

City & Town

FEBRUARY 2023 VOL. 79, NO. 02

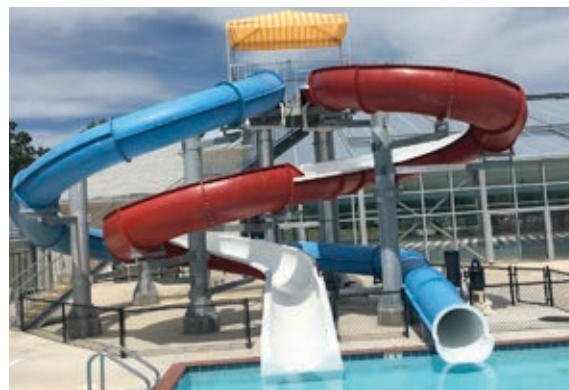
THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE ARKANSAS MUNICIPAL LEAGUE



2023 WINTER CONFERENCE



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Cover photo by Andrew Morgan.



ON THE COVER—Attendance was strong both in person and online for the League’s 2023 Winter Conference, and the agenda was full of timely and essential information for city and town leaders. Check out session highlights and pictures from the event beginning on page 18. Read also about the observance of the National Day of Racial Healing in Arkansas, advances in LED street lighting, and the challenges of protecting both the environment and our night skies, as well as the latest from our always-informative slate of regular columnists, all in this issue.—atm

Features

18 2023 Winter Conference a wrap!
Municipal leaders from across Arkansas gathered in person and online January 11-13 for the League’s 2023 Winter Conference, where they discussed an array of issues important to cities and towns with a special focus on the 94th General Assembly of the Arkansas legislature, now in session.

32 Arkansas celebrates NDORH
The League welcomed community advocates, nonprofit leaders, and city and county officials to its North Little Rock headquarters January 17 to kick off a weeklong series of events across the state in observance of the National Day of Racial Healing.

34 The big switch to LED
Street lights are an essential part of municipal infrastructure, and while modern LED fixtures may use less energy to light our way, they present new challenges when it comes to protecting our environment and limiting light pollution.

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Dear colleagues and friends,
 I hope this note finds you and yours doing great. What an incredible 2023 Winter Conference we just experienced in Little Rock! Of course, presiding as president was a new experience for me, but you all made me feel right at home. Thank you so much for that. I had an incredibly good time and was so happy to interact with many of you during the week. Your enthusiasm and engagement made for a standout conference that we can all be proud of. The speakers were terrific, and I know we all learned a lot of new information to use as we serve our cities and towns to the best of our ability. Thank you to the League staff for going above and beyond, as always, and thank you sponsors for your continued partnerships and support. We couldn't do it without you.



The new year is underway, with a new legislative session in full swing. If you caught the conference session about building relationships with your legislator, I want to emphasize those points again. Now is the time to be contacting them, and to stay in touch with them about the many bills being filed and voted on in the coming weeks and months. Our League staff will always keep us updated on important legislative matters, but nothing can replace the personal relationships and conversations that we as local elected officials can and should have with our legislators. Make an effort to reach out to them this week. Let them know that we want to be partners with them and that we appreciate the important work they are doing. It really matters to the future of your city or town.

One big takeaway from Winter Conference was the amount of cooperation and focus I felt from everyone in attendance. By that I mean that our members seem wholly set on working together and just doing the right thing for our people and our places. I mentioned during a session that we need not waste our finite time on pointless, partisan pursuits, especially in local government, and I meant it. Our residents need us working together to develop real solutions to real issues that affect their daily lives. As you well know, that is easier said than done! But I am convinced that we can do it. If we can't, who else can? Let's stay the course, and let's resist when the world around us suggests that we are more divided than we are aligned.

Feel free to reach out if I can be of service to you. Lord willing, we will gather again at the annual convention in June. Until then, I hope to see some of you at various meetings here and there, and I wish you, your families, and your cities and towns a great month ahead.

For greater communities and a greater state,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jonas Anderson". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Jonas Anderson
 Mayor, Cave City
 President, Arkansas Municipal League

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From the Desk of the Executive Director

A month of history: Two days of recognition and remembrance

This month's column is, in part, from an email I recently sent to the staff. After some thought it seemed clear that it was also well suited for the membership because, after all, we the staff are you the membership, and you are us. So here we go, my column for the shortest month of the year!¹

On November 17, 1957, Martin Luther King Jr. delivered the sermon *Loving Your Enemies* at the Dexter Avenue Baptist Church in Montgomery, Alabama. It may have been written, at least in part, as early as 1952.² The following famous quote has always struck a chord with me. It's both powerful and simple; both clear and comprehensive. "Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that."³ However, there's another quote from this same sermon that has gripped me more dramatically. "Yes, it is love that will save our world and our civilization, love even for enemies."⁴ How do you do that? I mean, loving the people you dislike or consider enemies seems counterintuitive to say the very least. King tackled that very question by noting you must analyze yourself for starters.⁵ Ugh. The hard look in the mirror. That's not easy to do because it requires an inventory of both the good and the bad of *yourself*. In a word, accountability. Acknowledging our own faults is never easy. Secondly, King suggests what may be an even more difficult task than self-analysis. That is recognizing the good in the other person.⁶ Why do I mention this history?⁷ Why do I specifically quote King's words? Bear with me...I'm going somewhere with this!

As I reflect on Martin Luther King Jr. Day⁸ and the day that follows, which is now recognized as the National Day of Racial Healing,¹⁰ I note something that has occurred right under my nose without me knowing or



¹ And right out of the chute I've given the local controller a wide-open target and she hasn't disappointed. "Shortest month of the year deserves the shortest column of the year. Your members will appreciate it." LC-1, Moi-0!

² <http://bit.ly/3X0S7Lf>, <https://thekingcenter.org/>

³ *Id.*

⁴ *Id.*

⁵ *Id.*

⁶ *Id.*

⁷ Cue the LC: "About that...why are you mentioning this history?" There's a slight tone of challenge in her voice. Challenge accepted! LC-1, Moi-1.

⁸ Martin Luther King Jr. Day was established as a federal holiday in 1983, but the first national observance took place in 1986. <http://bit.ly/3l5EGwt>

⁹ The initial push for a holiday honoring Dr. King took place a mere four days after his assassination in 1968. U.S. Rep. John Conyers from Michigan filed the bill but it didn't come close to passing. Session after session, Conyers filed the bill and slowly made progress. His 15-year effort was finally victorious but only after six million signatures in support were collected. The bill passed 78-22 and President Ronald Reagan immediately signed the legislation. <https://bit.ly/3zfLeC>

¹⁰ In 2017 the W.K. Kellogg Foundation (Yes, that Kellogg. The Corn Flakes Kellogg.) launched the National Day of Racial Healing in conjunction with the U.S. Movement for Truth, Racial Healing and Transformation also known as TRHT. <http://bit.ly/3l4pTlB>

¹¹ The Kellogg Foundation was established in 1930 in the middle of the Great Depression. It is guided by the belief that all children should have an equal opportunity to thrive in school, work and life. Pretty cool, says the controller! If you're keeping score that's LC-1 and Moi-2. <http://bit.ly/3Jw9UXD> Will Keith Kellogg, or W.K. as he liked to be called, was a fascinating cat. He was born into a large family in Battle Creek, Michigan, in 1860. He was working to pay for his own clothing at age 7 and took up being a traveling salesman at age 14! He invented Corn Flakes and by the time he reached the age of 46 his accountant told him he was a millionaire. Over the last 21 years of his life Kellogg donated 66 million dollars to the foundation. He routinely attended foundation board members with one of his faithful German shepherds, all of whom were descendants of Rin-Tin-Tin! <http://bit.ly/3Hwk9bR>. For more on Rin-Tin-Tin click here: <http://bit.ly/3wSuXMC>. He was quite the movie star!

realizing it.¹² I've been with the League since 1989 and have served as your executive director since August 2018. Being surprised by what you do doesn't happen much anymore. Don't get me wrong—I'm routinely impressed, but surprises are few and far between. This realization, or surprise if you will, is as follows: I see each of you, every day, never question the motivation of your fellow elected officials, municipal employees or your public mission. You see past hurdles and "traditional boundaries." You're fair and equitable. You recognize the good in each other. We all have our faults of course, but each of you have continuously shown yourselves to be caring, loving people. When your citizens walk into city hall there's a good vibe. I know, I know. That's a bit corny and sounds sorta New Age-y. For those of us from a somewhat *more aged* era, it sounds hippy-esque. Regardless, it's true. Your city hall radiates caring for the members of your community. Think about that. By and large, 499 cities and towns and thousands of municipal officials and employees pull together for the common good of each community because you care about your community. You love your community. It's astounding when you think about it. You work diligently together. Y'all laugh heartily together. You love your municipality together. And sometimes, yes, you even cry together. I think that's the sort of love that Dr. King was speaking of, at least I hope it is.

As I write it is the first of February, and thus the beginning of Black History Month.¹³ It's no secret that I'm a student of history. I love historical information, stories and data. I believe we learn from those things. My favorite president is Abraham Lincoln. I equate freedom and equality with Lincoln for obvious reasons, namely his leadership through the Civil War¹⁴ and the Emancipation Proclamation.¹⁵ He certainly wasn't a perfect man or president. In my estimation, however, he was the best man to be president at that time.

Here's a story that I believe illustrates his leadership as well as "finding the good" in people as Dr. King preached. Several years before Lincoln's election to the White House he was engaged to help litigate a case in Cincinnati with, among others, an attorney by the name of Edwin M. Stanton.¹⁶ Stanton was an immensely intelligent man and equally difficult to get along with.¹⁷ The tales of both those traits are lengthy and colorful. Much to the delight of LC I won't delve into those matters and I'll move on with the story. Essentially, he froze Lincoln out of any meaningful role in the case and wasn't particularly pleasant in doing so. While debated by some historians, it has been reported that during the case Stanton described Lincoln as follows: "A long lank creature from Illinois, wearing a dirty linen duster for a coat, on the back of which the perspiration had splotched wide stains that resembled a map of the continent."¹⁸ Not nice. Unfortunately, Stanton wasn't nearly finished with his negative commentary about Honest Abe. Early in Lincoln's tenure in our nation's highest office things were not going well. There was much organizational disarray and much in the way of controversy. At some point during those first few chaotic months Stanton wrote: "No one can imagine...the painful imbecility of Lincoln."¹⁹ Ouch. The president however saw beyond that negativity and recognized the talent Stanton could bring to his cabinet.

