

Ecuadoreans vote for president

Leftist takes lead; rival claims fraud, demands recount. — International, 4A



South Carolina women win it

Gamecocks hold off Bulldogs for first NCAA championship. — Sports, 1C

Arkansas Democrat Gazette

ARKANSAS' NEWSPAPER

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Printed at Little Rock • April 3, 2017

ArkansasOnline.com

36 Pages • 6 Sections

\$1.00

In the news

■ **Prime Minister Theresa May** of Britain announced that Millicent Garrett Fawcett, who campaigned for women's suffrage, will be the first woman honored with a statue in London's Parliament Square as part of next year's centenary of the first British women to vote.

■ **Tristian Myers**, 20, pleaded guilty in Nampa, Idaho, to vehicular manslaughter for hitting and killing Leslie Nassar, an Australian humorist, with his pickup last year.

■ **John Kindt** said drawings of an incomplete second *Atlanta Cyclorama*, which will go on display with the restored 150,000-square-foot cylindrical painting, were nearly destroyed when his great-grandfather Louis Kindt, one of the panoramas' painters, threw them out in the rain in a fit of rage.

■ **Vice Mayor Marc McGovern** of Cambridge, Mass., has filed a policy order, which the City Council will consider, that urges the U.S. House to support an impeachment investigation into President Donald Trump, citing claims that Trump violated the Constitution's emoluments clause.

■ **Oscar Cantu Murguia**, an executive of the *Norte* newspaper in Juarez, Mexico, wrote in a farewell letter in the paper that he is shutting it down because the rampant, unpunished killings of journalists in the country have made it too dangerous to go on.

■ **Derric Cooper**, 35, faces an arson charge in a fire that damaged a Colorado Springs, Colo., church, with authorities saying he started a fire in an alcove to keep warm during a snowstorm.

■ **Angela Anderson** of Ashland, Mo., whose daughter and son drowned in 2012 after suffering an electric shock while swimming near docks in Lake of the Ozarks, is supporting a proposed state law to set safety standards and require inspections at boat docks.

■ **Leslie McCrary** is seeking the release from prison of her father, Robert Bates, who is serving a four-year manslaughter sentence for the April 2015 shooting death of Eric Harris, saying the former Oklahoma reserve deputy was attacked by other inmates and had to spend 23 hours a day confined, claims that a prison spokesman said are untrue.

■ **Tracy Stephenson**, a London police inspector, reported that an unexploded World War II-era bomb found on the River Thames just yards from the starting line of the annual Oxford-Cambridge boat race was safely removed, allowing the event to go on as planned.



AP/FERNANDO VERGARA

People walk over the debris of a collapsed building Sunday in Mocoa, Colombia.

Colombian city searches for survivors of flooding

COMPILED BY
DEMOCRAT-GAZETTE STAFF
FROM WIRE REPORTS

MOCOA, Colombia — People in a small city in southern Colombia searched desperately Sunday for loved ones after heavy rains sent floodwaters, mud and debris surging through homes, killing more than 200 people and leaving many injured or missing.

The streets of Mocoa were covered in thick sand, mud and tree limbs from the rivers and forest that surround the city. With no electricity, authorities were forced to suspend the search and rescue effort during the night.

President Juan Manuel Santos, who visited Mocoa

for a second straight day Sunday, declared the area a disaster zone and said the death toll stood at 210. But that could still rise because authorities said there were more than 200 injured, some in critical condition, and people were continuing to locate remains in the debris. The Colombian Red Cross on Sunday put the death toll at 234, while Carlos Ivan Marquez, head of the country's disaster agency, put the toll at 238.

The president said on Twitter that 170 of the dead had been identified. He canceled a trip to Cuba and ordered soldiers to the region.

Santos said the avalanche of water and debris also

knocked out power in half of the province of Putumayo, where Mocoa is located, and destroyed the area's freshwater network, creating dangerous and unsanitary conditions.

The city was cut off from many services on Sunday, leaving nearly all residents without electricity, clean water or gasoline; some 600 residents were evacuated to temporary shelters. Survivors used car batteries to recharge cellphones in hopes of contacting loved ones in other towns.

