

North Little Rock e-Newsletter

Provided by Diane Whitbey, City Clerk and Collector

February 2014

North Little Rock e-Newsletter

If you have information you would like to share with other city employees, residents and businesses throughout North Little Rock, then let us know. The City Clerk's office provides a monthly *e-letter* to those who subscribe through the North Little Rock website. To sign up, email Dwhitbey@nlr.ar.gov.

Groundhog

Found in The Old Farmer's Almanac—2014 by Robert B. Thomas

February 2. All of a sudden, it's February and Groundhog Day is upon us. According to legend, if a groundhog sees its shadow on this day, there will be six more weeks of winter; if it doesn't, then spring is right around the corner.



The groundhog, or woodchuck, typically makes its home in the brambles and thickets that grow where forests meet fields. There, it digs burrows between 4 and 6 feet deep and up to 40 feet long—removing as much as 700 pounds of dirt in the process.

Like its squirrel relatives, the groundhog eats leaves, grass, flowers, bark and twigs and climbs trees to reach tender buds or fruit. The pesky animal

will also go after just about any crop, favoring beans, peas, and carrot tops. It may even take a bite out of every squash or pumpkin in a row, instead of consuming just one.

But the mischief-maker is not all nuisance. It burrows allow air and water to penetrate the soil and, when abandoned, they become homes for opossums and other small animals. The groundhog itself serves as food for larger creatures, such as bobcats, foxes, and wolves.

With hungry predators on the prowl, it takes courage for a groundhog to emerge from its hole every February to make its forecast. It must take its job very seriously!

Spring will be here soon...so will

Nature's Avengers

...by Sally Roth

Superheros and villains aren't just in the movies. They're all around us—in our backyards, gardens, even our houses.

The world is literally crawling with insects—about 10 quintillion (that's 10,000,000,000,000,000) creeping, crawling, flying, burrowing bugs, according to scientists at the Smithsonian Institution. (This is only a guess because it's impossible to count that many bugs). Every one of them has superpowers of some sort. Sometimes, like those comic-book characters in skintight suits, they work for the good of humanity:

- Leaps tall objects in a single bound? Child's play for a grasshopper.
- Lift objects a hundred times heavier than itself? Nice work, itty-bitty ant.
- Emit a poison gas that makes bad guys back off in a hurry? Stinkbug at your service.

Sometimes, these heroes show a darker side—if not to us, to each other.



Spiders. Were it not for spiders, we'd be up to our necks in insects. (Sorry, arachnophobes, but those creepy spiders that make you cower should be your very best friends.) Hunters one and all, spiders stalk with infinite patience, chase with incredible speed, and snatch prey with lightning quickness. They use more tricks than any human hunter can conceive.

Let's start with that web. Whether it's a messy, dust-collecting cob-web in the corner of the ceiling or a classic beauty stretched across branches in the garden,

web silk is miraculous—better than steel in tensile strength and tougher than Kevlar at resisting fracture.

All spiders make silk, but not all make webs. Some, like wolf spiders, depend on their terrific vision (four pairs of eyes help a lot) and speed (eight synchronized legs) to run down their prey.

The crab spider clan performs some of the sneakiest tricks. Being often white or yellow, crab spiders blend perfectly with the center of an aster or the snowy petals of a Shasta daisy, where they lie in wait, ready to pounce on any visiting pollinators.

The camouflage doesn't stop there. The backs of some species, including the lovely and common

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"Where's Mel"? Be the 1st person to call 975-8617 and tell us where you found him hiding and win a prize!

North Little Rock Animal Control

For more information call 501-791-8577

Teaching Your Pet to Perform on Cue

By Jennifer Arnold

Found in *Healthy Living Made Simple*
Sam's Club magazine

Would you like for your cat or dog to give you a high-five when you ask? Do you want to see your guinea pig walk backward through a tunnel or your fish swim through hoops? Just use a **M.A.R.K.E.R.**

M = Make a clear plan as to what type of behavior you want to see. If the behavior involves multiple steps, break it down into smaller ones, a technique known as incremental learning and shaping. Let's say that you want to teach a dog how to bring you a tissue (behavior) when you sneeze (cue). Your steps might be (1) getting the dog to approach the box, (2) getting him to put the tissue in his mouth, (3) getting him to pull the tissue from the box, (4) getting him to deliver the tissue to you and (5) getting him to release the tissue in your hand. This step-by-step plan represents incremental learning and shaping.

A = Associations must be formed in your pet's brain so that he understands exactly what it is you want him to do through the use of a marker. When your pet does what you want, you must mark that behavior very precisely. The marker tells the animal, "Yes, that was exactly what I wanted!" Markers act much like the shutter of a camera, recording in the animal's brain that split second in time when he is doing something you want him to do and getting a treat for it. We use a clicking noise as our marker. Clickers can be purchased or you can make your own using anything capable of producing a quick and precise clicking noise, such as a pan, the metal cap from a juice or tea bottle or even your own tongue. Clickers are great markers because each one's tone remains the same—no matter the energy or mood of the one clicking.

When teaching a dog how to bring you a tissue, you would mark the successful completion of each step. Once he is easily performing a step, withhold the marker until he goes on to successfully complete the next step. Some dogs will learn the entire behavior in



just a few 10-minute sessions, while others may need several weeks.

If you are having difficulty getting your pet to perform a specific step, you can lure your pet into position using a treat or toy. You may also encourage your dog to target an object using sound or motion. Try not to lure or target more than a time or two for each step so that your pet has the opportunity to think through what you're asking.

