

# KEISER NEWS

2025

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

**April Newsletter** 

Vol 24

#### FROM MAYOR RICK CREECY

## Understanding Grants and Water Bill Increases

I have received several questions about why, despite securing numerous grants, water bills remain high. It's important to understand that grants are awarded for specific projects and cannot be used for anything outside their designated purpose. For example, if we apply for a grant to improve the city park, we must outline exactly how the money will be spent—whether for new playground equipment, shade trees, or walking trails. If awarded, the funds must be used strictly for those improvements, and after the project is completed, we must report on our progress and provide receipts for all work completed.

Grants are not available for a city's day-to-day operations, such as utility costs or employee salaries. Our biggest financial challenge right now is our aging sewer system, which is failing and must be repaired. The total cost of the project is \$4.6 million. Thankfully, we secured a \$3.2 million grant to cover most of the cost, but that still leaves us with a \$1.6 million loan that must be repaid. Additionally, we are required to maintain a \$460,000 "Depreciation Account" until the loan is paid off. Since we do not have these funds upfront, we are allowed to build the account by making monthly deposits.

I have also been asked, "What if we reduce the amount of work and only do, say, \$3 million worth of repairs?" First, this would not be enough to address all the necessary repairs to create a stable sewer system. Cutting the project short would leave us with ongoing infrastructure problems that would still need to be fixed down the road. Second, the way the grant is structured, if we lower the amount of work performed, the grant money and loan money decrease proportionally. This means we would not just lose loan funding—we would also see a reduction in grant money at a 3:1 ratio. In other words, for every dollar less we borrow, we would also lose three dollars in grant funding, significantly reducing the resources available to make improvements.

The most recent increase in water bills was necessary to qualify for the grant. Without it, we would not have met the eligibility requirements, and the city would have been responsible for the entire \$4.6 million cost. While no one likes higher bills, this increase allowed us to secure funding that significantly reduced the financial burden on our community. Additionally, the funds generated from the last bill increase will help make the required monthly loan payment, ensuring that we can meet our financial obligations while keeping the project on track.

Beyond repairs, this investment in our sewer system is critical for the future of Keiser. With the system in its current condition, we cannot grow our city. Growth is necessary to attract new businesses and bring in more residents, which in turn helps share the costs across a larger population, ultimately reducing expenses for everyone. Our goal is to expand Keiser through annexation and the development of two new subdivisions—one on the west side of town and another where the old school system is being demolished. These efforts will strengthen our community and ensure a more sustainable future.

We appreciate everyone's understanding and support as we work to secure a better future for Keiser.

City Council meeting on the 3rd Monday of each month at 6:00 pm. All welcome.

Follow us on Facebook and at our website

Water bills due the 16th of each month. Late charges will be applied on the 17th and shutoff on the 27th unless the 27th is Friday.

Remember riding ATV's on city streets is a violation of state law and will be enforced.

Remember the city has a leash law. If you are walking your dog in the city limits they MUST be on a leash. No exceptions.

If you have not yet registered your dog or cat. Please come to City Hall and do so.

Disclaimer: The City of Keiser strives to ensure that all information published in this newsletter is accurate and up to date. However, errors or omissions may occur, and information is subject to change. The City of Keiser is not liable for any misprints, incorrect data, or reliance on the information contained in this publication.

Home owners and contractors are required to notify city hall before any mechanical excavation can be done.

City Hall—870-526-2300

#### **New City Hall Hours**

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

### Glenn Dunn III - Chief of Police

April is here! Hello, my name is Glenn Dunn III and I am the Chief of Police for the city of Keiser. Just a little about me, I am a 15-year veteran of law enforcement, with a background in School Resource Officer training. I'm excited to be a part of the city of Keiser and be a proactive and community-oriented figure. I have been married for close to 18 years and have 3 children. My wife and I have a small farm and work animal rescue.

We have some exciting plans for the community in the coming months and we at the Police Department hope to bring the community together to improve the safety and security of the city as well as build upon the community.

Some things to remember, residential areas of the city are 15 miles per hour. There have been speed bumps installed in areas where speeding and careless driving have been a problem in the past. City Ordinance 2021-1 details the licensing requirements for your dog or feline.

To help prevent stray animals in the city, please make sure your pet is registered at city hall in the event is does become loose, we can get your loved one safe and returned to you. The weather becoming warmer brings more people outside to enjoy it. Please keep an eye out for pedestrians and children as you are driving.

I look forward to a long and prosperous career, serving and protecting the citizens of this city.



