



# KEISER NEWS

# 2024

## "Small town, big heart - that's Keiser!"

January Newsletter

Vol 9

### FROM MAYOR RICK CREECY

As we start off another year, I want to take a moment to reflect on the accomplishments and progress we have made in our beloved city in 2023. It has been a year filled with challenges and opportunities, but together, we have persevered and made Keiser an even better place to call home.

One of the most significant achievements of this year was securing a total of nine grants, totaling \$626,324. These grants have allowed us to invest in various critical projects and initiatives that benefit our community. These funds have been allocated wisely to ensure that they have a meaningful impact on the lives of our residents.

Our commitment to improving infrastructure has been a top priority, including major upgrades to our sewer lift stations to enhance the efficiency and reliability of our wastewater management system, ensuring the health and safety of our community and contributing to the overall quality of life in Keiser. Additionally, we've secured a \$4.6 million dollar low interest loan, which will enable us to evaluate and upgrade our sewer system to meet current needs and accommodate future growth and development in Keiser. This infrastructure investment will support our city's expansion and ensure our continued prosperity in the years ahead.

City Hall, as the heart of our local government, also received much-needed attention. We invested in several upgrades to City Hall, ensuring that it remains a welcoming and functional space for both residents and city employees. These improvements will facilitate better service

delivery and enhance the experience of engaging with local government.

Our commitment to public safety has been unwavering. We upgraded the equipment used by our dedicated police force, ensuring that they have the tools necessary to keep our community safe. We will also be expanding our police department by hiring a second full-time officer, reinforcing our commitment to maintaining a safe and secure environment for all residents.

I am proud to announce that we put the city on the map with our official website, new Facebook page, a City Logo and this monthly newsletter. These platforms serve as vital resources for residents, providing information about local government, services, events, and opportunities. It's a testament to our dedication to transparency and accessibility.

Looking ahead to 2024, I am optimistic about the future of our city. We will continue to prioritize the well-being and prosperity of our residents, working diligently to address the challenges that may arise and seize the opportunities that come our way.

I want to extend my deepest gratitude to the residents of Keiser for your continued support and dedication to our community. Your involvement, ideas, and feedback are invaluable, and they have played a crucial role in the success of our city.

As we usher in the new year, let us do so with hope, unity, and a shared vision for a brighter future for Keiser. Together, we can achieve great things and make our city an even better place to live, work, and thrive.

City Council meeting on the 3rd Monday of each month at 6:00 pm. All welcome.

Follow us on Facebook and at our website [www.cityofkeiser.com](http://www.cityofkeiser.com)

Water bills due the 15th of each month. Late charges will be applied on the 16th and shutoff on the 27th unless the 27th is Friday.

Remember riding ATV's on city streets is a violation of state law and will be enforced.

Remember the city has a leash law. If you are walking your dog in the city limits they MUST be on a leash. No exceptions.

If you have not yet registered your dog or cat. Please come to City Hall and do so.

You can buy 40 gallon garbage bags at City Hall. There are 50 in a roll and the cost is \$10.00 per roll.

Home owners and contractors are required to notify city hall before any mechanical excavation can be done.

City Hall—870-526-2300  
Hours 8:00am to 5:00pm M-F  
Closed 12:00 to 1:00 for lunch

## *IT'S IN THE BANK By Peggy Sellars City of Keiser Treasurer*

Well, 2023 left us at 12 am December 31. Walked right out the front door with its head held high, as if to say, "My work here is done."

2023 was good to the City of Keiser. A newly elected council was sworn in on January 1, 2023. Three familiar faces, Donna Bell, Laura Smith, and Lynn Skaggs took their places at the council table along with newly elected Councilmember Joey Jackson.

Rick Creecy, who had been appointed in 2022 to fill the remainder of Eddie Gardner's term, was also sworn in for his own term. He hit the ground running and hasn't stopped yet. I guess no one told him that he couldn't apply for 30 zillion grants, SO HE DID. In 2023 the City of Keiser has received \$626,324 in grant funding. Totals for the last two years we are at \$917,449 and more to come. These funds have allowed us to purchase much-needed equipment in all our departments that will help us to do our jobs in a more efficient manner.

City Hall is now equipped with the latest technology and up-to-date programming. Our WATER SOLUTIONS water program has been updated ensuring greater accuracy in our tracking of water consumption and billing. We are now able to generate payment receipts from a laptop at the counter. I'm sure you have noticed that we also have a new face at city hall. Penny Willbanks has accepted the position of City Hall Coordinator.

The Keiser Police Department is on its way to becoming a first-rate law enforcement agency. Grant funds have allowed the city to purchase the necessary top-of-the-line safety gear for our officers. New body cams, bullet proof vests, and hand-held radios have become part of their daily uniform. Not only have outdated computers and printers been replaced, but our officers also now have laptop computers in each police car that allows them to run statistics on traffic stops within the cars instead of having to call the county. Chief of Police Andrew Gattis has accepted the position formerly held by Glenn Austin who retired in October.