R = Reward your pet with small pieces of his favorite treat after

every click, even those you make by accident. The positive feelings about those clicks formed through the use of desired rewards mean your pet is likely to work hard to figure out how to get you to click again. You can use treat placement to encourage him to focus on a particular object (or objective) to speed up the process. For example, you might put the treat on the tissue when teaching your dog to retrieve it. Much as with luring and targeting, placing treats in certain spots reduces your pet's need to think, so try to do it sparingly.

K = Keep clicking/treating for each incremental success until your pet has learned to perform the behavior in its entirety.

E = Embed your cue now that your pet knows the behavior for which you are looking. Once your cue is added, you may have to go back to clicking/treating each step for a session or two.

It may seem odd to teach the behavior first and then add the cue, but when you think about it, that makes a lot more sense than using a cue when your pet has no way of understanding its meaning. Cues can be words, gestures, or, in the case of the tissue-retrieving dog, even sneezes.

R = Remove your click when your pet clearly recognizes the cue and willingly performs the behavior.

A few extra tips... If your pet is struggling at any stage, reduce expectations (perhaps smaller steps or an easier behavior) and increase motivation (yummier treats). Remember to stop each session on a high note and, most importantly, have fun with your pet while they're learning!

Jennifer Arnold is a *New York Times* best-selling author of *Through a Dog's Eyes* and *In a Dog's Heart*. She is the founder of Canine Assistance, a nonprofit organization that teaches service dogs to assist children and adults who have physical disabilities, seizure conditions, or other special needs. For more information, visit canineassistants.org or [facebook.com/canineassistants](https://www.facebook.com/canineassistants).

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at any State Revenue Office.



North Little Rock Fire Department

February Fire Safety...

Many home fires happen at night, between 11:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m.

Make sure your family can protect itself by knowing these six steps:

1. Smoke detectors should be installed on each level of your home and outside sleeping areas. If you sleep with the bedroom door closed, install a detector in the bedroom. Smoke detectors sound an early warning while escape is still possible. Test detectors monthly and replace batteries annually.
2. Have a home fire escape plan. Draw out your home on paper and mark at least two exits from each room. Make plans for family members that may need assistance, the very young or old. If exits include windows, make sure they can be easily opened and if they're high, have escape ladders available. Designate a place for everyone to meet once they get outside.
3. Practice your plan. Have one practice with family members using their primary exit and another where the secondary way out is used. If necessary, make changes. Fire drills aren't just for school.
4. If possible, sleep with bedroom doors closed. In the event of a home fire they can hold back smoke and fire, increasing your time for escape.
5. When awakened by your smoke detector, roll out of bed and crawl to your bedroom door. Test the door with the back of your hand, for heat. Feel it high, low and touch the knob. If the door is hot, DO NOT open it, use your secondary escape. If it is cool, open it carefully and be ready to slam it shut if there is smoke or fire.
6. Go to your designated meeting place. Have someone go to a neighbor's home to call 911. Once you're outside, you should never go back into a burning building.



In the event of a weather related emergency like a tornado or high winds, you should also have a designated meeting place. Keep in mind that under weather related circumstances, telephones may not work.

If you or someone you know does not have a smoke detector in the home, contact the North Little Rock Fire Department at 501-340-5377.

Highlights from some City Departments



Mayor Joe A. Smith holds a monthly department head meeting. Department heads provide a report of activities, projects and accomplishments. Below are a few highlights from the last meeting (December events).

Central Arkansas Water—metered revenues year to date were down 14% from 2012 and down 7.4% from twelve year average.



Laman Library—the Argenta branch library located in the History Commission buildings closed January 11. A grand opening at the new location (old downtown Post Office) will be held March 15.

Neighborhood Services—Mailed 3 neighborhood group newsletters to 5,120 individual households and another 1,319 to others, emailed 100+. Attended numerous neighborhood related meetings.

Hays Senior Center—provided 10 medical van trips for Housing Authority—transported 28 individuals. 6 trips transporting 87 members to Heber Springs, Benton, Hot Springs, Searcy, Pine Bluff and Stone Ridge Nursery. 42 new members in December. During 2013, 1,076 new members joined the center. Total enrollment since opening 19,263. Volunteer hours (for November) were 1,324.

Utilities Accounting—Bad debt November \$33,150 Adjusted projected bad debt write-offs 2013: \$323,240 New accounts installed: 889 Accounts finalized: 897

Street Department—repaired potholes throughout city, cleaned ditches and alley ways, made sandbags, checked equipment, hauled off sweeper and brush piles, leveled Rose City ball fields, continue to pump Greenlea Lake, cleaned basins and drains, removed debris, and curb cut repairs.

Sanitation—garbage crews collected and disposed of 1,519.88 tons (3,039,760 lbs) of household garbage and the loads were processed at our two landfills located at Two Pine and Little Rock. Yard Waste crews collected and disposed 255 loads (7,929.0 cubic yards) of mixed debris along with 88 loads (3,287.6 cubic yards) of mulched leaves which were processed at American Composting, Inc. 264 used tires picked up, 1,370 telephone calls regarding scheduling, complaints and concerns, 418 calls regarding leaf vacuums. Completed first round of 2013 (Fall) - 2014 (Spring) Loose Leaf Program. Being implementing new Sanitation Ordinance.



Traffic—Service request work order (Sign Shop) 80. Signal trouble reports—57, Posts replaced—10. Approved Barricade Applications—89. City vehicles marked with decals (logo) 4.



