

TIMES RECORD

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TODAY IN LIVING

LAUGH ALONG WITH 'LEADING LADIES' AT FSLT

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A Stephens Media LLC Newspaper Serving Fort Smith, Western Arkansas and Eastern Oklahoma

FORT SMITH LEGAL COUNSEL

City Eyes 'In-House' Attorney

DIRECTORS SEE LAW FIRM RAKING IN TAX DOLLARS

By Chad Hunter
TIMES RECORD • CHUNTER@SWTIMES.COM

In the wake of allegations that Fort Smith's contracted legal counsel is charging too much, a city director has requested the city explore other options.

"The city has a lot of money in legal fees," At-Large Director Pam Weber told her peers on the Board of Directors and other city officials during a meeting late Tuesday. "I would like for us to look at the possibility of hiring an in-house attorney that would work for the city and be a city employee."

She added that, "A lot of cities do it. So I'd like us to explore that possibility and see if we could possibly save some money."

Following Weber's request, At-Large Director Philip Merry Jr. added, "Ditto."

For decades the city has employed the services of local firm Daily & Woods for general legal services, municipal court prosecution, advice on employment matters, litigation defense and legal work for property, right of way and easement acquisitions.

The firm charged the city \$404,285, \$406,380 and \$285,122 annually in 2013, 2012 and 2011 respectively, according to the Fort Smith Finance Department.

Weber referenced an attorney's report detailing specific legal fees charged to the city in 2013.

"I've gotten a lot of calls from attorneys recently since all these fees have come out," she said. "They told me we are wasting taxpayer dollars, bottom line."

On Wednesday, Weber said her request was in part sparked by allegations from Little Rock attorney Matt Campbell of "blatant, egregious and possibly criminal waste of public funds by the law firm of Daily & Woods in their capacity as city attorney for Fort Smith."

"That was part of it," Weber said. "But honestly I thought we should look into it for a couple years now. Since the report came out I've taken quite a few phone calls saying, you know, why haven't you all done this. I think it kind of spurred me on to action."

SEE ATTORNEY PAGE 6A

BIEBER FEVER



Elizabeth Morrow, front, and other students sing along with a Justin Bieber song Wednesday during Bonneville Elementary School's attendance, celebrating students who have missed one or fewer days of school since March.

RACHEL RODEMANN • TIMES RECORD

Arkansans Salute Angelou

FORMER STATE RESIDENT DIES

By John Lyon
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LITTLE ROCK — Gov. Mike Beebe, President Barack Obama and former President Bill Clinton were among those who paid tribute Wednesday to Maya Angelou after learning of her death at 86.

"Maya Angelou will always remain an Arkansas and American treasure," Beebe said in a statement. "She drew from a troubled and painful childhood

to write books and poems that have inspired countless others. From



Angelou

Stamps, Ark., to the steps of the U.S. Capitol for President Clinton's inauguration, Maya Angelou showed how strength, determination and honesty can take us all to the heights of greatness."

The author of "I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings" and numerous other works, Angelou died Wednesday at her home in Winston-Salem, N.C.

CELEBRATED POET, AUTHOR ANGELOU DIES PAGE 2D

She was born in St. Louis but spent part of her childhood in Stamps, to which she returned in 1982 with Bill Moyers for an episode of his television series "Creativity."

Clinton said in a statement Wednesday that he will always be grateful to Angelou for the "electrifying" reading she gave of her poem "On the Pulse of the Morning" at his 1993 inauguration.

"With Maya Angelou's passing, America has lost a national treasure; and Hillary and I, a beloved friend," Clinton said. "The poems and stories she wrote and

read to us in her commanding voice were gifts of wisdom and wit, courage and grace."

Obama, who presented Angelou with the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 2011, said in a statement Wednesday, "A childhood of suffering and abuse actually drove her to stop speaking — but the voice she found helped generations of Americans find their rainbow amidst the clouds, and inspired the rest of us to be our best selves. In fact, she inspired my own mother to name my sister Maya."

SEE ANGELOU PAGE 6A

Whirlpool Plans More TCE Tests

By Chad Hunter
TIMES RECORD • CHUNTER@SWTIMES.COM

Whirlpool Corp. submitted to the state this week what it calls a soil investigation work plan outlining additional tests that target a contamination hot spot at the company's closed plant in Fort Smith.

A portion of the sprawling Whirlpool property on Jenny Lind Road has been contaminated with trichloroethylene, or TCE, since at least 1989 when it was discovered at the site, according to environmental consulting firm Environ.

Earlier this month, Whirlpool noted that "an additional, limited area of soil with increased concentration" of TCE was discovered underground near a building where the chemical was once used as a degreasing agent before it was deemed harmful.

According to the Arkansas Department of Environmental Quality, the discovery is the result of an investigation during the winter months.

SEE WHIRLPOOL PAGE 6A



RACHEL RODEMANN • TIMES RECORD

Daryl Pemberton, left, 911 deputy coordinator with Washington County Emergency Management, Homeland Security, chats with Timothy Lee, training specialist at the Arkansas Small Business and Technology Center at UALR, on Wednesday at the Baldor Technology Building at the University of Arkansas at Fort Smith.

Workshop Helps Agencies Train For Search, Rescue Operations

By Justin Bates
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Representatives from local, state, tribal and federal government agencies spanning three states took part this week in a training course designed to increase preparedness and awareness of how mapping technology can be used in a search-and-rescue missions.

During two-day workshop hosted by the College of Applied Science and Technology at the University of Arkansas at Fort Smith, the group of 24 performed two simulated exercises in a classroom setting using MapSAR, a geographic information system software application for improving search-and-rescue efforts.

With each exercise, the

group was tasked with finding a missing civilian who had become lost in the wilderness.

The group was given the civilian's last known coordinates and successfully tracked them using the GIS technology.

The collaborative effort between the agencies is beneficial to real-life missions.

SEE WORKSHOP PAGE 3A

Fort Smith Officer Resigns After Arrest

By Stacy Ryburn
TIMES RECORD • SRYBURN@SWTIMES.COM

A Fort Smith police officer who was arrested Tuesday after he allegedly fired shots inside his Sequoyah County home and pointed a gun at deputies and a child has resigned from the department.

Naaman Adcock, 40, of Muldrow resigned Wednesday morning from the Fort Smith Police Department. He had been an employee with the department since May 23, 2011, and was assigned to the Patrol Division, according to a news release from Sgt. Daniel Grubbs with the Fort Smith Police Department.

About 2 a.m. Tuesday, Sequoyah County depu-



N. Adcock T. Adcock

ties responded to the Long community near Muldrow in reference to shots being fired. Dispatchers advised that a 12-year-old girl had gone to a neighbor's house to call 911 because her stepfather was threatening to shoot her 5-year-old brother, according to a Sequoyah County Sheriff's Department report.

Deputies spotted a blue SUV heading west on East 1030 Road, just north of Muldrow.

SEE OFFICER PAGE 6A

GETTING STARTED

IN THE NEWS

Chicken Producer Still Making People Ill

WASHINGTON — An outbreak of antibiotic-resistant salmonella linked to a California chicken producer continues to sicken people more than a year after it started.

FULL STORY, 1D



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