Director of Public Works Rodney Neal Brown sees to it that the city employees have everything they

need to do their jobs safely and efficiently. After all, these guys are the backbone of Keiser. The installation of an aerator system to keep all sewer wells clean has been a great improvement. New communication devices have aided tremendously in communication throughout the water and sanitation departments.

That was 2023, but it's gone now. It's time to do 2024. We don't know what this year will bring, but, if I could peek through my mind's eye, I'm hoping to see:

- A beautiful park with a new walking/bike track, playground equipment, maybe a clean, well-kept fishing pond for all ages to enjoy.
- Our city's water tank painted a bright white proudly displaying our new city logo.
- New businesses opening shop. (gas station, Dollar General) who knows, could happen.
- A much-needed improved water & sewer system.
- Chief Gattis at the helm of a growing police department (another full-time officer plus part-time and auxiliary officers).

In looking ahead 2024 is a clean slate. NEW YEAR, NEW IDEAS, NEW HOPES, NEW DREAMS.

It's up to us to paint the picture. What do you see?



## CHIEF ANDREW GATTIS KEISER POLICE DEPARTMENT

### Happy New Year Keiser!

I hope everyone enjoyed the holidays and the time with friends and family.

Not only has the year changed now but our drive, commitment and determination to make the community better and closer has also changed here at the police department. Beginning with the start of the year you are going to start seeing more activity from the police department within the community. Over the last few months the Mayor and I (Chief Gattis) have been coming up with ideas, putting together plans and setting goals to help incorporate more activities, events and ways to improve our community throughout the 2024 year. We, as a department, hope to become closer with our community and the people of Keiser. This is going to be a bit of a learning process during this transition so I hope that each and everyone of you will have patience as we make the changes that need to be made to get to where we all

would like to be. I would also like to extend an invitation to anyone that would be interested in helping out, anyone interested in sharing their ideas or anyone who would like to help organize an event within our community this year to just reach out to me either in person at the Police Department. You can also reach me by my email at "Chief.cityofkeiser@gmail.com". I have high hopes for this coming year and I truly believe that together we can all make a huge difference within our community, one we can be honestly proud of. I look forward to working with each of you this year and helping our community grow and prosper with each passing day.



## NEAL BROWN DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS

The city is on the verge of a significant infrastructure upgrade with the construction of a brand-new Sewer Main Lift Station. This vital facility is strategically located on S. Hwy 181, serving as the pivotal exit point of the town's sewage system. It plays a crucial role in the sanitation process, being the last station responsible for pumping our sewage to the lagoons. Here, microorganisms work to dissolve the waste, ensuring an environmentally friendly treatment process. Once treated, the water is safely discharged into ditch 31, located approximately two miles outside the town's limits.

The existing sewer station, however, has been plagued with challenges. Placed three feet below ground level, it is highly susceptible to flooding, especially during heavy rainfall of 3 inches or more. This vulnerability often requires the many hours of downtime for the water to clear the station. Such incidents significantly disrupt the system's efficiency in clearing the sewer system.

To address these issues, the new lift station is designed with significant improvements. A key feature is its elevation to ground level, effectively eliminating the problem of flooding. This strategic change will enhance the station's resilience to weather-related disruptions. Additionally, the lift station boasts a higher gallon per minute pumping rate. This increase in capacity is a critical

step in increasing the system's output, ensuring a smoother and more efficient sewage treatment process.

The financial aspect of this project is noteworthy. The construction and installation of this new lift station comes with a price tag of \$243,200. However, this substantial investment was made possible through a 75/25 grant received by the city this year, a testament to the commitment to improving the town's infrastructure and quality of life. This development is not just a technical upgrade but a significant step towards solving the city's

flushing issues during periods of heavy rain, ensuring a more reliable and efficient sewage system for the community.



## PENNY WILBANKS WATER/CITY HALL COORDINATOR

### Out with the Old, In with the New.

When we hear the statement “Out with the Old, In with the New”, a lot of things come to mind.

We may think of people. We are losing someone that’s been in a position for a long time, and we are gaining someone new.

We may think of jobs. I am leaving this job that I have been working for so many years; to work a new job, a new position, a new boss, etc....

I think of different attitudes. I have always had the attitude to approach or do things my way. My way may not always be the best way. Maybe I could change my attitude and try new ways, new things, someone else’s idea. We could change from being a procrastinator (Old), to doing things and getting the job done promptly (New). We should not be nega-

tive (Old) about different situations, think the positive (New) about it.

