

## Features



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# Bloomfield Chamber Holds Ribbon Cutting for Wildflower Boutique

NOVEMBER 15TH 2023 BY DEE LOFLIN

## Bloomfield Chamber Holds Ribbon Cutting for Wildflower Boutique

The Bloomfield Chamber of Commerce held a ribbon cutting for the The Wildflower Boutique located in downtown Bloomfield.

Owner is Amanda Fortner and she has recently opened the Wildflower Boutique on the courthouse square.

She carries clothing from small to 3xl along with shoes and accessories.

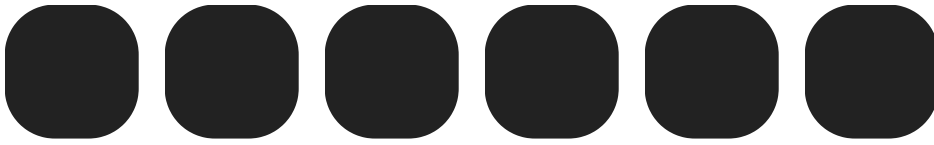
This is small-town shopping at its finest is what you will experience here at the boutique," commented Fortner. "We offer a wide selection of clothing items, accessories, and shoes that cater to every style and taste."

The Wildflower Boutique is nestled in the heart of downtown Bloomfield just across from the courthouse.

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## Puxico R-8 Schools Veterans Day Assembly 2023

NOVEMBER 15TH 2023 BY DEE LOFLIN

### Puxico R-8 Schools Veterans Day Assembly 2023

The annual Puxico School District's Veterans Day Assembly was held on Wednesday, November 8, 2023. The District was out on Friday so they held it earlier in the week.

Students who participate in FCCLA (Family Career and Community Leaders of America) club welcomed visitors and veterans. They also prepared a luncheon of ham, green beans, corn, mashed potatoes, gravy, dessert and drinks for approximately 80 veterans and their family members.

Laney Porter opened the ceremony while Austin Harbin and Zach Jones presented the colors. The Pledge of Allegiance was held by Ziti Boyco and the Puxico High School band played the Star Spangled Banner.

The guest speaker was Robert Wake of the Wake Foundation in Poplar Bluff. He was a veteran of Iraq and was wounded in combat being awarded a Purple Heart. He was also born and reared in Kennett, Missouri and now lives in Poplar Bluff, MO

On May 16, 2004, Sgt Wake was wounded severely when his detail received intense enemy fire.

"At about 3 o'clock in the morning, after moving back from a machine gun nest on the roof of a police station, me and the medic decided to have an MRE in the dark," Wake said. "We had been in a 17-hour gun battle. We were fighting very hard being up on the roof. There were 16 of us and about 5,000 of them. The medic lit a cigarette and I heard a bomb come down the tube. It exploded between me and the medic."

That was the beginning of an his long road to recover. This incident left Wake with 141 bits of shrapnel in his body.

"I really remember the bright flash and I remember feeling like a big part of my body was on fire," stated Wake. "It broke my nose, it knocked out my upper front teeth, shattered my right ankle and blew out my left knee and tory my frontal lobe."

Wake was in and out of consciousness for hours.

"Somehow I had crawled across the roof. I realized I was still alive, and I just said, 'God. If you just help me get home ...' And I went out again. The last time I came to, I had all my gear on and I had fallen backward through a window into this room ..." Filled with frightened Iraqi policemen, he explained.

"I went out and when I came to again, the Army had me in a stairwell," Wake said. "I could hear them calling my name over the radio, reporting there was blood coming from my ears, nose, eyes and I said 'This is not good.'

"My best friend and another gentleman carried me five flights of stairs. I have no memory of it. They got me into a Humvee and we went through another ambush before I could get out. Something I thought was five minutes lasted more than five hours. That's how much time I lost during that ordeal. I was then awarded the Purple Heart on July 4th in Baghdad."

VFW Post Commander Duane Martin help present the Quilt of Honor

Former Puxico R-8 Schools Superintendent George Sifford, 96, a World War II U.S. Navy veteran and "the oldest man in town" was awarded a numbered and recorded Quilt of Honor to commemorate his service to the United States. He received a standing ovation from the crowd.

Sifford was assigned to an aircraft carrier and spent 16 years as superintendent at Puxico School District.

Tonna O'Dell received the Teacher of the Year. She is a junior high social studies teacher.

Martin stated, "This is an annual event with the school and our organization sponsors programs dedicated to patriotism among students, the Patriot Pen and Voice of Democracy writing contests. The community support and the school support we have are overwhelming."

