



## September

National Suicide Prevention Month

9/10-9/16 National Suicide Prevention Week

9/4 Labor Day

9/11 Patriot Day

9/23 Autumn Equinox

**SEVENTH ANNUAL**  
**FALL**  
**Food & Craft Fair**  
HOSTED BY THE DHS DIVISION OF DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES SERVICES  
**OCT 6 • 11 A.M. - 2 P.M.**  
DOWNTOWN LITTLE ROCK 7TH & MAIN

**SUPPORT CRAFTERS**  
WITH DEVELOPMENTAL & INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES.

**ITEMS INCLUDE:**  
HANDMADE RUGS, MAGNETS, ARTWORK, WREATHS,  
HOLIDAY & HOME DÉCOR & MORE!  
ALL PROCEEDS GO TO THE ARTISANS WHO MADE THE ITEMS.

**FOOD TRUCKS!  
SHOPPING! FUN!**  
FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT YVETTE SWIFT  
AT [YVETTE.SWIFT@DHS.ARKANSAS.GOV](mailto:yvette.swift@dhs.arkansas.gov)

AR empower Summit CareSource arkansas total care

## *Arkadelphia HDC and the Elks Lodge Razorback Project*



The Elks Lodge provides the materials needed for AHDC residents to make these Razorback ceramic banks. The Elks also makes an annual donation to the HDCs. Pictured is AHDC's Vocational Training Director, Jamia Walker with an Elks Lodge representative providing them with 80 plus hogs that were created and painted by the residents of our facility.

*Submitted by: Janna Huneycutt,  
AHDC Quality Assurance Analyst*



## *Booneville HDC Therapy Dogs*

BHDC is very fortunate to have Therapy Dogs grace our campus. Kathy Edwards, Psychological Examiner, started this program in 2019 with her dog Ripley. Since then the program has expanded to three dogs, adding Abbey and Barkley.

Ripley has been working as a therapy dog since 2019. He is an 8-year-old Catahoula Leopard Dog mix, and he loves his therapy job. He is especially good at cheering up and bringing instant smiles to those he interacts with. During pet visits, clients can spend one on one time with Ripley and work on various skills. Some of the skills are: socialization, cause and effect, trust, reading nonverbal cues, focus and attention, interacting appropriately, mindfulness, and patience. Ripley teaches these skills naturally and unconditionally. Ripley works with Kathy Edwards, Psychological Examiner, in the Psychology Department. He is registered with the Alliance of Therapy Dogs.

Abbey has been working as a therapy dog since 2020. She is a 9-year-old English Bulldog. Abbey has great enthusiasm for her therapy work. She uses her outgoing personality to brighten everyone's mood. Abbey is especially great at nonverbal communication and interaction begins immediately in her presence. Petting, being the center of attention, and having a "conversation" are her favorite things. Abbey works with Michelle Shafer, Administrative Specialist II, in the Psychology Department.

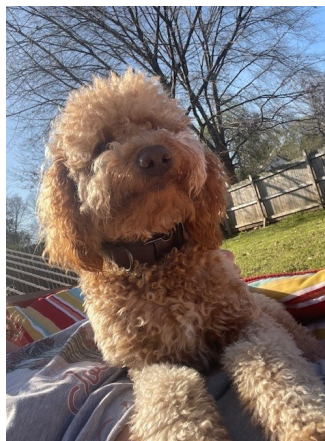
Barkley is our most recent therapy dog and started in June 2023. He is a 1.5-year-old Miniature Golden Doodle. He loves cookies, swimming, going for rides in the car and people! Barkley was definitely born to be a therapy dog, bringing smiles to our client's face and easing their troubles. He is still figuring out the lay of the land at BHDC but will primarily be working with our clients in the Judge Hill Living Area. Barkley works with Lynette Hill, ROM in the Residential Services Department. He is registered with the Alliance of Therapy Dogs.

It's such a joy having these dogs around.

*~Submitted by Jennifer Berry*



Abbey



Barkley



Ripley



## *Arkadelphia HDC Resident, Charles Nash spotlight*

Charles Nash was a speaker at the Arkadelphia Noon Rotary Club. Shelley Loe, Citizen Bank VP Commercial Loan Officer and DDS Board Member, stated, "He did an excellent job!" She also submitted photos from the event.

Congratulations Charles!



## *Meet Ann Marie Hatcher*



Ann Marie Hatcher is the Training Project Manager over the Staff Development Department at the Jonesboro HDC. She has served in this position since September 2016. She has been employed by the State of Arkansas for 36 years with all of those years being spent at JHDC. Ann is currently the longest tenured employee at JHDC.

