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## FATALITY

### One dead in Sunday killing near Crossett

California man, 55, died at hospital after he was shot

BY VAL GAUGHT REPORTER

A California man is dead and a Crossett man was arrested following a fatal shooting Sunday.

Ashley County Deputies and Crossett Police Department officers responded to a call of shots fired on Dunmore Loop in West Crossett at approximately 7 p.m. Sunday evening

When law enforcement officers arrived on scene, they found Dennis Smith, 55, of California, with apparent gun shot wounds.

Ashley County Sheriff Tommy Sturgeon said Smith was transported to Ashley County Medical Center by Crossett Ambulance Service, where he later died.

Sturgeon also said that James Webb, 79, of North Carolina Street in Crossett, was arrested and taken to the Ashley County Detention Facility in Hamburg.

Webb was charged with first-degree murder and appeared before Judge Bynum Gibson on Monday afternoon.

Gibson set Webb's bond at \$40,000 following the hearing.

The case is still under investigation and no other details have been released at this time.



Webb

## FUGITIVE

### Texas catches man wanted for shooting in Portland

BY VAL GAUGHT REPORTER

A suspect from an October 2017 shooting in Portland was arrested in Texas last week.

Laderrius Thornton, 22, of Indianola, Miss., was arrested in Smith County, Texas, last week on felony arrest warrants that were issued in Ashley County.

The Ashley County Sheriff's Department was notified Oct. 20 about an abandoned vehicle near a cotton field in the Sunshine community. According to an affidavit filed in the case, the deputies who responded found Larionnie Page near the vehicle. The report stated that Paige appeared to have been beaten and shot.

After further investigation, two men from Indianola, Miss., were arrested in the case, Daryl Crawford and Avarian Giles.

The report said that Paige, once he was medically able to give a statement, told the deputies that his car ran out of gas on the side of the road and he had contacted Daryl Crawford for assistance. Crawford arrived at the scene with Avarian Giles and a man that Paige could not identify.

In Paige's statement to deputies, he said the four men got into an argument and as a result Paige was beaten, shot and left for dead.

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## Group steps forward to clean City Park; more volunteers sought

BY VAL GAUGHT REPORTER

Members of the community are stepping forward to take ownership of the city park by helping keep it clean.

Four men from the Arkansas Forestry Commission were the first to volunteer

following City Council Member Crystal Marshall's call for the city to consider an "adopt the park" program to get the park cleaned up.

Keith Breshears said he and three of the men he works with — Clayton McGilton, Jerry Lynn and Cody Brooks — decided they would go in together to adopt a portion of the park. The men contacted Marshall and

**"We just wanted to do something to help the community."**

-Keith Breshears, volunteer

chose the east portion of the park because it contained multiple species of trees that were causing damage to the area.

"We don't like invasive tree species," Breshears said.

Breshears said the group wanted to eradicate the Chinese Tallow and other invasive species in the area, but their project is a work in progress.

The group spent last week cleaning

the area and removing the unwanted trees. They treated the area in an effort to prevent the unwanted trees from returning, but they will have to check for new sprouts.

The group already has plans to return to continue taking care of their new portion of the park.

"We just wanted to do something to help the community," Breshears said.

Marshall said she appreciates the men stepping up and spending their free time working on something that benefits the city of Crossett.

"I can't say, 'Thank you' enough," Marshall said.

Marshall said the area of the park looks so much better already and she

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## ASHLEY COUNTY

### Quorum votes to meet with Hamburg

Judge: City seems to be on right track for ambulance plan

BY VERSHAL HOGAN MANAGING EDITOR

The Ashley County Quorum Court voted Tuesday to seek a meeting with the Hamburg City Council to determine what the city's plans for long-term ambulance service in the area may be.

The vote came a month after the Quorum voted to enter into negotiations with ProMed Ambulance about providing ambulance service to the county outside the area covered by the Crossett Fire Department, and approximately six weeks after the Hamburg City Council separately adopted an ordinance seeking voter approval for a one-cent sales tax to fund ambulance service.

The sales tax vote will be in September.

Justice Ronnie Wheeler said Tuesday that after negotiations with ProMed, owner Ken Kelley had said he could bring his initial estimates for service down approximately \$14,000.