"There's not a single drop of drinkable water — we need water, that's what's urgent — and there's nothing

See **COLOMBIA**, Page 2A

U.N. envoy: Russian prints on '16 election

COMPILED BY
DEMOCRAT-GAZETTE STAFF
FROM WIRE REPORTS

WASHINGTON — The U.S. ambassador to the United Nations says there's no question Russia was involved in the U.S. presidential election and that President Donald Trump would fully support strong action against Russia once investigations are complete.

Speaking in television interviews broadcast Sunday, Nikki Haley contended there is no contradiction between her tough stance and Trump's desire for good relations with Russia. She said Trump "has not once" told her to stop "beating up on Russia" over issues such as its actions in Crimea and its dispute with Ukraine.

When asked whether she believes Trump should publicly take a harder Russia stance, she said: "Of course, he's got a lot of things he's doing."

"There's no love or anything going on with Russia right now," Haley said. "They get that we're getting our strength back, that we're get-

ting our voice back and that we're starting to lead again. Honestly, at the United Nations, that's the No. 1 comment I get is that they're just so happy to see the United States lead again."

However, Haley conceded that the United States needed Russia's help to deal with bigger problems.

"We need their pressure when it comes to dealing with ISIS," she said, using the acronym for the Islamic State militant group. "We also need their pressure when it comes to dealing with China and North Korea."

Trump as president persuaded Haley to leave the governorship of South Carolina to represent the U.S. at the United Nations. Sunday's news-show appearances were her first since becoming the nation's top diplomat at the U.N. She and Defense Secretary James Mattis have both called out Russia for its actions during the 2016 U.S. campaign.

"Well, certainly, I think Russia was involved in the

See **RUSSIA**, Page 6A

In D.C., Egyptian aims to fortify ties

COMPILED BY
DEMOCRAT-GAZETTE STAFF
FROM WIRE REPORTS

CAIRO — When President Donald Trump hosts Egyptian President Abdel-Fattah el-Sissi today in Washington, the two leaders will have a packed agenda: the fight against terrorism, the Middle East's multiple wars, the refugee crisis and Egypt's anemic economy.

Expectations for el-Sissi's wish list include a designa-

tion of the Muslim Brotherhood as a terrorist group, and the restoration of the kind of strategic partnership Egypt enjoyed with the United States for more than 30 years.

A senior White House official was noncommittal on what the administration was prepared to do on declaring the Muslim Brotherhood a terrorist group. Briefing reporters, he spoke of the U.S.' See **EGYPT**, Page 2A

Legislation fixes, for now, dual-seat counties' woes

HUNTER FIELD
ARKANSAS DEMOCRAT-GAZETTE

JONESBORO — Officials in the handful of Arkansas counties with two judicial districts returned to their courthouses last week relieved.

Rep. Sarah Capp's House Bill 1743 quietly sailed through the Legislature and, for now, resolved a politically charged issue that leaders in dual-district counties long

feared would surface.

The counties, which for nearly a century have operated as if they had two county seats, had not been following the law, and the Arkansas Supreme Court last month took notice.

Presented with a case related to the construction of a new county courthouse in Blytheville, the high court noted in its opinion a section from a 1901 law that split Mis-

issippi County into two districts. The section mandated that revenue from one district "shall be used for the exclusive benefit" of that district.

Revenue wasn't being separated in Mississippi County, as called for by the 1901 law, nor in the nine other split counties, most of which were divided by identical legislation.

The ruling threatened to upend operations in those

counties — a concern that local politicians for years have voiced privately.

"[The Arkansas Supreme Court's] ruling really put it on the map for me," Capp, R-Ozark, said in a phone interview Sunday. Her bill, now Act 751, repeals sections of century-old pieces of legislation that required divided counties to keep money separated by district.

The ruling underscores

the hurdles dual-district counties can face. Perhaps it was feasible to separate finances when the horse and buggy were the main mode of transportation, but it's nearly impossible in a world where multimillion-dollar bond issues routinely finance infrastructure projects, according to leaders in these counties.

In Arkansas, the 10 counties split about a century ago. See **COUNTY**, Page 5A

Sheriff changes policy after jail asthma death

Inmate dies after inhaler confiscated

SCOTT CARROLL
ARKANSAS DEMOCRAT-GAZETTE

A Pulaski County jail inmate suffered a fatal asthma attack in December after deputies confiscated her inhaler, a death that has since led the sheriff's office to change its policy on the device.

