

Shadrachs Coffee comes under fire for supporting a petition to cut library tax funds

RACHEL RUDD
NEWS EDITOR

Shadrachs coffee shops are in the center of controversy after the owners' names were found on a released list of people petitioning to cut Craighead County Library funds. The petition is to be able to vote to rollback a tax increase from 1994. The vote is supposed to save Craighead County taxpayers \$1 million. After the owners' signatures were found, members of the Jonesboro community took to the social media app Facebook to voice their concerns. Many people announced they were boycotting the company and would support other local coffee shops. "I'm incredibly disappointed to see that the owners signed petitions to defund our libraries," said Dean MacDonald, a

public administration graduate student from Paragould. "I genuinely enjoyed spending my money there." Hashtags such as #SaveOurLibrary and #BoycottShadrachs spread on Facebook. In addition, the Facebook group Citizens Defending the Craighead County Library posted infographics explaining the library's funding situation and urging voters to vote against the measure. A counter hashtag, #StandWithShadrachs, appeared on Facebook as well, but it did not gain a large following. Those in support of the coffee shop say that the owners' personal beliefs should have no effect on their business and that the owners have every right to express their opinions. After the eruption on

social media, Shadrachs owner, Larry Billing, reposted on the official Shadrachs Facebook page an explanation as to why his signature appeared on the petition. "What has been communicated to me about the petition that I signed was that it would not defund, but adjust the tax rates to reflect the library's needs," Billing said. "There seems to be a lot of confusion and misinformation about the facts in this case." Billing went on to say he had reached out to Vanessa Adams, director of the Craighead County Library, to arrange a meeting to further discuss the issue. Some Arkansas State University students have spoken out against Shadrachs. "I'm not sure why it surprises me considering the foundation of the company is based in faith,

however, I wasn't expecting them to be this outwardly disapproving of educating their own community," said Alex Tanner, a junior biology major from Russelville. "The fact that (the owner) tried to backtrack by sending a statement to his employees that he supposedly misunderstood what he was signing seems like a cop out." Tanner went on to say that even though she thinks most people won't boycott Shadrachs, she is planning to boycott until the company releases a public statement.

I am for our local library. Our children have been blessed by our local library. My wife and I are former public school teachers. I am for a fully functional, funded library.

What has been communicated to me about the petition that I signed was that it would not defund BUT adjust the tax rates to reflect the library's needs. There seems to be a lot of confusion and misinformation about the facts in this case. For this reason I have reached out to Vanessa Adams- the Director of the Public Library to get more information, and hope to meet with her ASAP.

Larry Billing, owner

CONTINUED:
SHADRACHS, 4A

PHOTO COURTESY OF SHADRACHS COFFEE FACEBOOK
Shadrachs owner Larry Billing's full statement regarding the controversy.

Honors College unveils new Honors Oasis outdoor lounge

RACHEL RUDD
NEWS EDITOR

The Honors College revealed its new outdoor lounge last Saturday, called the Honors Oasis. The area is meant to be a study and relaxation area that encourages students to get fresh air and sunlight. The idea for the Oasis first came about during the COVID-19 pandemic, where Honors College staff saw the need for an outdoor space. "Students wanted an actual outdoor event space. We sort of had different makeshift ones that we did for different events here," said Rebecca Oliver, director of the Honors College. "People were just kind of hanging out on the grass." Additionally, students provided insight into the area's creation via open forums. "Last year, we had some open

forums for students where they could talk about things they'd like to see in the Honors Living Learning Community space," Oliver said. "This was one of the ideas that really came out of that." Due to the pandemic, honors students were not able to go on Honors-sponsored trips such as Brainy Break, study abroad opportunities and conferences. This left extra money in the Honors College budget, which allowed for the funding of the Oasis. "It's something that the students actually paid for. We used part of the Honors College fee money that we had and we also got some funds from the student infrastructure funds from the university to help pay for a little bit of it," Oliver said. The space contains 65 pieces of furniture, as well as festival lights and on-site

electrical outlets. When the weather cools down, trees will be added throughout the area. Originally, the space was to be completed by the start of the fall semester. However, due to delays in construction and supply chain issues, completion was pushed back to the end of September. Honors College staff decided to unveil the Oasis on Homecoming game day. Oliver described it as "a great opportunity to show off the space." Honors students were excited about the new space as well. "I enjoy playing volleyball with people. Just having that nearby and being able to come over here and relax, it's a nice little social area," said Andrew Orr, a first-year civil engineering major from Roland, Arkansas. "I'm really excited about it. Hopefully it'll encourage

more honors students to spend more time outside," said Claire Greene, a senior biology major from Conway. "I know we're all nerds. We hang out inside for the most part. So hopefully we can get more sunlight." One student in particular was excited for the space's winter opportunities. "I cannot wait until it is winter and it snows because then this place is going to be a very interesting obstacle course," said Benjamin Whitfield, a senior electrical engineering major from Little Rock. "You've got the gravel. What's going to happen when it's covered in ice- it's a skating rink, automatically. Then you've got the chairs. You can set that up before it snows and then you have a snowy obstacle course."



