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Arkansas Democrat-Gazette/MELISSA SUE GERRITS

Richard Theilig prepares radio broadcast equipment Friday as Debra Wood arranges other artifacts during set up of an exhibit titled Alert Today, Alive Tomorrow: Living with the Atomic Bomb, 1945-1965, at the Laman Library in North Little Rock. The exhibit will look at the Atomic Age when Americans lived with an atomic threat in their daily lives.

NLR library displays atomic fears

Exhibit explores fallout on life in nuclear age, Cold War

JAKE SANDLIN
ARKANSAS DEMOCRAT-GAZETTE

Bombarded by information about fallout shelters, evacuation routes and schoolchildren practicing “duck and cover” drills, Americans’ daily lives during the 1945-1965 Atomic Age were punctuated by warnings of a possible nuclear attack.

The Alert Today, Alive Tomorrow: Living with the Atomic Bomb, 1945-1965, exhibit opens today at North

Little Rock’s William F. Laman Library, 2801 Orange St., and explores the ways in which lives were affected by a constant atomic threat.

Displays include about 75 objects from the era, including posters, pamphlets and other materials that were daily reminders that a deadly attack could be imminent. The exhibit, which cost the library \$4,300 to rent, is free to the public and will continue until Aug. 11.

“The only thing I could imagine in my lifetime that would be similar to living under those conditions was after 9/11, having the color code,” said Dan Noble, the library’s public relations manager, referring to the color-coded terror alert system the United States used after the 2001 terrorist attacks. “To me, that is as close as I could come to knowing what it was like.

“But that was not near

what it was like living under those conditions” in the Atomic Age, added Noble, 35. “I could not imagine growing up while living with that fear. People back then lived during some very stressful times.”

The exhibit displays a timeline and overview of three main chronological periods.

It begins with “The Blast, 1945-1950,” which starts with the atomic bombs dropped

See **ATOMIC**, Page 6B

Bad weather stalls building of county jail

104-bed Newport facility to take 15 months to finish

KENNETH HEARD
ARKANSAS DEMOCRAT-GAZETTE

Construction will soon begin on a new \$8 million jail in Jackson County to replace its existing jail, which was facing imminent closure because of crowded conditions and its inability to meet state prison standards.

Officials held a recent groundbreaking on 4 acres of land near Arkansas State University-Newport’s campus, but inclement weather has delayed the actual work, said Jackson County Judge Jeff Phillips. Once work does begin, it should take about 15 months before the jail is opened.

“We’ve been dealing with all that rain,” Phillips said. “I’m hoping we can begin work within a couple of weeks after all that water dries up.”

The new 104-bed jail will replace the county’s 26-bed jail, which is across the street from the Jackson County Courthouse in downtown Newport. That jail was built in 1978 and has routinely failed state inspections.

The Arkansas Criminal Detention Facilities Committee has cited the Jackson County jail for overcrowding, understaffing and having cells that are too small.

In 2008, an inspection

team recommended the jail be closed for two months while workers replaced two heating units.

Jackson County Sheriff David Lucas also spent more than \$50,000 from his budget on repairing a leaking roof and getting new lights.

The committee placed the jail on its last six-month probationary period on Aug. 12, 2012. The probation ended four days after Jackson County voters favored two three-eighth percent sales taxes to pay for constructing a new jail and funding its operations.

Voters widely approved both measures. The taxes will raise about \$1.4 million annually.

“If we hadn’t passed that tax, we couldn’t build a jail,” Lucas said. “This jail would have shut down, and we would have been out of costs transporting prisoners to other counties.

“That would have bankrupted the county,” he said.

Other counties faced similar situations and were forced to ask for sales tax elections to help fund jail construction.

Greene County voters supported a three-quarter percent sales tax in 2011 to build a \$12 million jail that

See **JAIL**, Page 6B

UAMS, UA team on grants

Telehealth focus of new program

TERESA MOSS
ARKANSAS DEMOCRAT-GAZETTE

The University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences along with the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville have partnered to provide grants for telehealth research in the state.

Laura James, director of UAMS Translational Research Institute, said the program will award about four grants for up to \$15,000 each to providers for the purpose of collecting data regarding telehealth use. An additional \$5,000 will be provided if the University of Arkansas is able to collaborate on the project.