Police—(November) Violent Crime down overall 14%, Robberies down 27%. Property Crime down 27%, Burglaries and Breaking and Entering (Storage Buildings) down 27%. Theft from motor vehicles was down almost 51%.



Fire—Total Incidents: 893
Residential Fires: 15
Vehicle Fires: 3
Rescue/EMS: 501
Other Responses: 286
Total Responses: 1,667
Other Structure Fires: 0

False Alarms/Malfunctions: 80
Haz Mat Responses: 7
Total Fire Losses: \$609,100.00
Total Value: \$16,875,300.00
Total Saved: \$2,895,100.00
Training: 3,285 hours
Building Inspections: 134

Office of Emergency Services/911—Calls for service 19,720. 7,758 CAD Entries.



Planning—Master Street Plan approved by City Council. Continue work with Game and Fish Commission on expansion of Ott Park. Prepared maps for proposal of veterans housing at Fort Roots.

Community Development—working on NSP 1 and 2 issues, preparing NSP 2 quarter report. Preparing for HUD visit in January.

Fit 2 Live—audited vending machines at various city facilities. Deadline for applications for Spring 2014 garden funding February 3. New Levy Trail Work Group.

Electric Department—38,332—customers, Peak Power—132,562 KW, Territory— 60 square miles, miles of wire—544.8 miles, # Transformers—11,248, Street lights—10,979 (109 repaired), Smart meters 27,023— Revenue \$6,494,341.00. 1 major outage (over 1,000) area of North Highway 107, Kellogg Road, Batesville Pike resulted from vehicle hitting pole.



Continued on next page...



City Clerk/Collector—issued 3,681 Business Licenses/Beer/Liquor/Restaurant in 2013. Staff completed auditing and invoicing 2014 renewals and hand delivered 8 boxes to mail room for postage and mailing (approximately 4,000 renewals). Continue to try to collect from 200+ delinquent license holders. Collected \$41,384.34— 2% Hotel/Motel, \$20,546.72— 1% Hotel, \$28,694.86—Mixed Drink and \$413,296.01 Restaurant Taxes.

Code Enforcement—106 assigned calls, 331 initiated calls, 15 citations, 177 notices, 26 vehicles tagged, 95 structures inspected, 18 food service inspections, 1 search warrants, 3 houses demolished by city, 3 houses demolished by owner. Secured 4 vacant houses, mowed 0 vacant lots, mowed 0 with structures, picked up 106 tires.



Animal Control—NLR
Incoming Animals—154,
Adopted 64,
Reclaimed 20,
Euthanized 59,
Citations issued 64,
Vouchers (spay/neuter) Dogs 52,
Cats 17,
Calls for Service 534

Pulaski County Incoming Animals—61, Adopted 22, Reclaimed 9, Euthanized 33
Total animals received at the shelter decreased significantly from 2012 due to “spay or pay” citations.

Parks and Recreation—Youth Basketball Leagues started, hosted Silver Gloves Boxing Tournament, After School Program (ASPIre) in full swing— Glenview Recreation Center 30 participants, North Heights Community Center 75 participants, Sherman Park Community Center 30 participants. Healthy After School Activities included Yoga for children, cooking healthy snacks and heart health. Education programming introduced students to first of a four part series on Sign Language. Completed aeration on Soccer Fields (1st time in 3 years). Burns Park golf revenue for October \$17,774.00, Emerald Park golf revenue \$2,417.00.

Finance—
Revenues (MTD—December)
Expenditures

Reports for December not ready in time for newsletter due to end of the year.

External Affairs—South Korean Winter Education Program January 10—February 7, includes 5 host homes, 10 students and chaperone from Sister City, Uiwang City, South Korea, student mentors identified, Korean students will attend regular classes and have opportunities to share their culture with other students in the North Little Rock School District.

Communications—presented new website information to City Council, developed programming scheduled for North Little Rock Television—NLRHS, prepared Press Releases and worked with press during weather event, working on State of the City.



Pictured left is the aftermath of mail being opened in the City Clerk's Office (for one day) last month.

The majority of the mail was Business/Privilege License renewals and monthly Restaurant tax payments.

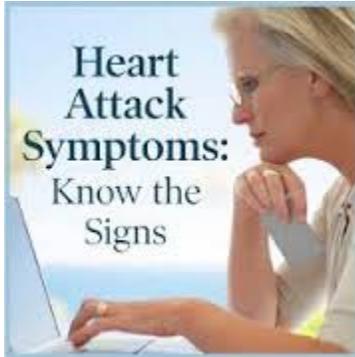
If you are a business in North Little Rock, you are required to have a Business/Privilege License with the city. If you have not received an invoice, please call 501-975-8617.

To view the Business/Privilege License Fee Schedule for the City of North Little Rock, visit our website at www.nlr.ar.gov.

Understanding the symptoms of a heart attack—and the risk factors that lead to one—can help save your life.

Signs by Dr. Joanne Foody

Found in *Healthy Living* January/February 2014
Sam's Club magazine



As the leading cause of death for both men and women in the United States, heart disease is an epidemic. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reports that about 715,000 Americans suffer a heart attack each year. That's not the only scary number when it

comes to conditions of the heart. A recent CDC survey reported that, while 92 percent of respondents recognized chest pain as a heart attack symptom, just 27 percent were cognizant of other major symptoms and understood to call 911 when a heart attack was occurring.

