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The Bartlett Express

Bartlett, TN | Volume 50 | Issue 47 | Thursday, November 19, 2026 | bartlett-express.news $1.00

BARTLETT BAND TAKES NATIONAL STAGE, MAKES HISTORY WITH EIGHTH-PLACE FINISH



Staff Report

The music of America provided the soundtrack, but the Bartlett High School Band made history of its own at the Grand National Finals.

In its first-ever appearance in the prestigious competition held at Lucas Oil Stadium in Indianapolis, the Bartlett Band earned an eighth-place finish with a final score of 88.85, placing the West Tennessee ensemble among the nation's top marching bands.

From the opening notes of a Colonial Williamsburg-inspired piccolo solo to the final strains of "My Country, 'Tis of Thee," the band's American-themed production, "A Neon Nation," offered a creative musical journey through the nation's history, blending familiar patriotic melodies with the powerful sound and intricate arrangements that have become part of its signature.

"Yankee Doodle" served as the musical thread throughout the production, appearing in unexpected ways through intricate woodwind features, individual solos and imaginative arrangements, including a brass and saxophone quintet.

The show moved seamlessly between musical styles and moods. Lush woodwinds and carefully constructed musical phrases led into "Shenandoah," highlighted by a beautiful flugelhorn solo and subtle references to "Battle Hymn of the Republic." The production then shifted gears with an energetic rendition of "American Salute," filled with intricate runs and musical flourishes, before bringing the audience home with a snippet of "My Country, 'Tis of Thee."

The visual presentation was equally distinctive. Star-shaped props featuring colonial imagery, sky-blue costumes accented with neon and colonial-inspired hats topped with feathers created a striking combination of historical Americana and contemporary marching band design.

But beyond the music, choreography and visual presentation, the weekend offered another memorable measure of the band's success: the crowd.

One of the most exciting moments came as audiences erupted in cheers following each performance. The enthusiastic response created an electric atmosphere and reflected the connection the Bartlett students made with spectators on the national stage.

For the students, directors and supporters who helped bring the production to life, the eighth-place finish represents more than a competition result. It marks a milestone for a program making its Grand National Finals debut and an accomplishment

See **Band,** *page 3A*



CHRISTMAS IN BARTLETT RETURNS FOR SEVENTH ANNUAL HOLIDAY CELEBRATION NOV. 20-21

Staff Report

BARTLETT, Tenn. — The holiday season officially kicks off in Bartlett on Friday, Nov. 20, with the seventh annual Christmas in Bartlett Market and Festivities, featuring the city's Christmas tree lighting at W.J. Freeman Park.

The two-day celebration will bring together residents and visitors for holiday shopping, food, family-friendly activities and seasonal entertainment.

Festivities will take place at the pavilion in Freeman Park on Friday, Nov. 20, from 4 to 8 p.m., and Saturday, Nov. 21, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

The City of Bartlett's annual Christmas tree lighting is scheduled for Friday at 6 p.m. The lighting ceremony will officially mark the beginning of the holiday season in the community.

In addition to the tree lighting, visitors can enjoy local shopping vendors, food trucks, a children's train ride, kids' activities and an opportunity to visit with Santa.

Organizers invite residents to bring family and friends and enjoy the holiday atmosphere throughout the weekend.

The seventh annual Christmas in Bartlett Market and Festivities offers an opportunity for the community to come together, support local vendors and celebrate the start of the Christmas season.



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Inside: Community News - Page 2A and 3A | Church Listings - Page 4A
Classifieds - Page 5A | Puzzles - Page 6A

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Members of the Appling Middle School band performed and provided music during the City of Bartlett's Veterans Day program on November 11.

Courtesy Bartlett City Schools



City of Bartlett, TN Parks and Recreation Department

BARTLETT TURKEY SHOOT DRAWS STRONG COMPETITION ACROSS AGE DIVISIONS

Staff Report

BARTLETT, Tenn. — More than 350 targets, plenty of friendly competition and a variety of prizes helped make Bartlett's 2026 Turkey Shoot a successful event at Singleton Community Center.

Participants took aim at paper targets with BB guns, competing for prizes that included turkeys, desserts and side dishes. Scores were divided into seven age brackets, with competitors posting strong results across the divisions.

Top finishers in each division included:

• Ages 8 and under: Micah Bowmah, first place, 75; Bruce Molin, second place, 63.

• Ages 9-12: Austin Williams, first place, 84; Henry O'Connell, second place, 77.

• Ages 13-17: Jack Breeden, first place, 127; Knox Lowther, second place, 89.

• Ages 18-35: Brenda Strickland, first place, 168; Felton Adams, second place, 167.

• Ages 36-50: Hayden Perez, first place, 168; Brian Moore, second place, 128.

• Ages 51-65: Richard Moore and Cheryl Parrish tied for first place with scores of 129.

• Ages 66 and older: Tommy Shelton, first place, 121; Don Weeling, second place, 119.

Organizers described this year's event as the smoothest yet, crediting the Bartlett Trap Team and employees from the Recreation and Maintenance divisions for helping make the competition possible.

Organizers also thanked everyone who attended and participated in this year's event.

Complete scores for each age division are available through the City of Bartlett's Special Events page at cityofbartlett.org/124/Special-Events.

Bizz Buzz

ALLEN MORGAN HEALTH AND REHABILITATION CENTER AMONG NURSING HOMES NATIONWIDE TO QUALIFY FOR NEW SURVEY PROGRAM

Recognition from Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services highlights facility's commitment to quality care and high performance



MEMPHIS, Tenn. – Allen Morgan Health and Rehabilitation Center (AMHRC) at Trezevant has earned recognition as one of approximately 12% of nursing homes nationwide to qualify for the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services' (CMS) new Risk-Based Survey (RBS) Program, a distinction reserved for facilities demonstrating consistently high performance across key quality, staffing and regulatory compliance measures.

Launched nationwide on September 8, 2026, the program is designed to recognize higher-performing nursing homes while allowing state agencies to direct more of their oversight resources toward facilities where residents may face greater health and safety risks. AMHRC's qualification places it among a select group of nursing homes meeting CMS's rigorous standards for participation.

"Being recognized by CMS as one of the nation's higher-performing nursing homes is a tremendous accomplishment and a reflection of the dedication, professionalism and compassion our team members bring to their work every day," said Rachel Siddall, LNHA, director of Health Services and administrator of Allen Morgan Health and Rehabilitation Center. "Our priority has always been providing residents with exceptional care in an environment where they feel safe, supported and at home. This recognition reinforces that commitment and belongs to every member of our team who works so hard to make that possible."

To qualify for the Risk-Based Survey Program, nursing homes must meet a stringent set of criteria established by CMS, including a five-star overall rating on Medicare's Care Compare website, a staffing rating of at least three stars, verified and accurate staffing and resident assessment data, and no citations for actual harm, immediate jeopardy or substandard quality of care during the previous survey cycle. Facilities must also meet additional requirements related to staffing, survey history and ownership.

