	AR	72205	501-227-6727
TANNER, MD	JAMES A	AR. WOMENS CTR.	12921 CANTRELL RD #300	LITTLE ROCK	AR	72223	501-224-6699
THOMPSON, MD	STEVEN M.	LR CHILDRENS CLINIC	9600 LILE DR. #360	LITTLE ROCK	AR	72205	501-227-6727
VONLANTHEN, MD	MARYELLE	PEDIATRIC GASTRO. ASSOC	1515 S BOWMAN RD #B	LITTLE ROCK	AR	72211	501-228-7171
WATKINS, MD	JULIA M	AR. WOMENS CTR.	12921 CANTRELL RD #300	LITTLE ROCK	AR	72223	501-224-6699
WYATT, MD	RICHARD A.	AR. WOMENS CTR.	9500 KANIS RD #200	LITTLE ROCK	AR	72205	501-224-6699
ZOCCHI, MD	KENT A.	RETINA ASSOCIATES	9800 LILE DR. #200	LITTLE ROCK	AR	72205	501-219-0900

LAST NAME	FIRST NAME	CLINIC/SPECIALTY	ADDRESS	CITY	ST	ZIP	PHONE
ZUERLEIN, MD	TERRANCE	PEDIATRIX MEDICAL GROUP	18 CORPORATE HILL #203	LITTLE ROCK	AR	72205	501-225-8821
FARMER, MD	JOHN	COLLOM & CARNEY CLINIC	211 E STADIUM DR	MAGNOLIA	AR	71753	870-234-3042
GONZALES, MD	CATHRYN	COLLOM & CARNEY CLINIC	211 E STADIUM DR	MAGNOLIA	AR	71753	870-234-3042
PRICE, OD	JAMES L.	FAMILY EYE CARE ASSOC	301 HWY. 425 S.	MONTICELLO	AR	71655	870-367-8534
AL-AJAM, MD	MOHAMMAD	BAXTER REG. PULMONOLOGY CLN.	628 HOSPITAL DR #3A	MTN. HOME	AR	72653	870-508-3250
AKIN, MD	ERIC D	AKIN NEUROSURGERY CLINIC	2411 MCCAIN BLVD #6	NO LITTLE ROCK	AR	72116	501-753-2550
LAMBERT, MD	ROBERT A.	ARKANSAS CARDIOLOGY	3343 SPRINGHILL DR. #1035	NO LITTLE ROCK	AR	72117	501-975-7676
DAILY, MD	RICHARD	NO LOGAN COMMUNITY SRVS CLN.	500 E ACADEMY ST	PARIS	AR	72855	479-963-6101
STEED, MD	MATTHEW	NO LOGAN COMMUNITY SRVS CLN.	500 E ACADEMY ST	PARIS	AR	72855	479-963-6101
FOX, MD	THOMAS A.	COLLOM & CARNEY CLINIC	1440 W. 1ST N.	PRESCOTT	AR	71857	870-887-8001
PALMER, PHD	SHONA	CENTER FOR STRESS REDUCTION	9 HALSTED CIRCLE	ROGERS	AR	72756	479-631-6400
DORAN, LPC	FAYE	WESTSIDE PSYCHIATRIC	2616 WEST BEEBE CAPPS EXPWY.	SEARCY	AR	72143	501-207-2727
MCGOWAN, MD	WILLIAM J.	FIRST CARE SPRINGDALE	1109 S WEST END ST	SPRINGDALE	AR	72764	479-750-3630
TOTTEN, MD	MATTHEW	FIRST CARE SPRINGDALE	1109 S WEST END ST	SPRINGDALE	AR	72764	479-750-3630
BROWN, MD	MARK C.	FAMILY PRACTICE	1033 OLD BURR RD	WARM SPRINGS	AR	72478	870-647-2541
LHEUREUX, MD	GUY	ORTHOAEDICS SURG. & SPORTS	228 TYLER #208	WEST MEMPHIS	AR	72301	870-732-3836

