

**Town of Ceredo Town Council Regular Session February 1st, 2021**

The Town of Ceredo Town Council met in Regular Session on Monday, February 1st, 2021, at the Ceredo City Hall. The Mayor, Paul A. Billups, called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. Those present included the Mayor, Paul A. Billups; the Recorder, Stanley E. Fink; and Councilmen Dennis Adkins, Oscar Adkins, Steve Diamond, Robert Leslie and Joe Ratcliff.

**Minutes of the Regular Session, January 4, 2021**

The Minutes of the January 4, 2021, Regular Session were provided to members prior to this meeting. There being no corrections or changes indicated, on motion by Dennis Adkins and second by Steve Diamond, with unanimous consent, reading of the minutes was waived and said minutes were made part of the record.

**Treasurer's Report**

Treasurer Robert Leslie provided a report of all fund balances and overview of expenditures for January, 2021. On motion by Robert Leslie and second by Dennis Adkins, with unanimous consent, the Treasurer's Report and expenditures for January, 2021, were approved.

**Delcie Elkins**

Delcie Elkins of 809 Main Street requested approval to construct a modular home on the site of her present house that was damaged by fire. After reviewing the drawings and ensuring that all applicable building codes would be met, upon motion by Steve Diamond and second by Joe Ratcliff, there being none opposed, approval was granted, subject to inspection of the construction process as mandated by town ordinance.

**Sixth Street Sewer Extension**

Terence Moran of Potesta and Associates presented an overview of funds available from the West Virginia Critical Needs Funding program, a 100% grant source, and suggested that the Town may qualify for funds to correct the sanitary sewer line at the Town Shops on 6th Street West and to extend a gravity line along the Ceredo Plaza parking lot to 4th Street West, thus enhancing the possibility of economic development of certain vacant property.

Mr. Moran explained that the current grant cycle requires applications to be submitted by February 10, 2021, and that the Town is required to engage the services of a project manager, accountant and attorney as part of the application process. Proposals were submitted and reviewed from Region II Planning and Development as project manager, Griffith and Associates as accountants, and Jon Nicol as attorney to handle land acquisitions.

After discussion, motion was made by Oscar Adkins and seconded by Robert Leslie to proceed with the grant application process, and by resolution to engage the services of Potesta and Associates as design engineers, Griffith and Associates as accountants, Region II Planning and Development as project managers, and Jon Nicol of Kay, Casto and Chaney as legal counsel.

**Nomination of Poll Workers**

Recorder Stanley Fink updated council regarding the March 20, 2021 Town election, and nominated the following residents as poll workers for the election: Kay Jordan, Lawrence Salmons, Gloria Pierce, Kelly Adkins, Greg Jarrell, and Charles Clarkson. Recorder Fink explained that the poll workers are required to attend a training session prior to election day, and suggested that pay be set at \$225.00, inclusive of the training session. Only five poll workers will be required on election day, with the sixth person being an alternate. After discussion, motion was made by Dennis Adkins and seconded by Steve Diamond that the nominated persons be hired and paid \$225.00 for their duties. There being none opposed, the motion passed.

**Cemetery Board Annual Report**

The Mayor provided council with a copy of the Crescent Hill Cemetery Annual Report and praised the work of the Board during the 2020 calendar year.

**Audit Report Fiscal 2019-2020**

The Mayor provided council with copies of the annual audit report submitted by BHM, CPA Group, Inc. The Mayor presented an overview of the audit and noted that the audit findings were very favorable. The final audit report will be submitted to the State Auditor as required by statute.

**New Police Vehicle**

The Mayor informed council that delivery was made of the 2021 Ford Explorer police vehicle. The vehicle was put in use on January 28, 2021.

**Elected Officials Salary 2021 Term**

On first reading and a motion by Oscar Adkins and second by Joe Ratcliff, there being none opposed, salaries of elected officials for the upcoming term were set as follows: Mayor, \$35,000; Recorder, \$14,000; and council members, \$6,700.

**Senior Wellness Center**

The Mayor updated council on progress at the Senior Wellness Center and asked for nominations of persons to serve on the Wellness Center Board. After discussion, council suggested that the Mayor contact Barry Scragg, Doug Adkins, Karin Dawson, Heather Ferguson and Ron Jarrell to determine their willingness to serve.

**Sixth Street West Survey**

The Mayor provided council with a survey map of Sixth Street West between Beech Street and Route 60. Several encroachments of various degrees were noted on Town property, and it was suggested that the Mayor contact the property owner and advise that no action is now necessary, but any encroachments once removed may not be replaced.

**Adjournment**

There being no further matters before council, the Mayor adjourned the meeting at 8:05 p.m.

**Town of Ceredo Town Council Special Session February 18, 2021**

The Town of Ceredo Town Council met in Special Session on Thursday, February 18th, 2021 at the Ceredo City Hall. The Mayor, Paul A. Billups, called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. Those present included the Mayor, Paul A. Billups; the Recorder, Stanley E. Fink; and Councilmen Oscar Adkins, Steve Diamond, Joe Ratcliff, and Robert Leslie.

**Ballot For 2021 Election**

The Mayor presented Council with the sample ballot for the 2021 Town election. On motion by Steve Diamond and second by Robert Leslie, Council unanimously approved the ballot as presented.

**Ballot Commissioners**

On motion by Robert Leslie and second by Joe Ratcliff, Council voted to approve Tammy Wolfe, Jennifer Akers, and Jacob Skeens as ballot commissioners for the March 20, 2021 Town election. All were in favor, motion carried.

**Polling Place**

The Mayor announced that the polling place for the March 20, 2021 Town election will be in Ceredo Town Hall, both for early voting and election day voting. Polls will open at 6:30 ante-meridiem and close at 7:30 post-meridiem.

