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Poplar Bluff Schools Awarded \$250k Preschool Grant

AUGUST 06TH 2015 BY DEE LOFLIN

Poplar Bluff Schools Awarded \$250k Preschool Grant

Poplar Bluff, Missouri - A \$250,000 grant has been awarded to Poplar Bluff Schools to add a preschool program that will further help serve the needs of the community in getting district children school-ready.

The funding through the Missouri Preschool Program will allow the Early Childhood Center to enroll 60 students ages 3-5, and employ six staff members to manage three classrooms. Pending licensing by the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services, the plan is for the preschool to be operational by Monday, Sept 21.

Enrollment will take place on a first come, first serve basis. Cost of tuition will be set on a sliding scale based on the income levels used for the free and reduced lunch program.

“Studies have shown over the years that when students enter kindergarten, there is a marked difference in skill levels from students who have or have not participated in preschool education,” said JoAnne Westbrook, Early Childhood Center director.

“Currently our highly qualified staff at Early Childhood is only able to serve a fourth of our kids entering the Kindergarten Center.”

Westbrook, who wrote the grant, has been employed by the R-I school district since 2005. For the needs assessment component of the proposal, she solicited AmeriCorps Director Becky Winters to enlist an advisory committee consisting of parents, educators, child care

providers, civic leaders, officials from the social services sector and members of the faith-based community.

“When students do not receive that jumpstart on their academic careers at an early age, they’re more likely to wind up in remedial programs in the upper grades,” Winters stated. “In recent years, the community has lost multiple child care facilities for different reasons, and our committee wants to help fill that void.”

According to their research, 568 district children are not receiving a preschool education. The area child care facilities available are presently serving 610 children with only 36 openings. Of those children, the Early Children Center is at capacity with 250 students registered in two half-day sessions based on family needs determined by the federal Title I and Early Childhood Special Education programs.

R-I was among 20 schools the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education announced would be awarded the five-year MPP grant on July 13. The money will go toward start-up costs with the goal of self-sustainability upon conclusion. By year four, the preschools will be accredited through the National Association for the Education of Young Children.

A waiting list is currently being compiled at the Early Childhood Center located at 1235 N. Main St. For consideration, a child must be 3 years of age but not older than 5 as of July 31. For more information, call 573-785-6803.

(From left) Jacob Woodruff, Ja’Meir Hood-Daniels and Logan Keown of the Poplar Bluff Early Childhood Center pose in their dream job attire during Career Day this past May.

***Tim Krakowiak, Communications/Marketing Coordinator
Poplar Bluff R-I School District***

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Dexter Chamber's July Jubilee Successful

AUGUST 04TH 2015 BY DEE LOFLIN

Dexter Chamber's July Jubilee Successful

Dexter, Missouri - The Dexter Chamber of Commerce recently hosted their July Jubilee at the Chamber office. The event is held each year in appreciation of the Chamber's members.

Several members of the Chamber and business professionals from around the area came to taste the delicious foods prepared by Coleman.

Janet Coleman, Executive Director, spent numerous hours the night before preparing the food for the Jubilee. Several board members and directors helped serve at the event. The theme was a Mexican Fiesta with a few folks trying on the sombrero!

An ice cream bar with all the toppings was available to cure your sweet tooth. On the Go fixed the chicken. Janet prepared the rest of the taco delights.

Thank you for cooking all night long Janet!!

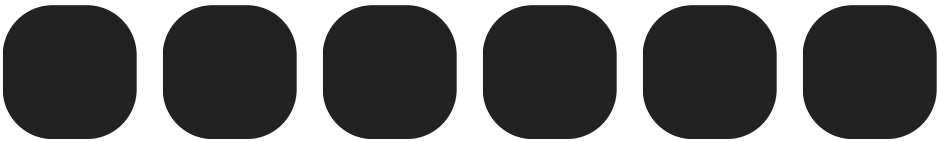
Schlieff Chiropractic & Wellness was the winner of the \$100 Dexter Dollars. Others who won \$25 were Charlie Flannigan, Dina Grubbs, Bennetta Harrellson, Robert Monroe, Kenny Pope, Peggy Potts, Lisa Thrower, and Justin Trammell.

Janet will be retiring from the Dexter Chamber of Commerce at the end of December 2015.

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Monday is National Watermelon Day!