IN-STATE DELETES

BROWN, MD	VERONA T.	EMERGENCY MED.	914 EAGLE MOUNTAIN RD.	BATESVILLE	AR	72501	870-793-1112
HANNAH, MD	JAMES T.	WOMENS CTR ON THE PKWY	2900 MEDICAL CTR PKWY #300	BENTONVILLE	AR	72712	479-271-0005
SCHMITZ, MD	LAWRENCE	WOMENS CTR ON THE PKWY	2900 MEDICAL CTR PKWY #300	BENTONVILLE	AR	72712	479-271-0005
GUESS, DC	KRISTIN R.	CHIROPRACTIC	23233 I-30 #10	BRYANT	AR	72022	501-847-7246
FOWLER, OD	PATRICK	VISION CARE ARKANSAS	201 SKYLINE DR #37	CONWAY	AR	72032	501-450-9191
MCCARTY, PHD	SCOTT	PSYCHOLOGY	65 E. SUNBRIDGE DR	FAYETTEVILLE	AR	72703	479-631-6400
BAPTIST HOME HEALTH		HOME HEALTH	1601 NEWCASTLE RD.	FORREST CITY	AR	72335	870-261-0158
SHARR, MD	JAN C.	FAMILY PRACTICE	401 W. SEARCY AVE.	HEBER SPRINGS	AR	72543	501-362-2414
OLDHAM, MD	BRENT	PSYCHIATRY	707 S. FIRST ST.	JACKSONVILLE	AR	72076	501-985-0292
DICKSON, MD	D BUD	DICKSON ORTHOPEDIC CENTER	9601 LILE DRIVE #410	LITTLE ROCK	AR	72205	501-225-6800
DICKSON, MD	D. BUD	DICKSON ORTHOPAEDIC CTRS.	707 N. WASHINGTON ST.	MAGNOLIA	AR	71753	870-234-3030
MCCARTY, PHD	SCOTT	PSYCHOLOGY	9 HALSTED CIRCLE	ROGERS	AR	72756	479-631-6400
BROOKS, MD	HAROLD	SEARCY MEDICAL CTR.	2900 HAWKINS DR	SEARCY	AR	72143	501-278-2800
OLDHAM, MD	BRENT	PSYCHIATRY	303 N. SPRUCE ST.	SEARCY	AR	72143	501-305-4415
PINEAU, DO	GREG	FAMILY PRACTICE	1304 S MAIN	SEARCY	AR	72143	501-268-7143
CONLEY, MD	THOMAS	ARKANSAS CARDIOLOGY NO.	2215 WILDWOOD #102	SHERWOOD	AR	72120	501-833-8100
EFIRD, PHD	TERRY L.	PSYCHOLOGY	106 S. MAIN ST.	SPRINGDALE	AR	72764	479-751-7074
L'HEUREUX, MD	GUY J.	MEDICAL ORTHOPAEDICS	228 TYLER #208	WEST MEMPHIS	AR	72301	870-732-3836

OUT-OF-STATE ADDITIONS

MCELRAETH, DC	SUE	ALL CARE CHIROPRACTIC CLINIC	37 S WILSON AVE	BROWNSVILLE	TN	38012	731-779-9222
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OUT-OF-STATE UPDATES

