



KEISER NEWS

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

2024

November Newsletter

Vol 19

FROM MAYOR RICK CREECY

I am excited to unveil our ambitious 3-, 5-, and 10-Year Strategic Plan, a comprehensive blueprint designed to steer the city's growth and development over the next decade. This plan represents a shared vision for a stronger, more resilient Keiser, emphasizing improvements to critical infrastructure and fostering community growth. Among our top priorities are significant upgrades to the sewer and water systems, ensuring that residents benefit from reliable, high-quality services, alongside efforts to expand the city's population and attract new businesses.

The strategic plan outlines a phased approach to modernize Keiser's aging sewer system. This includes the construction of a new lift station and the use of advanced technologies like pipe bursting to replace old sewer lines with minimal disruption. These improvements are essential for expanding the system's capacity, preventing costly backups, and preparing for future growth. By investing in our sewer infrastructure, we are ensuring that Keiser is well-equipped to meet the needs of a growing population while maintaining high standards for environmental compliance.

In tandem with these sewer upgrades, the plan also focuses on enhancing the city's water systems. This includes the installation of self-reading water meters that provide residents with more accurate billing and greater control over their water usage, as well as the addition of a new water aerator to ensure that our water supply remains clean, fresh, and free from impurities. These upgrades will not only improve the daily lives of residents but also position Keiser as a forward-thinking community that prioritizes sustainability and public health.

Beyond infrastructure improvements, the strategic plan places a strong emphasis on growing Keiser's population through new housing developments and economic opportunities. The city is planning the development of new residential subdivisions on the west side of town and along Main Street, offering a range of affordable housing options for families and professionals. Coupled with efforts to attract essential businesses, such as a gas station and retail options like a Dollar General, these developments will make Keiser a more attractive place to live and work. Our goal is to increase homeownership by 25% over the next decade, fostering a stable, thriving community that is deeply invested in the city's future.

We strongly encourage all residents to visit our website to download and read the full strategic plan. It provides a detailed look at the projects and initiatives that will shape our community over the next 10 years and offers a clear vision of what we can achieve together. Additionally, to support these ambitious goals, the city is preparing a professional prospectus based on this plan. This prospectus will serve as a valuable tool for securing grants, loans, and investment from potential partners who share our enthusiasm for Keiser's growth and success.

By working hand in hand with the community, we can turn this vision into reality, creating a Keiser that is vibrant, resilient, and ready for whatever the future holds. Take a moment to visit our website today, explore the strategic plan, and learn how you can contribute to building a brighter future for Keiser. Together, we can make our city stronger than ever.

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.

You can buy 40 gallon garbage bags at City Hall. There are 50 in a roll and the cost is \$10.00 per roll.

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

City Hall—870-526-2300

New City Hall Hours

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

Jerry Hamilton - Chief of Police

Many of you already know me, some will get to know me. I have many years of law enforcement experience with the majority being in investigations and administration. I am a lifelong resident of Mississippi County and care about the community we live in, especially Keiser, since I live here too. I know the concerns of everyone, and I assure you Keiser Police Department will be working to correct these issues. From the time I was a child and on up into my teens Keiser was to me an Andy Griffith show and it will be again. Law enforcement cannot catch everything all the time, but we will certainly do our best. I have made many friends in my law enforcement career over the years, many of which stand ready to help us now. We will use every tool at our disposal and any help given to stop drugs and all crimes related. I just ask for your patience as we start putting our plans to action.



Penny Wilbanks - Recorder/Financial Director

A Day In The Life Of A City Clerk

A city clerk is one of the oldest public service positions. The office of city clerk was one of the first to be established when early colonists set up local governments. Today, a city clerk is responsible for many administrative functions that relate to maintaining the public records of a municipality.

The office of the city clerk typically serves the mayor, the city manager, and the city council. This position also includes the roles of Treasurer, office manager, purchasing agent, and customer service representative.

A typical day in the life of a city clerk includes some or all of these activities:

- Preparing agendas and recording proceedings
- Certifying and recording resolutions, regulations, and ordinances passed by the council
- Serving as accounts payable officer
- Working with city auditors
- Overseeing city elections and administering oaths of office

Along with the City Clerk position, I have taken on the Treasurer position. This adds more duties to do in an 8 hour day. Utilizing time between the 2 jobs, makes for an eventful but successful day in the office.