ProMed's pre-negotiation proposal to the county, which was

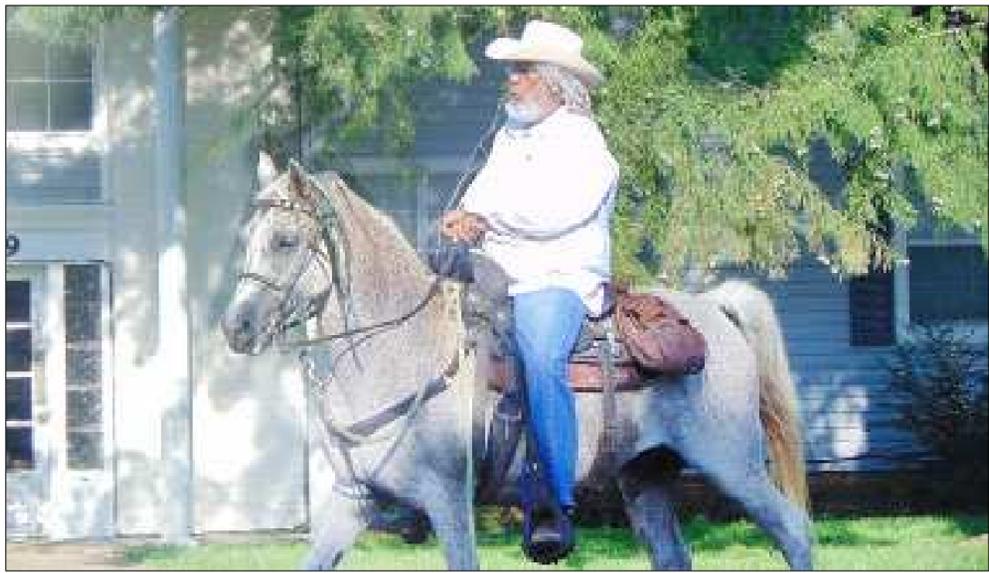
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Wheeler

## REUNITING AND RIDING

### Crossett Reunion Club hosts annual events, parade



VAL GAUGHT/News Observer

The Crossett Reunion club — a fellowship for both people living in Crossett and those who have moved away that hosts a series of homecoming events annually during the first week of July — paraded down Main Street Friday.

## EXECUTIVE CLEMENCY

### Governor set to pardon Ashley County men for convictions from decades ago

STAFF REPORTS

Two Hamburg men are on track to receive gubernatorial pardons in the coming month.

Gov. Asa Hutchinson announced Friday plans to grant pardons to John A. Lowrey and Eddie D. Savage Jr., along with 16 other requested pardons.

The governor's announcement said all requests for pardons came from people who have completed

all prison time and fulfilled all requirements of their parole or probations. They were also required to pay all fines connected to their sentences before they could seek pardon.

The announcement was made at the start of a 30-day waiting period for the governor's office to receive public feedback before granting the pardon.

Lowrey was convicted of violation of DWI—fourth offense and

theft by receiving in Chicot County in 1993.

Savage was convicted of theft of property in Ashley County in 1982.

The announcement of the governor's intention to grant executive clemency notes that for both men there have been no further criminal-law violations.

The announcement likewise noted that law enforcement officials have not filed any objections to the request.

## MEDICINE

### Garcia set to close practice after 40 years in Crossett

BY VAL GAUGHT REPORTER

A local family practice is closing after more than 40 years in Crossett.

Dr. Luis Garcia announced last week that the doors to Garcia Medical Clinic would be permanently closed July 13.

The decision came after Garcia's six-month battle with the Arkansas Medical Board after they suspended his license.

Garcia said in February he received notice that his license had been suspended by the Arkansas Medical Board.

The order, which was signed Feb. 13, stated that Garcia was alleged to be mentally unfit to practice and the charges were based on the allegations reported to the Arkansas Medical Foundation by Ashley County Medical Center.

"The complaints were sent to the foundation in the name of the Ashley County Medical Center Administrator, but the administrator told me in his own words that he did not do this," Garcia said.

Garcia said he doesn't believe it was the hospital administration that filed the complaint, but instead believes that he was turned in by other doctors in the area.

After Garcia's license was suspended, he completed testing and agreed to have his patient charts reviewed by the Arkansas Medical Board authorities.

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