Jail records released last week under the Arkansas Freedom of Information Act list an inhaler among the items that jailers took from Sharon Lavette Alexander when she was booked in the jail the night of Dec. 13 on a robbery charge.

Jailers found Alexander, 41, of Little Rock, unconscious in her cell the next night. She was taken to UAMS Medical Center and pronounced dead.

A state Crime Laboratory

report says she died of natural causes from acute asthma exacerbation.

Sheriff's office spokesman Lt. Cody Burk said an investigation found no criminal wrongdoing in Alexander's death. He said a separate administrative investigation is ongoing.

Alexander's death occurred two weeks after the Pulaski County jail had turned over its medical operations to Turn Key Health Clinics, a private corporation based in Oklahoma City.

The county, in a cost-cutting move, signed a \$3.7 million annual contract with the company effective Dec. 1.

Turn Key Health Clinics declined to comment on Alexander's death.

See **INMATE**, Page 5A

High-rise fire in Dubai

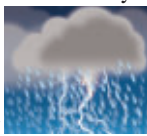


AP/JON GAMBRELL

A fire rages Sunday at a tower under construction in Dubai, United Arab Emirates. The fire, near Dubai's largest shopping mall, sent thick, gray smoke billowing over the heart of the city.

WEATHER

LITTLE ROCK
Today Mostly cloudy. Chance of showers and storms early.
High 73. The chance of precipitation 50 percent.
Tonight Mostly clear.
Low 54.



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Inmate

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Pulaski County Sheriff Doc Holladay said the jail changed its policy on inmate property, specifically asthma inhalers, after the fatal asthma attack.

Holladay said the old policy instructed deputies to take an inmate's inhaler and examine the device for drugs and other contraband within 24 hours. Even if no contraband was found, inhalers were not returned to inmates until a prescription for asthma medication could be verified.

The policy continued under Turn Key Health Clinics, according to the sheriff's office.

Holladay said the new policy instructs deputies to immediately inspect an inmate's inhaler and return the device if no contraband is found. The policy allows a prescription to be verified later.

Holladay said the jail confiscates any drug an inmate is carrying to verify it has been prescribed. He also said that any object, no matter how innocuous, has to be examined for contraband when an inmate is booked in the jail.

"Inmates receive mail that has drugs under a stamp on an envelope," he said. "We find that frequently. So it doesn't take much space to hide drugs depending on what kind of drug it may be. We have to balance how we try to protect the security of the facility and ensure that the inmates are provided adequate medical care."

Police and jail records released to the *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette* provide a picture of the final 24 hours of Alexander's life.

North Little Rock police arrested Alexander shortly before 7:30 p.m. on Dec. 13 on accusations that she'd tried to steal clothing from a Target store. A confrontation between her and security guards turned physical, which led police to arrest her on a felony robbery charge instead of misdemeanor shoplifting, according to an arrest report.

A jail checklist shows that Alexander completed a health

questionnaire and medical screening about 8:25 p.m. An inmate property receipt shows that jailers conducted a pat-down search and took her inhaler about the same time.

The jail checklist also shows that Alexander, who was initially held in lieu of \$15,000 bond, was given access to a phone. Her husband, Glenroy Charles, later told investigators that she'd called him and complained that the jail "would not provide her with her medication," according to a sheriff's office report.

Records show that another inmate, identified as Mya Hamilton, was assigned to Alexander's cell the next day. Hamilton told investigators that Alexander said she had asthma and sickle cell disease and that she needed an inhaler, a sheriff's office report states.

Hamilton reportedly told investigators that Alexander went to sleep after their conversation and began "gasping for air" shortly before 8 p.m. Jail deputy Jaketha Lattimore, who was conducting a security check at the time, responded to Hamilton's cries for help after "several minutes," a report states. Hamilton then told Lattimore that it looked like Alexander was having an asthma attack.

Alexander stopped breathing soon afterward, according to the sheriff's office.

She was pronounced dead later that night.

Holladay said he couldn't recall another instance of a Pulaski County jail inmate dying from an asthma attack. He said the jail's policy of confiscating asthma inhalers had been in place since at least 1994.

"It's one of those things where you hope that the policy is effective and it has been effective for years," Holladay said. "But when something happens, you try to find a way to ensure it doesn't happen again."