**Salaries of Elected Officials**

An ordinance setting the salaries of the elected officials was presented for second reading. On motion by Robert Leslie and second by Joe Ratcliff, the ordinance was unanimously approved as read, to become effective April 1, 2021.

**Sanitary Sewer Extension Grant Application**

The Mayor provided an overview of the proposed sanitary sewer extension grant, intended to improve and extend sewer lines in the area between 6th Street West and 4th Street West. On motion by Steve Diamond and second by Oscar Adkins, with all voting affirmatively, the Mayor was authorized to file the grant application.

There being no further business, the Special Meeting was adjourned at 5:45 p.m.

**Town of Ceredo Town Council Statutory Meeting March 26th, 2021**

The Town of Ceredo, Town Council, held a Statutory Meeting on Friday, March 26th, 2021 at the City Hall. The Mayor, Paul A. Billups, called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. The meeting had been called for the purpose of canvassing the General Election results.

Those present included the Mayor, Paul A. Billups; the Recorder, Stanley E. Fink; and Councilmen, Dennis Adkins, Steve Diamond, Bob Leslie and Joe Ratcliff.

**Canvass of Votes – General Election of Officers Held March 20th, 2021**

Council proceeded to open the sealed packages and counted the number of ballots in each package. The numbers entered into the record are as follows:

<b><u>Mayor</u></b>	<b><u>Precinct 12</u></b>	<b><u>Total</u></b>
Paul A. Billups	102	102
<b><u>Recorder</u></b>	<b><u>Precinct 12</u></b>	<b><u>Total</u></b>
Stanley E. Fink	92	92
<b><u>Councilman</u></b>	<b><u>Precinct 12</u></b>	<b><u>Total</u></b>
Robert Leslie	83	83
Ron Jarrell	90	90
Joe Ratcliff	88	88
Oscar S. Adkins	92	92
Steve Diamond	87	87
Tommie L. Kelley	22	22

Council found the count to be correct. After re-sealing the packages of ballots and supplies, Council declared the following candidates duly elected:

- For Mayor: Paul A. Billups
- For Recorder: Stanley E. Fink
- For Council: Robert Leslie • Ron Jarrell • Joe Ratcliff  
Oscar Adkins • Steve Diamond

On a motion by Dennis Adkins and a second by Joe Ratcliff, with unanimous consent, Council voted to approve the Canvass as presented and set the bond required for a recount at \$50.00.

**Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 2:00 p.m.

## CITIZENS PARTY RE-ELECTED

The quadrennial Ceredo town election was held on Saturday, March 20, 2021. The Citizens Party ticket, led by Mayor Paul Billups and Recorder Stanley Fink, was chosen to lead the town for another four-year term. Billups (102) and Fink (92), were unopposed, while four incumbents and two newcomers ran for the Town Council seat vacated by the retirement of councilman Dennis Adkins.

In the council race, incumbent Oscar S. Adkins led the race with 92 votes, followed by newcomer Ron Jarrell (90), and incumbents Joe Ratcliff (88), Steve Diamond (87), and Robert Leslie (83). Independent candidate

Tommie Kelley received 22 votes.

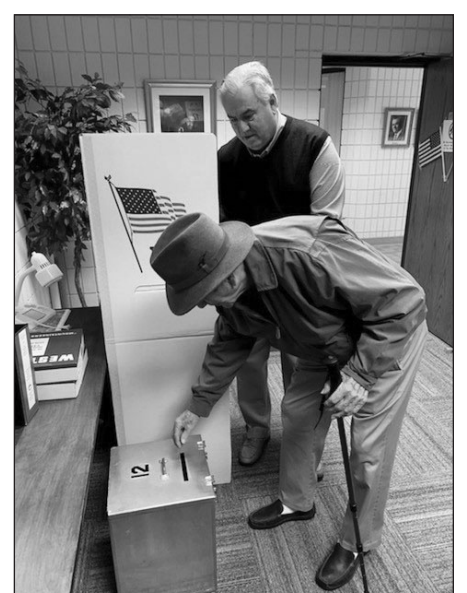
“It is encouraging that the residents have chosen to allow this administration to carry forth with another term”, said Mayor Billups. “It is a great honor for me to hold this office, in what is in my opinion the finest town in West Virginia, and to continue working with such a dedicated group of councilmen. Recorder Fink, having served the town for nearly fifty years, is a valuable resource and the council is composed of a dedicated, diverse group that bring talent and experience to each decision. We will be facing difficult decisions as our tax base dwindles, but I have every confidence

that this group of council members will appropriately direct the town and maintain the services that have made us known state-wide.”

The newly-elected officials took office on April 1, 2021.



Recorder Stanley Fink and Lee Dean, representing Secretary of State Mac Warner, during the Ceredo election canvass on March 26, 2021



Former Councilman Jim Billups casts his ballot in the recent Ceredo election. Mr. Billups has voted in every municipal election for the last 68 years.

# MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR

## PAUL BILLUPS, MAYOR

Ceredo residents have endured what has surely been one of the most trying years in our history. The COVID pandemic, still affecting our lives but the tide now slowly turning, was the first “once in a lifetime” event we faced. As we battled the virus and its’ damage to our health and economy, we were struck by a “once in a lifetime” ice storm that left us without power for days, nearly every road blocked by fallen trees, and a fire that destroyed town property valued at several hundred thousand dollars. Within two weeks of the ice storm, we suffered “once in ten years” flood.