CMS estimates that approximately 12% of the nation's nursing homes initially meet the program's eligibility requirements.

Under the new approach, qualifying facilities receive a streamlined annual recertification survey that requires fewer surveyors and approximately half the on-site time of a traditional survey. The process continues to evaluate compliance with required health and safety standards while allowing state agencies to redirect resources toward facilities with greater oversight needs. All nursing homes remain subject to recertification surveys at least once every 15 months, and state agencies retain the authority to conduct a full survey when concerns arise.

CMS also recognizes qualifying facilities on its Medicare Care Compare website with a gold trophy icon, giving families an additional way to identify nursing homes that meet the agency's high-performance criteria.

The recognition comes as Trezevant continues to invest in the future of its health and rehabilitation services through a $10 million renovation of the Allen Morgan Health and Rehabilitation Center. The extensive project encompasses all three floors of the 55,000-square-foot facility and includes renovations to all 104 patient rooms, the rehabilitation gym, central dining area, nurse stations and lobby. The improvements are designed to enhance the comfort, functionality and overall experience of residents, patients, families and team members while supporting the high standard of care for which the center strives.

"Quality care is about more than meeting regulatory standards. It's about continually looking for ways to improve the experience of the people who depend on us," said Kent Phillips, CEO of Trezevant. "As we make significant investments in our physical environment, we're equally committed to investing in our people, our processes and the level of care we provide. We're proud of what our team has accomplished and excited about what the future holds for Allen Morgan Health and Rehabilitation Center and the Trezevant community as a whole."

About Trezevant:

Located in the heart of Memphis at 177 North Highland, Trezevant is a continuing care retirement community offering independent living, assisted living, memory care, and health and rehabilitation services. Trezevant consistently provides world-class service to current and future residents while continuing to be an anchor in the community. Trezevant is a fair housing community and is consistently recognized with awards for resident satisfaction, industry expertise and community leadership such as the Holleran Community Choice Awards, LeadingAge Tennessee Excellence in Caring Awards, HealthCare Chaplaincy Network's Excellence in Spiritual Care Award, The Tennessee Center for Performance Excellence (TNCPE) Commitment Award, The Commercial Appeal's Memphis Most Community Choice Awards, and recognition from the National Center for Assisted Living. For more information on Trezevant, call 901.325.4000 or visit www.trezevantmanor.org.

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JUST TELL ME WHAT HAPPENED



Ad Veritas

Daniel Richardson

I've discovered that some of the biggest news on the internet takes a very long time to turn out to be nothing.

I notice it particularly with college football coverage. As a Tennessee fan, I'm an easy target for a headline promising big news about the Vols. I want to know what's happening, and I'll admit that my ability to resist clicking is not especially impressive.

But increasingly, clicking seems to be the beginning of an endurance test. The headline promises a major development, and the person in the video spends the first several minutes explaining how important that development is going to be. There is background, speculation and another assurance that something significant is coming. What there isn't, at least for a while, is the news.

Then, four or five minutes later, we finally reach the point. Sometimes there really is something worth hearing. Other times, the big development turns out to be a possibility, a rumor, or somebody's opinion dressed up as an announcement. Occasionally, I finish watching and realize I haven't learned much of anything.

I understand that not every story can be explained in 30 seconds. Some subjects deserve a lengthy interview or a careful explanation. I enjoy those, too. But there is a difference between taking time to explain something and deliberately taking a long time to get around to saying it.

In newspaper work, reporters are traditionally taught to put the most important information near the beginning of a news story, then follow it with supporting details and background. That structure is called the inverted pyramid. It respects the possibility that a reader may have time for only a few paragraphs and should still come away knowing what happened.

The approach I keep encountering online feels more like hiding the news at the bottom of a cereal box. You have to work through everything else before you find out whether the promised prize was worth the trouble.

As a publisher, I understand the need to attract an audience. We need people to read our newspapers, and we need advertisers to see value in reaching those readers. A headline should get someone's attention. But it should also accurately describe the story underneath it.

That seems like a reasonable bargain. We ask for your time, and in return we ought to give you what we said we would.

Newspapers are not exempt from that responsibility. An exaggerated headline is still exaggerated when it appears in print. An opinion should be identified as an opinion, and a possibility shouldn't be presented as something that has already happened. The standard shouldn't change depending on whether the information arrives in your mailbox or on your phone.

What bothers me most is the effect on trust. After being pulled into enough stories that don't deliver, I become suspicious of the next headline—even when that one might be legitimate. Instead of making me more interested, the repeated promises have made me spend less time watching.

I doubt that is the result the people making those videos are hoping for.

I'm not suggesting every piece of writing should be stripped of personality or reduced to a list of facts. This is coming from someone who has devoted newspaper space to mowing the yard, late-night toast and the challenges of getting children to sleep. There is room for a story to wander a little when the story itself is what the reader came for.

But when you promise news, deliver news. If it is a small development, let it be small. A story doesn't have to shake the foundations of college football—or civilization—to be worth telling.

People have jobs, families and responsibilities. The few minutes they give us belong to them, and earning their attention ought to come with some respect for their time.

I'll probably still click on the next promising Tennessee headline. Hope is difficult to overcome when you're a Vol fan. But I'd appreciate getting to the information before I've forgotten what interested me in the first place.

Just tell me what happened. Let me decide how big the news is.

BAND,

Continued from 1A

that puts Bartlett and West Tennessee in the national spotlight.

In its first trip to the Grand National Finals, the Bartlett High School Band did more than make an appearance. It delivered a memorable performance, earned a place among the nation's best and gave its community plenty of reason to celebrate.

For Bartlett, it was a history-making weekend — and one that will be remembered long after the final notes faded.



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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR POLICY

The *Bartlett Express* welcomes letters to the editor and guest columns (300 words limit). We reserve the right to edit letters for length and clarity. All letters/columns must be signed. Anonymous letters will not be published. Letters may be mailed to *Bartlett Express*, 7731 Hwy. 70, Ste. 102, Bartlett, TN 38134; or PO Box 529, Covington, TN 38019.

Living with Purpose

By David Peel

Time Remains Undefeated



Crash and I took a different path through the woods this week, and he stopped to sniff around an old oak. That's when I saw it. A strand of barbed wire ran into the trunk and disappeared. The tree hadn't just held the wire. It had swallowed it.

The wire goes right through the heart of that oak. Oaks grow slowly, so this one was just a sapling when somebody stapled wire to it. That puts it around 125 years ago, give or take.

I stood there and wondered about the man who strung it. Were his sons with him? Maybe one held the wire tight while the other handed up staples, and he taught them the way his daddy taught him.

