



KEISER NEWS

2024

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

April Newsletter

Vol 12

FROM MAYOR RICK CREECY

A Tribute to Daniel Lewellen: Celebrating a Life of Faith and Devotion

It is with profound sadness and a heavy heart that I dedicate this piece to the memory of Daniel Lewellen, who passed away on March 23. The City of Keiser has indeed lost a loyal worker, and personally, I have lost a friend whose presence was a constant source of light and strength even during the difficult times.

Daniel's dedication to his family, his unwavering faith, and his love for our city were the hallmarks of his character. Married to his beloved wife for many wonderful years, his commitment and love for her were as evident as his devotion to his Lord. Daniel navigated life with a joy and resilience that was truly remarkable, especially considering the challenges he faced with his hearing.

Despite being deaf in one ear and having only 35% hearing in the other, Daniel never let this dampen his spirits. His recent acquisition of a cochlear implant marked a significant turning point in his life. For the first time in years, he could hear almost perfectly. This breakthrough brought him immense joy and enabled him to engage in conversations just like anyone else. The transformation was heartwarming, and when he visited City Hall after receiving his implant, his radiant smile was infectious, lighting up the room and warming the hearts of all who had the pleasure of witnessing this moment of pure happiness.

Daniel's enthusiasm and newfound ability to communicate more effectively were not just personal victories; they

were a source of inspiration to everyone around him. His story is a testament to the power of resilience, faith, and the importance of cherishing the simple joys in life—like the sound of a loved one's voice or the laughter of friends.

As we mourn the loss of Daniel Lewellen, we also celebrate his life and the indelible mark he has left on the City of Keiser and on our hearts. Let us honor his memory by embracing our challenges with grace, by loving deeply, and by finding joy in every moment, just as he did.

Daniel, your spirit and love for life and this City will forever remain a beacon of hope and joy for all who knew you. You may have left us, but your legacy will continue to inspire and guide us. Rest in peace, dear friend. Your memory will always be cherished and kept alive in the hearts of those you touched.



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

Water bills due the 16th 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

New City Hall Hours

Hours 8:00am to 4:45pm M-F
Closed 12:00 to 1:00 for lunch

How Much Does PROGRESS Cost - By Peggy Sellars

The Osceola Times recently circulated its annual **Progress Edition**. The City of Keiser was among the cities commended for the progress they had made. In my past life I worked for the Citizen Journal/Osceola Times, so I decided to go a little further with my own **Progress Edition** of what's happening in our city.

Many scholars down through the ages have put their spin on what they think progress is. Ronald Reagan stated, *"There is no barrier to progress except those we erect ourselves"*. George Bernard Shaw said *"The reasonable man adapts himself to the world; The unreasonable man persists in trying to adapt the world to himself. Therefore, all progress depends on the unreasonable man"*. Sad, but sometimes true. My favorite quote came from Carl Sandburg who said, *"I don't know where I'm going, but I'm on my way"*. Can it really be that simple – just begin. Even small beginnings can turn into something amazing.

The word "progress" can be used as a noun meaning "to improve" or it can be used as a verb meaning "to move forward". I'm happy to say that the City of Keiser is doing both. But what does progress look like, what does it feel like, and what does it cost? I do have those answers.

What does progress look like? It looks like a 110-foot-tall water tank with a fresh coat of paint snazzied up with our new city logo. That's what we can see. What we can't see is the cleaning process and the new mixer that has been installed that will give us better water. Or ride just a little farther down the road and progress is just running rampant out by the lagoon. It looks like a new, larger capacity pumping station surrounded by a new fence. This pumping station is already helping tremendously with the city's sewer problems.

Our city's police department has undergone major transformations resulting in much needed progress in law enforcement. Chief Gattis has added a full-time officer in addition to two auxiliary officers. All our officers have the necessary certifications. The City of Keiser now owns four patrol cars, two of those have laptops installed that allow our officers to do violation checks instead of having to go through the county.