Daylight Savings Time

The end of Daylight Saving Time in 2024 falls on Sunday, November 3rd, at 2:00 a.m. At this time, most Americans will set their clocks back by one hour, gaining an extra hour of sleep and marking the shift back to standard time. This change means earlier sunsets and longer evenings, as the daylight hours begin to dwindle heading into winter. For many, the time change is a reminder that the colder months are approaching, with shorter days and cooler temperatures becoming the norm.

Daylight Saving Time has been a part of American life for over a century, initially introduced to make better use of daylight during the longer days of summer. By shifting an hour of sunlight from the morning to the evening, the aim was to conserve energy and make evenings lighter. However, as we return to standard time, the mornings become brighter once again, offering a bit of extra daylight for early risers.

The end of Daylight Saving Time often brings mixed feelings. Some welcome the extra hour of sleep and the return of brighter mornings, while others miss the extended daylight in the evening. It's a good time to

adjust routines, check household clocks, and prepare for the seasonal changes that come with this time of year. As we fall back, it's also a reminder to check smoke detectors and carbon monoxide alarms, a safety practice often recommended alongside the time change.

This transition may take a few days to adjust to, but it also serves as a natural reminder of the cyclical changes of the seasons. As the days grow shorter, the shift back to standard time encourages us to embrace the coziness of autumn and prepare for the winter months ahead.



City Hall Hours



Monday - Friday from 8:00 - 4:45

Closed for Lunch from 12:00 - 1:00

Happening Around Town - Keiser Update



Senior Park Area

The City of Keiser is excited to announce that the new Senior Area in City will soon be open and ready for use! This space includes a variety of exercise equipment designed to help our community stay active, including an Air Strider, Elliptical, Bike, and a 4-position exercise station. It's a great opportunity for residents to get outdoors, enjoy the cooler fall air, and work towards a healthier lifestyle.

In addition to the exercise equipment, the area features two picnic tables and three park benches, perfect for a relaxing visit with friends or family. While there is still some landscaping and dirt work to be completed, the space is already a welcoming spot for gathering and enjoying the park.

This project was made possible through a generous AARP grant, and we are truly grateful for their support. Let's come together as a community and make the most of this new addition to our city park!

City of Keiser Awarded Arkansas Urban & Community Forestry Grant

The City of Keiser is thrilled to announce that we have been awarded an Arkansas Urban & Community Forestry grant. This 50/50 matching grant, totaling \$5,000, will be used to purchase Willow Oak trees for the City Park. These new trees will provide much-needed shade and add beautiful fall colors, enhancing the natural beauty of our park for residents and visitors alike.

We are especially grateful to Big River Steel, who generously contributed the \$2,500 matching funds needed for this project. Their support has been instrumental in making this improvement possible, and they continue to be a WONDERFUL partner to our community.

We look forward to watching these new additions grow and thrive, creating a more inviting and vibrant space for everyone to enjoy!

Dylan Smith Attends Leadership Academy to

Strengthen Community Leadership

Dylan Smith, the Team Lead for Keiser's city employees, has been selected to attend the Leadership Academy, a program offered by South Mississippi County and the Osceola Chamber of Commerce. This initiative aims to ensure the continued prosperity of Osceola and South Mississippi County, which have thrived over the years thanks to a strong tradition of community and civic leadership.

Through the academy, Dylan will develop crucial skills such as communication, conflict resolution, and public speaking. These skills will equip him to play a more active role in shaping the future of Keiser and contributing to the city's growth. The program's mission is to seek, identify, educate, and motivate potential leaders, preparing them for the challenges of community leadership in the years to come.

The Leadership Academy is managed by the Education Committee, emphasizing the importance of building strong leadership for the next generation. Dylan's participation is a great step forward in fostering continued community engagement and progress in Keiser.

Keiser Police Department Enhances Capabilities Through Grants and Community Support

Thanks to several police grants, the Keiser Police Department has been able to significantly upgrade its equipment, providing our officers with the tools they need to perform their duties effectively and safely. These upgrades include new technology, protective gear, and other essential resources that ensure the department operates efficiently and enhances public safety.

We are also deeply grateful for the generosity of neighboring cities, which has greatly strengthened our department's capabilities. The City of Blytheville generously donated a patrol car, while the City of Jonesboro contributed additional equipment. Jonesboro also sold us three fully equipped police units for a nominal fee of \$1,000 each. These units come with essential tools and technology, enabling our officers to be even better prepared for their daily responsibilities.

This combination of grants and community support has been vital in keeping our city safe and ensuring that our officers can serve the community effectively.

