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# PROUD

Winter 2022, Vol. 05, No. 01.

A Publication of the North Little Rock Mayor's Office



## INSIDE:

LAMAN PLAZA PLAYGROUND  
DIVERSITY EQUITY AND INCLUSION IN NLR

Happy New Year! Wow, what a year we have had in North Little Rock. The North Little Rock Justice Center Dedication Ceremony was a special time for our citizens and police officers. We celebrated Christmas BIG with the annual tree lighting in Argenta Plaza, the Christmas parade, Northern Lights festival and our first-ever, Moments of Joy for unsheltered children in our community. Laman Plaza Playground is now open and is the second all-inclusive playground in our city. The Levy JumpStart project will be completed this month and Park Hill JumpStart will begin soon. Revitalization of Mid City is underway and you will continue to see more beautification projects in our city this year. Our newly formed North Little Rock Diversity Equity Inclusion Alliance is in full swing. We have many plans to make our city more inclusive with innovative opportunities in our neighborhoods and businesses. I am proud to be your Mayor and of the work the city employees and leaders have displayed in our community.

Mayor Terry C. Hartwick



The new North Little Rock Justice Center is a state-of-the-art, 84,000 square foot structure that will house the North Little Rock Police, District Courts, Information Technology Departments and public meeting rooms.



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Mayor Terry C. Hartwick

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# Patrick Henry Hays Senior Center




The staff and members of the Patrick Henry Hays Senior Center have worked diligently to offer quality activities for everyone who enters the building in spite of COVID-19 during 2021. We are thankful for the City of North Little Rock's support, the many volunteers who dedicate their valuable time, and the Hays Center's amazing staff. We would like to share some photos of our members enjoying the many activities they participate in each week. If you are 50 years old and older and would like to join the Hays Center, we would love to have you as a member and join us as we prepare with anticipation for an exciting 2022! Stop by the center and join or visit our website, [www.nlr.ar.gov/hayscenter](http://www.nlr.ar.gov/hayscenter) and join online.





## North Little Rock Justice Center Dedication and Ribbon Cutting

The City of North Little Rock and the North Little Rock Police Department recently celebrated the dedication and ribbon cutting of the new North Little Rock Justice Center. The state-of-the-art, 84,000 square foot structure, will house the North Little Rock Police, District Courts, and Information Technology Departments and public meeting rooms. An additional 6,500 square foot building was erected on the site to house police Special Operations Vehicles and an additional training classroom. The new Justice Center is replacing the current Police and Courts building which was completed in 1964. Several divisions of the North Little Rock Police Department are currently in numerous locations throughout the city. The new Justice Center consolidated several divisions into one central location. In 2017, North Little Rock voters passed a one-cent sales tax. Of the one-cent sales tax, half of the cent was a temporary tax to expire in five years. This half-cent temporary tax was used to build the North Little Rock Justice Center, the new fire station in Levy and to update all of the existing fire stations in North Little Rock. The new Justice Center is a great example that our citizens want our first responders to have the tools they need to do their jobs. Flynco Construction of Little Rock, Arkansas, was the general contractor for the construction of the new facility. The first day of construction was January 13, 2020.

Thanks to architectural firms Hoefer & Welker, Leawood, Kansas; Roark Perkins Perry Yelvington Architects, Little Rock, Arkansas; and 720 Design, Dallas, Texas, for the many months of planning and coordination, resulting in a structure that will provide exceptional services to the citizens of North Little Rock for many years to come. 










# North Little Rock Premiers Diversity Equity Inclusion Alliance (NLRDEI)

President John F. Kennedy once said, “The problems of the world cannot possibly be solved by skeptics or cynics whose horizons are limited by the obvious realities. We need men who can dream of things that never were and ask, “why not?” In North Little Rock, we believe each day we must make a conscious step to reach out and do something to promote a change in our city and community. There is a paradigm shift taking place, and important change is happening. The usual way of thinking or doing is being replaced by new and different ways in the workplace and community. We have millennials, baby boomers, Gen-X and Generation Z, listening to each other’s ideas to reach great goals. We are from different cultures dreaming

of things that never were, and making it happen. Things are changing! It’s achieved by respecting each other, listening to each other, and embracing the different cultures. That’s why, NLRDEI Alliance is so important. We must keep this momentum by outreach, training and communication. The mission of the North Little Rock Diversity Equity Inclusion Alliance #NLRDEIAlliance is to support an inclusive workplace and community by building a diverse fellowship of cultural and social events through ongoing training and information, inclusive to all North Little Rock City employees and community. The vision statement: “Respect each other, Listen to each other, and Embrace different cultures.” 