Our police officers have been provided the equipment needed to keep us and themselves safe. I would not hesitate to say that our city's police department is among the most qualified and best equipped of any small town in our area.

To travel to all these venues of progress, I'm sure you couldn't help but enjoy the nice smooth ride on our recently paved streets.

So, what did all this progress cost us? As treasurer of our city, I'm pleased to say that we got a very good deal on all of it. Following is the breakdown of all that I have mentioned:

Pumping Station

- A. Cost to city - \$0
- B. \$243,950 paid for by Mississippi County and ARPA Grants.

Water Tank

- A. Cost to city - \$0
- B. \$236,500 paid for by Mississippi County and ARPA Grants.

Police Department

- A. Cost to city - \$0
- B. \$119,824 paid for by COPS, Community Policing, Public Safety and LLEBG Grants.

Streets

- A. Cost to city - \$0
- B. \$275,000 ARDOT Grant.

\$875,274.00 worth of progress and it cost the city \$0. This is not a stopping place. Plans are already underway for a reimagined city park with a fishing pond, walking trail, and playground and exercise equipment for all ages. The city has already received grants and donations of over \$200,000 earmarked for the park.

PROGRESS MOVES ON!



CHIEF ANDREW GATTIS KEISER POLICE DEPARTMENT

Well, we are finally moving back into some warmer weather Keiser! With Warmer weather comes a lot more pedestrians walking around and children playing outside and/or riding bicycles. I would like to remind everyone to remain watchful, cautious, and safe when driving through our neighborhoods. With the implementation of our new animal control officer, the city will begin to see more activity by him when it comes to enforcing the animal ordinance's that are in effect. If you let your animal outside without a leash, or it is not in a properly enclosed or fenced in area, then you are liable to receive a citation. If the animal is out roaming and an owner can not be located the animal will be picked up and placed in the city's pound. If you have an animal that is currently not registered with the city, or if your animal is a banned breed and it is not grandfathered in then you will be subject to being cited and fined until the situation is resolved. All of the city's animal ordinances are going to be enforced fully due to the amount of animal related incidents that have happened in our past. We would like everyone to have a safe and enjoyable time while enjoying the warmer weather. The reasoning behind the ordinance is to keep the community safe from any potential future animal related incidents that result in injury or worse. So I would like to ask everyone to help do their part to ensure that we can remain a safe community that is continually growing for the better.

With the month of April beginning you will start to see some information being put out about the police department teaching a C.R.A.S.E. course. C.R.A.S.E. stands for "Civilian Response to Active Shooter Events". The course will be open to everyone and anyone that wants to attend for free. The information on the date, time, and location for the course will be put out on the city's Facebook page, so if this is something that you would be interested in attending then keep a look out for the information to be put out. If you would like to be informed about it by email or phone then let me know and I will personally update you and inform you when the information becomes available. You can contact me by email at chief.cityofkeiser@gmail.com or by phone at (870) 526-2102.

I would also like to share my enthusiasm about how proud I am of our officers and the amount of hard work that they have been doing, not only for the city but also on their time off of work to better themselves and grow their knowledge and skills. Each officer has put in a tremendous amount of time and hard work towards their training and education since January 1st of this year. As of

March 25th,2024 our department as a whole has completed a total of 615.75 hours of training. That is an amazing accomplishment for a small department and even more outstanding that each officer has completed over 100 hours of training or more in just 3 months. So if you see any of the officers out just stop by and congratulate them on all of their hard work and effort. It is definitely something to be proud of and worth recognizing. So from me, to each of the officers, thank you for all that you are doing to improve yourselves and our community. It is greatly appreciated and it does not go unnoticed.