¹² Well, I'll give you dear readers one guess as to the current level of consternation emanating from the local controller! "Let me see if I have this clear in my mind. You've now covered the life and career of W.K. Kellogg, the fortune made from the sale of Kellogg's Corn Flakes, the well-endowed Kellogg Foundation and Rin-Tin-Tin. What's wrong with you?! Get cracking Mr. Big Deal Executive Director!" And just like that, the LC and I are all tied up at 2-2. Overtime looms.

¹³ The foundation for Black History Month actually began in 1915 with the creation of the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History by historian Carter G. Woodson. In 1926 the group declared the second week in February as "Negro History Week." That week was chosen because it includes the birthdays of both Frederick Douglass and Abraham Lincoln. In 1976 the weeklong event became Black History Month due to the proclamation of President Gerald Ford. <http://bit.ly/3YfkpTg>. The LC just realized that I went to the kid's version of *National Geographic* for that information. *To say that she has a smile on her face would be like saying dogs bark. It's accurate but not nearly descriptive enough to paint the proper picture. LC-3, Moi-2. OT may not be in the cards.*

¹⁴ The American Civil War began April 12, 1861, and ended May 26, 1865. <http://bit.ly/3Jvp53k>.

¹⁵ Lincoln issued the proclamation on January 1, 1863. It is stored at the National Archives. <http://bit.ly/40g42aO>

¹⁶ Stanton was born in Ohio in 1814 and died in 1869. <http://bit.ly/3JwnYAq>

¹⁷ <http://bit.ly/3YgXAhZ>

¹⁸ *Id.*

¹⁹ <http://bit.ly/40iyK3j>

Lincoln appointed Stanton Secretary of War in January of 1862. Stanton is widely credited with cleaning up the corruption in the War Department and organizing it in a manner that led the Union to victory. In short, Lincoln saw the good in Stanton. After Lincoln died Stanton noted his admiration of the man saying, “He now belongs to the ages.”²⁰

According to the local controller it is “beyond time” to get to the point. I’m happy to note that I’ve already made it, at least in part. Earlier I mentioned my immensely satisfying observation of the love each of you show to your municipalities and the citizens of those municipalities. It is a grand and glorious thing to witness and you should stand proudly knowing you love your community. I can tell you the pride I have working for each of you, the members of the League, is truly immense. I’m not alone in that regard. Your League staff is not only the best in the nation, but they truly care about each other and you. They too love your community and their hometowns. Like you they find the good in every day and in every person. I’m not naïve²¹ and I realize that statement cannot possibly be 100 percent true because none of us are perfect. We are human beings with flaws. However, what *is* 100 percent true is their ability and your ability to see the flaws, strengths and good in the people and circumstances. We live in an angry world right now. People say and do things, on video no less, that are hurtful, embarrassing and damaging. During this month I believe it’s critical for us to remember Dr. King’s lessons of light defeating darkness and love conquering hate. We must see ourselves for who we are because we cannot be better if we don’t see our blemishes. We must look into the hearts and minds of those we disagree with and see the good in them. By doing so we bridge the gaps of misunderstanding and distrust. Please continue to be the strong, independent, non-judgmental local leader you have always been. Your hometown is stronger because of what you do, think and believe. And Arkansas is better as a result.²²

As always, please be local and be heard. It makes a difference.

Until next month, peace.



Mark R. Hayes
Executive Director
Arkansas Municipal League

²⁰ *Id.*

²¹ You should hear LC. “Oh, boy.” And a loud sigh.

²² I may be wrong but I think I just scored another point with the LC. That would make it 3-3 but I’m no fool. LC always wins because I’m better with her in my life and my family is, too!

EXECUTIVE EDUCATION AND PRE-CONFERENCE ACTIVITIES

MARCH 24-25, 2023



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Publisher

Mark R. Hayes

Deputy Director

Whitnee V. Bullerwell

Communications & Creative Manager

Mel Jones

Editor

Andrew T. Morgan

Graphic Designer

Mark R. Potter

Digital Content Specialist

Ben Cline

Certification/Membership Coordinator

Tricia Zello

Contributors

Shelby Fiegel

Steven Head, PE

Krissy Kimbro

Riley Lipschitz, M.D.

Kent Myers

Christian Sierra

Jim von Tungeln

www.arml.org



belocalbeheard.com



@armunileague



armunicipalleague

flickr

arkansas_municipal_league



citytown@arml.org



GreatCitiesGreatState.com

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Who we are ...

"Having been born and raised in Fayetteville, I've personally witnessed the substantial growth of my hometown and the surrounding NWA area over the past 20 years. As our region continues to grow, I take pride in doing my part to ensure the quality of each development by providing Geotechnical recommendations and inspection services during construction."

In my personal time, I enjoy spending my time with my wife, walking our dogs, and cheering on the Razorbacks.

AHPP sets Sandwiching in History tours for 2023

Since 1997, the Arkansas Historic Presentation Program has led public tours of historic properties in Arkansas. Called "Sandwiching in History," these tours typically take place at noon on the first Friday of each month. For the 2023 season, the tours will be held in person after going virtual for the past two years. The tours are also streamed live on AHPP's Facebook page and recordings are available after the event on AHPP's YouTube channel.

Tours generally last less than one hour. So bring your lunch if you like and join AHPP in learning about these unique historic properties. All tours are free and open to the public.

- March 3—Historic Johnson Farm (Benjamin Franklin Johnson, II Homestead District), 3150 West Pear Lane, Fayetteville
- April 7—Daisy Bates House, 1207 W. 28th Street, Little Rock
- May 5—Potts Inn, 15 2nd Street, Pottsville
- June 2—Presbyterian Village, 510 Brookside Drive, Little Rock
- July 7—Union Station, 1400 W. Markham Street, Little Rock
- August 4—Immaculate Heart of Mary Church, 7006 Jasna Gora Drive, North Little Rock
- September 1—Fort Logan H. Roots, Circle Drive, North Little Rock
- October 6—Jacob Wolf House, 13775 Highway 5 South, Norfolk
- November 3—Taylor Log House/Hollywood Plantation, 184 Plantation Lane, Tillar
- December 1—Laman Plaza Gazebo, 2801 Orange Street, North Little Rock

For more details, call the AHPP at 501-324-9880 or visit www.arkansaspreservation.org.

Event Calendar

March 26-28, 2023, National League of Cities, Congressional City Conference

June 14-16, 2023, Arkansas Municipal League 89th Convention

Certain municipal officials in first class cities may opt out of APERS

The Arkansas Public Employees Retirement System (APERS) provides cities with the opportunity to cover its employees and officials (Ark. Code Ann. § 24-4-303). The law states generally that the mayor and clerk "shall become participating employees upon taking office." On the other hand, the statute permits mayors and clerks of first class cities to opt out of APERS in order to participate in the local retirement plans provided for in Ark. Code Ann. §§ 24-12-121 and 24-12-123.

In order to make this election, the mayor or clerk must provide written notice to APERS within 90 calendar days of the date the official assumed office. Once made, this choice is irrevocable. Any employer contributions previously made on behalf of an official who elects not to participate will be refunded to the city and the official will forfeit service credit in the system.

Newly elected city attorneys or city treasurers in cities of the first class who are otherwise covered by a local pension fund may also take advantage of these provisions.

To contact APERS, call 501-682-7800 or visit www.apers.org.

Obituaries

NANCY ANITA (ELMORE) COOK, 63, who served as city clerk and water department manager for the city of McNeil for 18 years, died January 27.

JERRY L. HENSLEY, 86, a former council member for the city of Damascus, died September 27, 2022.

EDDIE MOORE, 82, who served as a council member for the city of Carlisle from 1987-2016, died December 20, 2022.

LARRY WILSON, 76, who served Oppelo for 18 years as a council member and as mayor, died January 2.

2023 Act 833 deadline for Arkansas fire departments

The 2023 Act 833 application period will open January 1, 2023, and will close June 30, 2023. Act 833 of 1992, "Funding for Fire Departments," is administered by the Arkansas Fire Protection Services Board and requires all Arkansas fire departments to become certified in order to be eligible for funding. Certification requirements include possession of a NFPA 1901-compliant fire suppression apparatus, a minimum of six active members with 16 hours of certified training and personal protective equipment for all active members.

An online application is available on the Arkansas Fire Portal at arfire.arkansas.gov. To request log-in credentials contact your County LEMC/Fire Coordinator or State Fire Coordinator Louis Eckelhoff at 501-683-6781 or email louis.eckelhoff@adem.arkansas.gov.

Clinton's Duncan achieves Certified Municipal Clerk status

Clinton Deputy Recorder/Treasurer Elishia Duncan has earned the Certified Municipal Clerk (CMC) designation from the International Institute of Municipal Clerks (IIMC), the organization has announced. CMC is one of two professional designations granted by the IIMC. To earn the CMC designation, a municipal clerk must attend extensive education programs often totaling more than 120 educational hours. The CMC designation also requires pertinent experience in a municipality. Since 1970, the CMC program has prepared applicants to meet the challenges of the complex role of the municipal clerk by providing them with quality education in partnership with institutions of higher learning as well as local and national associations. For more information on the IIMC, visit www.iimc.com. 🌐



Annual Statements

The suggested **FORM A** is for use by cities of the first class, second class, and incorporated towns to comply with A.C.A. § 14-59-116.