Mayor Terry Hartwick recently held a news conference in the lobby of City Hall to announce the creation of the North Little Rock Diversity Equity Inclusion Alliance (#NLRDEIAlliance). Mayor Hartwick made a campaign commitment to unify North Little Rock making it a more diverse place, inclusive to everyone in the city from the workplace to the communities served. After research, surveys and planning, Mayor Hartwick is fulfilling that commitment. “Our City deserves the best for all of our neighborhoods, residents and employees. I want to make sure all voices are heard and included in North Little Rock,” stated Mayor Hartwick. NLRDEI Alliance will be directed by Dr. Arnessa Bennett, Director of Special Projects for the Mayor’s office. “It is an honor to make history again in the City of North Little Rock. Our Mayor has true vision and insight into what this city needs at this point in time. I am excited about the projects we have planned and the future of our City!” shared Dr. Bennett. NLRDEI is a citywide focus.



“Scan the QR Code to sign-up to participate in the #NLRDEIAlliance.  
Spanish and English versions available.”



# USS Razorback Celebrates 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Pearl Harbor



The Arkansas Inland Maritime Museum (AIMM) in North Little Rock celebrated the 80th Anniversary of Pearl Harbor on December 7th with a ceremony where a piece of the USS Arizona's hull was unveiled and donated to the museum. The Arizona (BB-39) was hit by Japanese bombers during the attack on Pearl Harbor. After one of their bombs detonated, she sank with the loss of 1,177 officers and crewmen. The wreck still lies at the bottom of Pearl Harbor beneath the USS Arizona Memorial. The piece of the Arizona's hull and a dedication plaque has been commemorated in honor of the fifty-three Arkansans that paid the ultimate sacrifice during the attack on Pearl Harbor. This plaque will be mounted in the Crew's Mess of the Hoga tugboat (YT-146) at AIMM. Thanks to the efforts of many and the United States Navy at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, on December 7, 1941. The USS Razorback submarine, Hoga Tugboat and AIMM are open for tours. Please visit [www.aimmuseum.org](http://www.aimmuseum.org) to learn more about our museum and tour opportunities.



Former United States Congressman, Marine Vietnam Veteran and AIMM Foundation Board member Dr. Vic Snyder (right) is pictured along with two other Marine Veterans. Congressman Snyder spoke during the unveiling and dedication ceremony.



# Economic Development



Waldo's Chicken and Beer is new to Warden Road.



Whole Hog Cafe gets a new location on Warden Road.



The new Hoggs Meat Market on John F. Kennedy Boulevard in Park Hill.

# Revitalization in Mid City

In the early 1990s, the neighborhood north of Argenta from the 13th Street viaduct to Pershing Boulevard was formed by a concerned group of neighborhood residents. A senseless act of violence actually spurred the formation of the group, when a business owner was murdered at his shop at 18th and Main Streets. The Mid City group met monthly for years to discuss major concerns in their neighborhood: problem houses, crime, overgrown alleys, businesses in the area, and proposed changes to the neighborhood by the city. One issue discussed was the fate of a vacant business at the corner of Percy Machin and 18th Street, The Southern Grill which had been vacant for a number of years before owners attempted to reopen it as a bar. The neighborhood organization was very vocal in their disapproval of a bar in the heart of their neighborhood and the North Little Rock Planning Commission voted against the use. Eventually the building was torn down.


Founders of Mid City included Inez Ballentine and Mary Emma Hess. With I-30 forming the eastern boundary and the railroad track running north out of the railyard forming the western boundary, the leaders decided to use the name Mid City to describe the new area of North Little Rock. There are many different subdivisions comprising this area and they wanted



to differentiate it from Argenta to the south. Mary Emma Hess actually recommended the name, Mid City.

