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DEXTER STATESMAN/Noreen Hyslop

# Flu cases on the rise, no county schools closed

**By MIKE MCCOY**  
Statesman Staff Writer

Cases of influenza have increased over the last three weeks in Stoddard County, but there have been no school closures in the county due to illness. Last week, the Twin Rivers, Neelyville,

Sacred Heart in Poplar Bluff, Kelso and Clarkton School Districts all cancelled school because of the number of students with the flu.

While county schools have seen a dip in attendance due to illness, none

See **FLU/A2**

# CHASE INCLUDES STODDARD CO. 1 jailed after police chase, teen hurt

**SEMO News Service**

MOREHOUSE, Mo. — A Morehouse man faces felony charges following a police chase through multiple counties that resulted in a crash and seriously injured a teenager.

Justin A. Mattison, 18, of Morehouse is charged

with felony first degree assault, felony first degree endangering the welfare of a child and felony resisting/interfering with the arrest for a felony, according to online court records.

According to probable cause statement by More-

See **CHASE/A2**

# Bernie adopts school calendar, rehires principals

**By NOREEN HYSLOP**  
Managing Editor

BERNIE, Mo. — Members of Bernie School Board moved through a busy agenda in short order Monday night, Feb. 13, approving the district's 2017-18 school calendar, a pair of upcoming student

trips and some policy updates.

While the flu bug and other illnesses have hit Bernie Schools, administrators noted student attendance was still in the mid-90s for the month of January.

See **BERNIE/A2**

# 4 ALARM FIRE LEVELS BLOOMFIELD LANDMARK

**By NOREEN HYSLOP**  
Managing Editor

BLOOMFIELD, Mo. — Bloomfield firefighters, assisted by mutual aid from Advance, Dexter, and Puxico Fire Departments, were on the scene of an inferno Sunday afternoon that in the end destroyed a local landmark.

Firefighters were summoned to what locals for decades have referred to as "the old Bennett mill" on the north end of town on County Rd. 524. The mill was owned and operated for many years by the late Jess Bennett, but had been under lease to a Bloomfield couple, Joe and Heather White, who housed grain in the nearby storage bins and some farm machinery and other items inside the mill location. Heather White confirmed Tuesday that all larger implements were removed with little damage.

Firemen were called when smoke was witnessed coming out of the center "tower" of the facility just after 1 p.m. Sunday. Bloomfield's Battalion Chief Justin Bell made the decision almost immediately upon arriving at the scene to call in mutual aid from the three neighboring departments.

Fighting strong winds Sunday, firefighters worked to extinguish not only the structure fire, but a series of smaller brush fires set by the blowing embers, Dexter Fire Chief confirmed.

Bloomfield Director of Public Safety Daniel Dew said no one was injured in the blaze. He confirmed that Fire Marshall Jason Dunn was called to the scene and



that the fire remains under investigation at this time.

Tires, a fiberglass trailer and other items stored in the building caused clouds of thick, black smoke to rise from the fire. Area departments were called for tanker and brush truck support as well as manpower, officials said.

A dump system was set up, whereby firefighters could pull back pooled water used on the blaze.

See **FIRE/A2**

**The old Bennett mill, located on the north edge of Bloomfield, went up in flames early Sunday afternoon, Feb. 12. Firefighters from four area fire departments battled the blaze, which was hampered by strong winds in the area. No one was injured in the fire.**

Photos courtesy of Dave Cooper



# Never underestimate the Love of a grandmother

**By NOREEN HYSLOP**  
Managing Editor

With an abundance of prayer, energy, the support of family and friends, but most significantly, with the determination of a loving grandmother from Dexter, a legislative measure in Missouri is about to change a long-standing emergency medical protocol. It's a measure that could — and likely, will — save lives.

Darlene and Danny Shelton's grandson, Danny Noah Shelton, is six years old and lives with his parents, Daniel and Kristin, and three younger sisters, in Rolla.

Danny's family recognized that he seemed to bruise easily,

See **LOVE/A2**

**Darlene Shelton of Dexter is shown in a recent photo with her six-year-old grandson, Danny.**

Photo provided



# Citizen wants co. to ban burning of fields

**By MIKE MCCOY**  
Statesman Staff Writer

BLOOMFIELD, Mo. — A concerned citizen brought a complaint about the burning of agricultural fields in the county before the Stoddard County Commission at their regular meeting Tuesday morning. The resident said he suffers from respiratory problems that are worsened because of the burning.

Stubble from some crops, such as wheat and rice, are

See **BAN/A2**

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**A6 obituaries**

Larry Watkins — Dexter, Mo.  
Tressie Logan — Bernie, Mo.  
Elma (Harlan) Brown — Dexter  
Laura Edith Shipman — Bloomfield  
Katteena "Tina" Borders — Dexter, Mo.  
Jess Marion Brown, Jr. — Dexter

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**B4 north stoddard county**

**ADVANCE HONORS STATE CHAMPIONSHIP TEAMS ... SWARM-CATCHING IS TOPIC OF MONTHLY DEXTER BEE CLUB MEETING ... MY LONG BATTLE WITH FERAL BEE COLONY**