| Form A | | |
|---|-------------------|-----------------------|
| City or Town of _____ | | |
| (Cities of the first class, second class, and incorporated towns) | | |
| Financial Statement January 1, 2022—Dec. 31, 2022 | | |
| GENERAL FUND | | |
| Balance January 1, 2022 | \$ _____ | |
| Cash Receipts | | |
| State Revenues | \$ _____ | |
| Property Taxes | \$ _____ | |
| Sales Taxes | \$ _____ | |
| Fines, Forfeitures, and Costs | \$ _____ | |
| Franchise Fees | \$ _____ | |
| Transfers In | \$ _____ | |
| Other | \$ _____ | |
| Total Receipts | \$ _____ | |
| Total General Fund Available | \$ _____ | |
| Expenditures | | |
| *Administrative Department: | | |
| Personal Services | \$ _____ | |
| Supplies | \$ _____ | |
| Other services and charges | \$ _____ | |
| Capital Outlay | \$ _____ | |
| Debt Service | \$ _____ | |
| Transfers Out | \$ _____ | |
| Total Expenditures | \$ _____ | |
| Balance General Fund | | |
| Dec. 31, 2022 | \$ _____ | |
| STREET FUND | | |
| Balance January 1, 2022 | \$ _____ | |
| Cash Receipts | | |
| State Revenues | \$ _____ | |
| Property Taxes | \$ _____ | |
| Sales Taxes | \$ _____ | |
| Franchise Fees | \$ _____ | |
| Transfers In | \$ _____ | |
| Other | \$ _____ | |
| Total Street Receipts | \$ _____ | |
| Total Street Fund Available | \$ _____ | |
| Expenditures | | |
| Personal Services | \$ _____ | |
| Supplies | \$ _____ | |
| Other services and charges | \$ _____ | |
| Capital Outlay | \$ _____ | |
| Debt service | \$ _____ | |
| Transfers out | \$ _____ | |
| Total Expenditures | \$ _____ | |
| Balance Street Fund | | |
| Dec. 31, 2022 | \$ _____ | |
| The classification of expenditures shall be by department, i.e., administrative, police department, fire department, parks department, etc. | | |
| INDEBTEDNESS | | |
| Type of Debt | Amount | Date Last Payment Due |
| Property Tax Bonds | \$ _____ | _____ |
| Short term financing obligations | \$ _____ | _____ |
| Sales & Use Tax Bonds | \$ _____ | _____ |
| Revenue Bonds | \$ _____ | _____ |
| Lease Purchase Agreements | \$ _____ | _____ |
| | Date Free of Debt | _____ |
| Total | \$ _____ | |
| All financial records for the City of _____ are public records and are open for public inspection during regular business hours of ___ A.M. to ___ P.M., Monday through Friday, at City Hall in _____, Arkansas. | | |
| If the record is in active use or in storage and, therefore, not available at the time a citizen asks to examine it, the custodian shall certify this fact in writing to the applicant and set a date and hour within three (3) days at which time the record will be available for inspection and copying. | | |

Municipalities must publish annual financial statement


The time is rapidly arriving for the annual reporting of each city and town's financial statement. Refer to the *Handbook for Arkansas Municipal Officials*, 2021-2022 ed., section 14-59-116 and section 14-237-113.

A.C.A. § 14-59-116 provides that the governing body of each municipality shall publish annually in a newspaper published in the municipality a FINANCIAL STATEMENT OF THE MUNICIPALITY by April 1 covering the previous calendar year (January through the end of December).

The financial statement should include the receipts and expenditures for the year. In addition, it should contain "a statement of the indebtedness and financial condition of the municipality."

Section 14-237-113 provides similar publication requirements for the operating authority of the WATER and SEWER DEPARTMENTS. Water and sewer departments administered by one or two commissions must comply with the law. If the water and sewer departments are administered by the city council, then it is the responsibility of the city council to comply with the statute.

What if no newspaper is published in the city or town? In that case, the statements may be posted in two public places in the municipality.

Suggested Forms A and B appear on these facing pages. For additional information, call the League at 501-374-3484. You can buy a copy of the *Handbook for Arkansas Municipal Officials* at www.arml.org/store. 

The suggested FORM B is for use by water and sewer departments to comply with 14-237-113.

| Form B | | |
|---|---------------|------------------------------|
| City or Town of _____ | | |
| Financial Statement January 1, 2022—Dec. 31, 2022 | | |
| WATER AND SEWER DEPARTMENTS | | |
| Balance January 1, 2022 | \$ _____ | |
| Cash Receipts | | |
| Water Payments | \$ _____ | |
| Sewer Payments | \$ _____ | |
| Sanitation Funds | \$ _____ | |
| Other | \$ _____ | |
| Total Receipts | \$ _____ | |
| Total Funds Available | \$ _____ | |
| Expenditures | | |
| Personal Services | \$ _____ | |
| Supplies | \$ _____ | |
| Other services and charges | \$ _____ | |
| Capital Outlay | \$ _____ | |
| Debt Service | \$ _____ | |
| Transfers Out | \$ _____ | |
| Total Expenditures | \$ _____ | |
| Balance Water and Sewer Fund | | |
| Dec. 31, 2022 | \$ _____ | |
| INDEBTEDNESS | | |
| Type of Debt | Amount | Date Last Payment Due |
| Short term financing obligations | \$ _____ | _____ |
| Water Revenue Bonds | \$ _____ | |
| Sewer Revenue Bonds | \$ _____ | |
| | | Date Free of Debt |
| | | _____ |
| Total | \$ _____ | |
| All financial records of the Water and Sewer Department of (City or Town) of _____ are public records and are open for public inspection during regular business hours of ___ A.M. to ___ P.M., Monday through Friday, at the Water Department in _____, Arkansas. | | |
| If the record is in active use or in storage and, therefore, not available at the time a citizen asks to examine it, the custodian shall certify this fact in writing to the applicant and set a date and hour within three (3) days at which time the record will be available for inspection and copying. | | |

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Cave City Mayor and new League President Jonas Anderson welcomes municipal leaders from across Arkansas to the League's 2023 Winter Conference.

Education and legislation top agenda at League's 2023 Winter Conference

By Andrew Morgan, League staff

Elected officials and key personnel from cities and towns across Arkansas gathered in Little Rock or joined their colleagues online for the Arkansas Municipal League's 2023 Winter Conference, held January 11-13 at the Little Rock Marriott and Statehouse Convention Center. Attendance was strong, with 803 participating in person and 190 following the proceedings virtually. Newly elected officials and first-time officeholders were well represented, with 172 new mayors, council members, city clerks and other officials taking part.

The conference covered an array of topics important to cities and towns, including a series of sessions dedicated to "City Government 101," the popular League curriculum that covers the essentials of local government, including the statutory roles of elected officials, an overview of Arkansas' Freedom of Information Act

and an introduction to the many services and programs offered by the League to assist municipalities.

With the 94th General Assembly of the Arkansas Legislature getting underway in January, the conference also featured several sessions on bills likely to appear during the session that would affect cities and towns and how local officials can best stay engaged with the legislative process.

Education is the focus of each annual winter conference, and this year's event included five hours of core certification credit and three hours of continuing education credit as part of the League's voluntary certification program for municipal officials and personnel. Municipal leaders who have obtained or maintained certification status over the past year, including the inaugural class of Level 2 certification, were recognized during Wednesday's opening night banquet.

Key sessions and takeaways from #2023AMLWC



The Arkansas legislature convened for the 94th General Assembly in early January, and several key sessions of the 2023 Winter Conference focused on the goings on at the state capitol, including legislation likely to come before lawmakers that would affect cities and towns. The three main issues expected to be addressed in the session are criminal justice, taxes and education, League General Counsel John L. Wilkerson, above, said, and these will all have at least indirect effects on local governments, and defending local control remains the League's focus. "We are very protective of local control, and I cannot emphasize that enough."



One issue the League has spent several legislative sessions advocating for is giving cities and towns the ability to publish public notices on the internet in order to better reach citizens, whose news consumption is increasingly online. According to A.C.A. § 16-3-101, public notices—such as new ordinances—must be published in a newspaper in the county or, if there is no newspaper in the county, in "five (5) of the most public places." As print newspapers and their readership have diminished, cities continue to spend money but aren't reaching their citizens, said League Legal Counsel Blake Gary, who is positive about amending the law this session. "For the first time, I believe it actually has legs to get passed."



A panel of League staff members and officers provided an overview of how a bill makes its way through the legislative process. They also stressed the importance of local officials building relationships with their representatives at the capitol so when issues that affect cities and towns arise, municipal leaders are ready to advocate for local control. From left, League General Counsel John L. Wilkerson, League Legal Counsel Blake Gary, Crossett Mayor and District 4 League Vice President Crystal Marshall, Cave City Mayor and League President Jonas Anderson, League Legislative Liaison Jack Critcher, and League Executive Director Mark R. Hayes.



League Executive Director Mark R. Hayes, above, and several members of the League staff provided an introduction to the five major benefit programs: the Municipal Health Benefit Program, Municipal League Workers' Compensation Program, Municipal Legal Defense Program, Municipal Property Program and Municipal Vehicle Program. The League exists to serve its members, Hayes said. "We are you and you are us, and we don't exist without you. So let us know what we can do to help."



On the issue of public notice publication, "it's about local control," said League Legislative Liaison Jack Critcher. "Seems like everything that comes up we go back to what we stand for: local control. And it resonates pretty well over there with the legislators." Critcher began his political career as mayor of the city of Grubbs and went on to serve several terms in the legislature before joining the League staff.



League Deputy Director Whitnee V. Bullerwell opened the conference with an overview of the voluntary certification program for municipal officials and personnel, which has grown tremendously since its introduction in 2010. "We strongly believe as a League that municipal education and professional development are truly vital for you all to be best suited to do your jobs," she said. Last year the League added Level 2 certification courses, and the inaugural graduating class was recognized during the conference's opening night banquet.



From left, Cave City Mayor and League President Jonas Anderson, League Counsel Blake Gary and General Counsel John L. Wilkerson held a panel discussion and Q&A session covering the state statutes that govern who does what at city hall. "Now that you're elected, especially for you newly elected officials, the work really begins," Anderson said. "It's really critical that you understand the basics of holding office at the local government level. If you haven't figured it out by now, there's a lot to it."



Transparency is essential for good governance, and League Code and Opinions Attorney Linda Burgess, above, and General Counsel John L. Wilkerson covered the Arkansas Freedom of Information Act, which helps ensure the public's business—from meetings to records to hiring and firing—remains public.



Since being approved by Arkansas voters in Amendment 91 to the state constitution a decade ago, the Arkansas State Aid City Street Program (citystreet.arkansas.gov) has helped fund more than 700 projects in hundreds of cities and towns across the state. "Since 2013 the State Aid Street Committee has approved over 2,050 miles of improvements to city streets, which would take us past New York City from Little Rock," said the program's attorney, Steve Napper.



In an emotional presentation, the Arkansas Opioid Recovery Partnership (ARORP) awarded just over \$1 million in funding to the Hope Movement Coalition’s You Are Not Alone Project. According to the ARORP, the funding will allow the organization to develop support services for families who have lost a loved one to substance use disorder or fentanyl poisoning with an emphasis on the mental health and overall well-being of each family member. For more information on the partnership and funding opportunities, please visit www.arorp.org.