Lastly, I would like to reach out to everyone within and around our community. If anyone has any ideas, thoughts, or things they would like to try and accomplish or do this year then please reach out to me and let's talk about it. For example, I know a lot of people are unable to attend the events committee meetings or council meetings which can leave your ideas or suggestions unheard. If you email me or call me then we can talk about your ideas and try to find the best way to go about trying

to implement them. I myself would like to see more community related events this year where we can all get together and build a stronger community through either games, events, fundraisers, or even a community cook-out. Things that will bring us all closer together and help us grow as a community, that's what I would like to see more of this year. So if this is something that you would like to talk about, have ideas about, or would just be interested in helping put it all together then reach out to me and we can go from there. (This is not intended to take the place of the events committee but to allow those who are unable to attend a chance for their voice to be heard as well)

As always I hope everyone has a great month and If anyone would like to reach out to me about anything you can contact me by any of the information below or come by the police department.

Email: chief.cityofkeiser@gmail.com

Phone: (870) 526-2102



PENNY WILBANKS WATER/CITY HALL COORDINATOR

Understanding Your Water Bill

In Keiser, our monthly water billing process is both meticulous and geared towards ensuring accuracy and fairness for all residents. Approximately five days before the end of each month, an external contractor is tasked with recording water usage from all connections within our system, using a handheld device. This data is then uploaded into the city's Water Software, which subsequently generates a "Trouble Report." This report highlights accounts with abnormal usage levels, prompting a re-evaluation to confirm accuracy. Once validated, the software compiles various reports, culminating in the printing of water bills - one copy for our auditors and another for mailing to residents. It's crucial for residents to note that bills are rendered on the 1st of each month, with late charges - 10% of the unpaid balance with a minimum of \$1 - being applied after the 16th. In instances of non-payment, water services are subject to disconnection on the 27th, barring weekends. A reconnection fee of \$25 is imposed for restoring water services. This systematic approach ensures each resident receives a fair and accurate bill, reinforcing our commitment to transparency and the well-being of the Keiser community.

Here is an actual Water Bill and an explanation of how charges are applied listed below.

City of Keiser

P.O. Box 138 309 W. Main
Keiser, AR 72351 870-526-2300

FIRST CLASS MAIL
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
CITY OF KEISER
PERMIT NO. 1

Billing Date	Due Date	Account Number
3/1/2024	3/16/2024	

Service Adr:		
From:	1/31/2024	50660
To:	2/29/2024	54340
Consumption: X	1	3680

Amount Past Due	\$1.13
Late Payment Fee	\$6.61
Residential Water Rates Base	\$13.13
Residential Water Rates Use	\$4.56
Sanitation \$20	\$20.00
Public Service Fee	\$0.40
Sewer	\$18.98
Total Taxes	\$4.19
Total Amount Due	\$69.00

Please Return This Stub With Payment

Billing Date	Account Number	Amount Due
3/1/2024		\$69.00

If paid after due date: \$75.90

Residential Customers Only

Water	
Consumption	3,680
Minus first 1000	2,680
Divided by 100	26.80
Times .170	\$ 4.56
Base Rate	\$ 13.13
Total Water	\$ 17.69

Sewer	
Consumption	3,680
Minus first 1000	2,680
Divided by 100	26.8
Times .09	\$ 2.41
Base Rate	\$ 16.57
Total Sewer	\$ 18.98

Sanitation	\$ 20.00
Public Service	\$ 0.40
Late Fee	\$ 6.61
Previous Balance	\$ 1.13
Tax	\$ 4.19

Total Bill \$ 69.00

New City Hall Hours



Monday - Friday from 8:00 - 4:45
Closed for Lunch from 12:00 - 1:00

Sales Tax in Local Communities

Growing Keiser Together: The Impact of Shopping Locally and Online

In the City of Keiser, Arkansas, every shopping choice we make has the power to shape our community's future. While Keiser may not have a wide variety of stores yet, we're dreaming of a day when our streets are filled with bustling local businesses. But for now, we face a challenge: nearly 90% of our discretionary spending—money we spend after taking care of essential bills like our homes and utilities—ends up leaving our community. This means the bulk of our shopping dollars are boosting other cities' economies instead of our own.