HERZOG, MD	JOHN JR	DELTA HEART AND VASCULAR CTR	1421 EAST UNION STREET	GREENVILLE	MS	38701	662-335-0183
VANG, MD	MENG	INTERVENTIONAL ASSOC OF MEMPHIS	7945 WOLF RIVER BLVD	GERMANTOWN	TN	38138	901-448-1714
DANIELS, MD	CHALMERS	SOUTHWIND MEDICAL SPECIALISTS	6590 KIRBY CTR. CV #103	MEMPHIS	TN	38115	901-367-9001
MIDSOUTH HEART INSTITUTE		CARDIOLOGY, CARDIOVASCULAR	3930 NEW COVINGTON PIKE #302	MEMPHIS	TN	38128	901-973-4840
MIDSOUTH HEART INSTITUTE		CARDIOLOGY, CARDIOVASCULAR	1211 UNION AVE. #975	MEMPHIS	TN	38104	901-722-0410
WILLIAMS, MD	JAMES SCOTT	INTERVENTIONAL ASSOC OF MEMPHIS	877 JEFFERSON AVE	MEMPHIS	TN	38103	901-448-6111
MCNAIRY REGIONAL HOSPITAL		HOSPITAL	705 E POPLAR AVE.	SELMER	TN	38375	731-660-6340
CONTRERAS, MD	FREDDIE	NEUROSURGICAL ASSOC OF TEXARKANA	3313 N. STATLINE AVE.	TEXARKANA	TX	75501	903-794-4196
DIETZE, MD	J. BRETT	NEUROSURGICAL ASSOC OF TEXARKANA	3313 N. STATLINE AVE.	TEXARKANA	TX	75504	903-794-4196
PATTERSON, MD	JOEL T.	NEUROSURGICAL ASSOC OF TEXARKANA	3313 N. STATLINE AVE.	TEXARKANA	TX	75501	903-794-4196
THOMAS, MD	JEAN	COLLOM & CARNEY CLINIC	5002 COWHORN CREEK RD	TEXARKANA	TX	75503	903-614-3000
WRIGHT, MD	NATHAN JAY	GALLERIA OAKS DIAG. CENTER	2014 GALLERIA OAKS DR	TEXARKANA	TX	75503	903-792-2990

OUT-OF-STATE DELETES

NAUSHAD, MD	ABDUL	ADVANCED PAIN CENTERS	35 DOCTORS PARK	CAPE GIRARDEAU	MO	63703	573-335-4422
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GREGORIE, MD	ERIK	NEUROSURGERY	1001 MAIN ST. #200	TEXARKANA	TX	75501	903-794-4196
KEY, LPT	KELLY	FLINT PHYSICAL THERAPY	3102 RICHMOND RD	TEXARKANA	TX	75503	903-334-9205
RODRIGUES, MD	EDISON	TEXARKANA GASTROENT. CONS.	1920 MOORES LANE #A	TEXARKANA	TX	75503	903-792-8030

(The Arkansas Freedom of Information Act [FOIA], signed into law in 1957 by Gov. Winthrop Rockefeller, was 40 years old on Feb. 14, the Arkansas Press Association noted in its Feb. 15 newsletter, *Arkansas Publisher Weekly*. Here is a journalist's look at the FOIA, which the Municipal League distributes at its conventions, conferences and as mail outs. She also notes the national Sunshine Week, March 16-22.—Editor)

FOIA is 40 years old! And Sunshine Week celebrates open records

By Brenda Blagg

As Sunshine Week rolled around this year, the need for this concentrated effort to remind citizens—and the people elected to serve them—of the public's right to know is all the more evident.

March 16-22 was the third national Sunshine Week, an effort organized by journalists and others concerned about the diminishment of a fundamental freedom in this nation: the freedom of information (FOI).

The principle at its core is that in a democracy, public business isn't the government's business. It's the people's business. Yet, in the post-Sept. 11 psyche, the freedom of information is too often being sacrificed.

Fear feeds this change in the American mentality.

Has everyone forgotten the admonition President Franklin Roosevelt offered the nation in trying times?

"All we have to fear is fear itself," he said, as Americans—remembered now as the Greatest Generation—stepped up to save democracy.

It was some of those same GIs who upon returning home from war initiated the first "sunshine" laws. They wanted an end to the backroom politics that controlled their governments. They wanted to participate in the decisions of their school boards and their cities and their states and the nation, too. They had earned that right, and they demanded access.