In spite of these “once” events, we have battled through and now see the re-birth of Spring. Certainly, we are not out of the woods. Following the initial impact periods of the storm and flood, our employees have continued to cut and remove damaged trees from roadsides along Broad Hollow, Crescent Hill, and Walker’s Branch. Barring unforeseen events, the staff will finish the storm clean-up by the end of April. The remarkable thing is that our employees have handled this daunting task while keeping up with normal duties such as garbage collection, water and sewer repairs, and vegetation control in public areas. This is even more remarkable when you consider that our maintenance staff consists of only six employees. I’m sure that you join me in saluting the work of those fine employees.

We can look back to the founding of our town, where a single farm evolved into a bustling abolitionist town of 500 residents within three years, the destruction occasioned by the Civil War, and our determined battle to become an “All West Virginia City” and “West Virginia’s Most Livable Small Town” as evidence of the strength of our residents. I have no doubt that by the time summer

reaches Ceredo, our streets will be clean, our lawns well-manicured, and our residents proud of our town.

While most of our attention during the pandemic has been focused on health issues, our town and most other cities have faced a sharp decrease in revenue and increase in expenses. We were fortunate to have received some funds from the CARES Act, federal monies directed through the Governor’s office to assist counties and cities with expenses occasioned by the pandemic. This program allowed us to maintain a balanced budget so far this fiscal year. It now appears that we will be receiving direct federal funds totaling \$530,000 during the coming months as part of the federal Recovery Act.

It is tempting to view the federal monies as a cure-all, but they are not. Certainly, we are fortunate to receive the funds, and they will be used for limited purposes to update/improve our water and sewer infrastructure. What we must keep in mind is that these are not continuing funds, they are meant for specific projects and will not be part of our continuing budget funds after this year. We’re glad to get the money, we just can’t allow ourselves to believe they will be a forever thing.

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I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for expressing confidence in this administration by allowing us to stay in office another four years. Although we have faced a financial downturn of significant proportion during our first term, I am proud to say that your Town Council has acted in a sound fiscal manner and completed a number of projects and improvements while living within our budget and maintaining funds equal to those on hand when we took office.

We expect to face continued financial challenges during the next few years. The coal industry isn’t expected to improve, a few local businesses anticipate difficulty in recovering from the pandemic, and were recently notified that BB&T will be closing the Ceredo location. Hopefully, we will attract one or more businesses to Ceredo that will pick up the slack in our tax base. The good thing is that we have recognized the situation and have planned our budget accordingly. I have every confidence that your Town Council will see that municipal services continue at expected levels, and Ceredo will remain to be the small town of choice in West Virginia.



## Jarrell Wins Vacant Council Seat



When former councilman Dennis Adkins decided not to seek re-election, Ron Jarrell was quick to register for the vacant seat. A political newcomer, Jarrell was formerly employed as the town Public Works Director before retiring in May, 2020.

“I was born in Kenova, but much like late Mayor Otis Adkins, I got to Ceredo as soon as I could”, said Jarrell. A resident of First Street West, Jarrell campaigned hard for the vacant seat and was advised by veteran political pundit Richard Elkins. “I have watched how the council operates for several years, and feel that my experience in the construction

industry along with my knowledge of the town’s public works program can be put to good use.”

Jarrell won the vacant seat and took office on April 1. “Being retired, I have ample time to devote to this position. Hopefully, I can be an asset and will work well with the more experienced council members. I have great respect for the incumbent councilmen, and know the budget challenges we face in the near future”, said Jarrell. Ron and his wife, Cathy, have one daughter, Robin, a resident of Cincinnati.

## Town to Receive Federal Funds

The town has been notified by the office of Senator Joe Manchin that we will be receiving \$530,000 in Recovery Act funds from the federal government. It is expected that half of the total will be received in the next few weeks, with the remaining half coming after October 1, 2021.

These are restricted funds, meaning they must be spent on certain projects that include water and sewer infrastructure or COVID-related projects. The funds cannot be used to back-fill budget shortfalls.

While no definite projects have been identified, the town has both a water project and a sewer project that were in the engineering phases prior to learning of the federal funds. Town Council will make final decisions after analyzing fund restrictions. On the board now are a sewer project to improve and expand the sanitary sewer in the area between Sixth and Fourth Streets West, and repair of the reserve water line that runs from Main Street to the Crescent Hill reservoir.

It is anticipated that other projects will be considered, including stormwater improvements in the Greenwood Drive area and the intersection of Sixth Street and A Street.

“We are certainly happy to be receiving these funds,” said Mayor Paul Billups. “Even though these are ‘one-time’ funds, they will allow us to cure several utility problems in town without draining our utility funds. I’m sure Council will study a list of potential uses, and make sound decisions on how to utilize the funds.”

The town was hopeful that funds would be available to put a new roof on the Wellness Center, but that won’t be the case with this money. Efforts are still underway with the state to obtain some form of grant funding for the roof project.

## Wellness Center In Operation



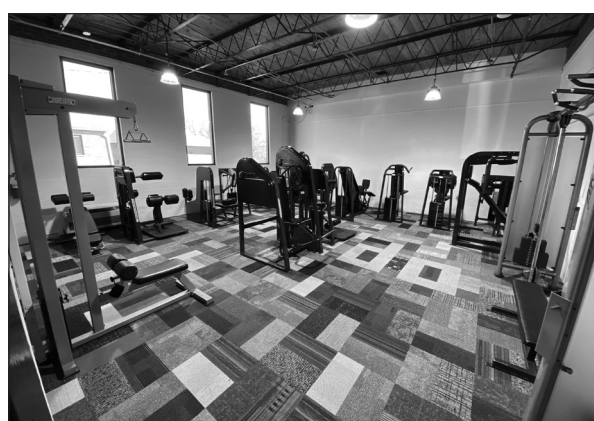
The Ceredo Senior Wellness Center is open for business and doing very well. Located in the former elementary school on Main Street, the physical fitness section of the Center is open Monday through Saturday from 8 a.m. until noon, with evening hours of 4 until 7 on Monday through Friday. The fitness facility has a cardio room with treadmills, stationary bikes, stairstep machines, and elliptical trainers. The weight room features a full compliment of Nautilus machines. Attendance has been very good, with a large number of Ceredo, Kenova, and Westmoreland taking advantage of the facility.