Maybe his mind was somewhere else. Maybe he'd been coughing all winter and wondered how many more fences he had left in him. Maybe his wife was weak after a hard birth, and he worked fast to get back to the house.

Or maybe the fence was the whole point. Maybe a neighbor had moved a corner stake, and the two of them hadn't spoken since. This wire was his way of saying, "This far and no farther." Whatever it was, it probably felt like everything that day.

The oak kept growing, ring after ring. The fence is gone. The neighbor is gone. The farmer has gone on to his reward, whichever place that turned out to be. Wherever he is, that corner stake doesn't matter to him anymore.

Time remains undefeated.

Most of what keeps us up at night won't matter in a hundred days let alone a hundred years. What lasts is how we loved our families, how we treated our neighbors, and where we stand when our own fence line runs out.

Crash sniffed the oak, looked back at me like I was taking too long, and trotted on.

Keep the main thing the main thing.

Mr. Peel seeks justice for those injured in tractor-trailer and car accidents, medical malpractice, and disability. He often addresses churches, clubs, and groups without charge. Mr. Peel may be reached through PeelLawFirm.com wherein other articles may be accessed.

BARTLETT POLICE DEPARTMENT INVITES CHURCH LEADERS TO JOIN 2027 CLERGY ACADEMY

Staff Report

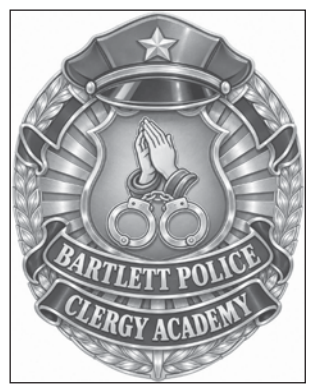
The Bartlett Police Department is inviting pastors, ministry leaders and other church leaders to express interest in its 2027 Bartlett Police Clergy Academy, an opportunity to learn more about local law enforcement and issues affecting the community.

The academy will offer participants a behind-the-scenes look at 911 dispatch, hands-on police scenarios and information about topics that may impact members of their congregations, including online scams, child exploitation, domestic violence and mental health crises.

Participants will also have opportunities to meet the Bartlett police officers and dispatchers who serve the community, share concerns they are seeing within their congregations and build relationships with law enforcement.

Organizers say the goal is to help church leaders recognize potential challenges, know where to turn for assistance and serve as informed, steady voices when tensions arise in the community.

The academy will meet Tuesdays from January 5 through February 16, 2027, from 6 to 9 p.m. Graduation and family night will be held February 16.



Church leaders interested in learning more are encouraged to email the Bartlett Police Department at **Lminch@cityofbartlett.org**.

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Is God Dead? . . . by *Ty B. Kerley, DMin.*

The Challenge of Gratuitous Evil

Over this miniseries of recent articles on evil, we have gleaned several notions from the biblical text in an attempt to ascertain what God has to say in answer to the question, "Why does God allow evil and suffering to exist in the world?" From that exposition, we have identified evil and suffering as punishment for sin, as a consequence of other people's sin, as a consequence of fallen angelic free will, and for a greater good that could not otherwise be obtained. Sure enough, the Bible gives multiple examples of each of these reasons why God may allow evil to exist in the world. There remains, however, a stubborn category that is perhaps one of the most vicious forms of evil and suffering that can be experienced: the notion of gratuitous evil (evil that seems to defy any reason at all). Often, this form of evil and suffering involves the suffering of the truly innocent: the suffering of children. These are heart-wrenching cases of suffering that seem to have absolutely no explanation and defy our understanding. For the moment, however, I would like to briefly set the suffering of children aside as we will consider it more fully at a later time. At present, I would like to pose an age-old question and then attempt to answer it coherently. Quite simply, the question is, "Is there gratuitous evil in the world?" Is there a reason, of some form or structure, that applies to every instance of evil? Or, is there evil and suffering in the world that makes no sense whatsoever? Evil that does not fit into any of the biblical categories we have been considering at some length over the last several weeks? This is an important consideration because the skeptics of theism and Christianity argue that the significant amount of gratuitous evil and suffering in the world indicates not only that God is dead but that God never existed, to begin with. The skeptic's philosophical argument is present in this form:

If God exists, there are no gratuitous evils.
There are gratuitous evils.
Therefore, God does not exist.

Following the rules of philosophical reasoning, if premises 1 and 2 are true, then 3 is true necessarily. To each in turn.

Considering that the last 80 articles (yes, 80 articles!) of this column have set about presenting a cumulative and progressive case, we have now established a rather robust case for the existence of God. Given God's existence, premise one can be restated: "Since God exists, there are no gratuitous evils. But this seems to be false; abundant cases of suffering seem to have no cause. In this sense, premise 2 is true. Logically, if premise 2 is true, the conclusion must follow: God does not exist. However, I categorically disagree with this conclusion because I believe that premise 2, in spite of what seems to be genuine gratuitous evil in the world, is false. Here is why. I want to argue that until human beings grasp the incalculable differences between the omniscience (all-knowing) that God alone possesses and the minuscule finitude of our understanding, we will continue to look upon some evil and suffering as gratuitous. God Himself makes this point abundantly clear in His questioning of Job (ch. 38-42), which begins, "Where were you when I laid the foundations of the world?" From there, God pummels Job with questions unanswerable from the finitude of the human mind. In the end, Job replies to God, "I have uttered what I did not understand, things too wonderful for me, which I did not know" (Job 42:3). Moreover, the Bible speaks directly to the perceptive limitations of human beings saying, "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways declares the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts" (Isa 55:8-9). No doubt God's ways are higher than our own, and they are often shrouded from our view, arguably for our own good. Truly, there exists pain and suffering all around us that seems to have no cause, no reason, and no purpose. Even still, the overwhelming abundance of evidence testifies not only to God's existence but to His eternal power and divine nature as well (cf. Rom 1:20). Philosopher Doug Groothuis put it this way: "The morally sufficient reasons for these evils may be inscrutable, but they are not gratuitous." From behind the veil, we are not so blinded that we cannot accept the existence of an all-powerful, all-knowing, and benevolent God and, at the same time, the existence of evil and suffering.

Join us next week as we look at the first murder and how the God of Christianity responded. Until then, *is God dead?*

Gloria in excelsis Deo!