During the time Ann has worked at JHDC, she has held many positions including Direct Care Staff person, Recreation Leader, Job Coach, Art Teacher, Personnel Manager, Retention and Recruitment Officer, and Assistant to the Superintendent, as well as over 17 years collectively in Staff Development alone.

Ann is married to her husband of 25 years, Donnie, who was the former Director of Residential Services and has retired from JHDC. They have two children, a son, Dylan, 24, who is a truck driver and daughter, Lauren, 20, who is a cosmetologist.

In her spare time, Ann likes to do arts and crafts. She is mostly self-taught. She likes to be outdoors either doing yard work or laying in the pool. Anyone who knows her knows she is a huge fan of Halloween, and even works as a scare actor at a local haunted house!

Ann states the following:

“Back when I first started here, this was not my career path. The Jonesboro HDC was not in my big scheme of things plan, but God had other plans. Over the years of working here, I have seen so many changes, residents and staff alike. If I was to start talking about it, I would be able to write a book! I have a sign in my office which says “I Teach...What’s your superpower?” My favorite thing about working here is the ability to teach others to care for the residents, helping them to become long term employees who will grow where they are planted. I take pride in knowing every single staff and resident by name. I might not know a lot about each and every person, but I do strive to get to know each person. Some certain people, I know a little “too much.” LOL! I can say I have been truly blessed with the friendships I have made and experiences I have had here. A lifetime of memories I will cherish always. I have always said that my hope is when I leave, I will have left it a much better place than when I started. It was a pretty great place when I started, so I still have work to do! I am not one of those people who can just walk away without making sure things are in order. I do not want someone to have to fill my shoes, but be able to pick up and run with a plan that “works” and needs no improvement.”

*~Submitted by Diane Keith, JHDC Superintendent*

## *Parent Advisory Council (PAC) President shares son's scholarship news*

At the Parent Advisory Council (PAC) Meeting on July 14, 2023, the PAC President, Michelle Siemiller, talked about her son Trip and his scholarship offer from the University of Pikeville in Kentucky for archery. The full story is on the Arkansas Game and Fish website in the Arkansas Wildlife Weekly Newsletter for July 12, 2023 under the story link, "Bergman athlete arrows college scholarship with archery."

Congratulations Trip!

Submitted by Iris Goacher, CHC Administrator



Photo credit: AGFC.com

# Save The Date

10/6

*7th Annual DDS Fall Festival*

10/30

*DHS Children's Halloween Event*



## *Comments, Suggestions, Q&A*

Please submit all questions, suggestions, and Q&A to Yvette Swift at [yvette.swift@dhs.arkansas.gov](mailto:yvette.swift@dhs.arkansas.gov) by the 15th of the month.



# The Blue Umbrella NEWSLETTER

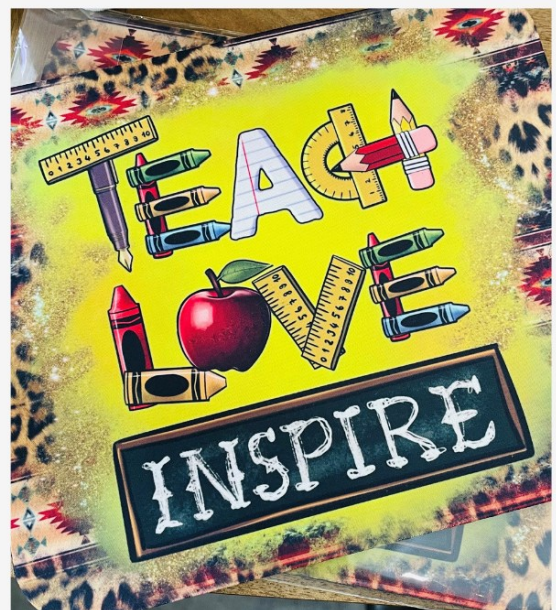


September 2023



*Back to School*

Show teachers, faculty, and school administration some love and appreciation with new classroom decor or apparel made by artists at Arkadelphia Human Development Center.



Shop Online → [www.blueumbrellaar.org](http://www.blueumbrellaar.org)



# Woo Pig Soobie



Arkansas Razorback home décor and stadium approved gear has arrived in The Blue Umbrella. Although these items are not made by artists, proceeds from the sale of these items help support the store, special events, and our day to day expenses.

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## UPCOMING EVENTS

Oct. 6: 7th Annual DDS Fall Food & Craft Fair

Oct. 18-19: AHSEA Annual Conference

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Thank you to everyone who shopped The Blue Umbrella at the Beyond the Borders Regional Conference this year! It was wonderful to meet everyone and we are beyond grateful for your support of The Blue Umbrella and our artists!

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Visit us in store Monday - Friday 10 AM - 2 PM or shop anytime online at [www.blueumbrellaar.org/shop](http://www.blueumbrellaar.org/shop)