

Russellville teacher faces termination

By COURIER STAFF
REPORTS

The Russellville School District has scheduled a public hearing later this month after a district employee's social media post about the murder of conservative commentator Charlie Kirk prompted an investigation.

The post quoted Clarence Darrow: "I've never wished a man dead, but I have read some obituaries with great

pleasure."

On Monday, teacher Chance Duncan, who serves as the Biology and Medical Interventions instructor and teaches Advanced Biology, wrote on Facebook that Superintendent Dr. Luke Lovins had informed him he would be recommending Duncan's termination to the school board.

"After nearly 18 years in the profession, devoting 10 years of my life to that

district, bringing it national accolades, winning awards for my quality teaching, facilitating students doing amazing science and winning recognition for themselves, leading teachers both within the district and from all over the country, I was brought in and told bluntly that I will be terminated pending a public hearing and board vote," Duncan stated. "There was no discussion, no offer for recompense, not even an

offer to resign instead of being terminated. I should be furious, but I'm mostly just stunned and numb at this point."

The district initially acknowledged Duncan's original Facebook post on Sept. 12, saying it was "aware of a recent Facebook post by an employee and is investigating the matter."

Previously, before receiving notification of the district's intentions to terminate him, Duncan posted an

apology on social media.

He wrote, "A few nights ago, in the wake of a national tragedy, I made the thoughtless decision to share a quote from Clarence Darrow. It was insensitive, and it was wrong. My post caused pain at a time when many were grieving, and for that, I am deeply sorry. "I know an apology cannot undo the hurt I caused, but I want to be clear: I take full responsibility for my actions. I failed to live

up to the values I strive for, such as thoughtfulness, empathy, and respect. I recognize that I fell far short.

"Teaching is my passion and my life's work. In the classroom, I am committed to fairness, respect, and care for every student. While I would never bring a post like this into my teaching, I also know that what I share publicly matters. I am committed to learning

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Vintage Rallies stops in Russellville

By TRAVIS SIMPSON
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Vintage Rallies drivers made a pit stop for lunch Monday at The Old Bank on its Ozark Passage tour. The rallies are five days long, cover 1,000 miles and feature 1997 or earlier Sports, Racing or GT automobiles – plus a separate class for exotics. Each event benefits charities across the country, with more than \$3 million raised so far. The Vintage Rallies headed to Branson, Mo., and will be driving through the Ozarks the rest of the week.

See more photos on A2.



20th edition of Brass in the Clouds planned for Saturday evening

By ATU MEDIA RELATIONS

Brass in the Clouds will celebrate its 20th edition when musicians from Arkansas Tech University perform at Mount Nebo State Park on Saturday, Sept. 20.

The performance will begin at 6:30 p.m. at Mount Nebo's Sunset Point. The public is invited to attend the event, which is co-sponsored by Mount Nebo State Park and the ATU Department of Music.

Dr. Sean Reed, ATU professor of music, is among the faculty members in the ATU Department of Music who serve as caretakers for Brass in the Clouds. He explained that while Dr. Gary Barrow, now professor emeritus of music at ATU, was the ATU faculty member who founded the event, it was Barrow's wife, D'Anne, who had the idea during a visit to Mount Nebo.

"Gary told me that he was

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Submitted | The Courier
Dr. Gary Barrow directs the Arkansas Tech University Brass Choir during the first Brass in the Clouds performance at Mount Nebo's Sunset Point in 2005. The 20th edition of the event is scheduled for Saturday, Sept. 20.

National Literacy and card collection program launches in Pope County

By HANNAH BUTLER
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The Pope County Library System is participating in a national literacy program called Reading Dragons and Friends. Reading Dragons is a card-based program designed to promote positive reading habits.

This program levels the playing field for readers of any ability or age by rewarding them for the time they

spend reading. Per the game, every two hours of reading time earns a new mythical creature card.

"It encourages you to read by giving you the incentive you get during our summer reading program, but throughout the rest of the year," PCLS young adult librarian Morgan Frazier said. "Not only can you collect the cards, but you can also play

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County flu clinic set for September 26

FOR THE COURIER

On Friday, September 26, the Pope County Health Unit of the Arkansas Department of Health (ADH) will offer flu vaccinations at no charge at their Drive Thru Flu Vaccination Clinic at 203 Weir Rd in Russellville from 8:30 am to 4 p.m.

People should bring their insurance cards with them to the flu vaccine clinic. If they do not have insurance, or the insurance does not cover flu shots, the vaccine will still be available at no charge.

"We want Pope County residents to stay healthy this flu season, and getting a yearly flu vaccination is the

best line of defense," Pam Sellers, Pope County Health Unit Administrator, said. "We encourage everyone to come to the community clinic or the local health unit to get their flu shot."

Annual flu vaccination is recommended for most adults and children six months and older. The flu virus changes from year to year, and this year's vaccine protects against the flu viruses that are expected to cause the most illness this flu season.

"The flu should not be taken lightly," said Dr. Jennifer Dillaha, ADH Chief Medical Officer. "We are

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Weather

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