In addition to the fitness center, classes in Zumba for both beginners and advanced, a Silver Sneakers exercise program, and a “Ripped” exercise program are in full operation, taught by Heather Ferguson and Sarah Lester. Indoor pickleball is staying

busy as the season ends, and it is expected that the Alumni Band and Tuesday Night Pickers will resume practicing at the Center within the next few weeks.

The Center accepts Silver Sneakers insurance programs. Regular memberships are available at the following rates: Over 65 years of age, \$120 a year or \$15 a month; Under 65, \$160 annually or \$20 a month. For members of the American Legion, the Legion pays ½ of the membership fee. A pickleball-only membership is \$50 per year. Veterans over 95 years of age named Blackie have been awarded a free membership.

Please stop and look at the facility. The Town was able to make this facility a reality with mostly in-house and volunteer labor with minimal costs, and it is a great addition to the community.



# “FIRST THINGS FIRST”

– Devotional thoughts from Pastor of the First Baptist Church of Ceredo.

“Seek **FIRST** the kingdom of God...” (Matt. 6:33)

## Spring Has Sprung!

Needless to say, the last few weeks have been more than eventful for the folks of the Ceredo-Kenova area, and the entire Wayne County region. Most of us are ready to bid Winter 2021 goodbye and see Spring arrive, with the hopes that things will be better. As Song of Solomon 2:11-12 says, “The winter is past, the rain is over and gone. The flowers appear on the earth; The time of singing has come...”

There is one part of Spring that none of us looks forward to at all...setting our clocks forward that hour for Daylight Savings Time. I don't mind setting

my clock BACK that hour in the Fall, but “springing forward” is for the birds! I don't like losing that hour of sleep! But the tradeoff is pretty good. We all enjoy the extra daylight in the evenings and the added warmth that hopefully will come with it.

This idea of “springing forward” can apply to a whole lot more of life than just setting our clocks up an hour. It can really be a way of looking at life. It reminds us of the preciousness of time and that every moment of our lives is a gracious gift of God. Every tick of the clock is gone forever and can never be lived again. What a powerful motivator to do what Paul said to do in Ephesians 5:15, and that is to be “redeeming the time” (present tense, something we

continually do), making every moment count for the glory of God.

Spring also reminds us something else, and that is the renewal of life. Before too long, the flowers will push through the hardened soil again and the trees will again bud. Bright green will soon replace the dull brown on the trees, and we will once again experience the shade of the leaves. This is a tangible reminder that God can still bring life out of death. It is no coincidence that the greatest day on the Christian calendar, Easter, is in the spring of the year. This is the day we as God's people celebrate the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, something that is, believe it or not, historically verifiable (more about that next

month). Jesus died for the sins of the world on a cross. He did not deserve to die that way (He never did anything wrong or worthy of death). He did so out of love for us (see February's article). But thank God, he didn't stay dead! Three days later, he came back to life again! And we can too! We who are “dead in sin” (Eph. 2:1), can be “made alive” in Jesus Christ (Eph. 2:5). When you see new life “springing” forth from the ground and trees, think about that!

We would like to invite you to our Easter services at FBC Ceredo: Good Friday (April 2nd at 6:30PM) and Easter Sunday morning (10:45AM). Our children will also be presenting their Easter program on Sunday, April 11th, also at 10:45AM.

You and your family are welcome to all of these services. We hope to see you at FBC Ceredo soon!

Jeffrey F. Canterbury is the pastor of the First Baptist Church, 448 Main St., Ceredo WV. For more information about the church, including service times and archived messages, please visit the church's website at

[www.fbcceredo.com](http://www.fbcceredo.com).

Or you can call the church at 304-453-2092. All scripture quotations are from the New King James version of the Bible. If you have any questions related to the Bible you would like answered, please send them to Pastor Jeff at [fbcsecretary@zoominternet.net](mailto:fbcsecretary@zoominternet.net) or mail them to P.O. Box 967, Ceredo, WV 25507.



### Our Doors Are Open To You!

**Service Times:**  
 Sunday 10:45 am  
(In person & Live Stream)  
 Sunday 7pm  
(Live Stream)  
 Wednesday 7pm  
(Live Stream)

