



**In this edition**

|              |    |                 |     |
|--------------|----|-----------------|-----|
| Obituaries   | 2A | Education       | 6A  |
| Police/Court | 3A | People & Events | 8A  |
| Editorial    | 4A | Classifieds     | 13A |
| Sports       | 5A |                 |     |



**NYC Bound...11A**

*Light accepted into acting program.*

**Wednesday  
February 20  
2019**



# The Times Dispatch

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## Hoxie considering location for new city hall

**Megan Heyl  
Staff Writer**

The Hoxie City Council met Monday night to tour the former IberiaBank building at 126 Southwest Texas Street. The building is being considered as the future site of the Hoxie City Hall and police department.

Mayor Dennis Coggins pre-

sented information about cost and possible payment options at the Feb. 12 regular meeting. Coggins explained that the building had been negotiated to \$95,000 down from \$400,000 and monthly payments would be \$847.23 over 10 years and \$480.67 over 20 years. A five-year plan is also being looked

into.

Upon touring the facility, the council voted to allow Coggins to enter negotiations on a final contract to be presented to the council at a special meeting Tuesday night at 5:30.

The council requested the roof and heat and air be inspected before a purchase is made.

Also at Monday's meeting, the council voted to enter into the Positive Pay program at IberiaBank. Following an increase in fraudulent checks targeting municipalities, Coggins informed the council that the Municipal League has advised them to increase protection. Coggins said Hoxie has had

two checks reported by the bank and both checks were caught before they were processed. The Walnut Ridge Regional Airport Commission recently reported that a fraudulent check did pass through its account.

Positive Pay offers an addi-

See **HOXIE...** page 14A.

## WR moving forward on one-way streets

**Megan Heyl  
Staff Writer**

The Walnut Ridge City Council voted to move forward on changing sections of Southwest and Northwest Second streets to one way.

Mayor Charles Snapp said the plan is to have Southwest Second (Abbey Road) be south bound only from Main to Elm and Northwest Second to be north bound from Main to Walnut.

Walnut Ridge EAST students were asked to make a presentation on the Abbey Road portion of the project. The students showed the lack of visibility at the crossing at Main Street. It also mapped out increased parking with angled spots along one side of the road. Cost estimates for the Abbey Road portion were presented at about \$1,100, which includes signage and striping.

Snapp said the city would proceed with research on both streets and seek counsel from the state on the process required to make these changes.

**Update on hazardous building**

Building Inspector Frank Owens and Code Enforcement Officer Bryan Archer presented photos of the further deterioration of property along Abbey Road.

The property is divided in three sections. Larry Steele and Dan Mullen, owners of two of the sections, are pursuing legal action against J.R. Rogers, who owns the third section, which is in disrepair.

Owens advised due to the state of the damages on the building overall, including increased collapse risk in the Rogers section and visible bowing and cracking in Steele's and Mullen's sections, that the surrounding area be fenced off.

Steele said the case against Rogers is currently under litigation but he understands that the city has to consider safety first. "We know it has to come down," Steele said.

See **WR...** page 14A.



Submitted Photo - Randy Story

**WWII MEMORIES SHARED** — Clifford Smith of St. Louis (left) shared stories of his 31 bombing missions during WWII, including getting shot down on his very first mission. He spoke during a special event on Feb. 12 at the Wings of Honor Museum in Walnut Ridge. Among the 117 in attendance were fellow WWII veterans Robert E. Puckett of Bono and D.J. Lawson of Paragould.

## Incident causes lockdown at Hoxie School

**Gretchen Hunt  
Editor**

Hoxie School was placed on lockdown for a little over an hour Friday morning after a reported threat involving a gun was called into 911.

According to Sergeant Jamie White with the Lawrence County Sheriff's Office Criminal Investi-

The name of the subject is not being released at this time pending formal charges.

"The suspect went before Judge Weeks at 11 a.m. today (Tuesday) for a probable cause hearing and was given a \$10,000 bond," White said. "However, formal charges are still pending."

According to a statement

State Police and Jackson County Sheriff's Office, responded to the call.

"After interviewing multiple witnesses it was learned that a student had made a comment regarding a possible firearm on the campus," the statement said. "Students overheard the comment and believed it to be



gation Division, one person was arrested in the matter for "communicating a false alarm" and other unrelated charges.

released by the Sheriff's Office on Friday, multiple agencies, including the LCSO, Hoxie Police, Walnut Ridge Police, Arkansas

a threat towards the school and immediately informed a teacher.

See GUN... page 14A.



TD Photo -- Gretchen Hunt

Virginia Goff of Smithville (from left) visits with AgHeritage representatives Nathan Davis, Lee Thielmier and Bo Tretenburg during Friday's Lawrence and Randolph County Agri Appreciation Expo.

## Agri Appreciation Expo draws crowd

**Gretchen Hunt  
Editor**

The 2019 Lawrence and Randolph County Agri Appreciation Expo was held Friday at Black River Technical College in Pocahontas offering local farmers an opportunity to learn from experts, network with each other, visit with agriculture-related businesses and enjoy a meal together.

The event is a joint effort of the Lawrence and Randolph County Chambers of Commerce and University of Arkansas Division of Agriculture Extension Service for the two counties.

Lesa Walter, director of the Lawrence County Chamber of Commerce, said the event was

well attended despite unfavorable weather.

"We had more than 50 vendor booths, and approximately 450 in attendance," she said.

Rich Hillman, vice president of Arkansas Farm Bureau, was the keynote speaker. In addition, professors and Extension experts conducted break out sessions on row crops, livestock and horticulture topics.

Herb Ginn, Lawrence County Extension agent, said he worked with the horticulture breakouts, during which information was shared on growing berries, as well as vegetables that are common in gardens.

"People went away with a lot more knowledge about grow-

ing small fruit," Ginn said. "They learned a lot about how to control disease in those and vegetables, as well."

Extension Agent Bryce Baldridge said the row crop sessions provided a lot of valuable information, including production practices, variety selection and irrigation.

The event also provided opportunities for agriculture students at high schools in the two counties.

"ASU and BRTC provided classes for the high school students," Walter said. "The students were also given a tour of the BRTC campus."

See EXPO... page 14A.



Submitted Photo -- Jennifer Archer

Hoxie High School student Cooper Wright, dressed in a medieval costume, accepts a donation for Make-A-Wish from Abby Lillard of Walnut Ridge at the road block in Walnut Ridge on Friday.

## LawCo. raises \$12,372 for Make-A-Wish

**Gretchen Hunt  
Editor**

Freezing temperatures and drizzling rain, didn't stop volunteers from manning road blocks in Walnut Ridge and Hoxie on Friday as they raised \$12,372 for the Make-A-Wish Foundation.

Jennifer Archer, who served as coordinator in Lawrence County, along with Felipe Baiza, said the Have-A-Heart Wish-A-Thon raised a combined \$374,556.43 across the region.

Locally, students from Hoxie and Walnut Ridge Schools volunteered to man roadblocks, along with many individual volunteers from the community.

She said the Walnut Ridge Police Department, Walnut

Ridge Fire Department, Hoxie Police Department, Cook's Wrecker Service and Craighead Electric Cooperative were also vital in making the event a success.

Food donations for volunteers were received from Sonic, Pizza Hut, Main Street Pizza and McDonald's.

Archer expressed her appreciation to all who worked the roadblocks and all who gave in Lawrence County and throughout Northeast Arkansas.

"The generosity of the people in Northeast Arkansas amazes me every year," she said. "I am so blessed to see the children's faces when we grant their wish. And it's all because of the giving."