### Penny Wilbanks - Recorder/Financial Director

#### The Role of a Recorder/Treasurer: Why It Matters

A Recorder/Treasurer is a crucial position in local government, ensuring transparency, accountability, and financial stability within the community. This role is often found in smaller municipalities, where combining these responsibilities helps streamline operations and reduce costs.

#### What Does a Recorder/Treasurer Do?

As a recorder, the individual is responsible for maintaining official records, including meeting minutes, ordinances, resolution, and vital documents. They ensure public records are accessible and accurate, supporting transparency in government operations.

As a treasurer or Financial Director, they manage the community's finances, tax collections, payroll, and financial reporting. This includes balancing accounts, tracking expenditures, and ensuring compliance with state and federal financial regulations.

#### Why Is This Role Important?

The recorder/treasurer or Financial Director ensures financial integrity and proper record keeping, preventing errors or fraudulent activities. By handling both administrative and financial duties, this position helps local governments operate smoothly and efficiently.

Their work also directly impacts residents, as they manage tax revenue, ensure public funds are spent responsibly, and maintain clear records for legal and historical purposes.

#### Conclusion

A well-organized and diligent recorder/treasurer is essential for any local government, providing financial oversight and maintaining records that keep the community informed. Their dedication to transparency and fiscal responsibility ensures that public resources are managed wisely, benefiting both residents and government officials alike.

### **Neal Brown - Director of Public Works**

# Keiser Prepares for a Clean and Safe Spring and Summer

As winter fades away and the days get longer, the City of Keiser is shifting focus from limited cold-weather tasks to a full schedule of spring and summer work. Winter weather often slows things down—cold temperatures, rain, and frozen ground make it difficult to complete many outdoor projects. But with the arrival of warmer weather, we are now diving into a wide range of seasonal maintenance and improvement efforts all across town.

One of our first priorities is city-wide cleanup. Fallen limbs from winter storms are being removed from streets, sidewalks, and especially the city park. Crews are trimming trees that pose safety concerns or interfere with walking paths and playground equipment. At the same time, we are picking up yard debris that residents place near the roadside after sprucing up their properties. This team effort helps keep Keiser looking neat and cared for.

Grass cutting is now in full swing. With the growing season underway, our city team mows more than 25 acres of public property each week—including parks, vacant lots, rights-of-way, and around public buildings. It's a big job, but essential for keeping the city looking sharp and preventing overgrowth.

In addition to mowing and cleanup, we've started cleaning out all ditches and culverts to ensure proper drainage and avoid future flooding issues. We are replacing damaged or faded street signs, squaring up any leaning ones to improve visibility and safety. New speed bumps are also being installed in targeted areas to help reduce speeding and protect pedestrians and neighborhood traffic. Street patching will follow shortly, with work crews focusing on problem spots across town to improve driving conditions.

These efforts are all part of our ongoing commitment to keep Keiser clean, safe, and welcoming. We appreciate our residents' cooperation and support as we work hard to get our town ready for a great spring and summer season.

### Spring Clean Up

# Spring Clean-Up Day in Keiser – Saturday, April 26th

As the weather warms up and the flowers begin to bloom, it's the perfect time to come together as a community and take part in something that benefits everyone—Spring Clean-Up Day. On Saturday, April 26th, the Mississippi County Landfill will be open free of charge to individuals from 7:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon. This event provides a valuable opportunity for residents to dispose of large or unwanted items without the usual landfill costs.

Here in Keiser, we're making it even easier to participate. The City will once again be placing large dumpsters behind the Post Office for residents to use during the clean-up. These dumpsters are ideal for throwing away household clutter, broken furniture, old appliances, brush, and other debris that accumulates over time. Please remember that shingles, tires, and hazardous materials are strictly prohibited from being placed in the dumpsters.

Spring Clean-Up is about more than just trash—it's about **community pride**. A clean, well-maintained community is not only more enjoyable for current residents, but it also makes a positive impression on visitors and potential new homeowners. Neighborhoods that are kept free of debris and overgrowth help **increase property values**, reduce pests, and even help deter crime. When our yards, streets, and public spaces are clean and welcoming, it creates a stronger sense of place and encourages others to do their part.



## Helmet Hero Project

#### Keiser Launches Helmet Hero Project in April to Promote Bike Safety and Community Connection

The City of Keiser is proud to announce the launch of the *Helmet Hero Project*—an exciting new initiative focused on promoting bike safety, protecting children, and strengthening the bond between the Keiser Police Department (KPD) and the community.

This family-friendly program encourages kids to wear helmets while riding bikes, scooters, skate-boards, and other wheeled equipment. But it's not just about safety—it's also about fun, education, and building trust between youth and local law enforcement.