Ty B. Kerley, DMin., is an ordained minister who teaches Christian apologetics and relief preaches in Southern Oklahoma. Dr. Kerley and his wife, Vicki, are members of the Waurika church of Christ and live in Ardmore, OK. You can contact him at dr.kerley@isGoddead.com

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Grayson Cathedral Church
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Greater Imani Church
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901-274-6711
Harmony Church of Bartlett
6740 St. Elmo Rd
Bartlett, TN 38134
901-249-7400
Holy Ground Church/ Non-Denominational
5900 Old Brownsville
Bartlett, TN 38135
The Life Church
1800 N Germantown Pkwy
Cordova, TN 38016
901-751-0095
Lighthouse Ministries
4384 Stage Rd, 4th Floor
Memphis, TN 38128
901-382-8106
New Destiny Church of Memphis
2909 Elmore Park Rd
Memphis, TN 38134
901-379-0303
New Life Fellowship Church
1747 Bartlett Rd
Bartlett, TN 38134
901-373-9500
Philippians V Multi-Ministry
3170 Covington Pike
Memphis, TN 38128
901-385-3555
Remnant Seed Ministries
2774 Bartlett Rd
Memphis, TN 38134
901-386-3386
River City Church
3871 Kirby Whitten Pkwy
Bartlett, TN 38135
901-386-4171
Ruach Ha-Kodesh Evangelistic Ministry (RHaKEM)
4910 Misty River Rd
Bartlett, TN 38135
901-373-2940

PENTECOSTAL
Fountain of Truth Church
7022 U.S. 70
Memphis, TN 38133
901-372-8238

PRESBYTERIAN
Advent Presbyterian Cordova
1879 N. Germantown Pkwy
Cordova, TN 38016
901-755-6290
Grace Presbyterian Church
6671 Yale Rd
Memphis, TN 38134
901-386-3241

PRESBYTERIAN – CUMBERLAND
Faith Cumberland Presbyterian Church
3427 Appling Rd
Bartlett, TN 38133
901-377-0526
Grace Presbyterian Church (PCUSA)
6641 Yale Rd
Bartlett, TN 38134
901-386-3241

MOSQUE
Al Rasool Center
5315 Stage Rd
Memphis, TN 38134
901-380-0992

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peellawfirm.com

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AUTO AUCTIONS

DTS TOWING
3930 THOMAS ST., MEMPHIS, 38127

THE FOLLOWING VEHICLES WILL BE SOLD AT AUCTION ON

DECEMBER 20, 2026 AT 11 AM

1N4AL3AP1GN348613
2016 NISSAN ALTIMA

1FMPU15LX4LB32890
2004 FORD EXPEDITION

1G1ZD5ST2JF182310
2018 CHEVROLET MALIBU

3GNAXHEV2LS661472
2020 CHEVROLET EQUINOX

JN8CS1MU1GM671498
2016 INFINITI QX70

1N4AA51EX9C856075
2009 NISSAN MAXIMA

KNAFK4A69G5460573
2016 KIA FORTE

3FADP4EJ4JM146539
2018 FORD FIESTA

JH4CL96846C033112
2006 ACURA TSX

1FA6P8TH9K5177938
2019 FORD MUSTANG

KL77LKEP7TC006787
2026 CHEVROLET TRAX

1HGCR2F19HA069081
2017 HONDA ACCORD

1FTRF17272KC89498
2002 FORD F-150

KMHDH4AE0DU939722
2013 HYUNDAI ELANTRA

1GYEC63T32R169363
2002 CADILLAC ESCALADE

1G1YC2D45P5502771
2023 CHEVROLET CORVETTE

3KPFT4DE9TE340628
2026 KIA K4 LX / LXS

WDDHF9BB3EA931717
2014 MERCEDES-BENZ E-CLASS

WBABW53414PL40464
2004 BMW 3 SERIES

1C4RDHDG8DC664083
2013 DODGE DURANGO

1N4BL4DV1KC177998
2019 NISSAN ALTIMA

4T1BF1FK7CU600576
2012 TOYOTA CAMRY

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DECEMBER 3 AT 9 A.M.

2017 KIA RIO
VIN# KNADM4A39H6050309

2008 SATURN OUT LOOK
VIN# 5GZEV33798J202275

2014 MERCEDES C250
VIN# WDDGF4HB6EA929742

1968 VOLKSWAGEN BEETLE
VIN#118905556

B&B TOWING, LLC
2574 SUMMER, MEMPHIS 38112

THE FOLLOWING VEHICLES WILL BE SOLD TO SATISFY STORAGE AND TOW FEES ON **12/9/2026:**

2008 FORD F150
VIN# 1FTPW14V78KB36585

2021 GMC ACA
VIN# 1GKKNKLA4MZ100943

2011 MERZ M35
VIN# 4JGBB8GB2BA683871

2018 RAM 1500
VIN# 1C6RR6FG0JS340184

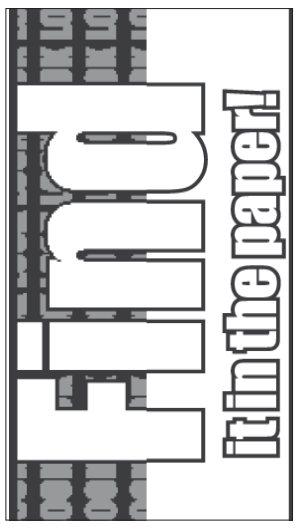
2017 DODG CHA
VIN# 2C3CDXHGXHH562902

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_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Please be sure to include your name and phone number as well as a check or credit card information for payment.

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CALL (901) 476-7116

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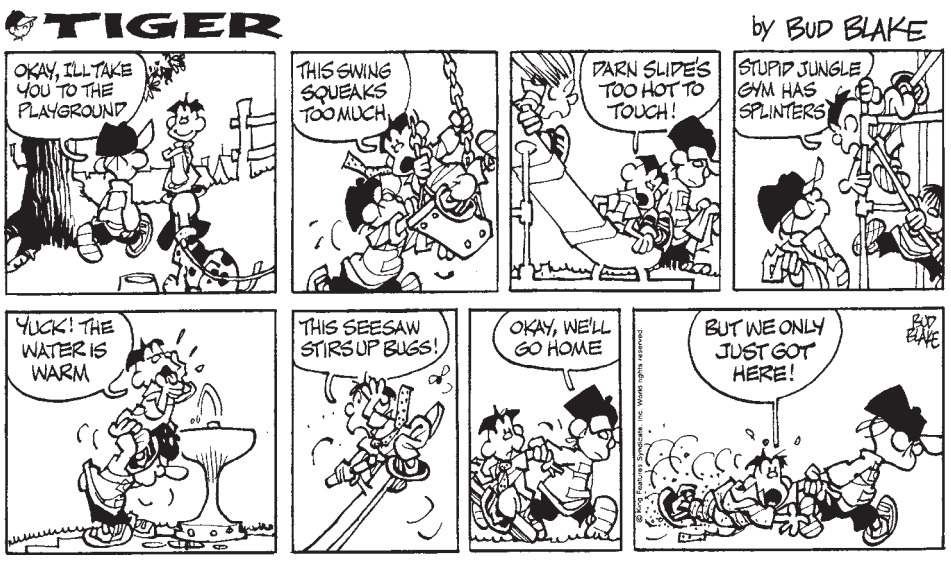
WE'VE MOVED! OUR NEW LOCATION IS: 7731 HWY 70, SUITE 102, BARTLETT TN 38134

PUBLIC NOTICE

The Millington Housing Authority will begin accepting applications for one (1) bedroom only (Please see website for occupancy standards). Effective
November 9, 2026 to November 13, 2026
Applications will be available online at the link below.
TheMillingtonha.org
Please note these applications are for the waiting list, NOT for immediate housing.