Spending Time with Family During the Holidays

The holiday season is a time of joy, warmth, and togetherness. Amidst the hustle and bustle of everyday life, it offers a chance to slow down, reconnect, and cherish moments with loved ones. Spending time with family during the holidays is more than just a tradition—it's a meaningful way to strengthen bonds, create memories, and remind ourselves of what truly matters.

Gathering with family provides a sense of belonging and comfort, offering a break from the stresses and challenges of daily routines. Whether it's sharing stories around the dinner table, playing games, or simply enjoying each other's company, these moments can create lasting memories that everyone cherishes long after the holiday season ends. It's during these gatherings that we often reflect on the past year, share laughter, and express gratitude for the support and love of those closest to us.

Beyond just creating happy memories, time spent with family also contributes to our emotional well-being. The warmth of a loving environment can provide a much-needed boost during the colder months, helping to combat the seasonal blues that some may experience. It also

reinforces the importance of nurturing relationships, reminding us that no matter how busy life gets, prioritizing time with those we care about is essential.

For children, holiday family time can be especially significant. It teaches them the value of togetherness, kindness, and traditions, laying the foundation for strong family bonds that they will carry into their future. These moments are often filled with the magic and wonder of the season, creating memories that stay with them for a lifetime.

As the holidays approach, making time for family helps us focus on the simple joys that truly define the season. It's a reminder that the best gifts are often not the ones wrapped in paper but the shared experiences, laughter, and love that we give to each other. Embracing this time together allows us to celebrate the spirit of the season and to find joy in the presence of those who mean the most to us.



The History of Thanksgiving

Thanksgiving is a holiday with deep historical roots, evolving over centuries into a celebration of family, gratitude, and community. Its origins can be traced back to the early 17th century when English Pilgrims settled in Plymouth, Massachusetts. In 1620, after a difficult journey across the Atlantic, they faced a harsh winter in the New World, during which nearly half of their community perished. Their fortunes changed in the spring of 1621 when they met members of the Wampanoag Tribe, including Squanto, who taught them essential survival skills like fishing, planting crops, and harvesting. These lessons were crucial to their first successful corn harvest that fall.

To celebrate this success, the Pilgrims invited the Wampanoag to join them in a three-day feast, now often considered the first Thanksgiving. Around 50 Pilgrims and 90 Native Americans attended the gathering. The menu differed from what we know today, featuring wild game like venison, fish, corn, and other local produce. It was a moment of shared gratitude between two cultures, highlighting cooperation in a time of need. However, the concept of giving thanks for the harvest was not unique to the Pilgrims; it was common among both European settlers and Native American tribes. Many colonies held their own thanksgiving feasts to mark the end of the harvest season.

Thanksgiving didn't become a formal national holiday until 1863. Amid the Civil War, President Abraham Lincoln, influenced by the advocacy of Sarah Josepha Hale, declared a national day of thanksgiving. He set the date as the last Thursday in November, aiming to foster a sense of unity and reflection during a time of great national strife. Lincoln's proclamation helped solidify Thanksgiving as a cherished American tradition, focusing on gratitude and family. Over the years, the holiday evolved, with turkey, stuffing, and pies becoming central to the feast. By the 20th century, Thanksgiving had grown to include parades, football games, and community activities.

In 1939, President Franklin D. Roosevelt moved Thanksgiving up one week to extend the holiday shopping season, but after controversy, Congress set it as the fourth Thursday of November in 1941. Since then, Thanksgiving has remained a time for families across the United States to gather, reflect, and enjoy traditional meals. While many aspects of the holiday are celebrated nationwide, Thanksgiving customs vary from region to region, reflecting the unique character of each state.

In Arkansas, Thanksgiving blends national traditions with local flavor, offering a unique holiday experience that emphasizes community, heritage, and the state's natural beauty. Families across Arkansas come together to share meals, often including traditional Southern dishes like fried okra,

smoked ham, and pecan pie alongside the turkey and dressing. These recipes, passed down through generations, create a sense of continuity and connection to the past.

The holiday weekend is also an opportunity for Arkansans to explore the state's breathtaking landscapes. The cooler weather and vibrant fall foliage make it an ideal time for hiking, camping, and fishing in places like Petit Jean State Park, Mount Magazine, and the Ozark National Forest. Many families use this time to enjoy the serene beauty of the Buffalo National River or Greers Ferry Lake, taking a break from the rush of everyday life to appreciate the peacefulness of nature. For those who prefer staying closer to home, community events like turkey trots, parades, and local fairs provide a chance to celebrate together.

