

From the David and Barbara Pryor Center for Arkansas Oral and Visual History

The Ouachita Citizen

COLLECT, PRESERVE, CONNECT

UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS, FAYETTEVILLE, ARKANSAS ■ WEDNESDAY, JUNE 3, 2026

PRYOR CENTER NEWSLETTER HONORS PRYOR'S OUACHITA CITIZEN NEWSPAPER

WELCOME FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE PRYOR CENTER

Friends,

I hope this note finds you well. It is my privilege to introduce you to the Pryor Center newsletter. My team and I thought a newsletter would be an ideal way to keep you informed of our ongoing work and future projects.

You can anticipate a couple issues a year, moving forward. The inspiration behind the format of our newsletter is the newspaper that David and Barbara started in Camden, Arkansas, in the 1950s. Over the last several months, we've added significant numbers of new oral histories to our ever-growing collection, held public programs highlighting projects related to Arkansas and its history, and celebrated the digitization of our KATV Collection—a one of kind digital record of Arkansas broadcast news spanning decades. In this and future issues, the newsletter will keep you informed of the work we're doing and what we plan to do next. Your support and interest in our work inspires us to continue to collect, preserve, and connect you to Arkansas stories.

Sincerely,
John C. Davis, Ph.D.
Executive Director



Above: David Pryor and Barbara Pryor working in the offices of the *Ouachita Citizen*, ca. 1957

CAMDEN PAPER RAN 1957–1962

In 1957, newlyweds David and Barbara Pryor returned to David's hometown of Camden, Arkansas, and opened a newspaper. In the midst of simmering racial tension and political turmoil, which would dramatically spill over into the Little Rock Crisis that year, the Pryors sought to start a paper that would provide an independent, progressive voice for southern Arkansas. They called their paper *The Ouachita Citizen*. The Pryors ran the paper for three years before David was elected to the state House of Representatives in 1960, where he began a 37-year career in elected office. The paper eventually shuttered in 1962. In honor of the Pryors' commitment to public service and Arkansas history, we have chosen to name the Pryor Center newsletter after their own paper. In these pages you can expect to find updates on our current projects, newly unearthed materials from our oral history archive, recent and upcoming events, and highlights from the KATV Collection.

NEWSPAPER MEMORIES IN OUR COLLECTION

It's no surprise that many of our interviewees say they were influenced by reading newspapers at a young age. Some went on to make their careers in print, such as [John Brummett](#) and [Rex Nelson](#). Others published small-town papers, like the Pryors and [Dorothy Stuck](#), or even the *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette*, which you can read about in [Walter Hussman's](#) interviews. Newspapers have also shaped the lives of those who went on to work in other forms of media or public service, as you will see in our upcoming interview with Skip Rutherford. The Pryor Center is pleased to join the long tradition of newspaper, radio, and television in sharing and preserving history. Find all these interviews and more on the [Arkansas Memories](#) page. For more on the newspaper war in Arkansas, see the article on page 3 and visit the [Arkansas Democrat Project](#) and [Arkansas Gazette Project](#).

Click below to view this newsletter in your browser.

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News from the Pryor Center

The Quachita Citizen

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COLLECT

PROJECT UPDATES FOR 2026

Arkansas 250

The Pryor Center has partnered with the Arkansas 250 Commission and universities and colleges across the state to collect interviews with Arkansans reflecting on the United States at 250. We have collected 200+ interviews so far, and plan to continue collecting more throughout the year.

Arkansans at War

The Pryor Center has partnered with former *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette* war correspondent Amy Schlesing to document the stories of the thousands of Arkansans who served in Iraq and Afghanistan. 20+ interviews have been conducted already, with more scheduled.

Juke Joint Oral History Project

The Pryor Center has partnered with the Music Education Initiative to conduct interviews around the history of Arkansas's juke joints. In 2025, Pryor Center staff traveled to Helena and Pine Bluff to conduct interviews for the project. More trips are scheduled for this summer.

Arkansas Prison Reform

The Pryor Center has partnered with attorney and former member of the Arkansas Board of Corrections John Elrod to conduct interviews with key players in the reform of Arkansas's prisons in the 1970s and 1980s.

PRESERVE

NEW TO THE PRYOR CENTER COLLECTIONS

New Projects Published to the Web

2026 has witnessed a number of new projects published to the web. Among these new projects are the [Arkansas Wilderness Project](#), which documents Arkansans' efforts to protect wilderness areas across the state, and the [Generational Journeys Oral History Project](#), featuring interviews between aspiring Arkansas artists and their mentors.

