

SEEDS OF GROWTH

A Newsletter from the Crossett Economic Development Foundation

From the Director's Desk

Introducing Hali McNeice



The Foundation is excited to welcome Hali McNeice to the team. Hali will be filling the role of Grant Writer. She studied English at the University of Arkansas at Monticello and moved to Crossett in 2013. "Although I didn't grow up here, Crossett is my hometown. I'm thrilled to have the opportunity to take part in helping this community flourish," says Hali.

"Grant writing and communication is a big part of what we do. Hali will be a big asset to our community in this role," said Smith.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "J. Michael Smith". The signature is written in a cursive style.

A Visit From Our Congressman

Recently, Congressman Bruce Westerman paid a visit to Crossett. He spent several hours touring and discussing Yale Camp Cabins and the Port of Crossett with Senator Ben Gilmore, State Representative Howard Beaty, Mayor Crystal Marshall, and Executive Director Mike Smith. Congressman Westerman is a graduate of Yale University's School of Forestry. He is the only practicing Forester in the House of Representatives. Always a fan of Arkansas History and anything forestry related; Congressman Westerman thoroughly enjoyed the tour of the Cabins.

During the port visit, the Congressman was able to tour Sierra Grapevine; a wreath rolling company stationed at the Port of Crossett. The manufacturer supplies a wide variety of grapevine wreaths to national retailers across the country. Sierra spoke highly of the support the Foundation has provided his company over the years. He believes the location at the port will serve his company for many more years to come.



Annual Marketing Event

The Crossett Economic Development Foundation hosts a marketing event annually in Little Rock at the Arkansas Economic Development Commission Office. The purpose of this event is to show appreciation to our state's agency. This event also allows our community to interact with the staff responsible for project management as well as with the staff responsible for grants.

This type of interaction helps to keep Crossett on the minds of the people turning the wrenches in our state. This event also allows our community opportunity to relay to staff member information about new developments in Crossett, new direction on projects, and the general atmosphere in our community. Georgia-Pacific was kind enough to donate Angel Soft bath tissue for the event which everyone appreciates.

Board members in attendance included; Executive Director Mike Smith, Mayor Crystal Marshall, Representative Howard Beaty, State Senator Ben Gilmore, Dan Pevy, and Mandy White..



Christmas in Crossett 2022



This year's Christmas in Crossett event shined like no other! From the festive music and the exciting kids' activities to the dazzling parade, Crossett really outdid itself. "It is exciting to see so many people in our community pull together to make this such a magical time for not just kids but people of all ages." Says Mandy White, A record breaking number of nearly fifty vendors set up booths throughout the downtown area, selling homemade crafts and canned goods as well as commercial items such as clothing and kids' toys. Various food trucks were stationed throughout to complete the fun, festive atmosphere.



Kids' activities played a huge roll in this year's celebrations. Children were excited to have the opportunity to challenge their friends to a game of laser tag or compete with one another at the inflatable axe throwing station. An adventure course was set up for the older kids and two bounce houses were available for the younger ones.

The event was capped by one absolutely fantastic parade. Members of the community worked hard to make this year special, and it showed. With over seventy-five entries, this year's parade was by far the most elaborate Crossett has yet to host. Included were floats from various school organizations, the hospital, and local businesses. In true Crossett fashion, decorated ATVs, classic cars, motorcycles, and even a lawnmower made an appearance. And, the rodeo club turned heads with all the horses.



The theme of this year's Christmas in Crossett event was "A Hard Candy Christmas". To celebrate, Mandy White joined the fun by dressing as Miss Dolly Pardon herself and riding in a red truck in the parade.

A special thanks is to be given to the gold sponsors of this year's event. Three of our biggest supporters were Master Tech, McDonalds of Crossett, and Commercial Capital Bank. These businesses, along with others, contributed financially to make Christmas in Crossett 2022 possible.





Tennis Court Repairs a Priority

Recreation is a vital aspect of our community's way of life. Locals are known for their love of outdoor sporting activities, from hunting and fishing, to making use of our wonderful sports complex. Crossett once had an active tennis community with regular Tuesday night matches. Unfortunately, over the years the condition of the courts has deteriorated to a point of deterrence for many regular players.

