



# KEISER NEWS

# 2023

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

November Newsletter

Vol 7

## FROM MAYOR RICK CREECY

### ***Growing Keiser, Building Our Future***

As we continue to navigate the path towards progress, I am excited to share some noteworthy updates on the development and expansion of our beloved community.

One of our top priorities has been improving our infrastructure, drainage, and sewer systems to support the growth of both homes and businesses. In the past year, we've made significant strides in this area. With a strong focus on enhancing the quality of life for our residents, we've invested in projects that ensure our town's resilience to weather challenges and accommodate future expansion. These upgrades will not only improve our current residents' well-being but also attract new families and businesses to call Keiser home.

We are thrilled to announce the successful annexation of 25 acres on the west side of our town. This expansion opens up new opportunities for residential development, and we look forward to working with developers and investors to bring exciting projects to this area. As we continue to grow, our community will become more vibrant, offering even more opportunities for our residents.

I am delighted to share that a new coffee shop will be opening its doors in Keiser soon. This charming addition to our town will provide a cozy space for residents and visitors alike to gather, socialize, and enjoy a warm cup of coffee. It's not just about caffeine; it's about fostering a sense of community

and providing a new hub for connection and creativity.

We have initiated discussions with Dollar General about the possibility of opening a store in Keiser. To make this a reality, we are actively working on securing an acre and a half of land along Highway 181. The addition of a Dollar General store will enhance convenience for our residents and provide access to everyday essentials right here in Keiser. As well as bring much needed revenue to fund other opportunities.

We understand the importance of easy access to essential services, including fuel. That's why we are actively seeking to bring a gas station to Keiser. This development will not only make life more convenient for our residents but also attract travelers passing through, contributing to our town's economic vitality.

As your mayor, my commitment is to ensure that Keiser continues to thrive and evolve while preserving the charm and sense of community that make our town so special. We are dedicated to making Keiser a place where families want to live, businesses want to establish themselves, and visitors want to explore.

We encourage your input and ideas as we move forward in our growth journey. Your feedback and engagement are invaluable as we work together to shape the future of Keiser.

Thank you for being an essential part of our community.

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 a 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

## THREE LITTLE WORDS – Transparency, Accountability, Misconception

In 1967, the federal government enacted the FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT, also known as the “Sunshine Law”. This law ensures that citizens can be aware of what their lawmakers are doing. This principle of allowing citizens to see their government in action is called “transparency”. Transparency in government is essential in fostering trust from the citizens it represents. The public has the right to know how and why decisions are being made by their officials.



The City of Keiser administration strives to be transparent in every decision that is made and every dollar that is received and spent. Our City of Keiser website and this monthly newsletter were birthed to help us keep our citizens informed. Transparency does not come by itself. It travels with a 1st cousin called “accountability”. In order to be transparent, we set ourselves up to be held accountable for those decisions and that dollar. We want to be held accountable. We want to do a good job. We want our town to do well and grow.

“Misconception” is another word that keeps the other two words busy. Misconception is a wrong or inaccurate idea that can cause quite a bit of trouble if it is allowed to make its rounds. In order to further the concept of transparency and accountability, I would like to address a few misconceptions that have come to my attention concerning our city.

**Misconception # 1-** The water rates were raised in order to build a water park.

Fact- Actually, the water rate increase was ordered by Arkansas Natural Resources Commission. A rate study clearly indicated that our rates were below what they

should be. We are not the only town that was ordered to increase water rates by the State. This misconception may have come from the fact that Osceola has voted to construct a water park for its citizens.

**Misconception # 2-** We received all that grant money, and the city is spending it on whatever they want.

Fact- Mayor Creecy has, in fact, procured around \$713,000 in grant money for the City of Keiser. However, this money comes with strict guidelines as to what it can be spent for. For example, we received a \$200,000 Lift Station Grant. This money can only be spent to repair or update our lagoon lift station. In submitting any grant application, tons of paperwork must be filled out, explicitly stating what the money will be used for. In addition to this, numerous audits by the State of Arkansas ensures that 100% of the grant money is used for what it was received for.

- We cannot pay city bills with grant money.
- We cannot make unauthorized purchases with grant money.

**Misconception # 3-** Chief of Police Austin has been fired.

Fact- Chief Austin has not been fired. In September, Chief Austin informed Mayor Creecy that he was considering retiring for health and personal reasons. Mayor Creecy asked him to take a personal leave and re-consider. On Friday, October 13th, Chief Austin turned in his resignation.

City Hall is always open to our citizens. Got something on your mind? Come on up and talk to us about it. Got a question? In the spirit of transparency, we will be glad to address any concern you may have.