This is where the importance of sales tax comes into play. Sales tax is a bit like magic dust that helps fund everything we love about Keiser, from smooth roads to safe parks. Whether you're buying a coffee, getting your hair cut, or purchasing a new battery for your car, a portion of what you spend goes back into making Keiser a better place through sales tax. And here's the kicker: even when you shop online, you can still support our city.

Here's a thought: until Keiser can offer more shops and services, why not make our online shopping benefit our hometown? Believe it or not, when you shop online as a Keiser resident, some of the sales tax from your purchases can come back to us. It's a way to keep some of our spending right here in Keiser, helping to fund public services and community projects.

Imagine this: if we could redirect some of the 90% of spending that leaves our city back into Keiser, even through online shopping, we could significantly boost our local economy. This means more money for public services, better roads, and eventually, attracting new businesses to our area. It's all about making strategic choices with where we spend our money.

But don't get it twisted: the dream is still to shop locally as much as possible. Every dollar spent in Keiser not only stays in our community but also helps it grow. Local businesses are the heart of our

city, creating jobs and adding character. By supporting them, we're investing in Keiser's future—one purchase at a time.

So, what can we do right now? First, let's support the local businesses we do have. They're the foundation of our future thriving city. Second, when shopping online, remember that those purchases can also support Keiser. Until our local shopping scene grows, this is a practical way to help our city flourish.

Reflecting on the tax revenue Keiser received in 2023, it's evident that our choices make a difference. The chart below outlines just how much we've been able to contribute to our city through sales tax. Now, imagine if we could double or even triple that amount. It would be a game-changer for Keiser, enabling us to not only maintain our existing services but also expand them. More funds mean we could enhance public spaces, improve our park, and even introduce new community services that make life in Keiser even better.

In short, every shopping decision we make is an opportunity to contribute to Keiser's growth and vibrancy. By being mindful of where and how we spend our money, we can help turn our city into the bustling, prosperous community we all dream of. Let's work together to make Keiser a place where everyone wants to live, work, and shop.

January.....	\$5,458
February.....	\$5,757
March.....	\$6,399
April.....	\$5,970
May.....	\$5,846
June.....	\$5,873
July.....	\$5,553
August.....	\$6,216
September.....	\$6,366
October.....	\$5,365
November.....	\$5,380
December.....	\$5,617
2023 Total.....	\$69,800

DREADED INCOME TAX DAY

A Brief History of Federal Income Taxes as We Approach Tax Day 2024

As we edge closer to Tax Day on April 15, 2024, it offers an opportune moment to reflect on the historical evolution of the federal income tax system in the United States, a journey marked by significant changes and pivotal moments that have shaped the way Americans fulfill their tax obligations today. The federal income tax, as we know it, has its roots deeply embedded in the fabric of American history, serving as a tool for revenue generation, economic policy, and social reform.

The inception of the modern federal income tax system dates back to the ratification of the 16th Amendment in 1913, which granted Congress the power to levy taxes on personal income regardless of state population. This landmark amendment marked the transition from a system heavily reliant on tariffs and excise taxes to one that could tap directly into the earnings of the country's citizens and businesses. The initial purpose was to generate revenue for the federal government and redistribute wealth more evenly across society.

Over the decades, the income tax system has undergone numerous reforms and expansions, reflecting the changing economic conditions, wartime needs, and social policies of the nation. For instance, the tax rates and the number of tax brackets have fluctuated significantly, especially during times of war such as World Wars I and II, when tax rates surged to finance military expenditures.

The Great Depression and the subsequent New Deal programs introduced under President Franklin D. Roosevelt in the 1930s further expanded the federal income tax to more Americans as a means to fund social welfare programs. It was during this period that the concept of deductions and credits was introduced to the tax code, allowing taxpayers to re-

duce their taxable income and thereby their tax liability, based on specific expenses or contributions.