In smaller towns like Keiser, neighbors come together for community dinners and free Thanksgiving meals hosted by churches and nonprofits, ensuring that everyone can share in the holiday spirit. These gatherings reflect the close-knit nature of Arkansas's communities, where supporting one another is a way of life. Local organizations often host food drives and prepare meals for families in need, ensuring no one goes hungry. The spirit of giving that defines Thanksgiving is evident throughout Arkansas, as volunteers deliver food baskets and sort donations, making the holiday brighter for those facing challenges.

Thanksgiving in Arkansas also offers a chance to reflect on the state's rich cultural heritage. Native American history is an integral part of Arkansas's story, with tribes like the Quapaw having deep roots in the region long before European settlers arrived. The holiday serves as a reminder of this deeper history and offers an opportunity to acknowledge the contributions and traditions of Native American communities. It's a time to honor the diverse roots of the state and to remember the importance of unity and respect among all its people.

As Thanksgiving approaches, Arkansans look forward to the traditions that make the holiday special—gathering with loved ones around a bountiful table, enjoying the beauty of the state's landscapes, and coming together as a community. Despite the challenges that each year may bring, the spirit of Thanksgiving endures.

It's a time to pause, reflect, and appreciate the blessings of life in the Natural State. For the people of Arkansas, Thanksgiving is more than a holiday; it's a celebration of family, friendship, and the simple joys that make their communities so special.

**ALWAYS
GIVE
THANKS
IN
EVERYTHING
HAPPY
THANKSGIVING**

Happy Veterans Day

Veterans Day is a time for Americans to unite in honoring the brave men and women who have served in the United States Armed Forces. Observed each year on November 11th, this day holds deep significance as a tribute to the courage, sacrifice, and dedication of our veterans. It is a day to remember those who risked their lives, stood in harm's way, and answered the call of duty with honor, ensuring that the freedoms we cherish remain secure. Veterans Day is more than a day of remembrance; it is a reminder of the values that define our nation—freedom, democracy, and selfless service.

The history of Veterans Day dates back to the end of World War I. The war officially ended with the Treaty of Versailles on June 28, 1919, but fighting had ceased months earlier with the armistice between the Allies and Germany on the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month—November 11, 1918. This moment marked a hopeful end to a conflict that had reshaped the world. President Woodrow Wilson proclaimed November 11 as Armistice Day, honoring those who fought and recognizing the peace achieved.

Initially intended to commemorate World War I veterans, Armistice Day became a broader reminder of sacrifice as the U.S. faced more conflicts, including World War II and the Korean War. In 1954, President Dwight D. Eisenhower signed legislation changing Armistice Day to Veterans Day, honoring all who served in the military. From that point on, Veterans Day became a time to recognize every veteran, whether they served in war or peace, for their role in defending liberty.

Communities across the country mark Veterans Day with parades, ceremonies, and moments of silence. From major cities like New York to small towns like Keiser, Arkansas, people gather to pay their respects. National landmarks, such as Arlington National Cemetery, become places of reflection, where wreaths are laid, and prayers are offered for those who made the ultimate sacrifice. The Tomb of the Unknown Soldier serves as a powerful symbol, representing those whose identities may be lost but whose service will never be forgotten.

Veterans Day is not only about remembering the past; it's about recognizing the nearly 19 million veterans living today. These veterans represent every branch of the military and come from every corner of the country, reflecting the diversity of the United States. They are our neighbors, friends, parents, and grandparents. Some bear physical wounds; others carry the invisible scars of combat. Veterans Day is a time to reach out, say "thank you," and ensure

they know their service is appreciated.

The day also reminds us of our duty to support veterans as they transition back to civilian life. While they have defended our nation, many face challenges at home, such as finding jobs and accessing healthcare. Veterans Day is a call to ensure that those who have given so much receive the support they need. It's a time to advocate for better access to services, job opportunities, and mental health resources, ensuring that veterans are treated with the respect they have earned.

Veterans Day's significance goes beyond a single day—it embodies the deep gratitude the American people feel for those who have served. It unites us as a nation, reminding us that despite our differences, we share a bond of appreciation for the freedoms we enjoy. Those freedoms are the result of the sacrifices made by veterans who have protected our country. The values of duty, honor, and country are at the heart of Veterans Day, reminding us of the ideals that our military men and women have upheld.

As Veterans Day approaches, it's a chance to reflect on the legacy of service that spans generations. It's a time to teach younger generations about the importance of honoring those who served and to instill respect for their sacrifices. By attending ceremonies, visiting memorials, or simply thanking a veteran, we honor their courage and reaffirm our commitment to the ideals they fought to protect.