Shawna Bell, Executive Director
The Millington Housing Authority

EQUAL HOUSING OPPORTUNITY



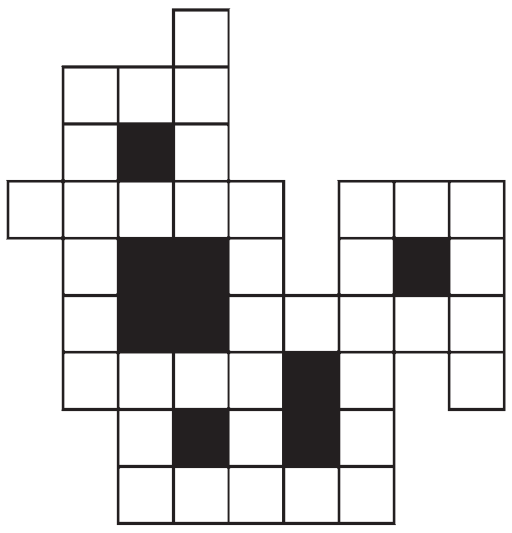


FEAR KNOT™

By: rj johnson

DOUBT? ...OR DARE!

HDO
ANIMLE
♥ NERGA
♥ HCMU
RITHEM
♥ RAF
RTFE
OLTDA
♥ OMT
CRIFLO
♥ RTNHO
♥ IETD



Unscramble these twelve letter strings to form each into an ordinary word (ex. **HAGNEC** becomes **CHANGE**). Prepare to use only ONE word from any marked (♥) letter string as each unscrambles into more than one word (ex. ♥**RATHE** becomes **HATER** or **EARTH** or **HEART**). Fit each string's word either across or down to knot all twelve strings together.

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Even Exchange

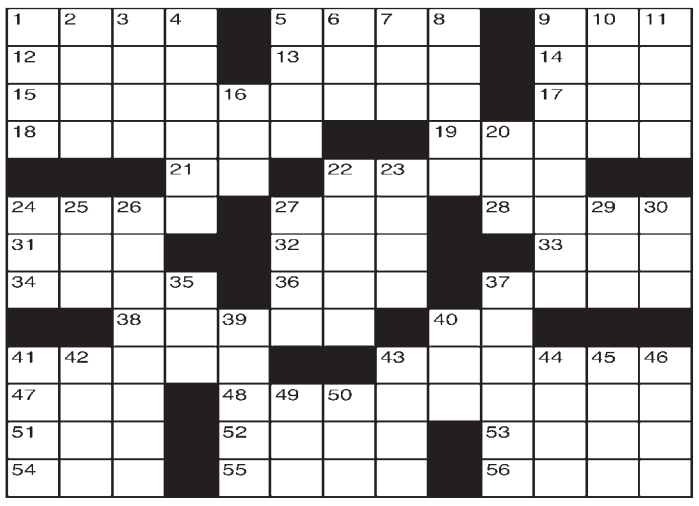
by Donna Pettman

Each numbered row contains two clues and two 6-letter answers. The two answers differ from each other by only one letter, which has already been inserted. For example, if you exchange the A from M**A**STER for an I, you get MISTER. Do not change the order of the letters.

1. Portugal's hilly city	_ _ _ B _ _	Sonny boxer	_ _ _ T _ _
2. Alert	_ _ _ _ E	Accolade	_ _ _ _ D
3. Baseball official	U _ _ _ _ _	Royal realm	E _ _ _ _ _
4. Fall predecessor	_ U _ _ _ _	Cook slowly	_ I _ _ _ _
5. Bath sheet	_ _ _ _ L	Eiffel or Pisa	_ _ _ _ R
6. Push	_ _ O _ _	Remove whiskers	_ _ A _ _
7. Pester	_ O _ _ _ _	Tub user	_ A _ _ _ _
8. Cake layers	_ _ _ R _	Supermodel Cheryl	_ _ _ G _
9. Cologne's river	R _ _ _ _	Gleam	S _ _ _ _
10. Contemplate	_ _ N _ _ _	Talcum	_ _ W _ _ _

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King Crossword



ACROSS
1 Off-white
5 "Star Trek II" villain
9 Yoga pad
12 Lopsided win
13 — the Great (kid-lit detective)
14 Yucatan "Bravo!"
15 Lead singer of Matchbox Twenty
17 Present location?
18 Most devious
19 Den fixture
21 ICU worker
22 No-frills
24 Big cheese
27 Warm-up run
28 Kitten calls
31 — Jima
32 Noshed
33 Slangy denial
34 Arrears
36 Roast VIPs
37 Hereditary unit
38 Jazz legend Vaughan
40 Concerning
41 Prefix with violet
43 Social blunders
47 Egg — yung
48 Workplace invitations
51 Sharing word
52 Sciences'
53 Coup d'—
54 Messy room
55 Diner dish
56 D.C. baseball team

DOWN
1 Blunders
2 "Neato!"
3 July birthstone
4 Says
5 Shoelace snarl
6 Deli choice
7 — premium
8 Tree houses
9 Frenzied gathering
10 Lotion additive
11 Libretto
16 QVC alternative
20 Energy
22 Foul up
23 Ice and Bronze
24 Auction action
25 Have bills
26 Pitiful tale
27 Magazine for docs
29 Pallid
30 That ship
35 Pitch
37 Lincoln Center's David — Hall
39 Indian prince
40 U.K. fliers
41 Sci-fi vehicles
42 Lummox
43 "Gee whiz!"
44 Greek salad cheese
45 Part of Q.E.D.
46 Swift jets
49 — pro nobis
50 "Dynamite" band

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Weekly SUDOKU

		5					6	8
4		8	6	7	5	1		9
9		6		8	1		4	
		4				2		7
6	7							3
3			7		9			1
2		9				5		
	6	3	9	5				
8	5			1		9	3	4

Place a number in the empty boxes in such a way that each row across, each column down and each small 9-box square contains all of the numbers from one to nine.

DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK: ◆

◆ Moderate ◆◆ Challenging ◆◆◆ HOO BOY!

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CryptoQuip

This is a simple substitution cipher in which each letter used stands for another. If you think that X equals O, it will equal O throughout the puzzle. Solution is accomplished by trial and error.

Clue: **E** equals **F**

BE EKGQWN NBAHCL YBQA SCLC NMQLBAH VQAMKVM FCANCN, SJKM EFWBY GBHJM NJC WNC? VCFBAC NQFWMBQA.