Out with the Old, In with the New is all about changes and we don’t like change. But I think we would all benefit from a few changes, no matter who we are.

If you haven’t already, reach out and make a change in someone’s life today. Be different than before. Leave the Old and bring in the New. ***The New You.***



## SUPPORT BUSINESSES IN YOUR COMMUNITY

In the City of Keiser, each citizen's choice to support local businesses plays a pivotal role in driving economic growth and fostering a strong, interconnected community. Our city, quaint and close-knit, boasts a variety of essential businesses: a welcoming coffee shop, a reliable parts store, auto repair and collision repair, professional hair salons, and a small grocery store. Each of these establishments represents not just a commercial venture, but a cornerstone of Keiser’s economic and social fabric.

When we choose to start our day with a coffee from our local café, we do more than just savor a delicious beverage. We contribute to a vibrant local economy and reinforce the importance of community spaces. These small interactions and exchanges, often overlooked, are what bind us together, creating a sense of belonging and mutual support.

Similarly, opting to shop for groceries in our local store is a powerful statement of support for local business owners and their families. In doing so, we help to ensure that these vital community resources remain available to us, while also keeping our spending close to home. This not only bolsters the local economy but also reduces environmental impacts by lessening the need for long-distance transportation.

The parts store in Keiser, is a testament to the resilience and resourcefulness of our community. By patronizing this store for our automotive needs, or our auto repair facilities we not only support a local business but also benefit from the personalized, knowledgeable service that is often lacking in larger chains.

Our hair salons, more than just places for grooming and beauty, serve as hubs of social interaction and relaxation. Supporting these local businesses means supporting the dreams and aspirations of our neighbors who run them. Each appointment is not just a transaction but an act of community building, contributing to the livelihoods of those who have chosen to serve our city with their skills.

In conclusion, the collective impact of our choices as consumers in Keiser is profound. By supporting our local coffee shop, grocery store, parts store, and hair salons, we do more than just meet our daily needs. We foster a thriving local economy, strengthen our community bonds, and lay the groundwork for a prosperous, interconnected Keiser. As we continue to make mindful choices about where we spend our money, we are not only enhancing our immediate surroundings but also securing a vibrant and sustainable future for our beloved city.

# The History of New Year's Celebration

New Year's celebrations in the United States showcase the country's cultural diversity and regional uniqueness, creating a mosaic of traditions and festivities that mark the beginning of the year in distinctive ways.

**The Spectacle of Times Square:** At the heart of U.S. New Year's celebrations is the iconic ball drop in Times Square, New York City. A tradition that began in 1907, this event has evolved into a global symbol of the New Year. The excitement in Times Square is palpable, with thousands gathering in the streets, braving the cold, to witness the sparkling Waterford Crystal ball descend as the countdown to the New Year begins. The event features star-studded musical performances, confetti showers, and a pyrotechnic light show, capturing the essence of celebration and the spirit of hope and renewal.

**Southern Charm and Traditions:** In the Southern United States, New Year's traditions are imbued with cultural significance and historical depth. Foods like black-eyed peas & Hog Jowl, symbolizing luck, and collard greens, representing wealth, are notable to the Southern New Year's table. These culinary traditions, passed down through generations, are more than mere superstitions; they are a celebration of heritage and community. The South also boasts unique modern festivities, such as the Peach Drop in Atlanta and the Moon Pie Over Mobile in Alabama, blending contemporary celebration with traditional symbolism.

**Diverse Cultural Celebrations:** The U.S. is a melting pot of cultures, and this diversity is vividly displayed in New Year's celebrations. For example, in cities with significant Chinese populations, the Lunar New Year is celebrated with grandeur, featuring parades, traditional music, dragon dances, and sumptuous feasts. In areas with large Hispanic communities, customs like eating twelve grapes at midnight, one for each stroke of the clock, embody hopes for prosperity in each month of the new year. Meanwhile, carrying suitcases to encourage a year filled with travel is another unique tradition observed in these communities.

**Regional Flavors:** Beyond these, regional traditions across the U.S. add to the New Year's tapestry. In Pennsylvania and the Midwest, the German-inspired practice of eating pork and sauerkraut on New Year's Day is believed to bring luck and fortune. Coastal areas often include seafood in their New Year's meals, reflecting local culinary traditions. In Alaska, New Year's might be welcomed with the Northern Lights as a backdrop, adding a natural spectacle to the celebrations.

**Community and Family Gatherings:** Across the U.S., New Year's Eve is also a time for community and family gatherings. From intimate family dinners to community balls and parties, these gatherings are a time for reflection, gratitude, and setting intentions for the year ahead. They are marked by the sharing of resolutions, a tradition where individuals make promises for self-improvement or personal goals in the coming year.