At the heart of the program is the *Helmet Pledge*, where children promise to always wear their helmets, follow the rules of the road, and encourage their friends to do the same. Each child who takes the pledge receives a pledge card, co-signed by a police officer, as a symbol of their commitment and a reminder that safety matters.

Officers will be on the lookout for children who are following through on their pledge. When spotted wearing their helmets, these young riders will be given a "Caught Being Safe" ticket. Each ticket can be redeemed at City Hall for fun prizes like treats, toys, or small items kids love. Even better—each ticket also counts as an entry into a year-end raffle, where lucky winners could take home a new bicycle, gift cards, or other exciting prizes.

To help ensure every child has access to a helmet, the city will provide **free helmets** (while supplies last).

The Helmet Hero Project will also host educational events where kids can learn how to properly fit their helmets and pick up useful bike safety tips. Officers will take an active role in helping fit helmets, leading

safety sessions, and celebrating children's efforts to ride safely.

This initiative is part of KPD's broader community policing strategy—focusing on positive, non-enforcement interactions with residents, especially the youngest ones. By connecting with children in a friendly and supportive way, the department hopes to build long-lasting trust and strengthen community ties.

If local businesses in Keiser or the surrounding communities would like to donate prizes to support this initiative, it would be greatly appreciated. Your contributions help encourage safety, reward positive behavior, and show a united commitment to protecting and uplifting our youth.

The Helmet Hero Project is more than a safety program—it's a symbol of what's possible when a city comes together to protect and empower its children. By working hand-in-hand, we can create a safer, stronger, and more connected Keiser.

More information, including the program's official start date, will be shared soon. In the meantime, we encourage all families to get ready to participate, and help us make the Helmet Hero Project a success!

Together, let's celebrate our young riders—and help every child in Keiser become a true *Helmet Hero*.



## April Fools' Day: A Celebration of Tricks and Laughter

Every year on **April 1st**, people across the world take part in **April Fools' Day**, a time for jokes, pranks, and playful deception. While its origins are debated, the modern celebration is widely recognized in many countries, with individuals, businesses, and even media outlets joining in on the fun.

In the **United States**, April Fools' Day is a lighthearted tradition where friends, family, and coworkers try to trick one another. Classic pranks include switching sugar for salt, placing fake insects in unexpected places, or telling someone an unbelievable but harmless lie. Schools and offices are often filled with practical jokes, as long as they remain good-natured and harmless. Social media has also become a major part of the holiday, with people sharing and spreading jokes online.

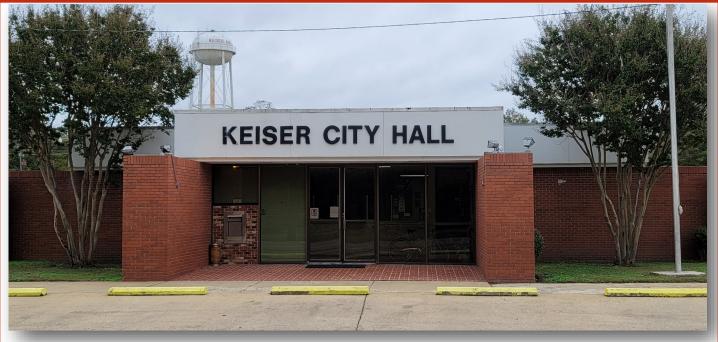
Businesses and media organizations have taken April Fools' Day pranks to another level. Companies like Google, Burger King, and Netflix have released fake product announcements, fooling thousands before revealing the joke. The BBC's famous 1957 "spaghetti tree" prank, where it claimed farmers were harvesting spaghetti from trees, is still considered one of the best

April Fools' hoaxes of all time. In 1996, Taco Bell tricked Americans by claiming it had purchased the Liberty Bell, renaming it the "Taco Liberty Bell." These large-scale pranks often make headlines and add to the excitement of the day.

Internationally, April Fools' Day is celebrated in different ways. In **France and Italy**, people play "**Poisson d'Avril"** (**April Fish**), where they stick paper fish on others' backs as a joke. In **Scotland**, the tradition was once a two-day event, with the first day focused on sending people on foolish errands and the second day known as "Tailie Day," where pranks involving people's backsides—such as pinning fake tails—were common. **Brazil, Canada, and Germany** also recognize April Fools' Day with hoaxes and media-driven jokes.

Though some elaborate pranks fool millions, April Fools' Day remains a simple and fun occasion for laughter and creativity. Whether it's a small joke among friends or a large corporate hoax, the holiday is a reminder not to take everything too seriously. Just remember—on April 1st, question everything before believing it!