Heart attack defined. A heart attack usually occurs when a blood clot blocks the flow of blood through an artery that feeds blood to the heart, causing permanent damage to the heart muscle unless treated quickly. The most common cause of heart attacks is atherosclerosis, or the buildup of plaque in the arteries. Although less common, heart attacks can also occur as a result of very low blood pressure, a tear in the heart artery, drug use and small blood clots or tumors that travel to the heart from other parts of the body. Understanding the typical and not-so-obvious symptoms when a heart attack is happening can be a matter of life or death.

Warning signs. The most common symptoms of a heart attack, especially for men, include severe chest pain, shortness of breath and pain that spreads to the shoulders, neck, arms or jaw. Conversely, women often experience atypical heart attack symptoms such as nausea or vomiting, dizziness, fatigue, inability to sleep and breaking out in a cold sweat. But everyone is different and not all people suffer the same symptoms or experience them to the same degree. That's why some people can overlook or ignore heart attack symptoms such as indigestion and fatigue. The key is to listen to your body and seek immediate medical treatment if you experience symptoms of a heart attack.

Risk factors. There are many facets that can increase heart attack risk, such as high blood pressure, high cholesterol, diabetes, obesity and lack of physical activity. Simply put, the more cardiovascular risk factors you have, the greater your risk for a heart attack. Often, people either don't know they have certain risk factors for heart attack, like high blood pressure and high cholesterol, or don't have these risk factors under control. The key is knowing your numbers and addressing any risk factors you may be living with to help prevent ever having a heart attack.

Catching it early. During a heart attack, the heart is being deprived of oxygen-rich blood; with each passing second, heart muscle can be damaged or destroyed. Seeking immediate treatment by calling 911 and taking aspirin, which reduces blood clotting, can help reduce long-term damage to the heart and increase the chances of survival. If you witness someone having a heart attack, CPR—even if it's hands-only—can also help deliver oxygen to the brain and greatly improve the person's chance of survival. For survivors of a heart attack, damaged tissue can result in abnormal heart rhythms, heart failure and valve problems. Those who have suffered a heart attack also have a significantly greater risk for eventually having another one, so taking steps to reduce any cardiovascular risk factors they may have is vitally important.

It can't be repeated enough: Always call 911 when you begin to have any symptoms of a heart attack. Statistics show that women tend to seek help much later than men, and by then, it may be too late. Don't be concerned about having a "false alarm" or bothering others. In addition, know your numbers. By understanding your potential risk for a heart attack, you can address any risk factors you may have and drastically reduce the probability of an attack or other conditions related to heart disease

Joanne Foody, MC., FACC, FAHA, is the Medical Director of the Cardiovascular Wellness Center and Polin Cardiovascular Wellness Program at Brigham and Women's Hospital. Dr. Foody has active and international roles in cardiac disease prevention and rehabilitation, with a particular focus on women and heart disease. She is a Fellow of the American College of Cardiology and the American Heart Association.



February is American Heart Month

Plan ahead with a LIVING WILL

By Michele Mongillo

Found in *Healthy Living* January/February 2014
Sam's Club magazine

As a caregiver, health care decision making with the loved one for which you're providing care is a sensitive subject to broach. As vitally important as this planning can be for caregivers, they may feel overwhelmed when thinking about making important decisions for another's health care.

However, involving your loved one in these decisions prior to a significant medical event can help diminish this burden. Educating and informing yourself on the issues makes this often misunderstood topic easier to handle; understanding advance directives, specifically living wills, is a valuable first step.

An advance directive is a set of instructions a person gives that outlines their health decisions in the event they are unable to make those choices. It is important when providing care for someone to understand what their wishes are and to be able to honor them when possible. One type of advance directive is a living will, which is a legal document that contains an individual's wishes for life-prolonging treatments. Before preparing a living will, the following broad details should be addressed:

- The laws regarding living wills vary state to state
- A living will does not go into effect until the individual is incapacitated and unable to make decisions; oftentimes, a physician will make this determination
- The physician for the loved one you are providing care for should be aware of the living will and what that person has decided

Components of a living will can be very specific in regards to medical treatments. It is a good idea to discuss these with both the individual and their physician. Some specific medical treatments to consider when discussing health care decisions include:

- Pain relief and how it will be managed



- Antibiotics as treatment for infections
- Artificial feeding (feeding tubes)
- Cardio pulmonary resuscitation (CPR)
- Ventilators (breathing machines)

While not required, consultation with an attorney can be a good start to this process. In addition, organizations such as the American Hospital Association (AHA) make available key educational resources to provide basic information on getting started with living wills and urge those receiving care to express their preferences in writing. The National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization website provides state-specific forms.

Although broaching the topic of a living will may be a difficult conversation to have, it is essential as a caregiver to ensure that health care providers and family members are aware of the loved one's desires related to medical decisions. Having this conversation may alleviate some stress in your caregiver relationship and provide peace of mind to you and your family that their wishes will be honored.

Michael Mongillo, RN, MSN, is a clinical director who has over 20 years of nursing experience in a variety of settings including acute care, head/spinal cord injury rehabilitation and long-term care.

City Employees to Compete with North Little Rock School District in 2014 Wildcat Fitness Challenge

Anytime Fitness is hosting a Weight Loss Challenge—City vs. NLRSD. The challenge will run January 27—March 31. A \$5 registration fee was required. Anyone who gains 2 or more pounds above the previous week's weight will be charged \$1 per pound gained.

All funds raised will be donated to the North Little Rock School District to be utilized in their Welfare Fund to aid in providing healthy food for the backpack program and meet the needs of students and families.

Winners will be determined by the school or City department that loses the highest percentage of original body weight.



