

# THE MORNING NEWS

SERVING NORTHWEST ARKANSAS SINCE 1886

## BENTONVILLE EDITION

TODAY IN WEEKEND

**BIKES,  
BLUES AND  
BBQ  
FESTIVAL**

PAGE 1D

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50¢

PROPERTY REAPPRAISAL LAW

## Legislator Wants Clarity

LAWMAKER SEEKS OPINION FROM ATTORNEY GENERAL ON PRESENT STATEWIDE SYSTEM

By Rob Moritz  
THE MORNING NEWS  
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**LITTLE ROCK** — Amid growing angst over the real estate downturn in Northwest Arkansas, an area legislator wants clarity from the attorney general regarding state law as some property owners' taxes are rising while home prices and values decline.

Sen. Kim Hendren, R-Gravette,

thinks the current statewide system used to reappraise residential property is flawed, and he told colleagues Thursday he would seek the opinion of Attorney General Dustin McDaniel.

"This is not about paying taxes," Hendren said during a meeting of the House and Senate revenue and taxation committees. "This is an issue of fairness."

Hendren said he continues to get calls from upset property owners

and worries the state could be vulnerable to a class-action lawsuit because of what he said was varying applications of the law.

Testifying at a legislative hearing last month, Benton County Assessor Bill Moutray and others said part of the problem in their county was the county Equalization Board was not consistently applying a portion of the law that apparently requires equalization boards to go back and change all appraisals on

properties of similar size and value if one owner appeals a higher valuation and wins.

Moutray said more than 1,300 Benton County property owners already have asked to appeal their appraisals to the equalization panel.

Hendren said he would ask McDaniel's office whether the law in fact requires equalization boards to value similarly

SEE REVENUE PAGE 2A

## Students Learn Nutrition At Farm

By Rose Ann Pearce  
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**FAYETTEVILLE** — Standing at the edge of an apple orchard at the University of Arkansas farm, most of the fifth-graders raised their hands to show they like to eat apples. But before they could eat the Golden Delicious apples picked right off the tree, they had to collect and record data about what they were seeing and doing.

Then, they selected some of the apples from the different bins to wash, rinse, dry and take home.

The fifth-graders are from Leverett Elementary School where a pilot program was launched this year to teach students more about where their food comes from and more about making healthy food choices for meals and snacks.

Kindergarten, third-, fourth- and fifth-grade students each spent about an hour at the Agricultural Experiment Station on Thursday. Pre-kindergarten, first and second grades are there today.

The farm trip was the first activity for Apples in the Classroom, initiated by Apple Seeds Inc., a new nonprofit education organization formed last year, said Keith Richards, chairman of the board of directors. As the students arrived, they were greeted by a group of Apple Seeds volunteers and horticulture program specialists who gave a brief overview of apples.

The first apples were found in Asia and from those seeds, the Pilgrims grew apple trees in America, said Heather Friedrich, a horticulture program specialist.

Golden Delicious apples were first discovered in West Virginia and every Golden Delicious tree is directly linked to that first tree, she said. The students, armed with their new knowledge about apples, divided into groups to get to work.

SEE FUTURE PAGE 3A

## MASSIVE GRILLIN'



J.S. WEDGEWORTH THE MORNING NEWS

**Justin Eaton**, with Back Yard Burgers of Rogers, prepares food Thursday for a picnic at Memorial Park in Bentonville. The event was held for employees of Wal-Mart's Information Systems Division and featured food and games.

### GETTING STARTED

IN THE NEWS

#### Magical Journey Fully Bilingual

Teatro de la Rosa brings "El Secreto de la Lagartija/The Lizard's Secret" to the Arts Center of the Ozarks. In the story, a prince takes a magical journey where he encounters giants and talking animals. The bilingual production is based on an old Mexican folktale. **FULL STORY, 10D**



#### School Basketballer Tries Football Also

**BENTONVILLE** — Chad Hood wanted his senior year at Bentonville to be memorable. He wanted to experiment a little and let his final year of high school be something he wouldn't regret.

For the last three years, Hood has focused solely on basketball, a sport he planned to continue playing at the collegiate level.

Hood went to Bentonville's football coaches in the offseason and inquired about playing anywhere he'd be needed.

In his first game at Conway, Hood caught six passes for 121 yards and helped the Tigers win 42-3.

**PREP GAMEDAY**

## City, POA Discuss Streets

BELLA VISTA TO NEGOTIATE WITH ASSOCIATION

By Anna Fry  
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**BELLA VISTA** — Bella Vista budgeted to start paying for street maintenance this month, but it isn't.

The Bella Vista Property Owners Association provides the service through its street department. The association has been talking with the city about how best to transfer the responsibility, which state law requires cities to provide.

The city and association need to work something out as soon as possible, Board Chairman Roberta

Dale said in a meeting Thursday. If the association pays through the end of the year, it'll spend \$229,000 it didn't budget for, she said.

The board directed General Manager Tommy Bailey to negotiate a contract with the city to provide street maintenance through the end of next year.

Dale assumes the city will reimburse the association for street maintenance costs back to this month even if there's no contract, she said.

Mayor Frank Anderson attended the meeting and would not commit the city.

"In June, you folks stopped me moving forward on streets," he said.

When he contacted the association to say Alderman Doug Farnor would work on the transfer, the association waited to get back in touch with him, Anderson said.

The city has to pay unexpected expenses because spring storms damaged streets, he said.

"There are some fairly sizable projects out there and I don't have any money from (the Federal Emergency Management Agency) yet," Anderson said.

SEE CONTRACT PAGE 2A

## Board Agrees To Overseed Two Courses

THE MORNING NEWS

The Bella Vista Property Owners Association will oversee its Kingswood and Berksdale golf courses this winter, its board of directors decided Thursday.

Many in the village objected when the board in June upheld a decision to halt overseeding on all courses, citing better turf conditions and cost savings. The association overseeds with ryegrass, which thrives in winter and remains green.

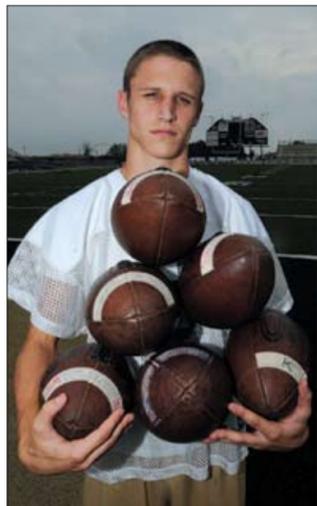
"It's time to compromise," Director Andy O'Neil said before moving to oversee the two courses.

When they halted overseeding, several directors expressed concern because that means golf carts are restricted to paths during winter months, and some residents aren't physically able to walk the courses. They asked the administration to find a way to accommo-

date golfers with disabilities.

General Manager Tommy Bailey said the two ways to do so are to oversee some courses or to establish a handicap flag system for carts. He heard no positive comments about flag systems from other course managers, Bailey said.

Director Stewart Smith was the only dissenting vote. A handful of audience members clapped after the board made the decision.



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