People in power fought the idea, and laws were passed that weren't terribly useful. Arkansas's first open-government legislation essentially said government meetings would be open to the public—unless the officials wanted them closed.

It took election of some of those determined GIs and others who shared their mindset to make real

change happen. In time, their efforts evolved into the state and federal laws that today guarantee the public's right to know, laws that really did open meetings and records of government.

FOI laws differ from state to state, and Arkansas's law, passed in 1967, still stands as one of the strongest. Yet, for 40 years now, there have been attempts to weaken this law, most often led by people in power, who don't like the inconvenience of answering questions from a pesky public.

Efforts to change the law have intensified in the years since terrorist attacks on American soil so frightened this nation that our leaders began to "protect" us by taking away our rights.

The USA Patriot Act is part of that movement. And there was legislation before the 86th Arkansas General Assembly that would have changed Arkansas's FOI Act because of perceived terrorist threats. Most of the bills that would alter the law, however, are simply about avoiding the aggravation of public participation in government.

In the last three regular sessions of the Legislature, all since the Sept. 11 attacks and all within the era of term limits, 75 bills have proposed to alter the FOI Act. Precious few of them would strengthen the law. Some are duplicate bills that keep coming back but have been successfully opposed by FOI advocates.

Term limits is another reason for this rash of legislation. The constant turnover in the Legislature brings lawmakers to power who don't know the history of the FOI Act. For some, their entire public lives have been consumed with this fear of terrorism. Others simply don't appreciate that public participation—made possi-

Changes to 2007 Directory, Arkansas Municipal Officials

Bauxite

Delete MTG Third Thursday
Add MTG Third Monday

Bay

Add PC David Kelly

Georgetown

Delete AL Bobby Bryant
Add AL James Burroughs

Paragould

Delete FC Eddie Brown
Add FC Kevin Lang

Pleasant Plains

Add MR Matt Thomas
Delete SAN Roger Turner
Delete AL Danny Wood
Add AL Connie Blevins

Portland

Delete MTG Second Monday
Add MTG Third Monday
Delete CA Herman Hamilton
Delete WW/SAN Floyd Kelley
Add WS Floyd Kelley
Delete DPW Jonathan Webb
Add SAN/SS Jonathan Webb
Delete PRD William Lassiter

Russell

Delete M Carletta Pyle
Add M Darrell Lutner
Delete R/T Henry Klotz
Add R/T Amanda Busselle
Delete WS/WW Glen Pyle
Add WS Carletta Pyle
Delete SS Darrell Lutner
Add WW Tommy Sanford
Add SAN Todd Meacham
Delete AL Glenda Pierce

Add AL Conlee Busselle
Delete AL Linda Holleman
Add AL Betty Case

Summit

Delete CEO William Cagle
Delete AL Robert Linton
Add AL Annie Allen
Delete AL Curtis Reed
Add AL Syble King
Delete AL Randy Lunceford
Add AL William Sweet
Delete AL Arnold Wilkerson
Add AL Terry Mooney

West Fork

Delete PRD Nancy Dugyler
Add PRD Nancy Dugwyler
Add LIB Joan Bachman
Add AL Brett Stone

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ble by this right to know—is fundamental to responsible government. Lawmakers become government insiders, with easy access to information themselves, and forget what it was like to be a citizen looking in from outside the halls of government.

But lawmakers aren't the only ones losing faith with the full participation of the public in their governments.

This year, as part of Sunshine Week, news organizations and others all around the country, sent individuals, acting as private citizens, to ask for a document the federal government requires be kept and be made available to the public.

The results of that audit of more than 400 agencies were wide ranging, in Arkansas and elsewhere; but far too many of those who keep the records failed to give them up.

Our experience in Arkansas, where auditors asked for documents in 30 counties, two cities and a state agency, was definitely mixed. More than half of the

record keepers responded fully, although not necessarily without suspicion. Six others gave up only part of the report. The rest denied the request.