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See This Week's Answers In Next Week's Edition

Weekly SUDOKU — Answer

8	2	6	4	9	7	1	5	3
3	1	7	2	5	6	4	8	9
9	4	5	1	3	8	7	6	2
2	3	1	5	6	9	8	4	7
6	9	4	8	7	2	5	3	1
5	7	8	3	4	1	9	2	6
7	8	3	9	2	5	6	1	4
4	5	9	7	2	3	6	1	8
1	6	3	9	8	4	2	7	5

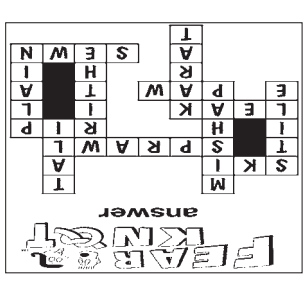
King Crossword — *Answers*

Solution time: 24 mins.



Even Exchange answers

1. Garden, Warden
2. Scold, Scald
3. Prize, Price
4. Banter, Barter
5. Pouch, Touch
6. Water, Wafer
7. Devour, Devour
8. Silver, Salver
9. Trail, Train
10. Kernel, Kennel



STICKELERS [sic].

by Terry Stickels

If I used the words forte, allegro, baroque, diminuendo and mezzo, you would tell me I was speaking about music.

If I said pinner, wye, turnout, big hole and highball, you would tell me I was referring to _?_.

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"We've got to stop seeing each other like this, Debra — I hate _____."

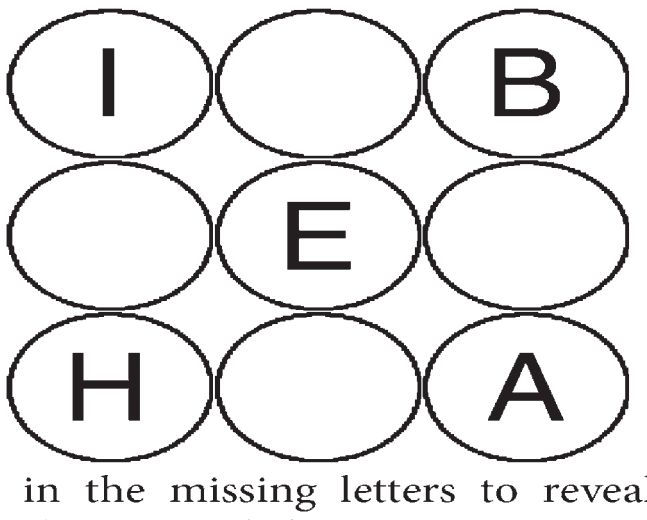
SCRAMBLERS

Unscramble the letters within each rectangle to form four ordinary words. Then rearrange the boxed letters to form the mystery word, which will complete the gag!

Vicar **APRONS**
Brisk **SCRIP**
Altar **INSHER**
Absorb **PENGOS**

TODAY'S WORD

WORD SPIRAL



Fill in the missing letters to reveal the nine-letter word that starts at one of the four corners and moves clockwise around the perimeter before ending in the center.

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Wishing Well®

3	5	7	8	6	4	6	5	7	3	4	7	3
A	P	C	V	C	G	H	R	O	W	O	N	A
6	8	3	8	3	8	4	7	4	5	2	5	6
A	A	Y	L	T	U	A	S	L	A	G	I	R
7	3	6	5	6	7	6	4	8	7	4	3	5
I	O	M	S	I	D	N	S	E	E	A	S	E
3	4	6	5	3	6	3	8	2	7	5	4	6
U	C	G	C	C	N	C	F	O	R	O	H	E
4	8	7	5	3	6	7	6	8	4	7	4	5
I	R	A	W	E	W	C	F	I	E	H	V	O
6	7	4	3	6	3	7	6	4	7	6	5	7
R	A	E	E	I	D	N	E	D	G	N	R	E
8	5	8	2	6	8	5	2	5	2	8	2	2
E	K	N	A	D	D	E	H	R	E	S	A	D

HERE IS A PLEASANT LITTLE GAME that will give you a message every day. It's a numerical puzzle designed to spell out your fortune. Count the letters in your first name. If the number of letters is 6 or more, subtract 4. If the number is less than 6, add 3. The result is your key number. Start at the upper left-hand corner and check one of your key numbers, left to right. Then read the message the letters under the checked figures give you.

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CryptoQuip answer

Climbing structure with rungs that receives fabulous reviews: a ladder of recommendation.

SCRAMBLERS *Solution*

1. Camber; 2. Offset
3. Carpet; 4. Tide

Today's Word

DEBRIEF

Word Spiral Answer

PALATABLE

SCRAMBLERS *Solution*

1. Camber; 2. Offset
3. Carpet; 4. Tide

Today's Word

DEBRIEF

HEALTH INSPECTIONS — Bartlett — week of November 10–16, 2026

SIX BARTLETT INSPECTIONS POSTED, NONE BELOW 97

Two mobile units score a perfect 100; Casa Lopez cited for pork thawing in standing water

BARTLETT — Six Bartlett establishments were inspected during the week of November 10 through 16, and no score fell below 97.

Two mobile units earned a perfect 100: Smith Fish and More, 3921 Clover Hill Dr., on November 12, and the Voodoo Cafe, 2780 Bartlett Blvd., on November 16.

Casa Lopez Grill, 2936 Kirby Whitten Rd., scored 97 November 13. The inspector found raw pork thawing in a bus tub of stagnant water and directed that frozen food be thawed under cold running water, and also cited containers of chips and sour cream buckets stored on the floor and open dumpster doors with the lids inside the dumpster. The report notes the inspector demonstrated how to calibrate a probe thermometer with the person in charge. The restaurant's bar scored 99, cited for the dumpster doors alone.

Ty's Smoke House, 7174 Hwy. 64, Suite 101, scored 97, cited for heavy food buildup on plastic containers, grease buildup on the spent oil container, stained ceiling tiles and a missing no-smoking sign.

Sunshine Tattoo Studio, 2965 N. Germantown Pkwy., Suite 117, scored 99. The inspector observed an artist missing a lap cloth during a tattoo and directed that a lap cloth be provided and the tattoo table properly covered.

Inspection reports are public record. Complete reports for all Tennessee establishments are available at inspections.myhealthdepartment.com/tennessee..

This Week's Inspections at a Glance

Bartlett health inspections, November 10-16, 2026. Source: Tennessee Department of Health / Shelby County Health Department.

Smith Fish and More (mobile unit) — 3921 Clover Hill Dr. *Food service, routine, November 12* — **Score: 100**
No violations noted.