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white crab spider, glow under ultraviolet light. (It's even better than a cloak of invisibility!) Wasps, whose eyes detect the ultraviolet spectrum, find the glow irresistible. When they arrive on the flower, it's breakfast time—for the spider, not the wasp.

Arachnophobia is no joke, of course. Certain spiders can cause serious harm when they sink their venomous fangs into our flesh. However, unless you're poking around in the secretive haunts of brown recluses and black widows or tickling a tarantula whose irritating hairs can be worse than a bite, serious injuries from spiders seldom occur.

Still, all spiders have venom and fangs with which to inject it. In the wild world, the poison liquefies prey (stinkbugs are a favorite), so the spider can suck it up or munch it more easily. In laboratories, researchers are investigating the possibilities of spider venom for pesticides as well as for medicine.

Wasps. Unfortunately for spiders, even the heroes are fair game. Birds gladly gobble up spiders, but wasps are an even bigger menace. Although adult wasps don't eat spiders (nectar and pollen keep them going), baby wasps crave arachnids. The larvae that hatch inside that big gray paper ball or mud tube (or whatever sort of architectural wonder a wasp makes for its home) are voracious eaters, and they want fresh, living meat. This is why we often see wasps coasting or creeping over plant foliage: They're on the hunt. One quick sting and the spider is paralyzed but not dead; sadly for the spider, it's not even close to dead.

The mother wasp carries the immobilized spider to her home, stuffs it into a cell with a wasp egg, and then goes back for more, until each wasp-to-be has a well-stocked larder. When the larvae hatch, they dine on helpless, living spiders.

Nightmarish, you say? It gets worse.

Some wasps are parasites that lay their eggs inside the bug that's going to serve as the food supply. The larval wasps eat the hapless host alive, bit by bit, getting their nourishment from the inside while the host slowly shrivels but remains alive.

For many species of parasitic wasps, including teeny-tine braconids, the target is a juicy caterpillar. Other species have other favorite happy meals? Aphid wasps, only 1/8 of an inch long, lay a single egg inside an aphid, which serves as exactly enough living foot to nourish the larval wasp until it pupates. Then the aphid host (usually there are many of them in an aphid colony) turns into an "aphid mummy," a bloated carcass that serves as a safe place where the new wasp can transform before eventually emerging.



Unsavory habits aside, wasps are just as much heroes as the insects they kidnap. Without wasps, our garden pests would zoom to plaque proportions.

Caterpillars. The heroics of all caterpillars fall into the self-sacrificing category. Their main role is to be food.

It's hard to admire a 4-inch-long tomato hornworm when it defoliates your previous 'Brandywine' plant overnight—unless you're a hungry house wren, for whom the caterpillar is a lovely lunch, or a tiny braconid wasp, which sees the hornworm as a living larder for its children. The larvae's tiny white cocoons will decorate the outside of the shriveling, dying caterpillar host like grains of rice in a tidy, crowded row. (If you love tomatoes and hate hornworms, don't pluck off that cocoon-dotted caterpillar. Let the wasps emerge for more allies in the fight against pests.)

Ladybugs. Sometimes, deciding which bugs are heroes and which are villains can be difficult. At other times, the champions are unmistakable.

Ladybugs lead the list of champs. Cute as a button, sure, but beneath that happy little exterior is a voracious killer that scuttles over, under, and around stems and leaves in search of prey. What's their target? Aphids. Only aphids. Miss Ladybug's kids are even fiercer than wasp babies. They are eating machines. Mama ladybug lay their eggs in the midst of aphid colonies. When the tiger-striped larvae hatch, it's Armageddon for the aphids.

Lacewings. Poor aphids. They enjoy the attentions of green lacewings, too. These lovely, diaphanous-wing insects are supreme aphid killers, although they'll grab any other insects that sit still long enough. The lacewing's youngsters, hatched from a beautiful arrangement of eggs held on long stalks, bear the nickname "aphid lions," although they are not above eating small caterpillars or other juicy meals. Aphids—food that can't get away or doesn't even try—are their mainstay.

Assassin Bugs. Assassin bugs eat aphids, too, but they also go after bigger game: Leafhoppers. Boll weevils. Beetles. Spiders. Caterpillars. Stinkbugs. Anything they can get in their embrace long enough to pierce its body and suck out the juices. Sometimes assassins take up residence in houses, where they dine on cockroaches, bedbugs, and other yummy bites. Most of us never notice the killers or we kill them, not realizing they are unsung heroes. and latch on.



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Praying Mantis. The biggest hero of all—sized—wise—is the praying mantis. (Yes, “praying,” not “preying,” although insects that venture too near those fierce claws would probably disagree.) Maybe it’s the 360-degree field of vision (more than an owl’s 270-degree view), with those alert eyes, or the mantis habit of staying in one spot (they’re fiercely territorial) that makes this insect seem like a superhero if you’re lucky enough to host one. Unfortunately, compared to other hero bugs, praying mantises are few in number. Like hawks, grizzly bears, and other top predators, every mantis needs a big territory to support its eating habits.