The tax landscape continued to evolve in the latter half of the 20th century and into the 21st century, with significant tax reform acts passed under various administrations. These reforms often aimed at simplifying the tax code, adjusting tax rates, and expanding or limiting deductions and credits to influence economic behavior and address social issues.

Today, the federal income tax system remains a complex structure that reflects the economic priorities and social values of the nation. It is a progressive tax system, where the rate of taxation increases as income rises, embodying the principle of ability to pay. Taxpayers navigate through a maze of tax brackets, deductions, and credits, each element a legacy of the system's historical evolution.

As taxpayers prepare for Tax Day 2024, it's important to recognize the rich history of the federal income tax system and how it has evolved to meet the needs of the American people and government. From its early days as a revolutionary idea to its current form as a fundamental component of the nation's fiscal policy, the federal income tax continues to play a crucial role in shaping the economic landscape of the United States.



Keiser's Sewer System Overhaul: A New Chapter in Infrastructure Improvement

The City of Keiser is embarking on an ambitious and critically important journey to revitalize and enhance our municipal infrastructure, with a particular focus on the comprehensive repair and upgrade of our sewer system. This extensive project, structured in multiple carefully planned phases, is designed to address and rectify a range of long-standing challenges that have significantly impacted the quality of life for our community members.

Phase 1: A Foundation for Future Success

Our journey commenced with Phase 1, focusing on the replacement of the Lagoon Lift Station, an essential component of our sewer system. This critical upgrade, made feasible through a generous \$200,000 grant we were fortunate to receive last year, marked a pivotal first step in our comprehensive plan to overhaul the sewer infrastructure. Unlike its predecessor, which was situated in a 3-foot depression and vulnerable to flooding during significant rain events, the new lift station is strategically positioned at ground level. This key improvement eliminates the previous susceptibility to flooding, ensuring that the system remains operational even in adverse weather conditions. The flooding of the old lift station would often lead to the shutdown of the system, causing backups and taking extensive time to return to functionality, depending on the severity of the rainfall. This upgrade is a testament to our commitment to eliminating such vulnerabilities and enhancing the resilience of our sewer system.

Phase 2: Diagnosing the System with Precision

As we move into Phase 2, our focus shifts to the Televising and Cleaning of our sewer lines, a process that promises to revolutionize our approach to system maintenance and diagnostics. Through this detailed examination, we aim to gain a comprehensive understanding of the current condition of our sewer infrastructure. Collaborating closely with our City Engineer, this phase will enable us to pinpoint precisely which components of the sewer system require repair or replacement to ensure its long-term sustainability. This is a crucial step in our mission to eliminate the recurrent system shutdowns experienced during heavy rain events, thereby mitigating the inconvenience and potential hazards to our community.

Phase 3: Implementing Necessary Repairs

With the insights gained from Phase 2, Phase 3 will focus on the actual repair and replacement of the critical components identified as necessary for the sewer system's sustainability. This significant step is made possible by a \$4.6 million low-interest loan from ANRC, awarded to us in July 2023. Boasting an impressively low interest rate of 1.75%, this loan represents a strategic financial approach to minimize the fiscal impact on our city. We are committed to using only what is necessary of this funding to complete Phases 2 and 3, ensuring a responsible and efficient allocation of resources.

Phase 4: Completing the System Overhaul

Looking toward the future, Phase 4 will address and replace the remaining damaged portions of our sewer system not covered in the earlier phases. This final phase of the project will be supported through additional grants, for which we will actively seek in the coming months and years. Our proactive approach to securing further funding underscores our dedication to the full restoration and improvement of our sewer infrastructure.