**Service live streamed on our website.**

**448 Main St.**  
**Ceredo, WV 25507**  
 Phone: 304-453-2092  
[www.fbcceredo.com](http://www.fbcceredo.com)

**First Baptist Church Ceredo**  
 Pastor Jeffrey F. Canterbury

### HONOR ROLL

Eleanor Terry.....	10/21
Jim and Pat Billups .....	02/21
John C. Hall .....	05/21
Paul and Kathy Billups.....	10/21
Jack and Ann Riggs .....	05/21
Mike and Susan Watts.....	10/21
Leigh Ann Johnson.....	04/22
Connie & Mark Beford.....	10/21
Dinah and Dale Ledbetter .....	10/21
In Memory of Herb & Helen Stephens .....	08/21
In Memory of Coach Dale Craycraft .....	08/21
In Memory of J. J. & Roma Gail Billups .....	08/21
In Memory of Houston & Gladys Woolwine.....	04/21
Katrina Childers.....	05/21
In Memory of Alberta “Dossie” & Sherman Medley .....	04/21
Herm Matney .....	08/21
In Memory of Anagene Wooten Gibbs .....	08/21
In Memory of Kathleen Wooren Marcum .....	08/21
In Memory of Larry Cole .....	08/21
In Memory of Charles & Dorothy Watts .....	09/21
Jeanette & Roger Barker .....	03/21
Karin & Mike Dawson.....	02/23
American Legion .....	01/21
Evaroni's .....	01/21
CUMC .....	12/21
Roberta and Charlie Mitchell .....	03/22
In Memory of Robert (Pete) & Carolyn Sullivan .....	04/21
Jennifer Ferguson.....	04/21
Oscar, Bonnie, Michelle Booth.....	04/21
John M. Spangler, Esq.....	05/21
In Memory of Frances Cornell.....	05/21
In Memory of WW. Mills, MD.....	05/21
In Memory of Larry Jack Heck .....	06/21
Floyd Mays .....	06/21
Mike & Karen Skeens.....	07/21
Keith and Freda Chadwick.....	07/21
Tyler Dawson, DDS .....	07/21
Raymond Keigley.....	07/21
Brenda Francis .....	07/21
O'Dell Mannon .....	07/21
Dr. Ron & Lucenda Akers.....	07/21
Marlene Simmons .....	07/21
The Flanagan Family of Saratoga Springs, NY .....	10/21
In Memory of Milton J. & Evelyn Mills .....	10/21
In Memory of Charles & Bet Pratt .....	10/21
Vern & Cindy Eagleston Blaine .....	11/21
Brother Otis Adkins.....	01/22
Brother Mose & Sister June Napier .....	01/22
Susann Meurer.....	12/21
Robert & Mary Lee Leslie.....	01/22
Taylor Booth.....	03/22
Michael & Debby Hibbard.....	04/22

The New Crescent Honor Roll is intended to be a way we give special recognition to those persons who donate at least \$50.00 during the year to support our publication. Since the Honor Roll is a twelve-month feature, you will need to renew your contribution every twelve months to remain on the Roll. Your name not appearing indicates your year had expired. A very special “Thank You!” to all of you who have helped us to continue the paper with your gifts. With your help, we have been able to publish and deliver The New Crescent to every home in Ceredo since February 1990!

## Around Town

Demolition is underway on the former home of Delcie Elkins, located on the corner of Main and High Street. Delcie's home was damaged by fire in December, 2020, and during her absence from the location, Delcie, Donnie, and Clyde have taken quarters in a rented house on Main Street.

When demolition is complete, a one-floor plan house will replace the two-story structure that was damaged by fire. The single-story house will be more convenient for Ceredo's “Flower Lady” and her family. We wish Delcie well, and hope she has time this year to do her annual beautification plantings for the town.

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The annual Hal McFann Pure Oil Cup golf tournament will soon be underway. A season-long event tracking local golfers, the Pure Oil Cup was shared last season by Clarence Pratt, Gary Runyon, and David Pennington. At least two residents, Bill Bailey and Ronnie Jarrell, obtained their Cup cards over the winter and are expected to challenge for the title this season. It does not appear that former Cup champion Elba Gene Cox will compete this season due to prior commitments, but he hopes to be available for the annual victory dinner and trophy presentation.

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The Paul T. Billups Park is again alive with activity. Softball practice is underway, the walking track is being utilized all day, and the basketball and pickleball courts are hosting daily groups. The annual rebirth of outdoor activity is exciting for us all. If you haven't visited the Park, please do so. There is space for every activity, and as strange as the name may sound, pickleball is the fastest-growing sport in America, suitable for all ages, and our fine outdoor and indoor courts are a great place to learn.

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The State Farm Insurance office located at Main and Route 60 is now being operated by agent Aaron Billups, son of former Ceredo resident Mike Billups, grandson of the late “Mayor of Main Street”, J.J. Billups, and great-grandson of former Mayor Jewel Billups. Aaron is a graduate of C-K High School and Marshall University, was a pretty fair baseball player, and surely qualifies as a “Ceredo Boy.”

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A speed hump was recently installed in Park Terrace in an effort to control speeding in the area. Park Terrace is a cul-de-sac street, thus not subject to through traffic, yet there appears to be a continued issue with some drivers. The neighborhood is home to more children than any other area in town, and hopefully the speed hump will remind drivers of the need to use caution in the area.

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The Ceredo Unsafe Housing Commission will be inspecting two buildings this month as we continue efforts to stay in front of the abandoned building plague that is overtaking some cities. Like most towns, we have a few older houses and buildings that have become dilapidated. If these structures can't be rehabilitated, they will be demolished.

The former elementary school building, now home of the Senior Wellness Center Golden Girl Fitness Center, Alumni Band practice facility, community meeting room, indoor court and walking area, Zumba classroom, and police and fire training areas is in need of a new roof. Senator Bob Plymale is working hard to make the roof a reality, and efforts continue with the Governor's office to obtain grant funding for this project.

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With the NCAA Final Four limiting attendance due to COVID restrictions, the Moore brothers were forced to forego their annual trek for the second straight year. Kevin, David, and Larry Moore, basketball fans extraordinaire, faithfully attended the Final Four for many years. It's a safe bet that the brothers, all great community volunteers, will soon be ordering tickets to next year's event.

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The popular Ceredo hanging flower baskets are now at the nursery and are expected to be delivered for placement in mid-May. Anyone interested in volunteering to assist with watering the flower baskets should contact Public Works Director Dustin Long at 304-453-4675. The flowers require watering around three times a week, and the town has a vehicle equipped with a pump and tank that removes any physical labor.

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Two town projects will soon be underway. The annual tree removal/replacement should begin any day, at the convenience of the tree cutting company. This program involves mostly trees that are too large to be handled by the town crew.