We have also posted several interviews from our long-running [Arkansas Memories Project](#). These include interviews conducted with legendary Razorback basketball coach [Nolan Richardson](#), former Arkansas governor [Asa Hutchinson](#), and popular Arkansas broadcaster and humorist [John Philpot](#)

New From the Archives

2026 has also witnessed our continued effort to publish older projects housed in our archives. These include the [William Jefferson Clinton Project - The Gubernatorial Years](#), a series of interviews with key individuals from Clinton's time as governor of Arkansas. We have also published a series of interviews recorded during a celebration for [William "Bill" Harrison](#) in 2011 that document the history of the University of Arkansas's Creative Writing Program.

CONNECT

PRYOR CENTER EVENTS

Recent and Upcoming Events

The Pryor Center has hosted two "Pryor Center Presents" events in 2026. In February, Dan Boice of UA-Monticello presented ["Arkansas Place Names: Heritage, Hope, and Happenstance,"](#) which drew heavily from his book *Naming Arkansas*, published in 2024. In April, we hosted a panel titled **KATV in Retrospect: Reflections on the History of TV News in Arkansas** that included KATV veterans Steve Barnes, Amy Oliver Barnes, Bob Steel, and Randy Dixon, moderated by Kyle Kellams. We are currently planning to host this panel again in Little Rock sometime this summer. More details soon!

Events from the Archives

Past events posted to the web in 2026 include several featuring our namesake David Pryor, such as [An Evening with David Pryor](#), an Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI) Event from 2014. We have also published recordings of an OLLI course on [The Life and Legacy of Dale Bumpers](#) from 2012, which features a discussion between Bumpers and Ernie Dumas. Most recently, we posted the [John Williams Memorial and Interviews](#), which commemorates the life and contributions of John Williams, the founder of the University of Arkansas's School of Architecture.

From the KATV Archives

The Quachita Citizen

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TOP STORY

President Kennedy Dedicates Greers Ferry Dam

Oct. 3, 1963 - Heber Springs, Arkansas



Thousands gathered to witness President John F. Kennedy dedicate the Greers Ferry Dam in Heber Springs, Arkansas. This is the first time a sitting president has visited Cleburne County. In his 12-minute speech, President Kennedy emphasized the "wise use" of natural resources and praised the project as a "valuable asset to the future of the nation." The event highlighted the dam as a major investment in regional infrastructure, tourism and power generation. Watch the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers film by clicking on the photo above.

CLICK THE LOGO
TO SEE MORE FROM
OUR DIGITIZED
KATV NEWS
COLLECTION! ↓



FEATURE

Johnny Cash Toast and Roast

July 10, 1983 - Little Rock, Arkansas

Country superstar and Arkansas native Johnny Cash was "toasted and roasted" by an array of local and national celebrities, all for a good cause. Cash was the subject of this year's charity gala to benefit the Big Brothers, Big Sisters of Pulaski County organization. Click on the photo to watch the entire event.

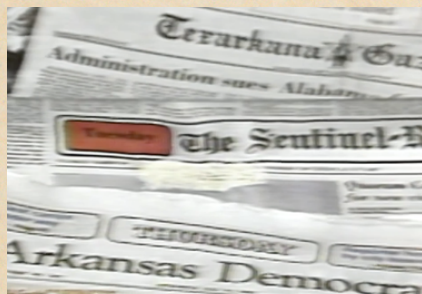


EDITORIAL

Newspaper War Rages On

July 17, 1983 - Little Rock, Arkansas

Arkansas residents are currently witness to an intense war, a battle for readership by the *Gazette* and the *Democrat*, both morning newspapers. The dailies have been at it, head-to-head, for four years but neither will fully admit to the all-out conflict. KATV's Amy Oliver presents a documentary with a look at both sides of this competition. See the documentary by clicking on the photo.



SPORTS

Hogs Win National Championship

April 4, 1994 - Charlotte, North Carolina

The Arkansas Razorbacks have won the NCAA men's basketball national championship by defeating the Duke Blue Devils 76-72 in Charlotte, N.C. Led by coach Nolan Richardson's "40 Minutes of Hell" style, the team finished 31-3, with Corliss Williamson named the tournament's Most Outstanding Player. Watch KATV's Special Report following the game by clicking on the photo.



WEATHER

Deadly Tornado Slams Cabot

Mar. 29, 1976 - Cabot, Arkansas

A devastating tornado struck the center of Cabot, Arkansas, destroying much of its historical infrastructure. More than 15 blocks were leveled, 90 buildings and homes were damaged or destroyed, countless residents were injured and five lives were lost. KATV's Bob Steel reports on the destruction and shows the first-ever film of a tornado in Arkansas. Click on the photo to watch Steel's story.