Ideally, all of the record keepers would have known their responsibility under the law and complied willingly. That didn't happen.

All of the audit experiences are documented on the Internet at www.sunshineweek.org. Numerous articles, editorials and cartoons about freedom of information are also available, including several from Arkansas.

The concern expressed in commentary there and here is genuine, fueled admittedly by a different kind of fear: fear that this fundamental public right to know is endangered.



Brenda Blagg is regional editor of The Morning News and Arkansas coordinator for Sunshine Week. Address comments or queries to Brenda Blagg, 203 N. College, Fayetteville, AR 72701, or e-mail to bblagg@nwaonline.net.

Local Option Sales and Use Tax in Arkansas



KEY: Counties with countywide tax (shaded is 1¢ unless otherwise noted)
 (2) 2¢ being collected in that municipality
 (2co¢) 2¢ being collected in that county

Source: Debbie Rogers, Office of State Treasurer

See also: www.arkansas.gov/dfa

Sales and Use Tax Year-to-Date 2007

Month	Municipal Tax	County Tax	Total Tax	Interest
January	\$33,890,076	\$32,664,439	\$66,554,515	\$244,719
February	\$41,087,573	\$39,706,942	\$80,794,515	\$209,743
March	\$33,903,991	\$33,441,917	\$67,345,908	\$217,856
Total	\$108,881,640	\$105,813,294	\$214,694,938	\$672,318
Averages	\$36,293,880	\$35,271,099	\$71,564,979	\$224,106

2007 Elections

CONWAY COUNTY, March 13.
 Defeated. 0.25% for 5 years
 For: 770 Against: 1,058

HOWARD COUNTY, March 13.
 Passed. 1¢ for hospital.
 For: 866 Against: 804

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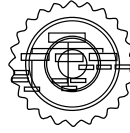
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ACCEPTING POLICE OFFICER APPLICATIONS—The Texarkana, Ark., Police Dept. is accepting applications for police officers. First year ann. sal. is \$34,340.02. After one year, sal. incr. to \$37,505.00(+). Benefits incl. ins., vac., sick leave, certificate pay, edu. pay and longevity pay. Uniforms and eqpt. furn. Min. req.: (1) Must be 21 yrs. old, (2) 30 hrs. of college (waiver to test for prior law enforcement or 2 yrs. active military), (3) meet all other min. req. of Texarkana, Ark., Police Dept. For further info., contact the Personnel and Training Office at 903-798-3328 or Tateson@txkusa.org, or Web site: www.txkusa.org/arkpolice.

CITY ENGINEER—Jacksonville is accepting applications for a city engineer. Qualifications: Bachelor's deg. in Civil Eng.; at least 3 yrs. exp. in civil eng., 5 supervisory; plan, design and direct city eng. projects; valid DL; must reside in Jacksonville. Applications may be obtained from Human Resources, Jacksonville City Hall, #1 Municipal Drive; or www.cityofjacksonville.net. Resumé may accompany application. Salary DOE. EOE.

CITY ENGINEER—Lakeland, TN, seeks applicants for the pos. of city engineer. Directs staff in Eng. Dept. and provides tech. direction for on-going devel. of city's infrastructure, estab. and monitor eng. standards, eng. review of com. and res. devel. plans and ensure compliance with fed. and state regs. Successful applicants will have 5-6 yrs. mun. exp., Prof. Eng. Cert. and at least 2 yrs. supervisory exp. Starting sal. \$80K+ DOE/DOQ, relocation exp. neg. and incl. benefit pkg. Applicants should contact Henry Evans at 1-800-762-0173, e-mail hevans@thecentregroup.com or check Web site: www.lakelandtn.gov.

DEPUTY COURT CLERK—Jacksonville is accepting applications for a part-time Deputy Court Clerk. Valid DL; GED/Diploma; at least 1 yr. professional clerical exp. Applicant will work 10 a.m.-2 p.m. M-F and fill in full-time hours as needed. Applications may be retrieved at www.cityofjacksonville.net or at City Hall #1 Municipal Drive. EOE.