The town park court lighting project is scheduled to begin later this month. The town is providing materials, and work will be completed by a volunteer crew headed by Mike Dawson. The directional court lights will allow basketball and pickleball to play extended hours without backlighting that could disturb neighbors.

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Thanks to former Police Chief Jack Butcher for providing lunch to the town employees. Now a Registered Nurse, Jack was a fine Police Chief before deciding to continue his education in the health field. A regular attendee at the Ceredo fitness facility, Jack is proud of his Ceredo connections and we are proud of him.

## Employee of the Month

Jacob Skeens is looking toward a bright future. A Ceredo native and graduate of Spring Valley High School, Jacob spent several years in the food industry prior to owning a restaurant in Florida before returning to Ceredo in 2016. "I loved the food industry, but running my own restaurant required standing on a concrete floor for several hours every day. Due to back issues, it became impossible for me to operate the restaurant like I knew it should be operated, so I decided to sell and return home."

Jake was first employed as a police dispatcher, and quickly proved to be a pro-active employee, motivated to do a good job, and possessing enough computer knowledge to assist several town departments. In 2020, an opening became available in the finance/accounting department and Jacob eagerly accepted the new challenge.

"Jake's experience in operating a business is valuable to the town," said Mayor Paul Billups. "Jake is able to understand the 'big picture' and constantly looks for ways to improve town operations." Jake currently handles payroll, accounts payable, tax receipts, stormwater collections and budget functions along with being the in-house



computer and internet technician. In his spare time, Jacob has played an integral part in completion of the Senior Wellness Center.

Water Clerk Tammy Wolfe credits Skeens with implementing the new utility billing software. "Jake is very knowledgeable about computer programming, and is willing to help with any problem. He works long hours and is willing to do anything. He has made himself into a valuable employee," said Wolfe.

## NOTICE PROPERTY AUCTION



The Town of Ceredo will be offering at auction a house and adjoining garage, located at 1409 B Street, Ceredo. The one-story brick house is 1,035 sq.ft., containing a living room, dining room, two bedrooms, and one bath. The garage is a 60 x 20-foot metal building with concrete floor.

The public auction will take place in front of Town Hall on Saturday, May 8, 2021, at 10 a.m. Terms of sale are cash or bank letter of credit at time of sale.

Persons interested in viewing the property may call Town Hall during regular business hours to schedule a viewing.

NOTICE: This property is located outside the town floodwall and is thus at risk for flood damage.

## CVFD Annual Report

Chief Rob Robson of the Ceredo Volunteer Fire Department recently provided the Town Council with the 2020 calendar year report of operations. We all recognize that Ceredo has one of the finest volunteer fire companies in the state, and the report of operations shows that the volunteers did yeoman's work in 2020.

The department responded to a total of 1,527 calls during the year. That is an average of just over 4 calls a day for 365 days, remarkable for a volunteer organization. Of the total calls, 81%, or 1,296 calls were for Rescue or Emergency Medical Service. When we consider that number, think what we would do without being able to call the paramedics and emergency medical technicians provided by the CVFD.

The department responded to 42 working fires, 49 false alarm calls, 102 calls for general assistance, 13 hazardous condition calls that did not involve fire, and 5 weather-related or natural disaster calls.

Undoubtedly the biggest challenge faced by our volunteers in recent years was the ice storm and its aftermath of power outages and blocked roads that started on Monday, February 15th. In anticipation of the storm, Chief Robson had the entire department on full alert, and every member faced unbelievable situations over the next five days.

By early Monday evening, most roads leading into Ceredo were blocked by downed trees and thousands of residents were without power. The department directed one group to use chain saws

to clear roads, a task that took nearly five days to complete, while a second group answered emergency medical calls. The department appropriated utility vehicles from neighboring communities that weren't hit by the storm, and members worked around-the-clock to answer every call for assistance.

As if the ice disaster wasn't enough, the town Beautification Building located directly behind the Fire Department caught fire on Wednesday afternoon. Fortunately, several firefighters were in the station at the time of the blaze, and their fast, professional work kept the fire from extending to the Fire Department, Police Department, and Water Department.

According to Chief Robson, as quickly as the rescue squads were able to clear rural roads the members visited every house to be certain that no one was in distress. "It was a true community effort," said the Chief. "When we did the house-to-house welfare checks, our residents offered us coffee or a place to get warm before we continued. It was obvious that our residents appreciated the hard work being done by the volunteers."

Our volunteers are called upon to perform difficult tasks on a regular basis, but to work around the clock for nearly a week is a very uncommon duty. Our men and women met the task and performed admirably, and we should all salute their service to the town.

## CEREDO TOWN STATS

POPULATION 1,412	LAND 1.53 SQ. MI.
MALE 42.6%	WATER .73 SQ. MI.
FEMALE 57.4%	MEDIAN AGE 48.9
ELEVATION 552	HOUSING UNITS 718
AREA 2.26 SQ. MI.	

## THE NEW CRESCENT

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Letters welcome.

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## Beautification Conflagration

The February ice storm was quite devastating for Ceredo. Town buildings were closed over the February 13-14 weekend, and remained closed on Monday, February 15, in observance of President's Day. At approximately 6:00 p.m. on Monday a majority of the town and all outlying areas lost power due to downed electrical lines, creating an emergency situation not previously experienced in our town.

The work of our volunteer fire department and town employees, recognized elsewhere in this issue, was outstanding. Somehow, our in-town residents survived forty hours of frigid temperatures without electricity before power was restored at 12:58 p.m. on Wednesday, February 17th. Unfortunately, the restoration of electrical power brought devastation to the town Beautification Building, located directly behind the former Town Hall and Fire Department.