## CHIEF ANDREW GATTIS KEISER POLICE DEPARTMENT

I am someone that the community of Keiser is going to be seeing a lot of. I am a strong believer in community relations, keeping the residents and their property safe, and moving forward in a positive direction. I am a Veteran. I served 5 years Active Duty, 3 years overseas, and 2 years stateside, as a Military Police officer. I conducted my duties in 11 different countries and 2 different states during my enlistment. After the military, I became a police officer in Arkansas where I have served as a Sergeant, a Training Administrator, CID, an Assistant Chief, and now as the Chief here in Keiser. I have an Associate of Applied Science Degree in Information Technology. I am a certified DDACTS Analyst which stands for Data-Driven Approaches to Crime and Traffic Safety (DDACTS). I am a Certified Law Enforcement Instructor, a Firearms Instructor, a Radar Instructor, and I am a Taser Instructor certified through AXON. I am a CIT officer, which means I am part of the Arkansas Crisis Intervention Team, and I am also a Certified

Crisis Intervention Team Instructor certified through the University of Memphis CIT Center. Currently, I have completed and/or attended over 2,976 hours of training that has been approved by the state of AR and the Commission of Law Enforcement Standards and Training (CLEST). I look forward to learning more about the community and growing together with all of you.



## NEAL BROWN DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS

### ***Where does our drinking water come from?***

Our drinking water is sourced from a water well that delves deep into the earth's crust. This well extends an impressive 1,500 feet below the surface, which is notably over a quarter of a mile, given that a quarter mile is equivalent to 1,320 feet. Once extracted, the water undergoes a comprehensive process to ensure its purity and safety. Initially, it is pumped to the surface and directed to a specialized facility known as the filter house. Within this facility, the water is subjected to rigorous filtration at a high pressure of 52 psi. The filtration system comprises multiple layers designed for maximum efficiency. There are layers of coal, sand, and three distinct layers of rock. The coal plays a pivotal role as it specifically targets and captures elements like Iron and Manganese, effectively removing them from the water. As an added measure, during this filtration process, chlorine gas is judiciously injected and thoroughly mixed with the water. This step is critical for disinfection, aiming to

eliminate harmful pathogens that can be detrimental to mammals. It's worth noting that this method disinfects the water; it doesn't sterilize it completely. Once the filtration and disinfection process is concluded, the water is then channeled to two large water towers. From these towers, it is distributed through a network of pipes, passing through meters to monitor consumption, and eventually, it reaches our homes, ready for consumption.



# KEISER YELLOWJACKETS

Nestled along the meandering banks of the majestic Mississippi River, the town of Keiser, Arkansas, holds a cherished and profound educational history dating back to the inception of Keiser School in 1917. This was a time when the educational landscape was drastically different from the modern institutions we know today. Keiser School was born as a humble one-room schoolhouse, with just a solitary teacher and a mere handful of eager students, numbering five in total. It was a modest beginning, but it laid the foundation for an extraordinary educational journey that would come to define the community.

In its earliest days, Keiser School offered a curriculum that covered grades one through eight, imparting the fundamental knowledge and skills needed for young minds to thrive. However, for those students who aspired to attain a complete high school education, daily train journeys to the neighboring town of Wilson became an essential part of their academic pursuits. The commitment to learning was undeniably strong, and the resilience of Keiser's youth in their pursuit of knowledge was evident.

The remarkable growth of Keiser School was swift and steady. In 1918, recognizing the increasing demand for education, another room and teacher were added to accommodate the burgeoning student population. By 1923, with an enrollment of approximately 90 students, the need for yet another room and teacher was evident. Keiser School had quickly become a beacon of education in the region.

By 1926, the school boasted an enrollment of 130 students, a testament to the community's unwavering dedication to fostering learning and providing opportunities for its children. Education was increasingly valued, and Keiser School's reputation as an educational institution of significance continued to grow.

The year 1927 marked a significant turning point in the school's history, as Keiser School District 31 was formally established. This consolidation brought together several neighboring schools, including Athelstan, Shady Bend, Hickory Ridge, Sandy Bayou, and Tryonza Lake. The unification of these communities in their shared pursuit of knowledge was emblematic of the broader commitment to education within the region.

Keiser School also embraced a unique and enduring mascot during this period - the Yellowjacket. Symbolizing the industrious and resilient nature of Keiser's community, the Yellowjacket became an iconic representation of the school's spirit. The black and gold school colors further exemplified the unity and unwavering pride of the Yellowjacket family.

The educational landscape evolved further in 1929 when the Keiser High School building was completed. This modern fa-



cility was designed to cater to an enrollment of 450 students, representing a monumental step forward in the provision of comprehensive education in Keiser. It was a tangible symbol of the town's dedication to providing quality education to its youth.

However, the educational journey of Keiser School took a transformative turn in July of 1969 when the school districts underwent a significant reorganization. The districts of Keiser, Dyess, Shawnee, and Wilson collectively formed the South Mississippi County School District 57. This transition marked the end of an era for Keiser School. The Class of 1970, with its graduation ceremony, closed a chapter in the school's history.

Today, the legacy of Keiser School lives on in the hearts and minds of its alumni, who carry forward the values of determination, resilience, and commitment to learning instilled during their time in the school. While Keiser School is no longer an active educational institution, it stands as a testament to the enduring spirit of Keiser itself.