DIRECTOR OF INSPECTION AND ZONING—Pine Bluff seeks a qualified, experienced individual to fill the pos. of director of inspection and zoning. Performs professional-level tech. work rel. to land use, planning, zoning, code enforcement, site inspection and rel. work as req. Develops and monitors overall comprehensive plans for the city, incl. commercial, residential, industrial and neighborhood. Bachelor's deg. in Land Use, Planning, Urban Planning, Landscape Arch. or rel. field; at least 5 yrs. in municipal planning as a director or asst.; considerable exp. in project coord., mgmt. or rel.; equiv. comb. of edu. and exp.; knowledge of tech., urban planning, zoning, code enforcement, political geog., drafting, photography and graphic design desired. Submit applications in person or by mail to City of Pine Bluff, HR Dept., 200 E. 8th Ave., Room 104, Pine Bluff, AR 71601. Fax resúmes to 870-850-2449 or email vconaway@cablelynx.com. Open until filled.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SPECIALIST—Pine Bluff seeks qual. ind. for the pos. of Econ. Dev. Spec. Organizes and coordinates adm., tech. and prof. activities in the prep. and implementation of econ. devel. and redev. plans, programs and svcs. Applicants should have a B.A. from an accredited univ. in Real Estate, Urban Planning, Economics, Public or Business Admin. or a rel. field with 5 years inc. resp. work exp. in any comb. of public or private bus., real estate or econ. devel. An adv. degree may sub. for 2 years of exp. Apps. accepted in person or by mail at City of Pine Bluff, HR Dept., 200 E. 8th Ave., Rm. 104, Pine Bluff, AR 71601. Salary comm. with exp. up to \$40K. Resúmes may be faxed to 870-850-2449 or e-mailed to vickiecc@cityofpinebluff.com. Apps. can be downloaded from www.cityofpinebluff.com. Open until filled.

FIREFIGHTER—Jacksonville is accepting applications for entry-level firefighter. Applicant must have a valid DL; GED/Diploma. Deadline for applications is Friday, April 20, for the test on Friday, May 4. Starting salary: \$25,731. Applications and test information pamphlet may be retrieved online at www.cityofjacksonville.net or at City Hall, #1 Municipal Drive. EOE.

FITNESS SPECIALIST—Jacksonville seeks Fitness Specialist w/Associate's degree (A.A.) or equivalent from 2-year college or tech. school, or 6 mo. to 1 yr. related exp. and/or training, or equivalent comb. of edu. and exp. Valid driver's lic.; Certified Personal Trainer/CPR. Other

skills and abilities: Understanding of physical fitness; exercise techniques; knowledge of resistance, nutrition and cardiovascular education. \$10/hr. Mon.-Thur. 11 a.m.-8 p.m., Fri. 9 a.m.-6 p.m. Applications may be obtained at www.cityofjacksonville.net or at City Hall, #1 Municipal Drive, Jacksonville. EOE.

HEAVY EQUIPMENT OPERATOR—Jacksonville is accepting applications for a heavy equipment operator. Requirements: Valid CDL A; HS diploma or GED; at least 5 yrs. rel. exp.; drive dump truck, tractors, other street maint. equip. Applications may be obtained from Human Resources, Jacksonville City Hall, #1 Municipal Drive; or www.cityofjacksonville.net. Salary \$11.75 to \$13.20/hr. DOE.