### **City Hall Hours**



Monday - Friday from 8:00 - 4:45

Closed for Lunch from 12:00 - 1:00

#### Tax Deadline Approaching: A Look at Its History and How to Prepare

As we move closer to **April 15, 2024**, it's time to start thinking about filing your income taxes. This date marks the deadline for both **federal and Arkansas state income tax returns**, and missing it can result in penalties, fees, and unnecessary stress. Whether you're expecting a refund or preparing to pay taxes owed, understanding the history of taxation in the U.S. and following a few key steps can help you navigate this process smoothly.

The concept of income tax in the United States dates back to the **Civil War**, when President Abraham Lincoln signed the **Revenue Act of 1861** to help fund war efforts. However, this tax was repealed a few years later. It wasn't until **1913**, with the ratification of the **16th Amendment**, that the federal income tax system as we know it today was established. Initially, the tax only applied to the wealthiest Americans, but as government programs expanded, the tax system was revised to include more taxpayers.

Arkansas introduced its state income tax in 1929 as a way to support public services such as education, transportation, and healthcare. Like federal taxes, Arkansas' tax rates and brackets have changed over the years, with recent reforms aimed at lowering tax rates for residents. Today, both the IRS and the Arkansas Department of Finance and Administration (DFA) manage tax collection, ensuring that funds are distributed to various government programs that benefit the public.

April 15 has been the official **Tax Day** since 1955. Before that, the deadline had been March 1, and later March 15, but as the tax code became more complex, the deadline was moved back to give taxpayers and accountants more time to prepare returns. If April 15 falls on a weekend or holiday, the deadline is extended to the next business day. For 2024, since April 15 falls on a **Monday**, there are no automatic extensions.

Failing to file or pay your taxes on time can result in penalties and interest. The failure-to-file penalty is 5% of your unpaid taxes per month, while the failure-to-pay penalty is 0.5% per month. Over time, these penalties add up, making it even more expensive to catch up. Even if you cannot afford to pay the full amount, it is better to file on time and set up a payment plan with the IRS or the Arkansas DFA to avoid hefty fines.

To make the tax process easier, start by gathering all necessary documents, including W-2s, 1099s, mortgage interest statements, charitable donation receipts, and

any deductions you qualify for. Missing documents can delay your filing and possibly cause errors. Many taxpayers choose to file electronically (e-file) because it is faster, more secure, and helps reduce errors. E-filing with direct deposit ensures a quicker refund if you're owed money.

Some taxpayers qualify for free tax preparation assistance through programs like the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) and Tax Counseling for the Elderly (TCE), which help low-income individuals, seniors, and disabled taxpayers. Many online tax services also offer free federal and state filing for those who meet income requirements.

If you're unable to complete your taxes by April 15, you can file for an **extension** with the IRS and Arkansas DFA. This gives you until **October 15, 2024**, to file your return. However, **an extension does not extend your time to pay**—you must estimate and pay any taxes owed by April 15 to avoid penalties.

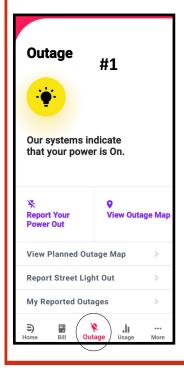
As tax season approaches, it's also important to **beware of scams**. Scammers target taxpayers every year through fraudulent phone calls, emails, and fake IRS websites. Remember that the **IRS and Arkansas DFA will never call or email you asking for personal information**—always verify tax-related communications through official sources.

With just a few weeks left before the deadline, now is the time to start gathering your documents and making a plan. Filing early can help you avoid last-minute stress and give you more time to correct any errors. If you need help, visit the IRS website (irs.gov) or the Arkansas DFA website for resources, tax calculators, and assistance programs. By staying informed and filing on time, you can ensure a smooth tax season and avoid unnecessary penalties. Don't wait until the last minute—take action now and get your taxes filed before April 15, 2024!