AUGUST 03RD 2015 BY DEE LOFLIN

[Monday is National Watermelon Day!](#)

National Watermelon Day is observed annually on August 3rd. Watermelon is a fruit enjoyed by many and is a favorite of summertime events such as picnics and fairs. Watermelon is 92% water, which is why it is so refreshing.

Watermelon is a vine-like flowering plant originally from southern Africa. Its fruit, which is also called watermelon, is a special kind referred to by botanists as a pepo, a berry which has a thick rind (exocarp) and fleshy center (mesocarp and endocarp). Pepos are derived from an inferior ovary, and are characteristic of the Cucurbitaceae. The watermelon fruit, loosely considered a type of melon – although not in the genus *Cucumis* – has a smooth exterior rind (usually green with dark green stripes or yellow spots) and a juicy, sweet interior flesh (usually deep red to pink, but sometimes orange, yellow, or white).

Watermelons can grow very large and you will find competitions across the country which award prizes each year for the largest one. The Guinness Book of World Records states that the heaviest watermelon weighed 262 pounds. To learn more interesting watermelon facts, check out www.watermelon.org.

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Friday's Full Moon Occurs Once Every Three Years!

JULY 31ST 2015 BY DEE LOFLIN

Friday's Full Moon Occurs Once Every Three Years!

This Friday much of the world will have the opportunity to view a "blue moon." Despite its name, the moon itself will not be blue.

A blue moon occurs every three years when we experience two full moons in a single month.

Full moons typically occur every 29 days, according [NASA's National Space Science Data Center](#), but since most months are 30 to 31 days long, it is possible to have two full moons in a month every 2 1/2 to three years.

There was a full moon on July 2 and July 31 will see the second - two very average-colored full moons.

Blue-colored moons do exist, but they only occur "once in a blue moon."

For a moon to take on a blueish hue, it is typically due to smoke or dust particles in the atmosphere such as during a volcanic eruption or forest fire, according to [NASA Science](#).

In 1883, an Indonesian volcano named Krakatoa exploded and scientists likened the blast to a 100-megaton nuclear bomb. Plumes of smoke rose to the top of the Earth's atmosphere and the moon turned blue.

Basically, if either a fire or an eruption produces ash or oily smoke containing a significant amount of 1-micron particles, the moon appears blue.

The most recent blue-hued moon was seen in Edinburgh, Scotland in September 1950, caused by ash from forest fires burning in Alberta, Canada.

The modern phrase associated with two full moons in a single month is attributed to a 1946 *Sky & Telescope* article entitled *Once in a Blue Moon* by James Hugh Pruett.

Before Pruett wrote his article, a "blue moon" referred to the third blue moon in a season, however, Pruett misinterpreted the information, according to [Sky & Telescope](#), and the

1946 version of the magazine adopted his more modern definition.

A popular radio program, called *StarDate*, referenced the two full moons in a month definition on Jan. 31, 1980, and it experienced widespread adoption.

So, yes, the lunar experience on Friday is based on a misinterpretation of the original definition of a “blue moon,” neither of which have anything to do with the moon’s color.

Regardless, it’s a good excuse to get outside and view a somewhat-rare occurrence.

The last time we saw two full moons in month was in 2012 and we will not see the event again until 2018.

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Moon photo by local photographer Jimmy Sisk of Charleston, MO.

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National Mutt Day - Share Your Photo of Your

Favorite Mutt

JULY 31ST 2015 BY DEE LOFLIN

National Mutt Day - Share Your Photo of Your Favorite Mutt

United States - Each year on July 31st and December 2nd, National Mutt Day is celebrated across the United States. This day was created as a day to embrace, save and celebrate mixed breed dogs.

Desperately longing for a new home, there are millions of loving and healthy mixed breed dogs, in shelters across the United States, awaiting for someone to come and adopt them.

For more information regarding National Mutt Day, see:

<http://www.nationalmuttday.com/>

CELEBRATE

Visit a dog shelter. If you are unable to adopt a dog, you can always volunteer. Post on social media using #NationalMuttDay and encourage others to join in.

HISTORY

National Mutt Day, an “unofficial” national holiday was created in 2005 by Celebrity Pet Expert and Animal Welfare Advocate, Colleen Paige.

This day is celebrated on both December 2 and July 31 of each year.

Shown in the photo is 11 year-old Grace who lives with Jessica Loflin in Dexter, Missouri. She is half Dachshund and half Beagle, so she is a Deagle! Jessica is the daughter of Dee Loflin.

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