For many cities and towns, particularly smaller and more rural communities, Main Street is also a state highway, which can mean barriers to overlays and other improvements. Under a new State Aid City Street Program initiative in partnership with the Arkansas Department of Transportation, the city of Crossett was able to turn a portion of state Highway 133 into a city street in exchange for a new overlay. It was “a win-win” for the city and for ARDOT, said Mayor Crystal Marshall, the League’s 2022-2023 District 4 vice president. She encouraged other small cities to consider the program and apply for funding.



Settlement money resulting from the litigation brought against opioid manufacturers and distributors by Arkansas’ cities, towns and counties has begun arriving and will continue to be paid out over the next 18 years. From left, a panel including Colin Jorgensen, litigation counsel for the Arkansas Association of Counties; Tenesha Barnes, deputy director of the Arkansas Opioid Recovery Partnership; Kirk Lane, director of the Arkansas Opioid Recovery Partnership; Mark R. Hayes, League executive director; and Magnolia Mayor Parnell Vann, League first vice president, discussed how cities, towns and counties will use the funding to mitigate the addiction crisis in our state.

Municipalities, individuals honored at 2023 Winter Conference

The 2023 Winter Conference included several award presentations that honored cities and towns for volunteerism and innovative problem solving.



Engage Arkansas honored the 2022 Volunteer Communities of the Year, above, during a January 12 luncheon. The award recognizes cities and towns that exemplify the spirit of service through volunteerism. The 2022 recipients are Bentonville, Etowah, Fayetteville, Lonoke, Mulberry and West Memphis.



During the luncheon, the Arkansas Business Publishing Group presented its 2022 Trendsetter City Awards, which honor cities and towns that improve the quality of life for their residents through innovative initiatives in categories such as diversity and inclusion, infrastructure and water, tourism development and creative culture. The municipalities honored include Alma, Arkadelphia, Beebe, Bentonville, Clarksville, Conway, Eureka Springs, Fairfield Bay, Fayetteville, Harrison, Hot Springs, Jonesboro, Paragould, Springdale, Texarkana and West Memphis. ABPG presented Hot Springs, above, with the 2022 Don A. Zimmerman Pinnacle Award for the city's outstanding efforts in both tourism and water infrastructure.

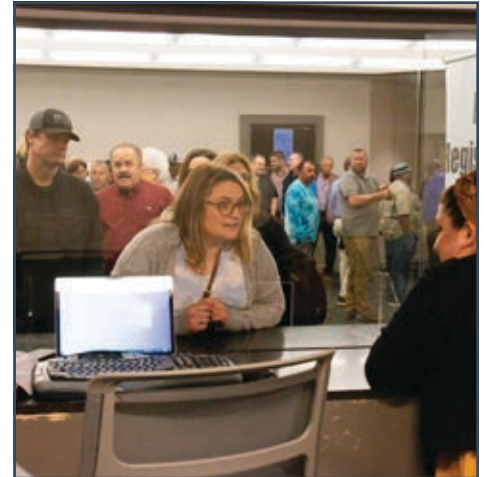
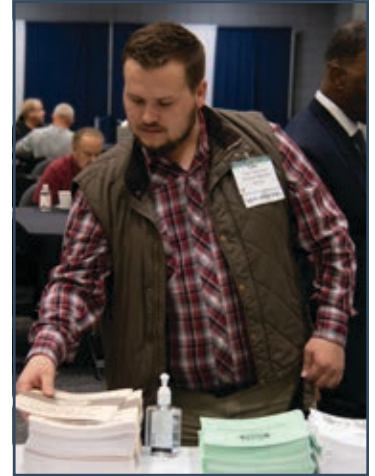


During the conference's opening night banquet, the League honored several outgoing or retiring officials with honorary life memberships for their many years of service to their communities and to the League. New League members for life include James Sanders, former mayor of Blytheville; Catherine Cook, former city manager of Hope; Howard Cain, former Huntsville city attorney; Jackie Crabtree, former mayor of Pea Ridge; Sonny Hudson, former Prairie Grove mayor; Virginia Young, former mayor of Sherwood; Bobby Neal, former Smackover mayor; and Alan Loring, former mayor of Wrightsville. For his 27 years of service to his city before stepping down at the end of 2022, the League presented outgoing Pea Ridge Mayor Jackie Crabtree, left, with the Don A. Zimmerman Dean's Chair.

2023 Winter Conference Snapshots



PHOTOS BY ANDREW MORGAN AND MARK POTTER



2023 Winter Conference Snapshots



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479-228-7929

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www.dps.arkansas.gov
501-683-1922

Arkansas Department of Health-Engineering Section

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www.healthy.arkansas.gov/eng
501-661-2623

Arkansas Department of Labor & Licensing

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www.labor.arkansas.gov
501-690-5271

Arkansas Department of Transportation

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www.ardot.gov
501-410-2204

Arkansas Division of Environmental Quality-Brownfield Program

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| <p>Arkansas Peace & Justice Memorial Movement (APJMM) 2513 McCain Boulevard., Suite 2-221 North Little Rock, AR 72116 www.APJMM.org 501-813-2673</p> |
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| <p>Arkansas Opioid Recovery Partnership (ARORP) 1400 West Capitol Avenue, Suite 330, Little Rock, AR 72201 www.arorp.org 501-317-9042</p> |
| <p>Attorney General Tim Griffin 323 Center Street, Suite 200, Little Rock, AR 72201 www.arkansasag.gov 501-682-3645</p> |
| <p>Central Arkansas Astronomical Society River Ridge Observatory, 45 West South Ridge Road Bigelow, AR 72016 www.ar-eclipse.info 501-551-1316</p> |
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Racial justice through community transformation

Community advocates, nonprofit leaders and local government officials gathered January 17 at the League's North Little Rock headquarters for a press conference kicking off the 2023 National Day of Racial Healing in Arkansas.

By Andrew Morgan, League staff

The Arkansas Municipal League welcomed the Arkansas Peace & Justice Memorial Movement (APJMM) to its North Little Rock headquarters January 17 to observe the 2023 National Day of Racial Healing, part of the W.K. Kellogg Foundation's Truth, Racial Healing and Transformation initiative. The leadership of APJMM was joined by local government officials and nonprofit and community leaders from across Arkansas to address efforts to build the relationships necessary to heal the wounds caused by racism and transform our communities.



Pulaski County Judge Barry Hyde, left, presents Kwami Abdul-Bey with the county's signed National Day of Racial Healing proclamation. A record number 26 Arkansas counties signed the proclamation this year.

This year marks the seventh annual NDORH and the fifth year that it has been observed in Arkansas, and Kwami Abdul-Bey, who along with his wife Clarice co-convenes APJMM, thanked everyone who attended the event or tuned in to the livestream on YouTube. Participation has "snowballed" since its inception, Abdul-Bey said. "We just hope that the mayors and the police chiefs and the county judges and the governor here in Arkansas will take this as an example and know that we are moving forward together, and that's what this is all about. We have to do this together because none of us can do it alone. We have to work together, we have to listen to each other, we have to talk to each other and we have to allow ourselves to be uncomfortable and courageous."

The press conference kicked off a weeklong series of events, including an MSNBC town hall on economic inequality hosted by UA Little Rock, a panel discussion at the University of Arkansas at Fort Smith titled "An American Story: Racial Amity and Other Traditions," a virtual "fireside chat" dialogue on race, a jazz concert dubbed "The Movement, The Music & The Magic" and other events across Arkansas and online.

Pulaski County was one of 26 Arkansas counties this year that signed the proclamation recognizing the National Day of Racial Healing, and Judge Barry Hyde presented the document during the event. "Ignoring the deep wounds this country has inflicted upon many of its citizens does not move us toward healing," Hyde said. "It only widens the gap. We are in this together. It takes all of us to reflect on racial healing and ask ourselves how we



Fort Smith Chief of Police Danny Baker presents Abdul-Bey, right, with a copy of his department's new operational memo as, from left, League Deputy Director Whitnee V. Bullerwell and Fort Smith City Director Andre Good observe.

can make this a community where we all can flourish and achieve our full potential.”

To honor the 2023 National Day of Racial Healing, the Fort Smith Police Department issued an operational memo to be incorporated into department policy. According to Abdul-Bey, it is the first police department in the nation to issue such a directive. The memo reads in part: “We must all work earnestly to create courageous and supportive environments that acknowledge the traumatic past, promote the healing of the wounds created by racial and ethnic bias, and build an equitable and just society so that

all within our city and our department can thrive.”

Preston Clegg, senior pastor at Second Baptist Church in Little Rock, citing both the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr.'s April 4, 1967, address at Riverside Church in New York City and the biblical story of the “Good Samaritan,” said that while we are of course called to show mercy and love to the marginalized as individuals, we must also strive as a society to address the roots of injustice. “At what point would we stop giving hand-ups from the ditches and start saying we’ve got to start taking care of the road. We’ve got to start monitoring what is putting people in ditches in the first place.”

To learn more about the APJMM and NDORH in Arkansas, visit apjmm.org and healourcommunities.org.