## City Street Lights- You Can Report an Outage

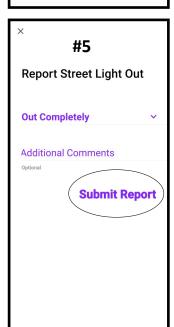
In the City of Keiser, the 139 streetlights are crucial for nighttime safety, but many of these bulbs, having been in service for years, are prone to weakening, blinking, or failing completely. Fortunately, Entergy has streamlined the process for reporting outages with a user-friendly app available for both iPhone and Android devices. Residents can simply download the app, log in or register their account, and use it to report issues. To report an outage, users should select the #1 "Outage" option at the bottom of the screen, which displays a #2 map of streetlights near their location. If the faulty streetlight is known, it can be selected directly from the map. If the exact light is unknown, users can stand near the problematic light and select the purple dot with a circle on it from the bottom right of the screen to use GPS for precise location. After selecting the light, a menu titled #3 "Report Street Light Out" appears, offering #4 five options to describe the issue. Once the problem is specified, users can #5 submit the report. A confirmation screen will then verify that the report has been received by Entergy, who typically resolves such issues within one to two days. Reporting streetlight outages not only helps in maintaining the infrastructure but also enhances community safety by deterring crime, so residents are encouraged to report any issues they observe.













### Important Reminder: All-Terrain Vehicle Road Usage in Keiser

The Keiser Police Department wants to remind all residents and visitors about the regulation regarding all-terrain vehicles (ATVs) within city limits and on Arkansas roads. According to AR Code § 27-21-106, operating three- or four-wheeler ATVs or side-by-sides on public roads in Arkansas, including the streets of Keiser, is illegal. This law is in place to protect not only ATV riders but also drivers and pedestrians. ATVs are designed for off-road use and lack the safety features of road vehicles. Riding them on public streets increases the risk of accidents and injuries, putting both riders and others in danger.

To ensure compliance, the Keiser Police Department will be actively enforcing this regulation. Anyone caught riding an ATV on Keiser streets will receive a citation. This enforcement effort is not about penalizing residents but about keeping everyone safe. While we understand the enjoyment ATVs bring, safety must come first. We encourage ATV owners to respect this law and use their vehicles only in designated areas or private properties where riding is both legal and safe. There are many trails and off-

road sites designed for ATV use, allowing riders to enjoy their vehicles without endangering others.

The decision to strictly enforce AR Code § 27-21-106 in Keiser is made with the community's best interests in mind. Safety is our top priority, and by following this law, we can work together to prevent accidents and injuries on our roads. We appreciate your cooperation in keeping Keiser safe for everyone, whether walking, driving, or enjoying recreational activities. If you have any questions or need clarification on ATV regulations, please contact the Keiser Police Department. Together, we can ensure our community remains a safe and enjoyable place for all.



# April 2025

| SUN         | MON              | TUE             | WED              | THU                 | FRI            | SAT               |
|-------------|------------------|-----------------|------------------|---------------------|----------------|-------------------|
|             |                  | 1               | 2                | 3                   | 4              | 5                 |
|             |                  | April Fools Day | Autism Awereness | Nat'l. Burrito Day  |                |                   |
| 6           | 7                | 8               | 9                | 10                  | 11             | 12                |
|             | World Health Day |                 |                  | Nat'l. Siblings Day | Nat'l. Pet Day | Passover (Begins) |
| 13          | 14               | 15              | 16               | 17                  | 18             | 19                |
| Palm Sunday |                  | Tax Day         | Water Bill Due   |                     | Good Friday    | Bicycle Day       |
| 20          | 21               | 22              | 23               | 24                  | 25             | 26                |
| Easter      | Council Meeting  | Earth Day       |                  |                     | Arbor Day      |                   |
| 27          | 28               | 29              | 30               |                     |                |                   |
|             | Cutoff Date      |                 | Denim Day        |                     |                |                   |

# Kids Fun Page

## **Addition Problems**

**Contact Us** 

City Hall—870-526-2300 Email—cityofkeiser@gmail.com Mayor—rjc.cityofkeiser@gmail.com



Scan Me...

# City Fun Page

#### Tax Season

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SSYZZZLTOKFYPYXRYRYQGIKUS
EKTYLZGXRWFIBNXTYTAXPA
WZWAIWYOZYEHLH
INKUTVNOEODTC
                 PPU
ROYPCEIRSGSELSNDQF
                 BGGG
           TSKTEBNGT
A K I S X H | N Q V U Z E F N D K Y F L Q D
MDODOEYFALOLCOEDPNRGGC
            BFBGDXE
                NGEM
            LIB
      KSBRPOLRYEN
           VOIANBOYP
            TACXAFKO
                      В
            IBKDTOVVABLCNO
               ZFNUUMXRC
        TFGDTDUALOCLRXR
             YSNUKME
             STDGZDDGI
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V T G A G Y | W F D E W O H D C K Q U O R N N G Y
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Withholding Dependents Deduction Owe
Extension Exemption Liability W-2
Deadline Taxpayer Write-off IRS
Penalty Credits Filing

Penalty Credits Filing
Bracket Return Refund
Income Rebate E-file
Audit State Gross

**Contact Us** 

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