The City of Keiser fully acknowledges the difficulties and disruptions our residents have faced due to the historical issues within our sewer system. However, with these structured phases of repair and upgrades, we are steadfast in our belief that we are on the correct path to not only resolving these issues but also paving the way for future growth and prosperity. This initiative represents more than just the repair and maintenance of our infrastructure; it is a commitment to the well-being and sustainability of our community. As we turn this critical chapter, we look forward with optimism to a brighter, more resilient future for the City of Keiser.



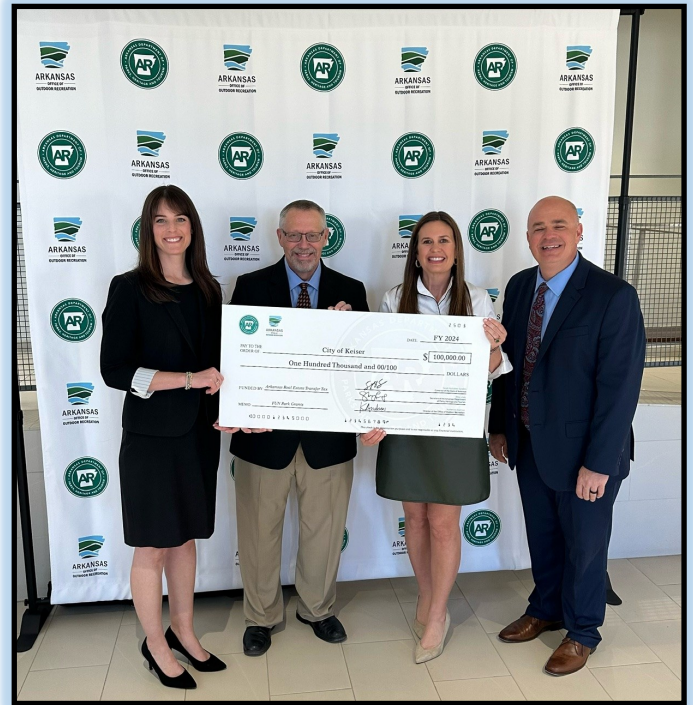
March 27th marked a momentous occasion for the City of Keiser, as I had the distinct pleasure and honor of representing our community in Little Rock. The purpose of this visit was truly special, as we were awarded a \$100,000 Fun Park Grant by the Arkansas Department of Parks, Heritage, and Tourism.

Receiving this grant was not just a testament to the potential and vibrancy of Keiser but also an opportunity to engage in meaningful dialogue about our city's future. It was particularly rewarding to receive the grant directly from Governor Sarah Huckabee Sanders, whose support for local initiatives like ours is invaluable.

Our conversation extended beyond the grant, touching upon the various projects that are currently shaping Keiser. I also took this opportunity to discuss our city's current sewer issues, advocating for assistance and support. I'm looking forward to further discussions with the governor's aide to explore how we can address this challenge effectively.

This grant is a step forward in enhancing our com-

munity's recreational infrastructure, promising fun and enjoyment for families and individuals in Keiser. It's an exciting time for our city, and I am eager to see the positive changes this Fun Park will bring to our community.



April 2024

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
	1 April Fools Day	2	3 National Walking Day	4	5 Gold Star Spouses Day	6
7 World Health Day	8	9	10	11 National Pet Day	12	13
14	15 Tax Day Council Meeting	16 Water Bill Due	17	18 Animal Crackers Day	19	20
21	22 Earth Day	23 World Book Day	24	25	26 Arbor Day	27
28	29 Cutoff Date	30				

Arkansas Birds

Y S X O S L S L B I W U J N P F S Q O I
 M M P O D P Y T C L X A U X Q C C V L U
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- | | | |
|--------------|------------|-------------|
| Hummingbirds | Woodpecker | Mockingbird |
| Blackbird | Goldfinch | Cardinal |
| Starling | Blue Jay | Bluebird |
| Sparrow | Pigeon | Flicker |
| Oriole | Finch | Robin |
| Wren | Dove | Cowbird |
| Crow | | |

Contact Us

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