In the modern era, the educational landscape has evolved, and schools in the area have consolidated to form Rivercrest High School. This consolidation represents a new chapter in the educational journey of the community, emphasizing the importance of adaptability and the collective pursuit of educational excellence.

Looking forward, it's important to note that the historic school building, which holds decades of memories, is soon to undergo a transformation. The old building is slated for demolition, marking the end of one chapter and the beginning of a new historic and beneficial era for the city of Keiser. This redevelopment of the property holds promise for the community, as it is poised to become a cornerstone of progress and opportunity for Keiser.

As we reflect on the rich history of Keiser School and anticipate the changes ahead, let us also eagerly look forward to the continued growth and success of this remarkable community, a place where the legacy of education and progress continues to shape the future for generations to come.

## Get Ready for Festive Fun: Keiser Christmas Parade!

The spirit of the holidays is blossoming, and the air is charged with excitement as we gear up for the highlight of our community's calendar: the annual Keiser Christmas Parade. This eagerly anticipated event is slated for Thursday, November 30th, and promises an experience more enchanting and awe-inspiring than ever before.

The parade will commence at the stroke of 6:30 PM, so be sure to gather your loved ones and stake out your ideal viewing location in advance. With each float passing, you'll feel the rising anticipation in the air, leading up to the most awaited moment of the night: the grand entrance of Santa Claus! The jolly man in red, with his infectious laughter and iconic sleigh, will captivate both children and adults, igniting that special Christmas magic in our hearts.

But the spectacle isn't just a visual journey; it's a testament to the unity of the Keiser community. As we all stand shoulder-to-shoulder, regardless of the chilly weather, we're reminded of the warmth that human connection brings. This parade is more than a tradition; it's a communal celebration of the values that the holiday season stands for: joy, giving, and togetherness.



# November 2023

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
			1	2 Deviled Egg Day	3	4
5	6	7	8	9 World Freedom Day	10 USMC Day	11 Veterans Day
12	13 World Kindness Day	14	15 <b>Water Bill Due</b>	16	17	18
19	20 <b>Council Meeting</b>	21	22	23 <b>Thanksgiving City Hall Closed</b>	24	25
26	27 <b>Cutoff Date</b>	28	29	30 <b>Christmas Parade</b>		

## City Church Spotlight

### Keiser Chapel: A Beacon of Love and Acceptance Since 1977

Nestled in the charming town of Keiser, the origins of Keiser Chapel trace back to 1977, unfolding within the warm and welcoming home of Jerry and Von Weathers. Beginning as a close-knit gathering of only 13 devout individuals, the seed of faith soon sprouted in the Weathers' den. The community's fervor and dedication to their newfound spiritual haven quickly led to a growth that none had anticipated. In mere weeks, it was evident that a larger sanctuary was needed to house the burgeoning congregation.

Pastor Jerry Weathers, with a heart full of dreams and aspirations for Keiser Chapel, turned to The Lord for guidance. He envisioned the church not just as a place of worship, but as a sanctuary where every soul, regardless of their circumstance or appearance, would find solace and acceptance. He dreamed of a place so welcoming that even a weary farmer, after a long day in the fields, could drive by and step into the chapel, feeling embraced and cherished, dust and all. This deep-seated philosophy of unreserved love and acceptance became the bedrock upon which Pastor Weathers built his teachings. He continually emphasized the message of loving without barriers, preconditions, or biases.

To this day, a heartwarming ritual continues to resonate within the walls of Keiser Chapel. At each service's conclusion, Pastor Weathers gently reminds his congregation of their shared purpose with a touching directive: "Look into your neighbor's eyes and affirm, 'I love you, regardless!'" This practice serves as a poignant reminder of the church's mis-

sion: to create an environment where love, understanding, and mutual respect flourish.

Jerry and Von Weathers, with their unwavering commitment spanning over fifty years, have been pillars of strength and inspiration for their community. Their journey of faith has seen numerous milestones, and as they gaze forward, the path ahead is luminous with promise. Ambitious plans are afoot to erect a state-of-the-art church and an expansive family life center to better serve their ever-growing community. Yet, amid these developments, the Weathers hold steadfast to their foundational belief: they are instruments in the divine orchestration of The Lord's grand design.

To those on a spiritual quest or seeking a sanctuary of faith and fellowship, Keiser Chapel extends an open arm. Echoing Pastor Jerry's words, "We promise an abundance of love, offered in countless ways, ensuring that you find at least one form that resonates with your heart." Above all, the paramount message that the Weathers and the Keiser Chapel community want to impart to every Keiser resident is timeless: Jesus loves you, and in the embrace of Keiser Chapel, you will always find a home.



# Chevrolet Word Search

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

Trailblazer

Silverado

Avalanche

Volt

Traverse

Colorado

Suburban

HHR

Corvette

Equinox

Express

Trax

Caprice

Blazer

Lumina

Camaro

Impala

Spark

Sonic

Tahoe

Malibu

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