Photo by: Rachel Rudd | News Editor
Honors staff and students relax and enjoy barbecue at the grand opening of the Honors Oasis.

Chancellor's Leadership Class includes 34 students involved in development program

A-STATE NEWS
PRESS RELEASE

Thirty-four promising first-year students comprise the third Chancellor's Leadership Class (CLC) at Arkansas State University. Students are chosen for CLC based on their character, leadership involvement in school and community, evidence of service to others, academic performance, and potential for future success. In weekly sessions, the class focuses on academics, leadership, campus involvement, service and cultural engagement. "I'm excited to welcome this year's class to A-State," Chancellor Todd Shields said. "We know that experience-based programs like the CLC play an important factor in connecting students. We're looking into ways we can expand this to other areas of campus in the future." A range of leaders from campus, the local community, and state and regional politics will provide guest lectures and interaction with the students.

Like their predecessors, participants in the 2022 CLC will put their leadership skills into practice by working together on community service projects around campus. Each participant will receive a \$750 stipend upon successfully completing each semester, \$1,500 total for the year. Participating students with their major, hometown and high school (if different), for the 2022 Chancellor's Leadership Class are, by county and state.

Arkansas
Magon James, animal science, pre-veterinary, DeWitt.

Ashley
Mk Mashburn, health studies, Crossett (Arkansas School for Mathematics, Sciences and the Arts)

Christina Schwartz, radiologic sciences, Crossett.

Craighead
Salma Abdel-Karim, biological sciences, pre-professional, Jonesboro

Jenna Hauge, exploratory, Jonesboro (Nettleton)

William Osborn, communication studies,

Jonesboro (Brookland)
Elaina Parker, psychology, Jonesboro (Brookland)

Cameron Salo, creative media production, Jonesboro (Nettleton)

Alyssa Willie, exploratory, Jonesboro (Nettleton)

Crittenden
Lauren Maness, international business, Marion

Tamyia Weatherspoon, business economics, West Memphis (Academies of West Memphis)

Dallas
Alianzo Williams, psychology, Fordyce

Faulkner
Charlie Lutz, exercise science, Greenbrier

Colby Thompson, creative media production, Conway

Grant
Rocco Hicks, political science, Poyen

Renee Pye, biological sciences pre-professional, Sheridan

CONTINUED:
CHANCELLOR, 4A

CAMPUS CRIME



RACHEL RUDD
NEWS EDITOR

Oct. 2 | 2:46 a.m.
Officer Anthony Gielen responded to 201 Olympic Dr. regarding a window broken out of a vehicle. He spoke with victim one who stated the front passenger window of her 2022 Hyundai Santa Fe SUV was broken out sometime between 5:30 p.m. and 7 p.m. Victim one stated her purse containing \$40 currency, medication, insurance cards, Craighead County ID, house and work keys and a couple of credit cards was stolen from the front passenger side floor. Victim one completed a written statement describing the vehicle damage and property theft. Victim one's husband stated he checked the dumpsters nearby but did not locate the purse or its contents. **Sept. 29 | 3 p.m.**
Officer Daniel Bradway was parked across from the intersection of University Loop and Cherokee Drive when he noticed a vehicle traveling at

what appeared to be a high rate of speed on University Loop. The speed limit is posted at 20 mph. Bradway used his hand held radar and locked in the speed of the car at 42mph. He immediately pulled out with his emergency lights activated in an attempt to stop the car. Suspect one continued driving for several more feet and pulled into the parking lot of the Dean B. Ellis Library. Once Bradway made contact with the driver, he identified himself and gave the reason for the stop. He asked for suspect one's driver's license and was told by suspect one that he had just gotten out of jail for driving on a suspended license. When asked why he was continuing to drive, suspect one did not give a response. Bradway returned to his patrol car and confirmed that suspect one's license was suspended. He cited him for that offense and the speeding offense. He had a licensed driver on scene, witness one, who was allowed to drive the car from the scene. Suspect

one was given a court date of Oct. 26, 2022 at 9 a.m. **Sept. 27 | 2:25 p.m.**
Officer Billy Branch went to 125 Dean St. to assist with a civil standby. He contacted victim one at his room and told him that suspect one was wanting to exchange property. Victim one stated that he did not want suspect one in his room, then stated that suspect one would not stop following him and harassing him and his friend. Branch was also told that suspect one is not a student. Branch explained to victim one that a persona non grata could be issued to try and keep suspect one from following them while they are on campus. Victim one agreed that would be best. Branch then took the items that were given to him outside and met with suspect one and Officer Demetris Noles. Branch told suspect one that a PNG would be issued due to victim one. After the PNG was explained and signed, a copy was given to suspect one along with the items victim one gave Branch.