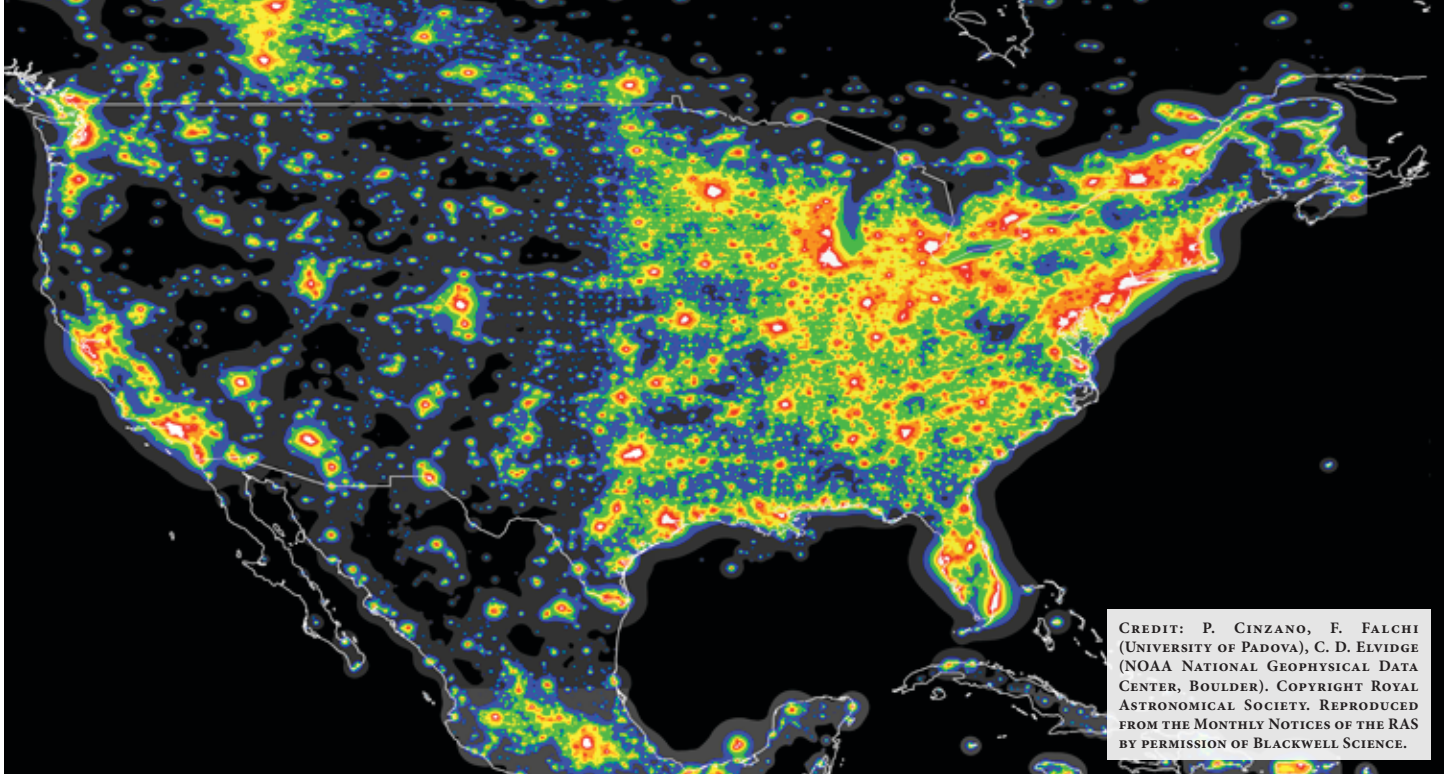
“Justice is tending to the road,” Clegg said, “so that we don’t need so much mercy lifting people out of ditches. And yet, y’all, when you start tending to the road, that’s the hard work.”

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Arkansas may experience less light pollution than other more urbanized parts of North America, but preserving our night skies utilizing modern LED street lighting remains a challenge.

City lights vs. dark skies: New challenges for essential infrastructure

By Kent Myers

Street lighting improves public safety and has long been an important municipal service. Upgrading existing lighting systems with modern fixtures can improve the efficiency and quality of lighting to better protect the environment, public health and safety. Despite the many benefits of street lighting, it is often prioritized for funding at a lower level than other infrastructure such as streets, parking, drainage, utilities and park improvements. Many cities have capital improvement plans that reach five to 10 years into the future, but these rarely include upgrades to street lighting systems, which are often owned by a public utility, not the city. While municipalities like Bryant and Gilbert have achieved some success, upgrading street lighting remains a challenge.

The nature of street lighting has evolved over many centuries. A decree by the mayor of London in 1417 requiring “lanterns with lights” to be hung on winter evenings is the first known municipal effort to light streets. In 1524 Parisians were required to place a light in windows facing the street on dark moonless nights, but it was the late 17th century before Paris and London had significant publicly maintained street lighting systems, and they didn’t become more universally common until the early 19th century following the invention of the gas light.

With the advent of electric lighting, cities and lights became almost synonymous. But even by the middle of the last century, street lighting was rare in rural and small-town America, where street lights had to await electric utility service and utility-owned lights. In 1940, with a population of just under 2 million, only 112,050 Arkansas citizens had access to electricity. Doubtless, it was a sign of progress and a source of community pride to have the town square illuminated at night.

While delegating street lighting to a public utility had its advantages, it has become an increasingly expensive solution, often suffering from slow maintenance and one-size-fits-all fixtures. With the evolution of lighting technology and emerging issues around environmental impacts, outdoor lighting has become more of a concern for city governments. Meeting this challenge is something public utilities are poorly equipped to address.

Outdoor lighting has entered something of a perfect storm. First, there is a growing concern about the human health and environmental impacts of artificial light at night (ALAN). The American Medical Association has warned that exposure to ALAN presents an increased risk of diabetes, obesity, depression, and breast and prostate cancer. Exposure can also impact the hormonal shift that

is keyed into the daily cycle of light and dark, throwing off our biological clocks and suppressing the expression of important hormones. The AMA has recommended the judicious use of properly shielded outdoor lighting to mitigate the risk.

In addition, there is growing evidence of impacts on wildlife breeding, feeding and migration. Germany has recently passed national laws regulating outdoor lighting to address an alarming decline in the insect population, while the Audubon Society documents that millions of migrating birds die each year due to being attracted to or disoriented by high levels of light pollution around cities.

These emerging concerns about the downsides of outdoor lighting coincide with LED lighting arriving on the scene. While LED technology offers a large increase in efficiency and dependability, it comes with added complexity. With heirloom lighting technology, the color of the light was inherent in the technology used. With LEDs, there is a whole range of colors to choose from, but they often have a high level of blue light. Humans are biologically sensitive to this part of the spectrum, and blue light is also associated with disabling glare. The AMA has therefore recommended that outdoor lighting should be warm in color to minimize the blue light. Blue light is also a major factor in sky glow, which now hides the stars in all but the most remote locations in this country.

A second issue with LED lighting is over-lighting. Not only do you need fewer watts with LEDs, but you also need fewer lumens. Too much light can reduce visibility, increase glare, waste energy and needlessly increase sky glow along with the other environmental impacts of ALAN. The Federal Highway Administration suggests lumens may be cut in half when switching from heirloom fixtures. Depending on the quality of the fixture being replaced, an even larger reduction may be justified. Glaring examples of overly bright LEDs with a high blue-light content are proliferating in our urban environment. It is important that street lighting not contribute to this dangerous and uncomfortable clutter.

A third element in our perfect storm is the concern with climate change and the pressure to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Outdoor lighting is a significant energy consumer and hence contributor to our collective carbon footprint that does not lend itself to being powered by sustainable energy sources like solar.

Finally, there is the ever-present concern with costs, and here a notable paradox has emerged in the pricing of utility-provided LED lighting. While cities and towns across the country are switching to LEDs to reduce costs, the tariffs charged by utilities for LED lighting are frequently higher than for the “equivalent” but less efficient, shorter lived and higher maintenance heirloom fixtures.

Many communities around the country are finding it both necessary and economical to address these

complexities by acquiring ownership of the utility-owned power pole fixtures, replacing them with city-owned fixtures selected through professionally designed lighting plans and maintained by independent contractors. Their experience has resulted in better, more reliable lighting at less cost.

Under current law in Arkansas, however, that option remains uncertain, and this has impacted communities trying to upgrade their public lighting. The city of Bryant is the first Arkansas municipality to pursue a professional master lighting plan. Unfortunately, the plan had to be implemented around the offerings of its utility, limiting the potential benefits of a purposefully designed lighting plan.

Another example is the town of Gilbert, the state’s smallest incorporated municipality. As ever-expanding light pollution has washed out the stars over large parts of the country, natural skies have become a tourism resource. When Gilbert learned that the Buffalo River National Park, which borders the town on three sides, was to be designated an International Dark-Sky Park, it wanted to do its part to protect the park’s access to the stars.

The problem, though, as with Bryant, was that its utility did not offer appropriate fixtures. It took five years, the assistance of an out-of-state contractor specializing in municipalizing utility-owned street lighting, a state senator and a grant to get the necessary lights installed. The new fixtures use about one-fifth of the energy as the old fixtures while also spreading light on the street more evenly with a rectangular lighting pattern using a warm white color that minimizes blue light.

But the city had to surrender ownership and control of the fixtures to the utility. Despite the reduced energy consumption, having paid for the fixture and the installation cost, and agreeing to pay for any necessary replacements, the tariff is about the same as with the more troublesome heirloom fixtures, and the city had to surrender the ability to dim the fixtures late at night or turn some off for special events.

For other Arkansas municipalities looking to emulate Bryant and Gilbert’s efforts, modernizing street lighting may be challenging so long as utilities retain a monopoly over power pole-mounted street lighting. It is anticipated that a bill will be introduced during the current legislative session intended to expressly facilitate the municipalization of utility-owned street lighting. If passed, it will open new possibilities for Arkansas communities to innovate and improve public street lighting. 🏡

Kent Myers recently retired to Little Rock after spending 44 years in city government, including serving for 14 years as the city manager of Hot Springs. He currently serves on the board of directors for the Arkansas Natural Sky Association, the Arkansas affiliate of the International Dark-Sky Association.



PHOTO BY JIM VON TUNGELN

Mayor Furlow asked me to dedicate this column to his friend, fellow mayor and shipmate, Robert Patrick (1929-2022) of St. Charles, Arkansas, shown here with longtime Recorder/Treasurer Naomi Mitchell in the city's museum. Mayor Patrick served his city for 33 years.

A visit to Pot Luck

By Jim von Tungeln

Rosie Aberdeen, assistant to Mayor Furlow Thompson of Pot Luck, Arkansas, told me to “go on in,” so through the doorway I went for my annual visit on behalf of our state’s Municipal League. The self-titled “best mayor in America” was reclining in his office chair, staring through sunglasses at the ceiling while listening to a cassette player. I recognized the tune: a 1960s favorite among military veterans of that era, “We’ve Gotta Get Out of This Place.”

I startled him when I closed the door. “What the? Oh, it’s you.” He turned off the music and removed the sunglasses. “Has it been a year already?”

“Yes sir,” I said, remembering that he liked formality at times.

“Did Mark Hayes send you?”

“No sir,” I said. “I came on my own.”

“I figured you were here on Mark’s behalf.”

“Why is that?”