Telehealth uses electronic devices such as televisions and cameras to remotely connect medical providers when treating patients.

“We are the second highest state in the country if you look at our telehealth capability,” James said Thursday. “We have a chance to be an example to other states. We want to give them [providers] the opportunity to show how this works so that it can eventually be adopted throughout the country.”

UAMS has 40 telehealth programs that it operates in the state, James said. However, data collection is not sufficient.

The university received a \$102 million grant in 2010 from the U.S. Department of Commerce to upgrade broadband connections at 474 health care and education sites for health care. James said those upgrades have helped the state develop and expand its telehealth program.

The Arkansas Stroke Assistance Through Virtual Emergency Support program is an example of telehealth in the state. More

See **UAMS**, Page 3B

Sharing culture



Arkansas Democrat-Gazette/BENJAMIN KRRAIN

Israeli Scouts Bar Peres (left) and Roni Benarye dance with Elora Osmundson (center), Arduse Sonnier and Roxy Sonnier (right) during a visit to Congregation B’nai Israel in Little Rock. Ten members of the Israel Scouts Summer Delegation are touring more than 25 cities in the U.S. during the summer, sharing activities and culture about Israel and Judaism.

New library rises in Camden

Other towns across state open, plan revamped facilities

JOHN WORTHEN
ARKANSAS DEMOCRAT-GAZETTE

CAMDEN — It’s been three years since Ouachita County lost its largest library to an early morning blaze that claimed 96 percent of the collection and destroyed the building.

Since then, the Camden library has operated out of a cramped space in a shopping center about 2 miles from downtown, where an older facility had stood for decades.

But in less than a year, a brand new library will be completed on Cash Road.

Every time Camden Library Director Lisa Pickett

drives by the construction site, she swells up with pride, smiles and envisions the gleaming new structure filled with patrons eager to check out books.

“This is something we have been waiting for for a long time,” Pickett said. “It’s a great feeling knowing we are about to once again have a permanent home.”

Though an opening date hasn’t been set, construction on the library is well underway. All of the walls are up, and Pickett said the building will be “in the dry” in a few weeks — meaning the inside will be safe from the elements.

Insurance money is paying for the cost of the \$1.9 million, 8,800-square-foot building, which is double the size of the old library.

Pickett said a faulty shredder caused the 2011 fire, adding that she and her staff “were able to save most of our genealogical records and anything that wasn’t totally burned. ... We tried to restore things as best we could.

“Right now, as far as our main collection goes, we are buying new books as we can, and we have had a lot of donations.”

Pickett said it will likely take several years to build

See **CAMDEN**, Page 3B

2 Berryville murals freshened up

\$3,500 raised to restore old signs for Coca-Cola, grocer

BILL BOWDEN
ARKANSAS DEMOCRAT-GAZETTE

BERRYVILLE — Depression-era murals on downtown buildings have been disappearing, taking some of Berryville’s history with them.

For years, Mary Nell Billings tried to muster public support to restore the old advertising signs. She got little traction until she joined a Facebook page called Berryville Organic News.

Through the Facebook page, Billings raised about \$3,500 from 50 donors. The money was used to restore two signs — a 11-by-14-foot Coke advertisement and the Gentry’s Grocery sign above it.

“There was much enthusiasm and input on the idea of restoring signs, which really motivated me,” said Billings. “All it took was a little encouragement on the site. By yourself you can’t do much. ... The beauty of this is it hasn’t been funded by a grant. It’s just done by the people. Everybody helping out.”

The work on the first two signs was completed last week.

The grocery store was on the southwest side of the square in a building that now houses a beauty shop called

Salon 71. It’s across an alley, also known as Court Street, from the Carroll County Heritage Center Museum of Pioneer History, a building constructed in 1880 to be a courthouse.

Started Jan. 29 by Kevin Wright, the Berryville Organic News Facebook page provides a forum for current and former residents of the city. It had 1,594 members as of Friday.

SEEN AS BENEFICIAL

Wright said some people in Berryville call Billings “the crazy sign lady.”

“It’s been her passion for three years,” he said.

Billings said she doesn’t mind the moniker.

“I have watched them slowly disappearing over time,” she said of the murals. “Many beautiful pieces just painted over, and I felt what was left should be restored and viewed as a source of pride for the community.”