**New Year's Day Activities:** The celebration continues into New Year's Day, with activities like the Rose Parade in Pasadena, California, a festival of flower-covered floats, marching bands, and equestrian units. In many cities, New Year's Day is also marked by Polar Bear Plunges, where people brave the cold waters as a fun and invigorating start to the new year.

In conclusion, New Year's in the United States is a rich combination of customs and traditions, from the bright lights of Times Square to the intimate family gatherings and cultural celebrations across the country. These varied customs reflect the nation's diverse heritage and regional characteristics, bringing people together in a shared spirit of hope, renewal, and anticipation for the year to come.



## "Empowering Our Community: Simple Steps Every Citizen Can Take"

In the City of Keiser, each of us has the opportunity to make a meaningful impact through small, consistent actions. Volunteering time at local charities, schools, or community events is a great way to contribute, as even a few hours can make a significant difference. Supporting local businesses strengthens our economy and community bonds, while attending community meetings and city council sessions ensures we stay informed and have a say in local decisions.

A pivotal aspect of nurturing our community involves maintaining its cleanliness, starting with our own properties. A clean town reflects our pride and respect for where we live. We encourage everyone to take a moment to pick up any trash encountered around town. Such efforts, though small, contribute immensely to the overall beauty and health of our environment.

Looking ahead to 2024, major enhancements are planned for our City Park. This exciting development calls for everyone's involvement in preserving the park's cleanliness and monitoring for any vandalism. It's our shared space, and together, we can ensure it remains a safe, clean, and inviting place for all.

Simple acts of kindness, such as checking in on elderly neighbors or organizing community events, foster a sense of connection and resilience. Moreover, staying educated about community issues and sharing knowledge with others raises awareness and involvement. Lastly, participating in local festivals celebrates our unique culture and strengthens our community ties. By taking these steps, we collectively enhance the vibrancy, care, and connectivity of our neighborhood, creating a place we're all proud to call home.



# January 2024

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
	1 New Years Day	2 National Buffet Day	3	4 National Trivia Day	5	6 National Bean Day
7	8	9 National Law Enforcement Appreciation Day	10	11 National Arkansas Day	12	13
14	15 <b>Water Bill Due Council Meeting</b>	16	17	18	19 National Popcorn Day	20
21	22	23 National Pie Day	24	25	26 National Spouses Day	27
28	29 <b>Cutoff Date</b>	30	31 National Hot Chocolate Day			

# Items in Arkansas

G W A L M A R T H L D H O U A C H I T A J W P Q K  
 X T K D K S N V Y A I E W O Q N U F P I P U T M P  
 L L W P Q H I X B G C T X H O T S P R I N G S X L  
 T C Y S K C H T H L Y N T W J X C U H T H S U L C  
 H C A A P D R I L M U F S L C X Q O Q K F A Y A K  
 V X P E T D F Y W R O E D F E C A T F I S H W J S  
 R G S J A D B T S Q U C S C D R Z D M C B M V Y Q  
 P V M M F I E E J T L W K S G Y O G Q Z I A W F J  
 E E T E A Q J L H I A G L I G C O C X E L A M W L  
 F T B L V M I D T V W L S H N F B V K Z L S A Z N  
 N A R G D B M J U A P B B O K G U N I C C L G Z J  
 P R Y A G G N O H C S Z J R I Q B J L C L O N H H  
 U Y H E M P E K T Q K S E W I H O I Z E I B O U W  
 N U X J T Y U O Q H U H N S F D K J R P N H L S W  
 F T O T G T K Q S A S A U X L T G I W D T I I R H  
 B C G K D W E E I Z T P P N V M O E B L O A A V A  
 P A Y P F S R V M X Y F R A T M T F S J N U Q A N  
 D I A M O N D S I U J E C I W I Z T N H Q B Z Y P  
 P C L W X W A T W L I J A F N R N M Y J A W G H J  
 P W S B J U L X Y J L I E Q G G P G O U O V P N E  
 Z L P E G I K O W G W E O C R S N A N N A I G W M  
 A J Y E G K B R L D F T U A R A Z O R B A C K S E  
 H I M S I L M I W Q N S D V R C U H O Z A R K S E  
 A Q L V O D B C E H O F J E Q S A Y F S T M Q M I  
 M U K Q P H K E R I V E R F E S T Z F T U A X A B

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|----------------|---------------|--------------|------|
| CrystalBridges | MammothSpring | Fayetteville | Rice |
| Mockingbird    | BillClinton   | HotSprings   |      |
| Razorbacks     | DuckHunting   | Riverfest    |      |
| LittleRock     | Ouachita      | Magnolia     |      |
| Diamonds       | Catfish       | Ozarks       |      |
| Quapaw         | Delta         | Blues        |      |
| WalMart        | Cave          |              |      |

**Contact Us**

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