Shortly after power was restored an explosion occurred inside the Beautification Building and within minutes fire fully engulfed the 60 x 40-foot metal building that was built in 2001. To our good

fortune, a number of volunteer firemen were at the station as rescue work was continuing for persons in our outlying areas.

The CVFD, assisted by the Kenova Volunteer Fire Department, were able to bring the blaze under control and protect the adjoining buildings from damage. It was truly an example of professional firefighting for our volunteer departments to do such a great job on a major fire.

The Beautification Building was a total loss, although some contents were salvaged. In addition to being the storage space for beautification items such as seasonal banners and holiday decorations, a number of small mowers, tillers, and other implements were stored in the building and lost in the fire. The building also housed the work area for our small engine repair, electrical, and carpentry shop, along with the sewer department office and work area.

Preparing a "lost contents" list for insurance purposes was a daunting task. Imagine sifting through fire debris to determine how many wrenches and screwdrivers had accumulated over

the past twenty years. David Patrick, Matt Myles, Steve Amis, and Jeff White did a commendable job in compiling the list, and we expect to soon receive insurance funds with which to start replacing the lost items.

The exact cause of the fire has not been determined, although given the time of the fire in relation to power being restored to the building indicates a likelihood that one of the ceiling-hung gas furnaces may have malfunctioned. We are extremely fortunate that, due to the power outage, no employees were working in the building. It is expected that demolition will begin later this month, and the Town Council is currently considering whether to replace the structure as it was, or in some other building style.

Residents shouldn't notice any changes in municipal services or the town beautification program as a result of the fire. Seasonal beautification items should be replaced in short order, and currently-needed equipment such as lawn mowers have already been replaced.



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## Wintering Covid

Mike Watts, Contributing Columnist

Yesterday was the first day in the past two weeks that the temperature went above freezing in Oklahoma. That's the good news. The bad news is that we have two supposedly '90% high efficient' furnaces – both of which stopped cycling/functioning on Tuesday. I called Minter & Sons (HVAC specialist) and they checked the units during their service call and said that these type furnaces are very efficient units but have one major flaw. That flaw being that they will stop working when the temperatures get and remains as low as it has been in Oklahoma for the past 13 days – in fact, it got as low as minus 15 degrees this week. By the way, when I wrote this email yesterday it was 8 degrees at 9:10 am Friday morning. That was bad news “but wait (as they say in the TV infomercials) there's more.” Two nights ago, Susan came into our bedroom, where I was huddled under every blanket that we have in the house, and tells me that one of the small guest bedrooms has wet carpet. Well, that did not sound too good so I got up and went out to the garage to investigate. While looking for the problem I discovered that our 'modern tankless water heater' seems to have sprung a very robust leak. Water was flowing (like a small stream) down the garage floor and out into the driveway, where it immediately froze. Water was also flowing under the wall where our 'modern tankless water heater' was mounted and into the bedroom. Being a former West Publishing Company law book salesman (and definitely not a plumber), it took me a few minutes to figure out where the shut off valve was to the water tank. I finally found the valve and shut it off, then dried my feet, soaked up as much water from the bedroom carpet as possible, grabbed Susan and got back under the covers and went to sleep, hoping that it would not get any worse.

Well, I was right. Things have not gotten any worse (at least that I can see) and in fact have improved significantly. I called my USAA Insurance representative and told them of my situation. As usual they were exceptionally understanding, friendly, sympathetic and efficient. I joined USAA when I was commissioned a 2nd Lt. in the USMC in 1971 and I have now happily been a member for 50 years. I have never once thought about using any other company for my insurance needs – home, auto, life, personal property, the whole nine yards – they are the best. They advised me that they will take care of everything and said an adjuster will contact us shortly. This completes

my 'infomercial' for USAA.

I know that it's hard to believe but that is just part of the good news. As they say, “the best is yet to come” so pay close attention - this is where it gets good. As you all know I enjoy playing golf, probably as much as anyone. In the past I have been known for being able to hit a golf ball a long way, especially for a 72-year-old man. Unfortunately, I am also known for being able to hit it a long way – in any given direction and not always in the direction intended. I am what you might call “a consistently inconsistent golfer” – more than capable of shooting 75, 85, 95 on any given day (depending on which Mike shows up that day.) It is a sad but known fact that I have even been known to score in the dreaded triple figures. Well, I am happy to report that those days are over. The arctic blast that has engulfed Oklahoma over the past two weeks has enabled me to correct every swing fault that has plagued me over my last 50 years of golfing – please note the key words – has plagued! Thankfully those dark days are over – for good???

Normally a golfer does not share the secrets to his new found success. However, I am not one of those selfish type golfers who only worries about improving his golf game. I want my friends to have great enjoyment, success and athletic fulfillment while on the links so I am now going to share the secrets that I have discovered over the past two weeks – get ready because here it comes. For the past two weeks, due to the weather and the COVID-19 pandemic, I have been nearly bored to death. I could either watch Susan work another 1,000-piece jigsaw puzzle, let her beat me at scrabble (hard on my ego) or wander the isles at Lowe's looking for yet another item/tool that I did not really need, all while trying to breathe comfortably out of my Covid-19 face mask. The only other option was to read another book on my iPad thru the Kindle app. This was fine for a while until I started several new books - only to discover after reading the first chapter or two that I had already read that book. Don't laugh because I am sure that this has happened to you too. That only left one thing to do and that was to watch endless YouTube videos on topics that (before the lingering cold weather hit Oklahoma) I had absolutely little or no interest in exploring. I can now report that I know all there is to know about removing ear wax, how Dr. Lee successfully and safely pops pimples, learn how novice wood workers can build nearly anything

using a Shopsmith home work shop, watch Phil Helmuth “implode” after experiencing a ‘bad-beat’ on the World Poker Tour and most importantly, learn how to sharpen any knife ever made to a razors edge.