Alyssa Owens earned the Patriot Pen Speech winner and Ella Duncan won the Voice of Democracy Speech. Both reach their speeches to the audience.

Andrea Clark and Caiden Jackson accepted Patriot's Pen second and third place. Stephanie Day and Aricka Robinson placed second and third in the Voice of Democracy category.

Each were honored with medals and certificates of merit from the VFW and Auxiliary.

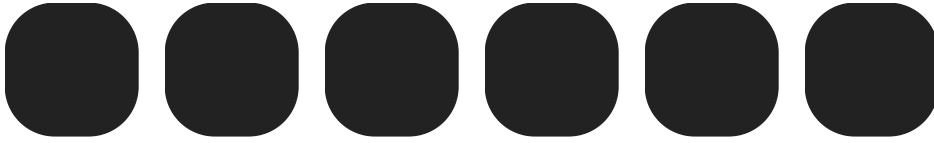
Rachell McGill recognized the winners of the Coloring Contest. Each student came to the stage for a group photo.

The Puxico Band played America the Beautiful and Taps was played by Joshua Simons to close the event.

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## GoSEMO Fiber Holds Ribbon Cutting in Puxico

NOVEMBER 09TH 2023 BY DEE LOFLIN

### GoSEMO Fiber Holds Ribbon Cutting in Puxico

GoSEMO Fiber is making its way into the city of Puxico and the rural area as well. You may have noticed a lot of work along the roadways already.

They officially opened an office in Puxico and held a ribbon cutting on Thursday, November 2, 2023.

“It’s been a very busy start-up for Angela and the team getting opened here,” commented Loyd Rice, Sr. Manager Fiber Services for GoSEMO Fiber. “There is lots of construction going on in the immediate Puxico area and the light is coming soon. Spread the word and stop by and sign up for internet/tv/phone.”

Future subscribers/customers residing in the City of Puxico! The moment is here for all City of Puxico residents to take action and sign up for their services.

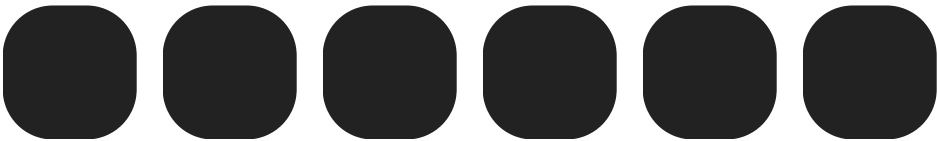
Your service area is steadily approaching its lighting and testing phase, so it’s time to ensure your name and address are on our service/drop list. You can register your home, church, or business for internet, phone, and/or TV services.

Registration is a easy and we are here to assist you – simply visit our website at GoSEMOFiber.com or drop by our local office at 310 N Highway 51, Puxico between the hours of 8 a.m. - 5 p.m. You can also call 573-321-9203 if you have questions.

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# Stoddard County Development Foundation Establishes 7 New Scholarships

OCTOBER 12TH 2023 BY DEE LOFLIN

Stoddard County Development Foundation Establishes 7 New Scholarships

The Stoddard County Development Foundation has established seven \$1,000.00 scholarships to be given out annually.

These scholarships will go to students attending Three Rivers College, and recipients will be determined by TRC.

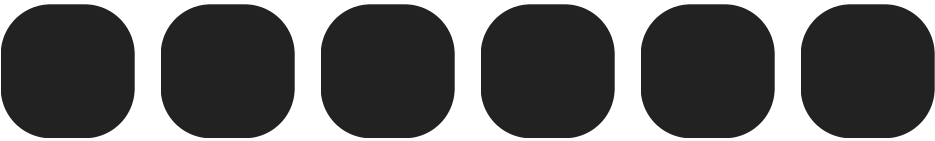
There will be a student from each of the seven school districts within Stoddard County that will receive the scholarships.

Pictured are Peter Coutavas, Executive Director, IDA and Michelle Reynolds, Coordinator of Academic and Career Outreach at Three Rivers College.

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# 2023 Stoddard County Fair Queen Named

SEPTEMBER 21ST 2023 BY DEE LOFLIN

2023 Stoddard County Fair Queen Named

Hanna Wilson of Puxico, daughter of Mark Wilson and Jeff and Schree Gunnels, was crowned the 2023 Miss Stoddard County Fair Queen Sunday afternoon at the Stoddard County Fair Grounds.

First Alternate is Lydia Hanner of Dexter. She is the daughter of Andrea and Larry Hanner.

Second Alternate Brooklyn Franklin of Dexter. She is the daughter of Jason and April Wray and Robert Franklin.

Photo by Keith Hente.

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