“I borrowed five dollars from him to tip the parking valet at the last conference. I thought maybe he sent you for it.”

“No sir, I just like to visit with you, and learn.”

“Sit,” he said, “and ‘sir’ is for officers. I know who my parents were.”

“Right,” I said, sitting. “How’s it going?”

He grinned, leaned forward and asked, “Who wants to know?”

“Your public,” I said. “You have become sort of a folk hero among our elected officials.”

“Harrumph.”

“Did I interrupt anything?”

“Just reliving the last year. It’s been a wild one in case you are wondering. I don’t know about other cities, but our people are fractious. They want to blame their mayor for everything from the price of Cheetos to daylight saving time. Just this week, Norma Raye Chidester called me an old fool and said I should step aside.”

“Goodness,” I said. “You didn’t listen to her, did you?”

“No, I just told her to find someone who would take this job and I would gladly go up north and make music with an old pal, that mayor up north who picks the steel guitar. That shut her up.”

“Really?”

“Really. People want to grouse, not govern. They got their heads stuck on Twitter too much these days to think about serving. Not many like my late friend Robert Patrick or that bright young feller over at Cave City. What’s his name?”

“Jonas,” I said, “but I’m surprised that a progressive town like this can’t produce any number of candidates.”

“Too much of what an old city manager once called the ‘uh huh—oh syndrome.’”

When I looked confused, he continued. “Refers to them town scolds who are always running around saying, ‘uh huh, uh huh’ but once they get into office and see what’s really happening, all they can say is, ‘Oh!’”

He changed the subject. “Did I ever tell you how I got to be mayor in the first place?”

“No, please do.” I took out my notepad.

“Put that thing away.” I did and he continued. “Well, the mayor before the mayor before me had prepared some new regulations for our planning commission. Pot Luck had just put in a new sewer system, and every scoundrel in the county was wanting to haul shacks in, call them affordable homes and tie onto our system. The city couldn’t allow that.”

“And?”

“After she had all these regulations passed and in force, she fell in love with a fire truck salesman, got married and moved to Florida. That left the mayor’s job open.”

“I see.”

“No, you don’t. The council at that time picked one of the best young men in town to fill out her term. He was a recent grad from Hendrix College and was saving up to go to law school. It seemed like a perfect fit. Until”

“Until what?”

“Until the planning commission started enforcing all those regulations that his predecessor had come up with.”

“And?”

“His life turned worse than you can imagine. By the time his term was up, he hated city government so bad he eventually went to practicing law and filing suits over statutes that cities hadn’t dealt with for nearly a century. They call him ‘Mandamus Bydamus’ now, and worse.”

“I think I’ve heard John Wilkerson mention him,” I said. “So, what happened then?”

He leaned back, looked at the ceiling and said, “The clouds opened and a voice said, ‘Let the righteous come forth,’ and all the suckers rose from the sea, At least one did. Me.”

“Were you committed to good works?”

“No, I was bored and financially secure by then. I guess I missed a life of danger. I had very little fear of adversity or voters. I figured, what are they gonna do, cut my hair off and send me to Vietnam?”

“And?”

“I was elected in a landslide, over 80 percent of the vote.”

“That speaks well for you.”

“I was the only candidate.”

“Did you have a campaign slogan?”

“Yep.”

“What was it?”

“I hear the other guy is worse.”

“You’ve been mayor for a long time. Did you do away with the new regulations?”

“No, not at all. Oh, one or two of the sillier ones, like the one requiring folks building a new home to have a front porch. The young planners thought that was a winner.”

“It wasn’t I take it.”

“Not by a long shot. Lots of folks in Pot Luck don’t sit on front porches. They open their garage doors and sit in there drinking sweet tea or beer and waving to their neighbors walking by or visiting with the ones who stop. You planners have an awkward sense of human nature.”

“Hmmm.”

“I learned a couple of things, though, from that experience.”

“What?” I asked.

“First, it’s not always the folks who first write regulations that get chased off.”

“No?”

“No. It’s the folks that first enforce them.”

“That made sense.”

“Second thing is that once the first crew of those enforcing the regulations are gone, things don’t return to zero. There’s a ratcheting effect. If you get rid of the worst regs, or appear to, you can start back way up the ladder and folks think you are a hero.”

“That’s interesting,” I said. “Anything else you’ve learned?”

“Oh, yes,” he said. “Far too often it’s the mayors who do things that get voted out, not the ‘go along, get along’ crowd. People don’t always like change.”

“But you’ve done a lot,” I said, “and you are one of our longest-serving mayors.”

“I learned the trick,” he said.

“And what trick is that?”

“It’s based on two things,” he said. “When things happen for the good, always give credit to other people, particularly people out in the community.”

“And the other?”

“It’s usually people out in the community who do make those good things happen. A mayor’s job is to make people feel that it is OK to do good things.”

I left feeling a bit wiser, if a bit older. A person can learn a lot from our state’s public servants. I may go visit Cave City. 🍷



Jim von Tungeln is staff planning consultant and available for consultation as a service of the Arkansas Municipal League. He is a member of the American Institute of Certified Planners. Persons having comments or questions may reach him at 501-944-3649. His email is uplan@swbell.net.

EngageAR partners on pantries for MLK Jr. Day of Service

By Shelby Fiegel

The Martin Luther King Jr. National Day of Service is a defining moment each year when Americans across the country step up to make communities more equitable and to take action at the local level. It is the only federal holiday designated as a National Day of Service to encourage citizens to volunteer to improve their communities. During the last quarter-century, the MLK Day of Service has grown, and more Americans have embraced the idea that citizenship involves taking an active role in improving communities.

Engage Arkansas (EngageAR) celebrates the MLK Day of Service by engaging with municipalities and nonprofit organizations to:

- Engage with their community and create constructive action;
- Act on Dr. King's legacy of social justice and equity; and
- Recommit by volunteering to serve others (clean up a public space, mentor a young person or help those who are food insecure).

This year in celebration of MLK Day, EngageAR supported the Little Free Pantry Movement statewide. The Little Free Pantry is a grassroots effort launched by Fayetteville's Jessica McClard in May 2016. She planted the first Little Free Pantry, a wooden box on a post, that contained food and personal care and paper items accessible to all citizens in her community to support neighbors in need.

Through a donation of 100 old newspaper dispensers by the *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette*, EngageAR supported over 60 communities by repurposing the dispensers into mini food pantries. Partnering communities also hosted block parties and food drives to bring their community together.

"Our mission at EngageAR is to bridge divides by bringing people together through service and volunteerism," said Deputy Chief of Community Engagement and Faith-Based Partnership Shana Chaplin. "We seek to provide support and tools to help local communities



PHOTO COURTESY CCED

A Maumelle Public Works Department employee retrofits a donated *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette* newspaper dispenser to serve as a community food pantry as part of the Martin Luther King Jr. National Day of Service.

build strong civic infrastructure. The Little Free Pantry project is an example of how state government, private sector partners and local communities can creatively engage citizens of all ages to help meet local needs."

Each community identified a unique approach in coordinating and supporting the pantries. Some opted for nonprofit organizations, education institutions, health care facilities or individuals to take ownership of the pantries. In Maumelle, the city identified the need for additional pantries and made the decision to support the installation of two new pantries: one for general community needs on the north side of town near the police and fire department (2000 Murphy Drive) and one for pet products at the Maumelle Center on the Lake, a senior wellness center (2 Jackie Johnson Cove).

“Engage Arkansas’ excellent idea to turn old newspaper boxes into micro food pantries proves that a project doesn’t have to be big to make a big difference,” said Maumelle Mayor Caleb Norris. “Those families who will benefit from this program will have food on the table and will know that the people in their community have stepped up to help.”

EngageAR also encouraged their partners to decorate and paint the pantries with art representative of their communities. Maumelle utilized city equipment and employee-centered volunteerism within their public works department to sand, paint and print stickers of inspiring quotes and paw prints to make the pantries aesthetically pleasing and easy to locate. Other communities and organizations opted to work with local artists and youth to decorate the pantries.

“We are so excited to be part of the MLK Day of Service project with Engage Arkansas,” said Maumelle

Director of Economic Development Courtney Dunn, who served as the main point of contact for the project. “Providing resources like the Free Little Food Pantry to our community is impactful and is a community effort.”

Learn more about the MLK Day of Service at www.americorps.gov/newsroom/events/mlk-day, or visit www.engagearkansas.org/mlk-day-of-service for resources, ideas for community projects and a full map of communities participating in the project.

You can learn more about the Little Free Pantry Movement at www.littlefreepantry.org. 🍷



Shelby Fiegel is the director of the University of Central Arkansas Center for Community and Economic Development. You can contact Shelby at sfiegel@uca.edu or 501-450-5269.

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A new resolve for healthy living

By Riley Lipschitz, M.D.

We're a few weeks into 2023, and if you're like many other Americans, then some of your New Year's resolutions have already fallen by the wayside. The most common resolutions focus on improvements in health and fitness, but unfortunately, those are usually among the first to be broken.

This year, let's look beyond the simple goals of pounds lost or miles walked and instead focus on the bigger benefits of healthy living. Making good decisions now will have an impact far beyond the next 12 months.

Healthy decisions today have long-term effects, improving your mental and physical health and lowering your chances of chronic disease. A commitment to diet and exercise won't just improve your life, it'll prolong it!

That's why this is a good time to look at the benefits of healthy living and make changes that will lengthen your life. No matter your age, it's always a good time to invest in your future. It's never too late to refocus on your goals—or set some new ones.

Importance of diet

A balanced and healthy diet has a significant effect on your quality of life. Healthy eating can boost your immunity, maintain the function of bodily systems and strengthen your teeth and bones.

Your diet can also reduce the risk of health conditions such as heart disease, obesity or Type 2 diabetes. If you already suffer from a chronic illness, a healthy diet can help you manage your condition or avoid severe complications.

A balanced diet starts with fruits and vegetables, whole grains and healthy proteins. Try to minimize processed foods that are high in sodium and fat. However, it's important to keep in mind that no two people are alike. As you make a plan for healthier eating, you should consult with your health provider for suggestions that fit your particular needs.

Benefits of exercise

Physical activity is another key component of healthy living. Getting consistent exercise can help you control your weight, boost your energy and lower your risk of disease. It also has psychological benefits, stimulating the production of brain chemicals that improve your mood and reduce anxiety.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends that adults perform at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic activity or 75 minutes of vigorous aerobic activity each week. Types of moderate-intensity activities include walking or taking a leisurely bike ride. Running, dancing and jumping rope are examples of vigorous activities.

