



Blue Raiders simplify uniforms

SPORTS, 1B



The Daily News Journal



Feelings on crime don't match data

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Elmo performs Aug. 14 with Lauren Alaina at Grand Ole Opry. The arrangement was part of the Opry's centennial celebration. NICOLE HESTER/THE TENNESSEAN

Elmo, Abby Cadabby make their Opry debut

Sesame Street standouts share their love for country music

Marcus K. Dowling
Nashville Tennessean
USA TODAY NETWORK – TENNESSEE

As part of the Grand Ole Opry's continuing 100th anniversary celebration, on Aug. 14, two of the most unique and youngest entertainers to ever grace the Opry House stage were special guests. Fresh from Sesame Street to Music City, 4-year-old Abby Cadabby and her 3 1/2-year-old best friend, Elmo, debut-

ed during an edition of Opry Country Classics. Abby performed a duet of Loretta Lynn's 1971 hit "You're Lookin' at Country" with the late country legend's granddaughter, Tayla Lynn, while singer Lauren Alaina joined Elmo to perform "Road Less Traveled." "Music is everywhere and the more we interact with it, the more magical it is," said Abby Cadabby.

In their country era? Abby Cadabby, Elmo join country singers on stage

Alaina and Tayla Lynn have joined Chris Stapleton on the list of country singers who have performed with Abby Cadabby and Elmo over the past three weeks. Grand Ole Opry members including

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Barrett Firearms breaks ground for new factory

Scott Broden
Murfreesboro Daily News Journal
USA TODAY NETWORK – TENNESSEE

Longtime Murfreesboro company Barrett Firearms celebrated an Aug. 13 groundbreaking for a new factory expected to open January 2027 in Rutherford County. The groundbreaking ceremony for the U.S. military sniper rifle supplier drew locally elected officials and included a combat rifle demonstration by U.S. Army Col. Jason D. Bohannon. The \$76.4 million Barrett Manufacturing & Technology Campus will open at 8808 Manchester Pike. The 170-acre property is a short drive from the company's existing factory off Interstate 24's exit to Epps Mill Road on the southeast side of Rutherford. Former owner Ronnie Barrett of Murfreesboro founded the company in 1982. He sold the business in 2023 to NIOA, a global firearms, weapons and munitions company headquartered in Brisbane, Queensland, Australia,

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U.S. Army Col. Jason D. Bohannon shoots a starter gun shot to demonstrate a rifle Aug. 13, for the Barrett Manufacturing & Technology Campus groundbreaking ceremony. SCOTT BRODEN/THE DAILY NEWS JOURNAL



Middle Tennessee State University students Max Brooks, left, and Bereket Tegistesillassie take a peek at some of the new FANUC Robot equipment they and future students will be working with during a facility tour following the ribbon-cutting ceremony for the new Applied Engineering Building. PROVIDED BY MIDDLE TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY

MTSU MONDAYS

MTSU's building a 'commitment to our region's economic prosperity'

MTSU Communications

Middle Tennessee State University students like Abbie Lee and those in the future will benefit from the new \$74.8 million, 90,000-square-foot Applied Engineering Building, offering state-of-the-art training in a high-demand field. "The new building provides access to cutting-edge technology and collaborative spaces that will enhance hands-on learning and innovation," said Lee, 22, of Glasgow, Kentucky, a mechatronics engineering major and math minor who graduated in May and is now in graduate school. "For me, it's the realization of a goal that has been in the works since I first arrived on campus." Recently opened with a ribbon-cutting attended by hundreds of university and program supporters, the three-sto-

ry facility will be the home to the mechatronics engineering program and other engineering technology concentrations, providing students with high tech space, robotics and engineering equipment and education to continue the mission to prepare for ever-changing careers in engineering, technology, design, automation and manufacturing. "This facility represents our commitment to providing our students with relevant skills development, hands-on access to state-of-the-art manufacturing equipment and the state's most technologically advanced training in Mechatronics Engineering," said MTSU President Sidney A. McPhee. "Our programs needed dynamic new space, with resources to explore, create

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