Jails and prisons across the country restrict access to medicine and medical devices, including inhalers, over concerns that inmates will misuse them.

In January, the Cook County, Ill., jail in Chicago reported that five inmates had been injured in

a brawl that involved two weapons made from asthma inhaler parts. It wasn't the first time an inhaler had been turned into a weapon at the jail. The jail reported in 2014 that an inmate had made a stabbing weapon from a thin strip of metal inside an inhaler.

But limiting access to inhalers has been deadly for asthmatic inmates in some cases, according to reports.

The family of Curtis Garland sued the Texas Department of Criminal Justice last year after Garland, 37, died from an asthma attack in prison. The suit states that Garland repeatedly asked prison guards for an inhaler before he died.

Ashley Gill, 25, died from an asthma attack five days before he was scheduled to be released from prison in Liverpool, England, in 2015. Before his death, Gill filed a formal complaint that jailers had taken away his inhaler.

In 2006, California found that asthma was the leading cause of preventable death in its prison system, killing more inmates than sudden cardiac arrest and congestive heart failure, two conditions that, typically, are far more deadly.

Asthma is a long-term lung disease that inflames and constricts a person's airways. About 24 million Americans have asthma, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Roughly half of those with the disease suffer an asthma attack each year.

Asthma attacks are easily treated, most commonly through inhaled anti-inflammatory medication. Deaths are rare. About one in 100,000 people die from asthma each year, according to the CDC.

Pulaski County jail reports state that Alexander's family members were "understandably upset" after her death. One of them reportedly said that jailers had "allowed her cousin to die."

Alexander's husband and daughter, Porche Alexander, declined multiple requests for comment.

County

● Continued from Page 1A

Rivers, swamps and mountains made it difficult for many residents to reach their county courthouses to pay taxes, obtain marriage licenses or attend court. So officials resolved the issue by building additional courthouses closer to isolated areas.

In Carroll County, for example, the Kings River isolated Eureka Springs from Berryville, the county seat. Lawmakers authorized the construction of an additional courthouse in Eureka Springs in 1883.

Of the 3,066 U.S. counties outside Arkansas, only 18 are divided by district, according to the National Association of Counties.

Officials in those counties believe that automobiles and computers have eliminated the need for split districts. But those with the power to do away with the quirky setup are elected, and to take that position publicly would alienate whichever half of the county stood to lose its courthouse.

Residents in the mostly small towns see any action against split districts as an affront to their venerable courthouses. They dread losing the centerpieces of their town squares and the convenience of handling their affairs close to home.

Mississippi County Judge Randy Carney is one of the few to consider consolidating a two-district county. In 2015, he and several justices of the peace floated the idea of closing the county courthouses in Blytheville and Osceola to build a new one in Blytheville or a more central location.

Both courthouses are nearly 100 years old, and repair costs were expected to exceed \$300,000.

"It's no longer feasible to have two courthouses," Carney said at the time. "The business part is a no-brainer."

Mississippi County's efforts led to last month's court ruling, which affirmed a lower court's injunction to stop a special election that would have asked voters to approve the construction of a new courthouse, a bond issue to finance it and the extension of an existing sales tax to pay for it.

The state Supreme Court ruled that it would be illegal for Mississippi County to use tax revenue from the Osceola District to pay for a courthouse in Blytheville, quoting the section of the statute that said Capp's bill repealed. The court issued the opinion just weeks before Capp's bill passed.

Just south of Mississippi



County, Craighead County officials watched intently. County Judge Ed Hill's assistant, Tony Thomas, called Capp's bill "vital."

"The Supreme Court ruling would have significantly changed the way we did business on a daily basis," Thomas said. In Craighead, like most divided counties, one district — Lake City — is much smaller than the other — Jonesboro.

If revenue was separated between the districts, would that harm the Eastern District of Craighead County?

"It's tough to say because we've never segregated revenues and expenditures," Thomas said.

Nothing appeared on last week's Quorum Court agenda, but Craighead County officials arrived ready for a fight anyway.

Such have been most meetings for the past year-and-a-half in the northeast Arkansas county, which has struggled through an identity crisis being a split county in a smartphone world.