Ty's Smoke House — 7174 Hwy. 64, Suite 101 *Food service, routine, November 12* — **Score: 97**
Plastic containers have heavy food buildup. Corrective action: maintain cleanliness.
Spent oil container has grease buildup. Corrective action: maintain cleanliness.
Ceiling tiles are stained. Corrective action: maintain cleanliness.
Post a no-smoking sign at the front entrance.

Sunshine Tattoo Studio — 2965 N. Germantown Pkwy., Ste. 117 *Tattoo studio, routine, November 13* — **Score: 99**
Observed an artist missing a lap cloth during a tattoo and a properly covered table. Please provide a lap cloth and properly cover the tattoo table during a tattoo.
Please post your no-smoking sign at the entrance to the facility.

Casa Lopez Grill — 2936 Kirby Whitten Rd. *Food service, routine, November 13* — **Score: 97**
Raw pork thawing in a bus tub in stagnant water. Corrective action: thaw frozen food under cold running water.
Containers of chips and sour cream buckets stored on the floor. Corrective action: keep items at least six inches above the floor to prevent contamination.
Dumpster doors are open and the lids are inside the dumpster. Corrective action: keep the doors closed between uses and have the lids cover the dumpster to discourage pests.
Comment: the permit is paid. The inspector demonstrated how to calibrate a probe thermometer with the person in charge and provided fact sheets.

Casa Lopez Grill (Bar) — 2936 Kirby Whitten Rd. *Food service, routine, November 13* — **Score: 99**
Both dumpster doors are open and the lids are inside the dumpster. Corrective action: keep the doors closed between uses and have the lids cover the dumpster to discourage pests.
Comment: the permit is paid.

Voodoo Cafe (mobile unit) — 2780 Bartlett Blvd. *Food service, routine, November 16* — **Score: 100**
No violations noted. Comment: permit is current.

USPS REPORTS $6.5 BILLION LOSS AS MAIL VOLUME DECLINES

The U.S. Postal Service reported a $6.5 billion net loss for fiscal 2026, an improvement from its $9 billion loss a year earlier, as higher revenue and lower workers' compensation expenses helped offset continuing declines in mail volume.

Operating revenue rose 3% to $82.9 billion for the fiscal year ended Sept. 30, according to results released Nov. 13. Total mail and package volume fell to about 105.1 billion pieces from 108.6 billion the previous year.

"While the Postal Service continues to face systemic challenges associated with the business model and regulatory framework established by Congress, the results we are reporting for the year demonstrate solid improvements in revenue generation, cost control and service performance," Postmaster General David Steiner said.

"Because of our ongoing financial crisis, we are continuing to balance the needs of our daily business operations with our need to conserve cash. We are also seeking legislative actions to establish a better and more durable business model for the Postal Service and for the benefit of the American public we serve."

The agency's periodicals category recorded revenue of $830 million, down from $884 million. Periodicals volume fell to 2.114 billion pieces from 2.443 billion.

First-Class Mail revenue increased $311 million, or 1.2%, to about $26.2 billion despite a volume decline of 2.2 billion pieces, or 5.1%. Marketing Mail revenue rose $843 million, or 5.3%, to about $16.7 billion, while volume fell 640 million pieces, or 1.1%.

Shipping and Packages revenue increased $1.7 billion, or 5.1%, to about $34.1 billion. Package volume declined 359 million pieces, or 5.3%.

The Postal Service attributed its revenue improvement to growth in its Ground Advantage shipping product, strength in Marketing Mail and price increases. Those included increases for First-Class Mail and Marketing Mail and a temporary transportation-related increase for certain shipping products.

Operating expenses totaled $89.4 billion, down $404 million, or 0.4%. The decline primarily reflected changes in the actuarial valuation of workers' compensation cases and discount rates, along with lower retirement expenses. Higher compensation and benefits, retiree health benefit expenses, other operating costs and transportation expenses partially offset those reductions.

The agency said it reduced work hours by 19 million during the year, streamlined its networks, adjusted air and ground transportation and pursued other cash-conservation measures. It said price increases would remain part of its strategy for long-term financial sustainability.

Its "controllable loss" decreased to about $2.4 billion from $2.7 billion. That measure excludes certain costs the agency considers outside management's control, including some retiree health expenses, workers' compensation valuation changes and pension liability expenses. It is a supplemental measure that does not replace the net loss calculated under generally accepted accounting principles.

Postal officials said changes by Congress and regulators remain necessary. They called for raising the agency's $15 billion statutory debt limit, which has not increased since 1992, and changing how pension costs are divided between the Postal Service and the Treasury for workers whose service spans the agency and its predecessor, the Post Office Department.

The agency also sought authority to diversify pension and retiree health investments, changes in workers' compensation administration and relief from certain uneconomical requirements of its business model or modest appropriations to help fund them.

In April, the Postal Regulatory Commission granted a temporary conditional waiver of required annual pension amortization payments. The Postal Service also suspended biweekly normal-cost contributions for employees covered by the Federal Employees Retirement System, deferring about $2.6 billion during the year.

Those obligations will eventually have to be paid, the agency said, and the measures do not provide a long-term solution.

"Our financial results for the year reflect improvement compared to the prior year, as we continue to grow revenue and manage the costs under our control, transportation network consolidation, and reduction of work hours," Chief Financial Officer Luke Grossmann said.

"However, our actions alone cannot resolve the challenges brought on by an outdated business model. We will continue to do our part but we need meaningful legislative, regulatory, and administrative reforms to propel the Postal Service toward long-term financial sustainability."

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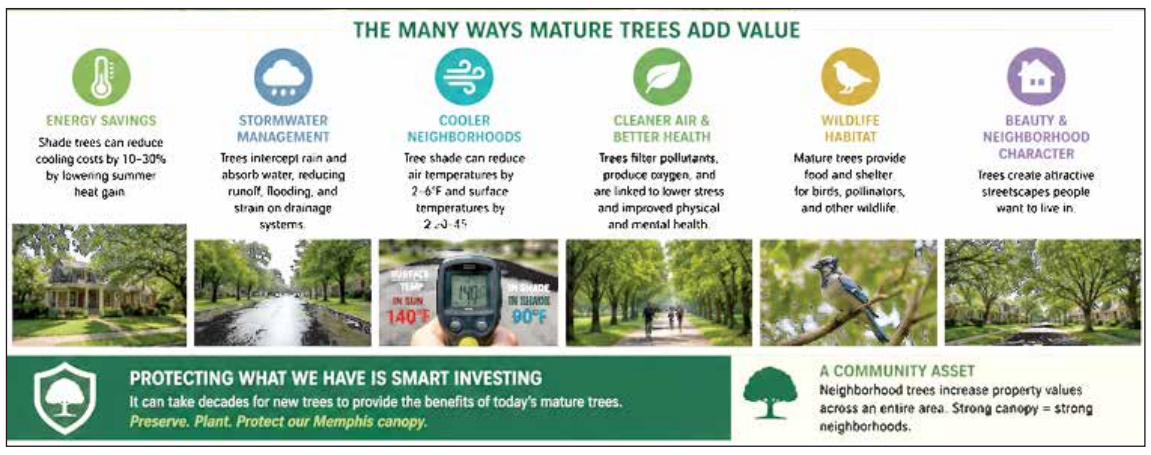