Billings also thought restoring the signs might give Berryville an economic boost.

“I felt like it would be beneficial to the downtown square,” she said. “Perhaps people would stop and take notice, and linger a while.”

The Coke sign was re-

stored to its original appearance. The Coca-Cola Co. declined to donate for the first restored Coke sign, but the company may donate in the future for another sign, said Wright.

The Gentry’s Grocery sign was restored as a “ghost” sign, meaning not to its original appearance from decades ago. Instead, it was restored to appear already somewhat old and slightly faded.

The painting and restoration work was done by James Abbott and Randal Rust, both experienced painters from Berryville.

Abbott said the Coke sign probably is from the late 1930s. He and Rust found a similar, older Coke sign underneath the layer of paint they were restoring.

“We saw the ghost of another Coke sign under that one,” said Abbott. “The circle was a little lower.”

Money is still being raised for the project to make sure Abbott and Rust get paid, said Billings. Wright said they did the work at a discount price.

EMOTION INVOLVED

On Wednesday, one of the donors, Jim Shell, and the building owner, Levi Phillips, stopped by to take a look.

See **BERRYVILLE**, Page 6B

Quality time with Dad



Arkansas Democrat-Gazette/MELISSA SUE GERRITS

Justin Eisele (center), with sons (left to right) Thomas, 7; Collin, 4; and Graham, 9, goes fishing on Sunday at Wildwood Park for the Performing Arts. The annual Father’s Day fishing event at the park allows men and their families to fish at the park, catching and releasing crappie and blue gill, among others.

Jail

• Continued from Page 1B
opened earlier this year.

Newton County voters favored a half-percent sales tax in 2008 to fund construction of a new jail, but failed to pass a second sales tax that would have paid to operate it.

The jail now sits empty; prisoners are sent to neighboring Boone County at a cost of \$35 a day.

Voters in Garland, Nevada, Prairie, Crawford and Yell counties also passed taxes to build new jails in recent years.

"Counties have outgrown their jails," said Danny Hickman, the detention facilities committee coordinator. "Every jail is overcrowded, and many are totally out of compliance."

A major reason for the crowded conditions is the increase in the number of state prisoners counties are holding,

said Ronnie Baldwin, president of the Arkansas Sheriffs' Association.

"County jails are holding 2,650 state prisoners waiting transport," Baldwin said.

That's more than are in the largest prison in the state, which holds 1,850, he said. "There are 800 more prisoners in county jails than what the Department of Correction is holding [in that prison]."

"The county jails are the largest state [prison] facility," he said.

He said it costs counties \$18 million a year to house the state prisoners. Counties are reimbursed \$28 a day for housing state inmates, but Baldwin said it costs about \$45 a day to keep them when considering salaries, jail maintenance and other expenses.

"Counties are letting prisoners go because they can't afford to keep them," he said. "It's a major problem. People are finally starting to understand, and

they're building new jails. But it takes three years to [pass a tax and build a jail]. We can't keep going on like this."

Officials will build Jackson County's jail with expansion in mind, Lucas said. The 78,500-square-foot facility is situated on land that will allow for additions.

"There's plenty of room to build on if we need to," Phillips said.

Plans also call for adding a large garden tended by the prisoners, who will raise vegetables for food and help keep some costs down, the county judge said.

The county has received construction bids and plans to rebid a few of the projects, he said. If clear skies remain, construction should begin by the end of the month.

"We're doing all we can," Phillips said. "Within 15 months this will be done, and we'll be in good shape."

Atomic

• Continued from Page 1B

on Japan in 1945 that ended World War II and the resulting knowledge and fear about such a bomb's power. Those fears increased after the Soviet Union successfully tested its first atomic bomb in 1949.

The next segment, "Under the Mushroom Cloud, 1951-1956," demonstrates how the Federal Civil Defense Administration and Emergency Broadcast System, both created under President Harry Truman, began inundating adults and children with information and warnings. These included advertisements and films about preparing for a surprise atomic attack.

A widely released Civil Defense film about a turtle named Bert was supposed to teach children to "duck and cover" to protect themselves during such an attack, a practice that was used

in regular school drills in which pupils would duck beneath their desks.

The absurdity of such drills as being protection from a nuclear blast later became evident, providing stand-up material for modern-day comics such as Lewis Black: "Goats and monkeys flying everywhere. The windows of the elementary school blown out. ... But there were the children ... hiding safely under their desks."

