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Samaritan Ministries to expand men's shelter

Submitted photo

ARTIST'S RENDERING: An artist's rendering of the exterior of the new Samaritan Ministries of Hot Springs, which is expanding into the former Weyland Machine Shop at the corner of Sanford and Valley streets.

STEVEN MROSS
The Sentinel-Record

Samaritan Ministries of Hot Springs broke ground earlier this week for a major expansion of its shelter services for homeless men in Hot Springs.

In 2013, SMHS purchased the former Weyland Machine Shop warehouse, located next to its main 10,000-square-foot facility at 131 Sanford St. After developing architectural plans and raising necessary funding, construction began Tuesday to expand SMHS's operations into the other building, located at the corner of Sanford and Valley streets.

"The building was empty for a number of years. The owner lost it to the bank, Bank of Hot Springs, and we got it for a really good deal and started developing plans for it and raising funds," Charles Laggan, president of the shelter's board of trustees, said Wednesday.

The expansion, which will incorporate another 18,000 square feet of property, will include a fully equipped wood shop to provide job skills training, seven transitional housing apartments for graduates of SMHS's Resident Program, additional office space, a large meeting room, additional parking, a Market Place area to stage donated material, and six retail shops to provide income to support the operation of the expanded homeless shelter.

Since it is located on Valley Street just across from the Hot Springs Greenway, SMHS said in a news release that it will be a "wonderful compliment" to the "great work the city is doing upgrading the Valley Street corridor."

"The architectural plans were developed by Dan Laggan, our oldest son," Charles Laggan said. "Dan and his firm Schenkel Shultz Inc. of Orlando, Fla., donated all their services to develop our plans. That was a very significant blessing and major cost saving for us."

The project will be done in two phases. Phase 1, now underway, will replace numerous steel components such as the roof decking, roof trusses and columns, install a new roof and exterior on the east end of the building, add parking and landscaping, install all new utilities, and fully complete the wood shop. The work is being performed by Harrison Construction of Hot Springs and will cost $575,000.

"The engineering part took longer

SAMARITAN, PAGE 5A

RUNNING OF THE TUBS

Battle of the Badges and more entertain at bathtub races

ELISHA MORRISON
The Sentinel-Record

The Battle of the Badges was back on Saturday during the 11th annual Stueart Pennington Running Of The Tubs along Central Avenue in downtown Hot Springs, with a new competitor to join the fray.

The Hot Springs Fire Department, which won the battle by default last year because the police department did not enter the competition, successfully defended its title this year.

"It's always awesome beating the cops," said Kevin Ellsworth, captain of the fire department team, adding that the competition is really all in good fun. He also complimented the new competitor in the Battle of the Badges, the Arkansas Department of Correction — Ouachita River Unit Emergency Response Team, and said he hoped they entered the race again next year.

Other winners included the following: Modified Tub, Hot Springs Police Department Tub No. 1; Traditional Tub, Riser Auto; Most Original, Arkansas Department of Correction; Most Spirit, Ouachita Job Corps; and Best Overall, the Arlington.

"It is the most heated rivalry in all of bathtub racing," said Steve Arrison, CEO of Visit Hot Springs, the sponsor of the race, which also serves as a fundraiser for the Downtown Association Christmas Tree Fund.

This year's Battle of the Badges featured one tub from the Hot Springs Fire Department, two from the Hot Springs Police Department, and one from the Ouachita River Unit. Unlike the rest of the bathtub races, the Battle of the Badges is run without stops and without interference from the judges, who normally enforce an arcane set of rules during the competition.

Other entrants included LakePointe Church, with a "Star Wars" themed tub called Galaxy; Ho Ho Ho Hot Springs, representing Visit Hot Springs; The Ninja Tub, representing Grandmaster Han's Martial Arts; Jack of All Trades, entered by Ouachita Job Corps; Bubbly Brothers, representing the Quapaw Baths & Spa; Jaws,

TUB RACES, PAGE 3A

The Sentinel-Record/Richard Rasmussen

WATER HAZARD: Members of the Riser Auto Tub team, from left, Clay Shatley, John Ringgold, Matt Barrett, in tub, Evan Dingler, right, and Tex Holmes, not visible in back, roll across the finish line to win the Traditional Tub division of the 11th Annual Stueart Pennington Running of the Tubs Saturday.

The Sentinel-Record/Richard Rasmussen

ALL WET: Members of the Hot Springs Police Department Tub No. 1 team, from left, Joey Williams, Shannon Steed, in tub, John Hammons, Jjesus Anaya and Zack Rostan, win a heat in the Modified Tub division of the 11th Annual Stueart Pennington Running Of The Tubs on Saturday. The tub went on the win the modified division.

Is transgender restroom use an issue?

EDITOR'S NOTE: This is the third installment in a series concerning the ongoing debate about transgender rights, particularly the current issue of restroom use. The Sentinel-Record met with two transgender students in the community about their backgrounds and how the public debate affects them.

JAY BELL
The Sentinel-Record

Gov. Asa Hutchinson said the president's recent directive about transgender restroom use attempted to solve an issue that did not need to be addressed by the federal government, but local students say their daily restroom interactions can be awkward, inconvenient and

TRANSGENDER, PAGE 3A

The Sentinel-Record/Richard Rasmussen

BASEBALL TALK: Author Mark Blaeuer, left, visits with Steve Spakes prior to a presentation on his book Thursday at the Garland County Library. The presentation consisted of photographs from Blaeuer's recently released book "Baseball in Hot Springs."

Local author: Baseball book 'time machine' to training era

COLBIE MCCLOUD
The Sentinel-Record

Major league teams once flocked to Hot Springs each spring to get into shape, and one local author has created a "time machine" to travel back to that era through nearly 200 rarely seen historic photographs.

"There were major league teams and individual players that would come to take the thermal baths, hike on the trails, and golf at the Hot Springs Country Club to get into shape," said Mark Blaeuer, author of the recently released book "Baseball in Hot Springs."

"It was a situation where you might have several hundred major league players at any one time in Hot Springs in the height of the phenomena," Blaeuer said Thursday afternoon at the Garland County Library. Blaeuer was the featured speaker at the second in a series of Garland County Historical Society-sponsored presentations at the library.

The 127-page book showcases Hot Springs from the late 1800s to the early 1900s as a flourishing spring camp destination to major and minor league baseball teams. Players soaked their exhausted limbs in the bath houses' thermal waters and stretched them out on area mountain trails and at ballparks such as Whittington Park.

"There were always photographers around to take pictures and document stuff. So each one of these photos is like a time machine. It takes you back to a moment way back when," Blaeuer said.

Blaeuer's book brings together a collection of photographs taken across the city at the numerous ballparks that were utilized by Major League Baseball teams including the New York Giants, Boston Red Sox, and Philadelphia Phillies.

"Spring training began in

BOOK, PAGE 5A

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Weather

SUNNY. HIGHS IN THE MID 80S. LOWS IN THE LOW 60S.

SUNRISE: 6 A.M.
SUNSET: 8:22 P.M.

MONDAY: HIGH 86° LOW 64°

TUESDAY: HIGH 88° LOW 64°

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Headlines from 1916

Officials named for parade here

(Arkansas) Traveler's parade planned for Arkansas Travelers visit here

Team adopts uniform of all white but socks, to be purple hose

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