The most visible issue the neighborhood worked on was the proposal to build a bridge over the railroad tracks at 15th Street. The organization objected to tearing down the houses the bridge construction would require, the large amount of new traffic through the neighborhood, having to back out of driveways onto a busy street, and having their neighborhood cut in half by the bridge itself. Eventually the City Council voted against the proposed bridge. The group disbanded after several years as elderly

residents died or moved away. While some founding members still live in the neighborhood, no younger residents expressed interest in continuing the group. Efforts to encourage new members to step up into leadership roles were unsuccessful.

Fast forward to 2021. Mayor Hartwick appointed Dr. Arnessa Bennett, Director of Special Projects, to oversee a beautification project starting from 13th and Main Streets to Pershing and Main Streets. Banners, planters with flowers and other improvements are already in place. Businesses located on Main Street in this area have partnered in committing to the revitalization of the area, now called Mid City Main Street and are starting to do their part to help with the beautification efforts on their properties. Because of the delay of merchandise all over the country, phase one of the project from 13th and Main Streets to 18th and Main Streets will not be completed until the Summer of 2022. If you are interested in purchasing property in the Mid City Main Street area or helping with the beautification effort, please contact Dr. Arnessa Bennett, [abennett@nlr.ar.gov](mailto:abennett@nlr.ar.gov). 



# Christmas in North Little Rock: MAYOR'S TREE LIGHTING



# Christmas in North Little Rock: CHRISTMAS PARADE



# Christmas in North Little Rock: NORTHERN LIGHTS



# Christmas in North Little Rock: MOMENTS OF JOY

The City of North Little Rock sponsored the first-ever, MOMENTS OF JOY, on Saturday, December 18 for children within the North Little Rock School District who face homelessness. Thirty children were presented an assortment of gifts, including items of necessity, enjoyed lunch with one guest of their choosing and also shared in a performance of “A Christmas Carol” at Argenta Community Theater. North Little Rock Police Officer Jhailan Rathey, Liaison to the Unsheltered Community shared, “We are thankful for everyone who positively impacted “MOMENTS OF JOY” through their sponsorship. Sharing time with the kids made the event extra special.” First Assembly of God in North Little Rock, Argenta Community Theater, Galaxy Furniture and North Little Rock Chamber were just a few of the local sponsors that participated with the City of North Little Rock and the North Little Rock School District. “What a great time we all had at MOMENTS OF JOY. This was a memorable moment for each child that attended as well as all of the adults. Thanks to all of our sponsors that assisted this year. We hope to continue this as an annual event.” stated North Little Rock Mayor Terry Hartwick.



# Laman Plaza Playground Opens



The North Little Rock Parks and Recreation Department recently opened the second accessible playground in North Little Rock at Laman Plaza located at 2801 Orange Street in North Little Rock. The playground is located between the North Little Rock Community Center and the William F. Laman Public Library. The new accessible playground has been built on the footprint of the old water fountain in Laman Plaza. It improves access to play for children with disabilities and 200+ children and teens from local low-income neighborhoods who use the William F. Laman Library as a community center. This universally designed play space is the second accessible playground in North Little Rock and can accommodate 269 children at a time. Renovations to the Laman Plaza provide the Laman Library and the North Little Rock Parks and Recreation Department more space to deliver safe community programs. “We envision Laman Plaza as a destination for families by continuing to build our community across economic barriers and abilities. Families of all demographics can spend the day in North Little Rock going between the library and the playground for free,” shared Mayor Hartwick. Accessible parking and entrances to Laman Plaza are available from parking lots on the east and west side of Laman Library. Accessible bathrooms are available in William F. Laman Library.







# Fire Station Re-Opens in Historic Park Hill



The North Little Rock Fire Department re-opened station #5, a historic structure in the Park Hill neighborhood during December. The 103 year old rock station is located at 3417 Magnolia Street, next door to the City of North Little Rock Neighborhood Services building. The station was closed temporarily in 2018 due to health and safety concerns within the building. The station needed major renovation to remain safe for both the firefighters and citizens of North Little Rock. The concerns and renovations included major roof repair, water-proofing, structural repair, electrical and plumbing, HVAC and a solution for the truck exhaust problem. In 2018, the Fire Department partnered with the Arkansas Historic Preservation Program and received the first of two grants for the station renovation and remodel. A \$50,000 grant was issued in 2018 and a \$33,000 dollar grant for 2021. In 2019, Fire Chief Gerald Tucker and his staff put together a renovation

program to modernize and repair the Park Hill fire station and bring a new home to the Fire Marshal's Office while preserving the Park Hill Neighborhood's relationship with the fire department. CBM construction was hired to oversee the remodel in 2020. Most of the remodel to the outside of the station was designed to give it the original appearance presented in 1938.