Veterans Day embodies the spirit of America—a spirit of resilience, bravery, and a steadfast belief in freedom. It is a day when Americans come together to express gratitude to those who served under our flag. Their service is a reminder that our freedoms come at a cost, one they willingly paid to keep our nation strong. On November 11th, with flags raised and hearts full of pride, we remember the sacrifices of our veterans and celebrate their enduring legacy of service to the United States of America.



The Right and Responsibility of Voting

As the National Election approaches on November 5th, it's important to remember the right and responsibility that each of us holds as citizens. Voting is not just a privilege—it's a fundamental right that has been earned and protected throughout our history. By casting your ballot, you have a voice in shaping the future of our nation, state, and local community. While national elections often capture headlines, local elections in the City of Keiser have a direct impact on our everyday lives. They determine who will serve in roles that shape local policies, services, and the direction of our community.

Participation in both national and local elections is crucial. It ensures that our leaders are chosen by the people and are accountable to the needs of those they serve. In Keiser, our votes decide who will be responsible for making decisions about city services, community development, and the well-being of our town. It's an opportunity to ensure that the voices of Keiser residents are heard loud and clear. By voting on November 5th, you can make a difference at every level—so let's come together as a community, exercise our right, and fulfill our responsibility. Every vote counts, and every vote matters.

Engage with Your Community Leaders

Beyond casting your vote, it's just as important to stay involved in local issues by voicing your opinions to city leaders and attending City Council meetings. These meetings are a valuable way to stay informed about what is happening in Keiser, from new projects and developments to discussions about city services. They provide a platform for residents to share their thoughts, concerns, and ideas directly with decision-makers. By attending, you help ensure that the community's needs and desires are considered when decisions are made. Make your voice heard, not just at the ballot box, but throughout the year by engaging with your local government. Your participation helps build a stronger, more connected Keiser.

Arkansas Rural Community Grant

The City of Keiser is proud to announce that we have been awarded the Arkansas Rural Community Grant for the second consecutive year, a testament to our commitment to enhancing public spaces and services for our residents. This ongoing support allows us to tackle essential projects that improve our community's quality of life, one step at a time. Last year, we used the grant to install new playground equipment at City Park, providing a vibrant and safe play area that has quickly become a favorite spot for local families. The addition of swings, slides, and climbing structures has created an engaging, safe environment for children to enjoy, fostering both physical activity and social interaction.

This year, the grant will be directed toward a new priority: upgrading and repairing the park's restroom facilities. These upgrades aim to address both structural and aesthetic needs, including the repair of the roof to ensure the building remains dry and damage-free, as well as fresh coats of paint on both the interior and exterior. The improvements extend to plumbing and fixtures, with plans to repair or replace sinks, toilets, and other essential features to maintain functionality and provide a more polished appearance. Additionally, in our commitment to accessibility, we will be making these restrooms fully handicap accessible, including modifications to meet ADA standards. This upgrade will ensure that all residents and visitors, including those with mobility challenges, can comfortably use these facilities.

These changes not only enhance the park's functionality but also contribute to the broader revitalization of City Park, where recent developments, including new playground equipment, security updates, and lighting enhancements, have transformed the area into a clean, safe, and welcoming space. We are grateful to the Arkansas Rural Community Grant for making these projects possible and to our community members for their ongoing support. Together, we're building a better, more inclusive City of Keiser for everyone to enjoy.

Christmas in Keiser



November 2024

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
					1 All Saints Day	2
3 Daylight Savings Time Ends	4	5 Election Day	6	7	8	9
10	11 Veterans Day	12	13 World Kindness Day	14 World Diabetes Day	15	16 Water Bill Due
17	18 Council Meeting	19	20 Universal Children's Day	21 World Hello Day	22	23 Nat'l Espresso Day
24	25	26 Nat'l Cake Day	27 Cutoff Date	28 Thanksgiving	29 Black Friday	30 Small Business Saturday

City Fun Page

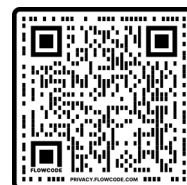
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Native Americans	Mashed potatoes	Celebration	Fall
Cranberries	Cornucopia	Togetherness	
Gratitude	Blessings	Tradition	
Gathering	Pilgrims	Stuffing	
Pecan pie	November	Family	
Turkey	Parade	Autumn	
Feast	Harvest	Roast	
Giving	Pumpkin	Thanks	

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