HOUSING INSPECTOR—Pine Bluff seeks applicants for the pos. of Housing Inspector. Resp. for inspecting houses in need of repair or demolition and lot clearances. Also resp. for citizens' complaints relating to Housing Codes. Prepares form letters adv. property owners and tenants of poss. violations and time allowed for correcting deficiencies, consults file of violation reports and revisits dwellings at periodic intervals to verify correction of violations by property owners and tenants. Also keeps records of all notices, compliance and non-compliance of housing costs demolished and issues citations. App. must have high school diploma and working knowl. of tech., materials and corrective meas. used in all aspects of housing constr. Must be aware of fed., state and city regs. that govern housing constr. Must understand and be competent to work from constr. blueprints, drawings and diagrams. Apply at City Hall, Room 104, Dept. of Human Resources. Open until filled. EOE.

HUMAN RESOURCES DIRECTOR—Jacksonville is accepting resúmes for a director of human resources. Qualifications: Bachelor's deg. in public admin. or human resources; SPHR or PHR and/or IMPA-CP or IPMA-CS certification pref.; at least 5-7 yrs. rel. exp. in human resources field; supervisory exp. Benefits incl. a 457/plan, complete health ins. pgm. (medical, dental, vision), tuition reimbursement pgm., mandatory contr. into APERS, and an education incentive. Must live in Jacksonville. Submit resume and city application to City Hall, ATTN: Human Resources, #1 Municipal Drive, Jacksonville, AR 72076. Application may be obtained from city hall or from www.cityofjacksonville.net. EOE.

INFORMATION SYSTEMS MGR.—Pine Bluff seeks applicants for the position of information systems mgr. Resp. for planning, developing, implementing and evaluating cost-effective, state-of-the-art information tech. services. Dept. administers network ops., GIS communications, website mgmt., records/imaging systems and several dept. specific software applications. Mgr. will guide the development of information systems, coordinate interdepartmental activities to increase employee productivity using tech. Bachelor's deg. in IT, Computer Sci., Public Admin., Business Admin., Business/Econ., and/or 5 yrs. IT mgmt. exp. or equiv. comb. preferred. Applications accepted at City of Pine Bluff HR Dept., 200 E. 8th, Room 104, Pine Bluff, AR 71601; fax 870-850-2449; or e-mail vconaway@cablelynx.com. Open until filled.

MAINTENANCE/GROUNDS—Cammack Village seeks F/T maintenance/grounds employee. Responsibilities include but not limited to street maint., light repair, park maint. and other indoor/outdoor maint. Min. sal. \$20,000 DOE. Health benefits, annual vac. Applications avail. 9 a.m.-5 p.m. M-F at city hall, 2710 N. McKinley, 501-663-4593.

POLICE OFFICER—Cammack Village Police Dept. seeks F/T certified police officers. Health benefits, annual vac. Applications avail. 9 a.m.-5 p.m. M-F at city hall, 2710 N. McKinley. Contact Chief Powell for info, 501-663-4593.

POLICE OFFICER—The City of Jacksonville is accepting applications for entry-level police officer. Applicant must have a valid DL; GED/Diploma; no felony convictions. Deadline for applications is Friday, April 20, for the test on Tuesday, May 4. Starting salary: \$26,266. Applications may be retrieved online at www.cityofjacksonville.net or at City Hall #1 Municipal Drive. EOE.

POLICE OFFICER—Allport (Lonoke County) seeks a full-time officer. Mail resumé and cert. to: Allport Police Dept, P.O. Box 58, Humnoke, AR 72072.

POLICE OFFICER—McCrorry is accepting applications for a full-time certified police officer. Applications may be

picked up at McCrorry City Hall.

POLICE OFFICER—Menifee Police Dept. seeks a P/T officer. Certification required. Starting pay \$9/hour. Fax applications to Chief Wayne Morris, 501-354-6826.

SANITATION LOADER—Jacksonville is accepting applications for a F/T sanitation loader. Must have valid CDL B; pass pre-employment drug screen; must be able to lift up to 75 lbs.; must be able to walk, stand and balance for extended periods of time; sanitation exp. pref. Applications may be obtained from Human Resources, Jacksonville City Hall, #1 Municipal Drive; or at www.cityofjacksonville.net. Salary up to \$10.65/hr. DOE. EOE.