The third segment, "Nuclear Fallout, 1957-1965," ushers in a new phase of the Cold War after the Soviets launched an intercontinental missile and also Sputnik, the first artificial satellite, into orbit. The Soviet Union now held the potential to hit a U.S. city with a hydrogen bomb in minutes, prompting the promotion of community and home fallout shelters.

Noble recalled that his grandfather, Roy Wisener, had

a bomb shelter built at his home in Glenwood in Pike County.

"It had these 2½-foot-thick walls," Noble said. "When I'd go down there, I just thought it was a cool room to play in. But he was concerned enough in the late 1950s and early 1960s for his family to spend the money to have a shelter at his home."

The exhibit will provide a good reminder to baby boomers of what it was like to grow up during the 1950s and '60s, Noble said, while offering a lesson about those years to those who didn't live through that era.

"People my age can learn a lot about that time from the exhibit," Noble said. "But for grandparents, they can bring their grandkids to this and say this is what we grew up under. I think they'll come away having a greater respect for the hostile environment people who grew up during that time had to live through."

Berryville

• Continued from Page 1B

"I think there's a lot of emotion going into this," said Shell. "Everybody can relate to this, especially if you were brought up in a small town."

Shell told Billings he would give more money to the restoration project.

"You can see the results," he said, pointing at the sign.

Phillips said the sign is hard to miss for motorists driving through town on U.S. 62 from the east, especially those who have to stop at the traffic light at the corner of U.S. 62, also known as Main Street, and Madison Avenue. He said people at that intersection would naturally look left, across the green grass of the square, and the bright red and yellow of the sign is hard to miss on the other side.

"It looks great," said Phillips. "I can remember a long time ago when it looked like that. Pretty cool. It's an era gone by."

Phillips said he remembers from the 1950s that old men would sit in the alley next to Gentry's Grocery and whittle all day.

"They had the damndest deal of shavings," he said. "And when they'd go home at night, they'd burn them. And the next day it was the same thing all over again."

currently operates Rust Studios in Berryville.

Abbott owns Abbott Signs of Berryville. He painted the sign for The Park at Holiday Island and the Huntsville High School football stadium (except for the eagle, which was done by another painter).

"Back in the '80s, I decorated all the trains in Eureka Springs and their water tower," said Abbott.

Abbott said he has done hundreds of signs for Thomas Dees, founder and president of Holi-

day Island Development Corp., and thousands of signs "that are simply not there anymore," including murals at the Berryville Information Center.

Billings said she hopes to raise money to restore more signs in downtown Berryville, perhaps a Coke sign on the other side of the downtown square or the Main Theater sign, which is a neon electric sign. There are several ghost signs left in downtown Berryville, and if they're not restored, they could be lost, she said.

Police name men involved in fatal shooting

HOLLY WEST
ARKANSAS DEMOCRAT-GAZETTE

Little Rock police have released the names of the men involved in a deadly Saturday night shooting on Geyer Springs Road.

Laron Ware, 44, died after being shot in the parking lot of Willow Creek Apartments about 7:46 p.m. Saturday, according to a report from Little Rock police. Another man, Tory Wade, 29, of Mabelvale, was injured in the shooting.

An officer responded to 7515 Geyer Springs Road after hearing several gunshots, the report states. The officer

reported that Wade was lying on the ground in the parking lot when he arrived and had apparent gunshot wounds.

Wade was taken to UAMS Medical Center. Information on his condition was not available late Sunday.

Witnesses told police that Wade was shot by five men in a silver vehicle, the report states.

According to the report, police stopped a vehicle matching that description at West 59th Street and Geyer Springs Road.

Ware was found in the vehicle with apparent gunshot

wounds, the report states. He was taken to UAMS Medical Center, where he died.

Police reported that four other men were also in the vehicle — Brelyn London, 19, of Little Rock; Kyle Woolfolk, 18, of Little Rock; Leondrye Brit, 19, of North Little Rock; and Melvin Lonnie, 19, of Little Rock.

They were all interviewed by detectives and released without being charged, said police spokesman Lt. Sidney Allen.

Allen said no additional information about the shooting was available late Sunday.



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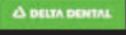
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