The condition of the courts has not gone unnoticed. Recently, Mayor Marshall and Mike Smith, Executive Director of the Foundation, made a pitch to the Arkansas Parks and Tourism board in pursuit of the Outdoor Recreation Grant. If awarded, the funds would be used to restore the courts to playable condition that last for decades to come. This grant would also add the option for Pickle Ball; a new sport that is going viral across the nation.



What's Going on at the Port?

The Port of Crossett is being considered for use in transporting a large piece of equipment to its final destination. Geotechnical studies have been conducted in hopes that the Port is equipped to handle the immense weight of the machinery. Once cleared by the assessor, permits can be approved. We hope to see this move take place in either the late spring or early summer adding barge traffic to the river and usage to our port.

Crossett Light Featured on National Television

In November, the Travel Channel chose to feature the infamous Crossett Light in its series Paranormal Caught on Camera. The mysterious light has caught the attention of thrill seekers across the country. In this production, it is featured alongside a haunted wreck site in Florida and a "bizarre humanoid creature" soaring over Scotland.



Celebrating Milestone's with Cynergy Cargo

Cynergy Cargo employee's and key members of the community were invited to a fish fry held in honor of Cynergy Cargo. The event was held in celebration of the completion of a fully functional food truck. This marks a key milestone in the growth of the company as well as the growth off Crossett's manufacturing industry as a whole.

Hood Packaging brings Good News for Crossett

Hood Packaging is a big part of our local economy, and our local workforce has done a great job of proving their ability to be profitable with the tools and machinery they have to work with. Recently Hood approached the Economic Development Foundation with an opportunity to grow. The Foundation agreed to assist with the freight bill on moving machinery to Crossett. This is a great investment. It will provide new opportunities for our local workforce and help to secure the jobs already in place at the Hood Packaging facility in Crossett. Thank you to Hood Packaging leaders and the great workers who made this growth possible.



Photo includes Stacey Womack, Kevin Harrison, Mike Smith, and Mandy White.

ACT Workforce Readiness

Machinery and equipment are only as good as the people who operate them. Workforce has been a big topic in the news, as the national economy continues to struggle. Our community is part of a ten-county region that is the only regionally certified Workready Community. This allows our educators and economic developers to have access to locally derived hard data. This data allows our educators to craft programs to assist workers as they prepare themselves for the new workforce. It also allows economic developers to provide the information companies require when looking to locate to South Arkansas.





Need a Venue?

Don't forget to consider Crossett's Community Center when hosting your next event! This venue is perfect for any large-scale event, such as a wedding, conference, or banquet. The facility is stocked with tables and chairs and has the space to accommodate all your guests. There's also access to high-speed wireless internet and two large monitors that are ideal for presentations

Be sure to book your slot fast! This venue is growing in popularity and in high demand. To make a reservation, fill out the form attached and bring it by our office at 125 Main. Slots will not be held without payment.

COMMUNITY CENTER RENTAL REQUEST

CONTACT NAME: _____

ORGANIZATION (IF APPLICABLE): _____

ADDRESS: _____

PHONE NUMBER: _____

EMAIL: _____

DATE(S) REQUESTED: _____

TYPE OF EVENT/OCCASION: _____

WILL THERE BE FOOD AND/OR DRINKS SERVED AT THE EVENT? YES OR NO

IF SO, WILL THE FOOD BE CATERED BY A LICENSED CATERER? _____

WILL THERE BE ALCOHOL SERVED AT THE EVENT? YES OR NO

WILL YOU NEED WI-FI FOR YOUR EVENT? YES OR NO

IS THE HOST ORGANIZATION A 501(c)3 NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION, GOVERNMENT ENTITY OR PUBLIC SCHOOL? _____

WHICH ROOM(S) WILL YOU NEED ACCESS TO? (PLEASE CHECK ALL THAT APPLY)

<input type="checkbox"/>	BANQUET ROOM
<input type="checkbox"/>	MEDIUM MEETING ROOM
<input type="checkbox"/>	SMALL MEETING ROOM
<input type="checkbox"/>	KITCHEN/BAR AREA
<input type="checkbox"/>	OTHER _____