STREET DEPT. DIRECTOR—Pine Bluff seeks applicants for the position of Street Dept. director. The director oversees and reviews plans and specs. for public works projects, assists in projecting a plan of public works projects and improvements, and administers and coordinates all capital improvement projects with other city depts., utilities and outside contractors. The director gives tech., engineering and architectural advice to city depts. as directed by the mayor; performs and coordinates the investigation, development, design and construction of eng. projects; and supervises operation, maintenance of all dept. equip. Bachelor's deg. in Civil Engineering and/or five yrs.' exp. in engineering work (2 yrs. of which in mgr./supervisory capacity) preferred. Should have knowledge of federal flood plain mgmt. and state/local regulations. Applications accepted at City of Pine Bluff HR Dept., 200 E. 8th, Room 104, Pine Bluff, AR 71601; fax 870-850-2449; or e-mail vconaway@cablelynx.com. Open until filled.

VEHICLE MECHANIC—Jacksonville is accepting applications for a vehicle mechanic. Valid CDL A; GED/Diploma; ASE Cert. req. Salary DOQ. Apps. may be retrieved at www.cityofjacksonville.net or at City Hall #1 Municipal Drive. EOE.

WATER OPERATOR/SUPERINTENDENT—Big Flat seeks lic. water operator/superintendent incl. maintenance of complete distribution system., incl. billings and collection of water fees, or a person who can obtain a lic. within 1 year. Submit resumé, refs. and sal. hist. to Mayor Horace Dickerson, P.O. Box 92, Big Flat, AR 72617. Phone 870-448-5376 or fax 870-448-5350. Position available June 1.

WATER/SEWER OPERATOR—Black Rock (Lawrence Co.) seeks licensed water and sewer operator. Salary neg. Contact Mayor Calvin McLaughlin at 870-878-6792.

WATER/WASTEWATER OPERATOR—Lake Village (Chicot Co.) seeks water/wastewater operator. Lic. preferred but not req. Must be willing to train to perform duties in the Water and Wastewater Dept. H.S. dipl. or FED and valid Ark. CL req. Paid vac., sick leave, holidays. Send resumé to City of Lake Village, attn: Clinton Tipps, P.O. Box 725, Lake Village, AR 71653. EOE.

FOR SALE—1970 Ford F-850 Boardman 1000 GPM pumper. Truck bought new by city. Has hard suction, deck gun, siren, lights, soft steamer connection line, ground ladders, 2 red line reels and an auxiliary PTO pump for pumping on the go. Pump made by Waterloo. Truck currently in use. Contact Clarksville City Hall, 479-754-6486, or Chief Ron Wylie, 479-754-1949. Asking \$25,000.

PUMP STATIONS—Chidester has for sale two wastewater pump stations. Approx. 12 ft. long. Each has two pumps with alternating action and were used on the surface to pump wastewater from below-surface tanks. Make offer. For more info contact John Kraft, 870-685-2994.

PUMPER/TELESQUIRT—Van Buren is accepting sealed bids on a 1975 Ford 50-ft. Telesquirt/1250 GPM two-stage pumper. 534 motor w/5-speed trans. VIN#C91LCV35548. May be viewed at Fire Station #3 on N. 28th and Bryan Road. For details, contact Asst. Chief Stanley Clark at 479-471-5038. Sealed bids may be mailed to VBFD at 2009 Pevehouse Road, Van Buren, AR 72956. Bids will be received no later than noon, May 16, 2007. The City of Van Buren reserves the right to reject any and all bids.

STREET SWEEPER—Paris is selling 1988 Elgin Crosswind Street Sweeper. Contact Street Supt., 479-963-2450.

WANTED—Slightly used 20-cubic-yard, rear-load, trash compactor truck. Must be low hours. Contact Paris Street Supt. at 479-963-2450.

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