A few more...All insects work to make life livable by keeping nature in balance. Ants may be annoying in the kitchen, but they’re major caretakers of trees and plants: They eat pest insects, clean up debris, loosen the soil with the tunnels of their super societies, and harvest and store seeds. Grasshoppers chomp through the garden, but they’re a vital food source for birds, rodents,

Mantises eat plenty of garden pests, but they don’t ask “Friend or foe?” before those razor legs zap out and latch on. They eat anything that they can get their claws on including butterflies, frogs, and mice, plus a plethora of insects, including their own kin but not their mates, at least not during “the act.” The belief that the female usually eats the male after mating is a myth that got started when mantis couples were observed in captivity. In the wild, the male makes his getaway 7 times out of 10. Sometimes, though, a third mantis will stalk the mating pair and try to nap either or both for lunch while they’re otherwise occupied.

and people in many places. Even those hordes of mosquitoes have a good side. Their wiggling aquatic larvae feed many a predatory water creature. The belief that purple martins, swallows, and bats control mosquitoes is also a myth. Nothing eats adult mosquitoes in significant quantities except possibly toads, when the bugs are rising from foliage at dusk. Even flies are heroic: They’re the sanitary engineers, working to remove carrion by eating it. In turn, their fat, buzzing bodies feed many a bird, bat, and dragonfly.

The web of life is much more complicated than event the most beautiful spider silk, and every bug is both a hero and a villain.

For those of you who are a little squeamish...including me, did you find your self having multiple ick and eek moments while reading about insects?

North Little Rock School District Registration Update for the 2014– 2015 Year

In November 2013, the parties of the long standing Desegregation Lawsuit joined together and created a new Proposed Settlement Agreement to release the State from its obligations under the 1989 Settlement Agreement. The key terms of this Proposed Settlement Agreement will effect students attending Magnet schools, Majority-to-Minority Transfer students, desegregation funding, and the Legal Transfer Process for students within the three school districts in Pulaski County.

Registration will not be held in the NLRSD on Monday, January 27, 2014 for the 2014-2015 school year. The District will release a date for registration for the 2014-2015 school year after the court finalizes the Proposed Settlement Agreement.

Please contact Michael Stone, Executive Director of Student and Equity Services with any questions at 771-8050 or stonem@nlrsd.org. *Information received from NLRSD January 8, 2014.*

Household tips

Cleaner for grout

- 7 c. water
- 1/2 c. baking soda
- 1/3 c. lemon juice
- 1/4 c. vinegar



Simple way to slice cherry tomatoes



The simplest way to slice a bunch of cherry tomatoes at one time is to sandwich them between two plastic lids and run a long knife through all of them at once. *Via Food52.com*

Keep Brown Sugar Soft by storing it with a couple of marshmallows. *Via Storage and Glee*



Install a regular coat rack low down the wall to store shoes safely off the floor. *Via Destination Unknown*

Repurpose a cereal canister as a trash can for your car. *Via BHG.com*



Oven Fried Chicken

1 cup plain Greek yogurt
1 Tbsp Dijon mustard
2 garlic cloves, minced
1 Tbsp, kosher salt, divided
1 tsp ground black pepper
4 chicken legs, skin removed
4 chicken thighs, skin removed
Nonstick cooking spray
1/2 cup whole wheat flour
1 1/2 tsp sweet paprika
1 1/2 tsp dried thyme
1 tsp baking powder

Whisk together yogurt, mustard, garlic, 2 tsp salt, black pepper. Add chicken pieces and turn to coat in marinade. Cover bowl and refrigerated for at least 30 minutes, up to 12 hours.



Preheat oven to 425°F. Line a rimmed baking sheet with foil. Place a wire rack on top of baking sheet and lightly coat with nonstick cooking spray.

Place flour, paprika, thyme, baking powder, remaining 1 tsp salt and 1/2 tsp black pepper in a large plastic bag. Remove

chicken from marinade, shake off excess and place in flour mixture. Shake to coat, shake off excess coating and place on prepared rack. Repeat with remaining chicken. Discard remaining marinade and seasoned coating.

Lightly coat chicken with cooking spray and bake until golden brown and a digital thermometer reads 160°F, 50-60 minutes.

Mashed Potatoes

1/2 cup plain Greek yogurt
1 1/4 lbs Russet potatoes, peeled, cut into 1-inch pieces
1/4 cup low-sodium vegetable broth, warmed
2 Tbsp unsalted butter, melted
1 1/2 Tbsp fresh chives, chopped
1/2 tsp salt
1/4 tsp freshly ground black pepper

Bring a pot of water to a boil. Add potatoes and cook until tender, about 15 minutes.

Drain and transfer potatoes to a bowl. Pour in warm broth and mash potatoes. Stir in yogurt, butter, chives, salt and pepper.



More Household tips...

Use a magnetic strip to store bobby pins inside a cupboard... via *Superwoman*



...or store them in an **empty Tic-Tac dispenser**. Via *One Frugal Chick*

Use a paper plate to prevent splatters when using an electric mixer. Via *Cooking Club*



Place a layer of waxed paper on top of kitchen cupboards to prevent grease and dust from settling. Switch out every few months to keep clean. Via *In this Crazy Life*

Use a Post-It note when drilling to catch the dust. Via *Lifehacker*



Draw out a splinter for easy removal by applying a past of baking soda and water. Via *Wikibow*



Repurpose an old picture frame as a serving tray. Via *Camp Granma*

Use a large muffin tin to cook stuffed peppers in the oven—it will help keep them upright. Via *Better Recipes*





Above: Airmen from the Arkansas Air National Guard's 189th Airlift Wing Civil Engineering Squadron returned home following their deployment to Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom, where they provided a variety of engineering support at Bagram Air Base. Several of these Airmen have deployed numerous times, but most volunteered for their first deployment.

Members of the Camp Robinson/Camp Pike Community Council toured the new Combined Surface Maintenance Shop facility last month. Pictured left, outgoing CR/CP President Diane Whitbey in the Maintenance Shop.

Right, Whitbey was presented the Minute Man Award in appreciation of her service by Brigadier General Keith Klemmer.