While binge watching these YouTube videos, I fortunately ran across an instructional golf video by Tom Saguto - it was his video titled “Greatest Golf Swing Tip.” After watching this video, a light went off in my head and I immediately thought of the David Alan Coe classic record “You Never Even Called Me By My Name”, where he says that his friend sent him a song and said it was the perfect country western song. If you have never heard this classic country ballad, you should - see link below. Well, Tom Saguto may have created the perfect golf video. After watching this initial Tom Saguto video I became addicted to his golfing philosophy. I grant you that Saguto may come across as a bit of an “over the top doofus” but under that “crazier than bat-shit exterior” he is a pure golfing genius. And now that Hank Heaney has imploded on Sirius Radio there is more than enough room in the golf instructional market place for a guy like Tom Saguto. I am sending a few links to some of his award-winning instructional videos that should prove to be helpful to you. As Kenny Banya said on an old Seinfeld episode, “these are gold Jerry, gold.”

I am quite sure that after watching many, if not most, of Tom Saguto's Youtube videos I am now a 1 or 2 handicap at worse and quite possibly a plus 2 at best. I am attaching a photo of the view from my back porch of the eighth fairway of The Golf Club of Oklahoma, where we now reside. As you can see the conditions are slightly unplayable at present so I cannot actually put all the Saguto tips into practice at this time but I am sure that everything I have learned from the videos will be easily incorporated into my golf game. I have been using the “visualization practice technique” routinely the past week or so and I have not hit a single bad shot. Once the course is back in shape for daily play, I will be sending you an update. I am looking forward to this summer's tournament season in Oklahoma and expect to be very competitive in the senior division. Take care and be sure to subscribe to the Saguto-Golf channel on YouTube (I get an override on the increase in new subscribers.)

Remember, “if it's not fun, don't do it.”

## The Crescent Kitchen



**Cookie Butter Pie**  
by Natalie Hemann

I think I might be one of the last people to discover Biscoff Cookie Butter. I was familiar with their cookies but not the cookie butter. I saw it one day at our local Foodfair and bought it. I thought it would be similar to Nutella and I was planning to eat it by the spoonful! I think the only similarity is that they are both spreads. The cookie butter is not as sweet and with a more spicy taste. I didn't like it by itself so I started looking for recipes to make with it and I found this pie. Bingo! It is delicious! It has become a new favorite in my family. (I added a few dollops of whipped cream just to make the pie prettier but it doesn't need it.)

### Ingredients:

4 – oz. Cream Cheese, softened (I used low fat)  
1/2 – Cup Biscoff Cookie Butter  
1/2 – Cup Confectioners Sugar  
1 – Carton (8 oz.) Frozen Whipped Topping, thawed  
1 – 9 inch Graham Cracker Crust  
2 – Biscoff Cookies, crushed

### Directions:

Beat the cream cheese and cookie spread together; add the confectioners sugar until well blended. Fold in the whipped topping and put into crust. Pulse the cookies in any kind of chopper or blender until the cookies are a fine powder; sprinkle pie with crushed cookies.

## Dogs and Cats

It seems that every Spring we receive a number of calls at Town Hall concerning dogs and cats running loose in the town. Recently, the Cabell-Wayne Animal Control officer was in Ceredo attempting to locate at least two dogs on the southside and a dozen cats on the northside of town that residents had complained about.

Please be aware that per town ordinance, ALL DOGS AND CATS must be either contained on the keeper's property or on a leash. We all believe that “our” dog or cat is harmless, and it likely is, to us as owners. The problem comes with observing the rights of others.

In addition to the leash law being in effect, animal keepers walking dogs or cats in public areas are required to remove all waste left by the animals. Cans have been placed on nearly every corner in town to make it simple for people walking dogs or cats to discard waste. Please clean your animal's waste and place it in one of the corner baskets for removal by town employees.

The town has no control over the Animal Control officer. If residents contact Animal Control about a loose dog or cat, the animal may be apprehended by the dog warden and taken to the shelter. Please avoid the unpleasantry of this situation by following the law.

## Fake News Not New to Ceredo

We have all become familiar with the term “fake news” over the past four years. Most of us thought this was a new phrase coined under rather strange national political controversies. While perusing the September 15, 1886 issue of the Ceredo Gazette, it became apparent that “fake news” was alive and well in Ceredo some 125 years ago. Following is a story that appeared in the Ashland daily newspaper, and the follow-up printed in Ceredo later in the week:

Ashland, Ky. September 11 – An attempt was made to assassinate W.A. Wright, Mayor of Ceredo, W.Va. as he was returning home from a meeting of the City Council. The would-be murderers escaped and so far no clue has been discovered as to their identity.

Noting the Ashland report, and that the story had been carried by a number of local papers, the Ceredo Gazette reported that “the story contains not one word of truth. There is no man named Wright as the Mayor of Ceredo, and no one else has been assassinated here. The person who would for a dime or so would broadcast such a lie and thereby injure the fair name of a community should himself be assassinated. Ceredo is the most law-abiding town, we dare say, on the Ohio River. Since the present Mayor assumed the duties of the office six months ago there have been but two persons brought before him for trial, there being no occasion for more arrests. Is there another town along the river that can show this kind of record for law and order?”

Indeed, it appears that “fake news” is nothing new. One has now but to turn on the television to any purported news channel to hear stories equally outlandish as the Ashland Daily Mail report of 1886. The problem today is that the two political parties appear to be trying to out-do the other, and we don't have the Ceredo Gazette of 1886 to set the record straight.

It is good to report that Ceredo remains to this day as one of the safest communities along the Ohio River, and to our knowledge the town has not yet had anyone assassinated!