As a result, the North Little Rock Fire Marshal's Office is now located in the Park Hill Fire Station. The station has a completely remodeled and renovated office space and work area that will combine the long-standing fire department presence with the community partnership with our Park Hill neighbors. All health and safety concerns have been addressed and improved. The fire department has been overwhelmed with support over the re-opening. Many people have stopped by and shared stories of how they grew up in the neighborhood with the station. "We are excited to bring the station back to the community and service the city of North Little Rock with the new office space" shared Mayor Hartwick. The remodel was funded through several sources: Arkansas Historic Grant, Act 833 funds, allocations from the capital sales tax and funds from the Fire Department's Budget. The total cost of renovation was approximately \$455,000. 🏠



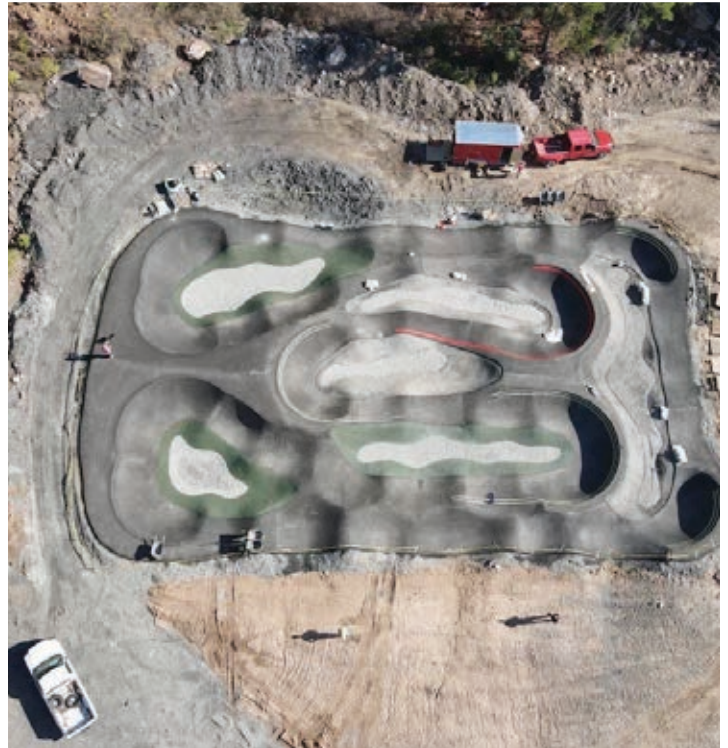
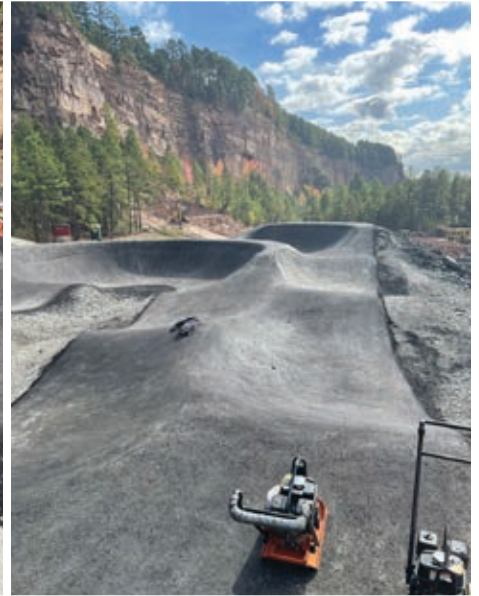
# Levy JumpStart Nears Completion



The Levy JumpStart project will be completed in early 2022. Landscaping and street lights are the finishing touches and should be completed in the spring. Thanks to the residents of our city for your patience. We are excited about the new look in Levy.



# Coming Soon: Grand Opening of Pump Track



## What to Look for in 2022!

- Location named for health clinic in Rose City
- Groundbreaking for Park Hill JumpStart Project
- Date for City of NLR Job Fair
- All city services to relocate to one building.