In addition, the CDC suggests that you take part in muscle-strengthening activities at least two days per week. This doesn't have to involve weightlifting. What's important is that you're engaging all the major muscle groups in your body.

Although the CDC guidelines are a good place to start, exceeding them can have an even greater effect on your health. In a study published last year in the scientific journal *Circulation*, researchers found that adults who followed the CDC recommendations lowered their risk of early death by as much as 21 percent, but those who surpassed them reduced their risk by up to 31 percent.

A long-term effort

Any plan to improve your health in 2023—whether it started with a New Year's resolution or begins right now—should only be the first stage of a long-term commitment. I encourage you to have a vision of what you need to do today to be healthy and vital in five, 10 or 15 years.

Making changes to your lifestyle might feel overwhelming, but don't get discouraged. The great thing about committing to diet and exercise is that every little bit helps. Even small changes in diet and short bursts of physical activity can have a positive influence on your health.

Now is the perfect time to start taking steps that will help you enjoy a healthier life for years to come. More than getting fit or losing weight, this is an investment in your longevity. 🍷



Riley Lipschitz, M.D., is an internal-medicine specialist at the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS) Internal Medicine Clinic and an assistant professor in the College of Medicine's Department of Internal Medicine.

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Don't create a mulch "volcano" (left). The mulch is too deep and is pushed right against the trunk. Do create a mulch "donut" (right). This newly planted sapling has been properly mulched with a wide ring 2 to 3 inches deep. Note the "donut hole" in the middle where the mulch has been pulled back so that it is not touching the tree's trunk.

Mulch matters

Proper mulching conserves moisture and protects trunk integrity.

By Krissy Kimbro

What do donuts and volcanos have to do with properly applying mulch around newly planted trees? Ask any Arkansas student or educator who has planted a shade tree on their school campus through the Arkansas Department of Agriculture Forestry Division's Shade Trees on Playgrounds (S.T.O.P.) program, and they'll tell you! Mulching is an important component of helping a new tree get off to a healthy start and maintaining tree health over its lifetime, but it is only beneficial if implemented correctly. Improperly applying mulch can actually shorten a tree's lifespan. Unfortunately, many people—including some professional landscaping crews—are unaware of how to properly apply mulch. Fortunately, there is nothing complicated or difficult about correctly applying mulch around a tree.

Donuts and volcanos

When planting trees on school campuses, the Forestry Division's Urban and Community Forestry staff and district representatives provide education to children and adults by demonstrating the correct way to plant and care for trees. The phrase they use to help students remember the most important aspect of applying mulch is "make a donut, not a volcano!"

Well-meaning attempts at mulching involve piling a thick layer of mulch all the way around the tree and right up to the trunk. However, the ring of mulch around a tree should resemble a thin donut rather than a volcano. Mulch should not be placed where it touches the trunk of the tree. There are guidelines for the recommended mulch depth and the distance it should extend from the tree.

Why mulch?

In the natural setting of the forest, fallen leaves, branches and other organic matter accumulate on the forest floor, providing multiple benefits to trees as they slowly decompose. For landscape trees, mulch can be used to imitate that process. Trees in the urban environment face more stress and survive under harsher conditions than in the natural environment, so using mulch benefits a landscape tree in multiple ways.

Visually, mulch provides a transition between the tree and any surrounding grass. This barrier can help keep mowers and string trimmers from getting close enough to damage the trunk. Mulch also prevents the growth of grass or weeds that could compete with the tree for nutrients and water. The mulch barrier also guides both foot and vehicle traffic away from the area directly under a tree, which prevents soil compaction and helps maintain proper soil aeration.

For trees planted in areas of hardscape, such as parking lots or sidewalk pockets, mulch helps prevent stormwater from the surrounding impervious surfaces rushing toward the tree and washing away the topsoil. For all trees, a layer of mulch helps the soil conserve moisture by slowing evaporation. Mulch also provides a layer of insulated protection from early freezing temperatures in the fall and late freezes in the spring, which could harm new root growth.

As mulch decomposes, it introduces vital nutrients back into the soil, improving soil composition. Additionally, mulch adds aesthetic value to trees in the landscape, especially given the array of materials and color choices available.

When, where and how much to mulch?

The best type of mulch is composed of organic matter, and hardwood bark mixed with leaves and wood is an easy, inexpensive mulch. All trees should be given a layer of mulch immediately after planting, and since it decomposes over time, mulch should be reapplied as needed. Reapplication of mulch is best done in mid-spring when roots begin to take advantage of warmer soil temperatures favorable to growth.

Keeping in mind the shape of a donut, mulch should be applied a uniform 2 to 3 inches deep in a ring around the tree that evenly extends out as close to the edge of the drip line as possible. Applying mulch too deeply can harm the roots by suffocating them, and more finely

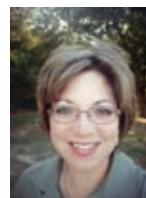
shredded bark should be applied less generously than mulch with larger particles.

Because mulching too deeply is harmful, it may be necessary when adding fresh mulch in subsequent years to remove some of the old mulch. Since mulch should extend as far out as the drip line of the tree's canopy, older mulch can be thinly spread out farther from the trunk to extend the diameter of the mulched area, with the fresh mulch placed on top, again keeping the total mulched depth under 3 inches.

“Volcano” mulching, when mulch is piled high against the trunk in a mound shape, causes problems for the tree not just by potentially cutting off oxygen to the roots, but also by trapping moisture against the trunk. Damp mulch against the trunk is an open invitation to moisture-loving insects and disease, and creatures like rats and moles will find that tunneling through deep mulch layers is an easy way to stay hidden while searching out delicious bark and woody tissues upon which to gnaw. If rodent damage goes undetected long enough, these pests may succeed in completely girdling the tree, leading to its early demise. Finally, as mulch decomposes, it produces heat. That heat when trapped against the trunk can raise temperatures of the young tissue directly under the bark to lethal levels. It can also send false signals to the tree about the ambient temperature, causing the tree to delay winter dormancy and leaving it vulnerable to winter freezes.

Practical takeaways

According to the International Society of Arboriculture, mulching, when done correctly, is one of the most beneficial practices for the health of a tree or shrub. It also happens to be one of the most inexpensive and simplest tree maintenance tasks. Have trouble remembering annual maintenance tasks like mulching? Consider the month of February a fabulous time to express your love for community trees by adding or refreshing mulch. Or adopt an annual mantra of making March the month to mulch. Regardless of when you add mulch, don't forget to “make a donut, not a volcano!” 🍩



Krissy Kimbro is the urban and community forestry coordinator for Arkansas Department of Agriculture's Forestry Division. Contact Krissy at 479-228-7929 or email kristine.kimbro@agriculture.arkansas.gov.



PHOTO COURTESY MCE

It is essential for safety—and required by fire code—to inspect the firestopping infrastructure in public buildings, like the seals around pipes and cabling that prevent fire, smoke and deadly gases from passing through walls and floor/ceiling assemblies.

Firestop system inspections crucial for new construction

By Steven Head, PE and Christian Sierra

The Arkansas Fire Prevention Code and International Building Code (IBC) are the primary resources that set standards and govern requirements for special inspection services on construction projects, particularly commercial developments. Special inspection requirements on projects were originally introduced in the 1980s, partially as a response to a number of high-profile structural failures on projects in the years preceding. Special inspections are intended to be a proactive system of increasing public safety by ensuring that structures are built in accordance with project plans and documents.

Typically, a qualified third-party engineering firm will provide the special inspection services on a construction project. However, certain specific items such as firestopping elements have historically been inspected by local fire marshals or other qualified state or local officials.

The current versions of both the fire prevention code and the IBC require special inspection of firestopping for buildings over 75 feet in height and/or Risk Category III and IV structures. These risk categories include structures such as schools, hospitals, emergency response facilities and many other essential operations that would present a substantial hazard in the event of a failure.


The requirement for special inspections to occur on firestopping elements in structures has been around for quite some time, but our state is seeing more and more projects with elevated inspection requirements due to height or risk category. This is particularly the case in the fastest-growing portions of Arkansas.

The building codes have very clear requirements on passive fire prevention, suppression and protection elements. Those codes help maintain a high standard for a multitude of manufactured systems that must demonstrate the ability to limit the passage of flames,

toxic smoke and deadly gasses through openings created for penetrations, joints, gaps in fire-rated walls, floors and floor/ceiling assemblies. Investigative reports into structure fires have consistently shown that improperly installed assemblies or improperly protected penetrations and joints have led to extensive property damage and can contribute to injuries and loss of life stemming from inhalation of smoke and toxic gasses, as well as direct exposure to the fire.

The inspection processes for firestopping elements can be time consuming and difficult to coordinate. But as Arkansas continues to grow, it will become increasingly important for our construction communities to coordinate and further educate on specialized items such as firestopping.

The International Firestop Council is a leading resource on furthering industry growth and coordination regarding fire safety elements on construction projects. It is a nonprofit association comprised of manufacturers, distributors, installers, inspectors and

other relevant personnel that have interests in fire protection materials and systems across North America. They provide resources and training for city staff, building officials, contractors, special inspectors and design professionals. The International Firestop Council can be found online at www.firestop.org. 



Steven Head, PE is head of MCE's Construction Related Services Department out of our Fayetteville office. Contact Steven by phone at 479-443-2377 or email him at shead@mce.us.com.



Christian Sierra is a materials lab technician out of MCE's Fayetteville office. Contact Christian by phone at 479-443-2377 or email him at csierra@mce.us.com.