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In her song Big Yellow Taxi, Joni Mitchell sings, "They took all the trees, put 'em in a tree museum. And they charged the people a dollar and a half just to see 'em". I sometimes feel that my neighborhood may be heading down this path. When we first moved here, 45 years ago, it was not unusual for the young homeowners to plant trees on their property to add to the few mature trees in the neighborhood. As time passed, neighbors have come and gone. However, the trees have mostly just gone. I have seen only a few new trees come to the neighborhood over the last 25 years, while many more have been removed. Hurricane Elvis and adverse weather have caused several trees to be removed, but more typically new homeowners simply did not want to maintain their trees and disliked having to deal with leaves in the fall. Apparently, they preferred to pay to remove the tree rather than deal with it. Others simply liked the look of an edge to edge lawn. Sadly, a few of my neighbors seemed to fear their trees, afraid that the tree or a limb would fall, damaging their home and possibly causing them injury.

According to a 2012 study by the University of Memphis, Shelby County was estimated to have a tree cover of about 36.8%. In 2025, Smart City Memphis reported that the Memphis tree cover was 35.8%, up from 34% in 2020. While some neighborhoods gained canopy, others lost. There was over a 2% decline in several of our older neighborhoods: Downtown, North Memphis, University of Memphis, Berclair, and East Memphis. Cordova/Shelby Farms showed the largest gain with an increase in tree canopy of 1.1%. In 2025, Shelby County commissioned a new countywide Tree Canopy Assessment, so we will have additional information to work with soon.

I often hear that Memphis has a substantial tree canopy, which is true when compared to the U.S. as a whole. However, the Southeastern states set the bar much higher. When compared to other cities in the South, we are slightly above average but lag Atlanta, which has a canopy of 48%, as reported by the non-profit Trees Atlanta. We are on par with Nashville's 35.4% cover. However, if you take in all of Davidson County, Nashville claims a 56% tree cover.

Why should we even care? If you stand in the sun and then move to the shade during the summer in Memphis, it feels about 10 degrees cooler. The air temperature does not change, but it is much more comfortable. The greater the tree canopy, the more comfortable our city will be. Their shade also helps keep our homes cooler, reducing our cooling costs.

Trees also benefit our environment in other ways. They absorb and slow rainwater, lessening runoff by keeping the water where it is needed. Trees help to cleanse our air by capturing particulate matter and absorbing some gaseous pollutants. They also sequester carbon, helping to reduce Carbon Dioxide levels. Trees are clearly beneficial, and I haven't even mentioned their aesthetic value, support to wildlife, and the value it adds to real estate sale prices.

To increase our tree canopy, we need to maintain and preserve our mature trees in addition to planting new trees. A 70-year-old oak lost to redevelopment cannot meaningfully be replaced by putting three 2-inch-caliper trees around the new parking lot. Tree canopy is much easier to preserve than to recreate. A goal of 45% tree canopy in every Memphis neighborhood is an achievable goal, and it can start with you planting a tree in your yard. Or even easier, simply leave a volunteer tree or two to mature, assuming they are in a suitable spot. Care for them as they mature, and you will never have to worry about them causing any problems for you or your property.

November is a great time for planting a tree in Memphis. Our soil stays warm enough for roots to grow throughout the winter, giving your tree a head start to develop a strong root structure. If you are going to buy a tree, choose it with intention and plant it in the right spot. Make sure the tree can handle both our cold hardiness and heat zone. Know its mature height and width and allow for 15 feet clearance from all utility lines at maturity. If you love the looks of a tree known to be messy, like river birch, magnolia, or sweet gum, to name a few, plant them where their detritus can fall into garden beds as a natural mulch so you will not need to constantly clean up after them.

The planting method I follow is first to dig the hole just as deep as the plant is in the container and three times as wide in a saucer shape, roughing up the edges with the shovel. I use the same soil I removed to refill the hole. I don't amend the soil, but if you feel you must, limit amendments to 10% and mix them thoroughly with the soil you removed. I always remove the soil around the roots of the tree to check that there are no roots growing in a circular manner as they followed the walls of the container. These are called girdling roots, which over time get larger and tighten around the tree and other roots, cutting off the movement of water and nutrients, essentially strangling the tree, causing decline and early death. If you see any, prune them if they can not be adjusted to radiate away from the trunk. I then replace the soil around the roots and gently firm the soil, making sure the tree base is at grade or slightly above grade. I water heavily, so soil settles around the roots and there are no air pockets. There is no need to stake the tree in most cases, but when a large tree is planted, it could be top heavy having been dug with a relatively small root system that is insufficient to stabilize the tree. I then lay 2-4 inches of mulch over the disturbed soil surface, making sure the mulch does not touch the trunk of the tree.

When I plant a tree, I plant as small a specimen as I can find. It is a lot easier than planting a large tree, but more importantly, it will more quickly get established in the garden since the roots and branches are balanced. Larger trees tend to be shy on roots, so it will need more attention and care for a couple of years until the roots are able to support the canopy. During this time your tree will show little top growth. You will always have more success with trees surviving when choosing a smaller size.

As development continues in Shelby County, let's be mindful of our canopy and do what we can to make up for all the new parking lots and roads being built. More trees in your yard will let you enjoy them without having to go to the tree museum.

November Gardening Activities

Plant You can continue to transplant evergreens, trees, and perennials throughout the fall and winter, as long as they remain dormant. However, fall planting crapemyrtles, edgeworthias, loropetalums, hardy gardenias, butterfly bushes, and warm-season grasses like muhly grass, Miscanthus, and Pennisetum can be a gamble if we have a severe winter. It's the ideal time to plant spring-flowering bulbs. Consider planting some of the minor bulbs such as winter aconite, glory of the snow, species tulips, narcissus, and grape hyacinths.

Lawn Care **Remove fallen** leaves so they don't smother grass. Shred fallen leaves for mulch or compost. You can mow over a light layer of leaves on your lawn with a mulching blade, turning them into a mulch that adds important nutrients back to the lawn.

Indoor Stop fertilizing indoor plants until spring. Force bulbs indoors like narcissus, hyacinths, and amaryllis for color early in the new year.

Other If still blooming at first frost, leave flower seed heads for the birds. Mulch beds with shredded leaves, aged compost, or pine needles. Remove spent annuals. Cut the tops off asparagus plants and mulch with a good layer of compost. Cover strawberries with 2 inches of hay or straw to reduce weeds and increase winter protection. Winterize your irrigation system before freezing temperatures arrive to avoid broken pipes and costly repairs.

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