Justices of the peace have grandstanded, the county's constitutional officers have bickered and state lawmakers have intervened — one requested an opinion from the attorney general and another introduced legislation to dissolve the Eastern District of Craighead County.

The bill failed in a House committee, the attorney general's opinion didn't solve the issues and some county officials are still at odds.

At one point during the March 27 meeting, several justices of the peace even disagreed about whether they had argued over the matter in the past.

The chatter around the conference table in the county judge's office quieted after one Quorum Court member boomed over the rest, pleading with the elected officials to solve

disputes about the courthouse in Lake City in-house.

"Please get together and figure this thing out, so I don't have to spend time talking about Lake City every time I walk into this courthouse," Justice of the Peace Richard Rogers said.

Craighead County is unique, even for this small collection of counties, but it shows the problems that can arise in a split county.

Its current problem started with a 2015 budget dispute. Circuit Clerk Candace Edwards noticed in the century-old law that split Craighead County that she was supposed to maintain an office in Lake City. Edwards, who was in her first term, wanted control of her office's budget in Lake City, which had traditionally fallen under the county judge's office.

County officials have argued over the old legislation for the past two years, and as they've feuded, more issues have come up. Most recently, they realized that the district dividing line may not actually be where officials have thought all along.

State Sen. John Cooper, R-Jonesboro, filed a bill last month to dissolve the Eastern District of Craighead County. It passed in the Senate but died in the House Judiciary Committee under staunch opposition from Craighead County's eastern residents, who argued it was a local issue.

Craighead County Justice of the Peace Terry Couch represents most of the county's eastern half, and he said most people there are offended by Cooper's bill.

Craighead County officials have signed memorandums of understanding in hopes of solving some of the issues, but Cooper isn't optimistic.

"This is already too complicated of a situation," he said.

New Men's Sex Pill Makes Viagra Obsolete

Scientific advance made just for older men. Works on both men's physical ability and their desire in bed.

By Harlan S. Waxman
Health News Syndicate

New York – If you're like the rest of us guys over 50, you probably already know the truth... Prescription ED pills may work, but they don't solve all the problems in the bedroom and they are very expensive. Dr. Bassam Damaj, chief scientific officer at the world famous Innovus Pharma Laboratories, explains, "As we get older, we need more help in bed. Not only does our desire fade; but erections can be soft or feeble, one of the main complaints with prescription pills. Besides, they're expensive... costing as much as \$50.00 each."

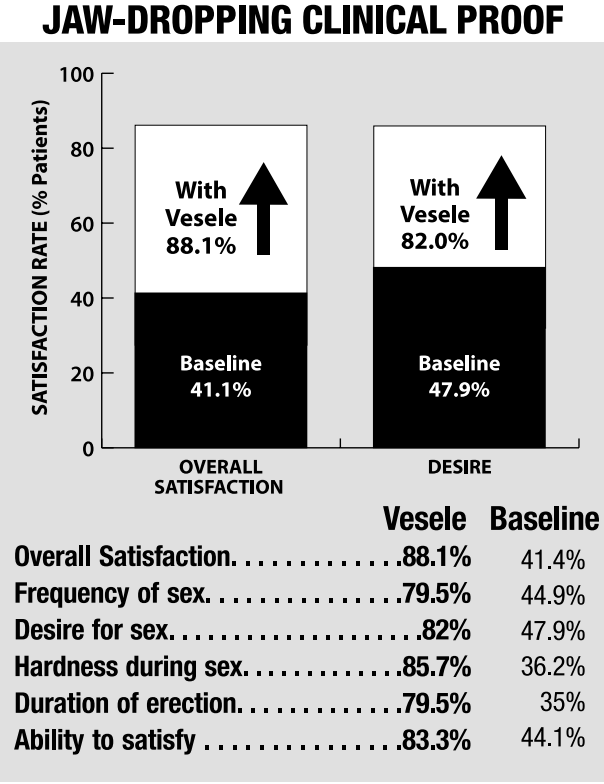
Plus, it does nothing to stimulate your brain to want sex. "I don't care what you take; if you aren't interested in sex, you can't get or keep an erection. It's physiologically impossible," said Dr. Damaj.

MADE JUST FOR MEN OVER 50

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The new men's pill is not a drug. It's something completely different.

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WORKS ON YOUR MIND AND YOUR BODY

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