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2022/2023 State Turnback Funds

| Actual Totals Per Capita | | | | | | |
|--------------------------|-----------------|---------------|----------------|---------------|-----------------|---------------|
| | STREET | | SEVERANCE TAX | | GENERAL | |
| MONTH | 2022 | 2023 | 2022 | 2023 | 2022 | 2023 |
| January | \$6.744 | \$6.66 | \$0.485 | \$0.49 | \$1.961 | \$1.96 |
| February | \$6.648 | \$- | \$0.486 | \$- | \$0.964 | \$- |
| March | \$5.544 | \$- | \$0.411 | \$- | \$0.964 | \$- |
| April | \$6.689 | \$- | \$0.314 | \$- | \$0.964 | \$- |
| May | \$6.636 | \$- | \$0.433 | \$- | \$0.964 | \$- |
| June | \$6.504 | \$- | \$0.363 | \$- | \$0.963 | \$- |
| July | \$7.289 | \$- | \$0.407 | \$- | \$3.463 | \$- |
| August | \$7.021 | \$- | \$0.558 | \$- | \$0.807 | \$- |
| September | \$7.212 | \$- | \$0.639 | \$- | \$0.963 | \$- |
| October | \$6.791 | \$- | \$0.553 | \$- | \$0.964 | \$- |
| November | \$6.509 | \$- | \$0.749 | \$- | \$0.96 | \$- |
| December | \$6.61 | \$- | \$0.809 | \$- | \$0.96 | \$- |
| Total Year | \$80.202 | \$6.66 | \$6.208 | \$0.49 | \$14.904 | \$1.96 |

| Actual Totals Per Month | | | | | | |
|-------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|---------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|
| | STREET | | SEVERANCE TAX | | GENERAL | |
| MONTH | 2022 | 2023 | 2022 | 2023 | 2022 | 2023 |
| January | \$13,523,371.95 | \$13,350,521.33 | \$971,650.77 | \$986,285.50 | *\$3,933,044.80 | *\$3,932,114.58 |
| February | \$13,330,126.26 | | \$974,949.61 | | \$1,932,029.37 | |
| March | \$11,116,392.03 | | \$824,985.57 | | \$1,932,175.48 | |
| April | \$13,413,142.61 | | \$629,375.82 | | \$1,932,175.48 | |
| May | \$13,306,592.12 | | \$868,435.30 | | \$1,933,337.16 | |
| June | \$13,042,397.16 | | \$728,488.74 | | \$1,930,396.00 | |
| July | \$14,616,346.04 | | \$816,970.67 | | ** \$6,944,783.81 | |
| August | \$14,078,419.61 | | \$1,119,657.38 | | \$1,619,187.98 | |
| September | \$14,460,958.73 | | \$1,280,885.52 | | \$1,931,889.90 | |
| October | \$13,617,712.35 | | \$1,108,417.65 | | \$1,932,525.04 | |
| November | \$13,058,733.21 | | \$1,502,715.99 | | \$1,931,894.66 | |
| December | \$13,262,227.20 | | \$1,622,364.84 | | \$1,932,114.58 | |
| Total Year | \$160,826,419.27 | \$13,350,521.33 | \$12,448,897.86 | \$986,285.50 | \$29,885,554.26 | \$3,932,114.58 |

* Includes \$2 million appropriation from the Property Tax Relief Fund

**Includes \$3,514,811.45 supplemental for July 2022

Local Option Sales and Use Tax in Arkansas



Source: Rachel Garrett, Office of State Treasurer

See also: www.dfa.arkansas.gov

| Sales and Use Tax Year-to-Date 2023 with 2022 Comparison (shaded gray) | | | | | | | | |
|--|---------------------|----------------------|---------------------|----------------------|----------------------|------------------------|------------------|--------------------|
| Month | Municipal Tax | | County Tax | | Total Tax | | Interest | |
| January | \$82,120,928 | \$79,509,192 | \$69,845,325 | \$67,235,746 | \$151,966,253 | \$146,744,937 | \$411,348 | \$7,996 |
| February | \$90,989,478 | \$88,238,219 | \$77,394,289 | \$75,394,289 | \$151,966,253 | \$146,744,937 | \$411,348 | \$20,291 |
| March | \$71,237,219 | \$69,845,325 | \$60,990,849 | \$60,990,849 | \$151,966,253 | \$146,744,937 | \$411,348 | \$13,414 |
| April | \$70,722,847 | \$69,845,325 | \$61,123,066 | \$61,123,066 | \$151,966,253 | \$146,744,937 | \$411,348 | \$23,045 |
| May | \$85,621,568 | \$82,774,267 | \$73,394,919 | \$73,394,919 | \$151,966,253 | \$146,744,937 | \$411,348 | \$45,685 |
| June | \$79,693,712 | \$77,394,289 | \$68,198,650 | \$68,198,650 | \$151,966,253 | \$146,744,937 | \$411,348 | \$66,577 |
| July | \$82,774,267 | \$80,956,997 | \$69,831,518 | \$69,831,518 | \$151,966,253 | \$146,744,937 | \$411,348 | \$100,880 |
| August | \$84,835,673 | \$82,120,928 | \$72,760,141 | \$72,760,141 | \$151,966,253 | \$146,744,937 | \$411,348 | \$133,556 |
| September | \$83,485,245 | \$81,355,162 | \$72,292,734 | \$72,292,734 | \$151,966,253 | \$146,744,937 | \$411,348 | \$262,246 |
| October | \$84,245,742 | \$82,120,928 | \$72,984,249 | \$72,984,249 | \$151,966,253 | \$146,744,937 | \$411,348 | \$283,743 |
| November | \$80,956,997 | \$79,693,712 | \$70,372,855 | \$70,372,855 | \$151,966,253 | \$146,744,937 | \$411,348 | \$299,643 |
| December | \$82,190,001 | \$80,956,997 | \$70,976,959 | \$70,976,959 | \$151,966,253 | \$146,744,937 | \$411,348 | \$400,114 |
| Total | \$82,120,928 | \$976,261,941 | \$69,845,325 | \$835,555,977 | \$151,966,253 | \$1,811,817,918 | \$411,348 | \$1,657,190 |
| Averages | \$82,120,928 | \$81,355,162 | \$69,845,325 | \$69,629,665 | \$151,966,253 | \$150,984,827 | \$411,348 | \$138,099 |

MUNICIPAL MART

To place a classified ad in City & Town, please email the League at citytown@arml.org or call 501-374-3484. Classified ads are FREE to League members and will run for two consecutive months from the date of receipt unless otherwise notified. FOR NON-MEMBERS, classifieds are available for the rate of \$0.70 per word and will run for one month unless otherwise notified. Once we receive the ad, we will send an invoice. The ad will run once payment is received.

CITY MANAGER—The city of Tifton, Georgia, is seeking applications for a new city manager. Tifton is the county seat of Tift County with an estimated population of 17,000. It is the home of several major educational institutions, a regional medical center, and serves as a center of commerce for the region. The position of city manager is appointed by the mayor and council and is responsible for directing the daily operations of all city departments and works closely with the mayor and council to ensure the vision of the city's elected officials is implemented. City services are provided by the manager through 15 departments, 152 full-time employees with an operating budget of \$16.1 million as well as enterprise funds (water, sewer, gas, solid waste and theater) and a capital budget of approximately \$12M. Interested candidates must submit by email a cover letter, resume, at least five job related references with email and phone numbers, as well as salary history no later than December 30, 2022: Lisa Ward, senior associate, Mercer Group Associates, at lisaward912@gmail.com. Any questions please call 706-983-9326.

COMPTROLLER—Washington County is seeking applications for a qualified comptroller. Under the general supervision of the chief of staff, and ultimately to the county judge, the comptroller is responsible for performing audits of county financial records, ensuring legislative compliance in all financial transactions and accurately reporting the county's financial position. The comptroller is responsible for payroll, accounts payable, general ledger, and budgets. The incumbent is responsible for preparing the county budget annually which averages \$60,000,000 annually. Payroll covers 1,483 employees with 700 being full time. The incumbent is responsible for ensuring elected officials and department heads expend county monies in compliance with county and state laws. A qualified applicant must possess an understand of fund accounting and possess a college degree in business-related field with seven years' experience in accounting, preferably government accounting or the equivalent amount of education and experience and five years of management experience. The incumbent should possess an intermediate level of data processing and computer knowledge with spreadsheet and work processing experience. Salary range: \$97,118.92 - \$133,538.51 DOQE. For more information please contact Washington County Human Resource Department at 479-444-1700, or to apply visit www.washingtoncountyar.gov or email resumes to hr@washingtoncountyar.gov.

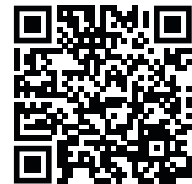
GRANTS DIRECTOR—Washington County is seeking applications for a qualified grants director. The grants director is under the general supervision of the chief of staff and is ultimately responsible to the county judge. The incumbent will be designated as the person/department responsible for the proper financial and program administration of grant assistance being sought, received or accounted for Washington County. The grants director will meet with local, county, state and federal officials as required for day-to-day administration of the county's grant administration programs. Salary Range: \$72,477.95 - \$99,657.18 DOQE. For more information please contact Washington County Human Resource Department at 479-444-1700, or to apply visit www.washingtoncountyar.gov or email resumes to hr@washingtoncountyar.gov.

WATER RECLAMATION/WASTEWATER MANAGER—The city of Cape Coral, Florida, seeks an action-oriented individual, who will energetically take on new opportunities and tough challenges with a sense of urgency and enthusiasm to serve as its next water reclamation/wastewater manager. The chosen candidate will be knowledgeable in relevant federal, state and local regulatory statutes, codes, ordinances and safety regulations, as well as the principles and practices of effective management, organizational structures, administration, budget development and leadership. They will be an excellent communicator with planning, organization, prioritization and time management skills. The manager will be familiar with the Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA) system. Requires a bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university in science, engineering, management, public administration or a related field; five years of progressively responsible experience as a wastewater treatment plant operator, as required for an "A" level license; and three years of experience in the supervision of a wastewater treatment facility, which must include all phases of facility wastewater/reuse processes, accounting, budget development and administration assistance. Direct municipal experience is not required if the candidate works or has worked for a private sector wastewater operations contractor who serves municipal clients, and the candidate has the appropriate licensing ("A" in Florida or the equivalent of an "A" in other states). Candidates must possess and maintain a Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) "A" Level or equivalent wastewater treatment plant operator license upon hire or promotion. If new hire with out-of-state license, must obtain and maintain FDEP "A" license within 12 months of hire. Must possess a valid state driver's license and obtain a valid Florida driver's license within 30 days of hire or promotion. Reclaimed irrigation water experience and experience in Class A AWT nutrient removal wastewater treatment system facility is preferred. The salary range for this position is \$81,764.80-\$130,832.00 DOQE. For more information on this position contact: Kurt Hodgen at KurtHodgen@GovernmentResource.com or call 540-820-0531.

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