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Board to consider condemnation of Majestic

DON THOMASON
The Sentinel-Record

The Hot Springs Board of Directors will consider a resolution Tuesday night to condemn the Majestic Hotel properties and repeal an ordinance awarding a bid for improvements at the Lake Ouachita Water Treatment Plant, then re-award the bid to include fluoride equipment.

The board will meet at 7 p.m. in City Hall, 133 Convention Blvd.

Bart Jones, the Hot Springs Planning Department code administrator, recommends condemning the Majestic's "red brick building," along with the Lanai Towers Building, which he says in a board action request form are "open, vacant, and structurally deteriorated."

Jones said if the city eventually removes the buildings, all costs associated with their removal will be billed to the owner and a lien will be levied against the property.

If the board approves the resolution, the owner of the property will have 30 days to secure a demolition or rehabilitation permit and begin work.

BOARD, PAGE 2A

Islamic State kills US aid worker

DIAA HADID
The Associated Press

BEIRUT — The Islamic State group released a video Sunday of a masked militant standing over a severed head it claimed was Peter Kassig, a former U.S. Army Ranger-turned-aid worker who was taken hostage while delivering relief supplies to Syrians caught in that country's brutal civil war.

Hours later, the White House confirmed Kassig's death after a review of the video, which also showed the mass beheadings of a dozen Syrian soldiers.

The 26-year-old Kassig, who returned to the Middle East to help wounded and displaced Syrians, "was taken from us in an act of pure evil by a terrorist group that the world rightly associates with inhumanity," President Barack Obama said in a statement.

He denounced the extremist group, which he said "revels in the slaughter of innocents, including Muslims, and is bent only on sowing death and destruction."

With Kassig's death, the Islamic State group has killed five Westerners it was holding. American journalists James Foley and Steven Sotloff were beheaded, as were British aid workers David Haines and Alan Henning.

Unlike previous videos of slain Western hostages, the footage released Sunday did not show the decapitation of Kassig or the moments leading up to his death.

"This is Peter Edward Kassig, a U.S. citizen ... who fought against the Muslims in Iraq," said the black-clad militant, who spoke with a British accent that was distorted in the video, apparently to disguise his identity. Previous videos featured a militant with a British accent that the FBI says it has identified, though it hasn't named him publicly.

The slain hostage's parents, Ed and Paula Kassig, said they were "heartbroken" by their son's killing, but "incredibly proud" of his humanitarian work. Kassig "lost his life as a result of his love for the Syrian people and his desire to ease their suffering," the parents said in a statement from Indianapolis.

The footage released Sunday identifies the militants' location as Dabiq, a town in northern Syria that the Islamic State group uses as the title of its English-language propaganda magazine and where they believe an apocalyptic battle between Muslims and their enemies will occur.

The high-definition video also showed the beheadings of about a dozen men identified as Syrian military officers and pilots, all dressed in blue jumpsuits. The black-clad militant warns that U.S. soldiers will meet a similar fate.

"We say to you, Obama: You claim to have withdrawn from Iraq four years ago," the militant said. "Here you are: You have not withdrawn. Rather, you hid some of your forces behind your proxies." A U.S.-led coalition is targeting the Islamic State group in airstrikes, supporting Western-backed Syrian rebels, Kurdish fighters and the Iraqi military.

Kassig, who served in the U.S. Army's 75th Ranger Regiment, a special operations unit, deployed to Iraq in 2007. After being medically discharged, he returned to the Middle East in 2012 and formed an aid or-

ISLAMIC STATE, PAGE 6A

The Sentinel-Record/Richard Rasmussen

OVER THE RAINBOW: Oaklawn Visual and Performing Arts Magnet School students Keyarra Brewer, as Toto, front left, Zachary Horne, as the scarecrow, Madison Matthews, as Dorothy, Joshua Smith, as the lion, and Zephyr Smith, as the tin man, rehearse the school's annual musical "The Wizard of Oz" young performers' edition on Friday.

No place like Oaklawn Magnet

Students to put on performance of 'The Wizard of Oz'

ALISON B. HARBOUR
The Sentinel-Record

A star is born as third-grade student Madison Matthews performs the role of Dorothy Gale in "The Wizard of Oz" young performers' edition at Oaklawn Visual and Performing Arts Magnet School.

During the course of the production, with music and lyrics from the MGM motion picture score by Harold Arlen and E.Y. Harburg, about 580 students will be showcased at 9 a.m. and at 6 p.m. on Tuesday and Thursday. There is no admission charge, and the public is welcome to attend.

"We have 29 people in our main cast

OZ, PAGE 3A

Oaklawn, Park named as 'Achieving' schools

JAY BELL
The Sentinel-Record

Two Hot Springs elementary magnets were among the small minority of Arkansas schools to be labeled as "Achieving" in the criticized annual proficiency results that are based on standardized test scores.

Oaklawn Visual and Performing Arts Magnet School and Park Magnet, A PYP World School, were the only two schools in the area to be listed among "Achieving" schools.

The 2014 results from the Arkansas Department of Education show that 877 schools are identified in the "Needs Improvement" category. Many schools continue to show improvement, but did not meet their Annual Measurable Objectives for the year. The "Needs Improvement" category includes 37 "Priority" schools and 85 "Focus" schools.

Lakeside Superintendent Shawn Cook and Assistant Superintendent

SCHOOLS, PAGE 3A

Festival of Trees

The Sentinel-Record/Mara Kuhn

Aspen Thornton, 11, looks over bids on Christmas trees during Safe Haven Shelter for Women and Children's fourth annual Festival of Trees on Saturday at the First United Methodist Church Christian Life Center. Decorated Christmas trees of all sizes, along with holiday wreaths and gifts, were on display and for silent auction to raise money for the shelter. The trees and wreaths were produced by area businesses, organizations and individuals.

Clashes await Obama after trip

JULIE PACE
The Associated Press

BRISBANE, Australia — After a productive trip abroad, President Barack Obama headed home Sunday on a collision course with Republicans on immigration and an oil pipeline project, showdowns that threaten prospects for cooperation over his remaining two years in office.

The contentious immigration debate could mean a year-end fight over keeping the government running, if some GOP lawmakers get their way.

On the foreign policy front, there is a Nov. 24 deadline in nu-

OBAMA, PAGE 7A

Sun set

The Sentinel-Record/Mara Kuhn

Arkansas Tech's Sierra Nighswonger hits the ball as teammate Katie Huff (11) looks on during the Great American Conference championship game against Southern Nazarene on Saturday at Bank of the Ozarks. The Golden Suns had to survive a five-set thriller to repeat as champions in the event's second year in the Spa City.

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Weather

SUNNY. HIGHS IN THE MID 30S. LOWS IN THE HIGH TEENS.

SUNRISE: 6:47 A.M.
SUNSET: 5:07 P.M.

TUESDAY: HIGH 39° LOW 28°

WEDNESDAY: HIGH 52° LOW 34°

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