Below left, this little guy was rescued during rush hour traffic last month, the temperature was 24 degrees. His coat was horribly matted and he was very thin underneath. He was very dirty and covered in fleas. His condition and appearance suggested a long period of neglect. Below Animal Control employee Adam Tindall and volunteer Liana Piorrier cut layers of matted hair off the little guy. He was also unneutered. "Clarence" was at North Little Rock Animal Shelter last week getting ready to find his forever home.



For information about Clarence or other animals at the shelter, please call 501-791-8577.

North Little Rock High School Charging Wildcats Junior Receiver K. J. Hill (*below*) will receive the Arkansas All Preps Football Player of the Year award and the Little Rock Touchdown Club 7A Player of the Year Award.

K. J. has been selected as first team wide receiver on the All Southeast United States Football Team.

Congratulations K. J.!



Leaf Vacs

Leaves must be raked within 6 feet of the curb and away from any obstructions,

(light pole, rocks, mail box, vehicles, etc.)

Do not put leaves in the storm drain!

Bagged leaves will be picked up weekly on the regularly scheduled yards waste pickup date.

For an approximate location call

371-8355 option 3

North Little Rock City Council Schedule

The North Little Rock City Council meets the 2nd and 4th Monday of each month at **6:30 p.m.** in the City Council Chambers in City Hall (300 Main Street, North Little Rock).

For more information, please contact the City Clerk's Office at 501-340-5317 or email Diane Whitbey at Dwhitbey@northlittlerock.ar.gov.

The City Council Agenda can be found at www.northlittlerock.ar.gov, then click on the Government tab, followed by Council Agenda.

City Council Members

Ward 1	Debi Ross Beth White	753-0733 758-2738
Ward 2	Linda Robinson Maurice Taylor	945-8820 690-6444
Ward 3	Steve Baxter Bruce Foutch	804-0928 658-9714
Ward 4	Murry Witcher Charlie Hight	835-0009 758-8396

Other Elected Officials

Mayor Joe A. Smith	975-8601
City Clerk and Collector Diane Whitbey	975-8617
City Attorney C. Jason Carter	975-3755
City Treasurer Mary Ruth Morgan	753-2028
District Court Judge Jim Hamilton	791-8559
District Court Judge Randy Morley	791-8562

North Little Rock Curbside Recycling
schedule for the month of February:



Feb 3—7 no pickup
Feb 10—14 recycle
Feb 17—21 no pickup
Feb 24—28 recycle

City Offices located at 120 Main

IT/Data Processing, Kathy Stephens	975-8820
Finance, Karen Scott	975-8802
Information	975-8888
Human Resources, Betty Anderson	975-8855
Planning, Robert Voyles	975-8835
Purchasing, Amy Smith	975-8881
Utilities Accounting, David Melton	975-8888

Utility Payment Assistance and Other Numbers

Central AR Development Council.....	501-603-0909
Little Rock Catholic Charities...	501-664-0640 ext 459
Saint Francis House.....	501-664-5036
Watershed.....	501-378-0176
Helping Hand of Arkansas.....	501-372-4388
River City Ministries.....	501-376-6694
Arkansas Metro.....	501-420-3824
Arkansas Food Bank.....	501-565-8121
American Red Cross.....	501-748-1021
Salvation Army.....	501-374-9296

New Telephone Numbers for City Hall

Mayor's Office.....	501-975-8601
Joe A. Smith	
City Clerk & Collector.....	501-975-8617
Diane Whitbey	
External Relations.....	501-975-8605
Margaret Powell	

No Change

Legal.....	501-975-3755
C. Jason Carter / Matt Fleming	
Fit 2 Live.....	501-975-8777
Bernadette Rhodes	
Communications.....	501-975-8833
Nathan Hamilton	

February Anniversaries

<i>Name</i>	<i>Dept</i>		<i># Yrs</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Dept</i>	<i># Yrs</i>	
CHARLOTTE	THOMAS	Admin	40	DEWEY	GOSHIEN	Planning	5
MARY	ERVIN	Comm Dev	12	JOHN	DAVIS	Police	28
MARK	ROGERS	City Clerk	1	LEONARD	MONTGOMERY	Police	36
TAMMY	NEWTON	OES/911	14	HARVEY	SCOTT III	Police	24
ERIC	HEINRICH	Electric	3	KIM	ALMOND	Police	24
SCOTT	SPRINGER	Electric	33	TODD	SPAFFORD	Police	22
EMORY	REED	Electric	26	DARRELL	PIERCE	Police	24
JEFFREY	EISENHOWER	Electric	32	CONNIE	BARTLETT	Police	22
RONALD	OSBURN	Electric	33	JAMES	BONA	Police	20
CHARLES	CARTER	Electric	7	JAMES	BAILEY	Police	20
JILL	PONDER	Electric	4	RAGAN	HERNANDEZ	Police	19
KEITH	MCCOURT	Electric	11	RICHARD	BIBB	Police	18
JOSEPH	FOLEN III	Finance	11	NATHAN	KIMES JR.	Police	19
ALANA	PIERCE	Fire	8	RICHARD	GRAY	Police	18
JEFFREY	COMBS	Fire	15	TODD	HUMPHRIES	Police	18
BRIAN	MILLER	Fire	8	JACOB	HOUSE	Police	11
CHRIS	PATTON	Fire	15	CHARLENE	JAMES	Police	16
COREY	PLATT	Fire	2	ROBERT	SPRIGGS	Police	8
CHRISTOPHER	BRADLEY	Fire	8	LARRY	EPPERSON	Code	8
CHRISTOPHER	MATLOCK	Fire	8	WILLIAM	DODSON	Sanitation	8
TYSON	HADDOCK	Fire	7	KENNETH	WILLIAMS	Sanitation	5
DOYLE	KIRKENDOLL	Fire	7	KENNY	SUMMONS	Sanitation	14
DUSTIN	FREE	Fire	15	PATRICK	LANE	Street	10
WILLIAM	BROOM	Fire	2	GARRY	BUTLER	Street	26
MICHAEL	COOK	Fire	8	ALLEN	BUIE	Street	28
SEAN	SPECKELS	Fire	2	BILLY	ROBERTSON	Vehicle Maint	13
SHANE	DOUGAN	Fire	8	NADIA	JOHNSON	Hays Center	6
BRIAN	THOMAS	Fire	7	WILLIAM	BURNHAM	Parks Maint	1
CHERYL	THOMAS	UAD	5	GARY	SONTAG	Parks Maint	2
DANA	RAEBURN	UAD	6	SAMUEL	SEIGRIST	Parks Maint	15
JENNIFER	JOHANSEN	HR	26	TODD	SMALLING	Parks Maint	16
				JAMIE	STOUT	Parks Rec	2

A spreadsheet including all North Little Rock employees is provided at the end of the previous year for Birthday and Anniversary information (to be used the following year). If you see an employee's name who is no longer with the city, keep in mind that the current information was provided during the previous year when those individuals were employees of the City of North Little Rock.

**North Little Rock City Offices City Offices will also be closed Monday, February 17, 2014
in observance of George Washington's Birthday and
Daisy Gaston Bates Day**

Garbage and trash routes will run one-day delayed the remainder of the week.
(i.e. Monday's route will be picked up Tuesday and so on...)

February Birthdays

Name	Dept	Date	Name	Dept	Date		
WILLIAM	BROOM	Fire	1	ROGER	ROBINSON	Fire	13
MARGIE	MAY	2nd Court	1	ALEX	GUAJARDO JR.	Fire	13
CHERIHAN	SBAIT	Hays Center	1	JERRY	ROBINSON	Fire	13
HARRY	ALLEN IV	Electric	2	DENNIS	HENDERSON	2nd Court	13
THOMAS	BLYTHE JR.	Electric	2	TAMEKA	DAY	UAD	13
ZACHRY	LEASE	Police	2	KAREN	SCOTT	Finance	14
LINDA	FELTON	Police	2	DAGNY	PRITCHARD	Finance	14
GLENDA	PARKER	Parks Rec	2	LESLIE	RICHARDSON	Sanitation	14
BEAU	BUFORD	Fire	3	RICKEY	TRAMMELL	Parks Rec	14
DIANE	WHITBEY	City Clerk	4	TERRENCE	WILLIAMS	Electric	15
JEFFREY	EISENHOWER	Electric	4	CYNTHIA	YANCEY	Fire	15
BENJAMIN	MUNDY	Fire	4	HEATH	WILLIAMS	Fire	15
JOSHUA	COX	Fire	4	JIMMY	JONES	Police	15
DIRK	BARRIERE	Police	4	ROY	ROBINSON	Street	15
PHILIP	GRAY	Police	4	PHILICIA	KNOX	Electric	16
DANIEKA	HERNANDEZ	Police	4	FATIHA	MILES	Hays Center	16
FELECIA	MCHENRY	Code	4	CONSTANCE	FOWLER	Health	17
WILLIAM	DODSON	Sanitation	4	MARTIN	DUNLAP	Planning	17
JENNIFER	FAULKNER	Parks Maint	4	JEFFERY	ELLISON	Electric	18
DANE	PEDERSEN	Police	5	BRIAN	MITCHELL	Police	18
JOHN	SCOTT	Police	5	KELVIN	LORING	Police	18
JOAN	STEWART	Electric	6	SAMUEL	SEIGRIST	Parks Maint	19
PHILLIP	HAMMONS	Police	6	MELINDA	JOHNSON	2nd Court	20
CHRISTOPHER	MORENO	Fire	7	KATELYN	THOMAS	City Clerk	21
ANTHONY	BROWN	Street	7	DOYLE	KIRKENDOLL	Fire	21
PEGGY	BOREL	Fire	8	GARY	SHEFFIELD	Street	21
LINDA	WILLIAMS	UAD	8	TRAVIS	ANDERSON	Street	22
RICHARD	COUNTS	Police	8	JAMES	HOOKS	Fire	23
ERNEST	RUMMEL	Street	8	BRIAN	MILLER	Fire	23
TODD	SMALLING	Parks Maint	9	ALICE	BROWN	Police	23
DANA	WALLIS	Electric	10	GREGORY	HEINTZ	Electric	24
MARK	TOZER	Police	10	HEATH	HOOPS	Fire	25
JASON	STEELE	Street	10	CLAYTON	ZAKRZEWSKI	Fire	25
TERRY	LEONARD	Sanitation	11	JASON	FENDER	Fire	26
GERALD	TUCKER	Fire	12	CHRISTOPHER	WEAVER	Police	27
SUZANNE	FLETCHER	Finance	13	DOUGLAS	THURMOND	Electric	29

If you have news, an upcoming event, recipe, photos, etc. you would like to share with others in North Little Rock, please email Dwhitbey@nlr.ar.gov by the 15th of the month.

Notice: to be eligible to offer a discount to North Little Rock City Employees, a business must be properly Licensed to do business in the city and current on all monies due to the City of North Little Rock.