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# Congratulations DHS 2022 Graduate Joshua Alday

APRIL 20TH 2022 BY DEE LOFLIN

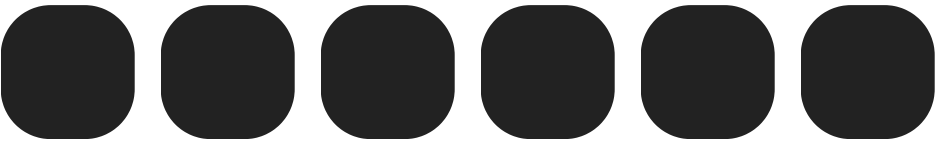
Congratulations DHS 2022 Graduate Joshua Alday

Congratulations DHS 2022 Graduate Joshua Alday!!

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# CTA Retirement Tea Set for Tuesday, April 19, 2022

APRIL 17TH 2022 BY DEE LOFLIN

## CTA Retirement Tea Set for Tuesday, April 19, 2022

Dexter, Missouri - CTA Retirement Tea is set for Tuesday, April 19th at 4:00 p.m. in the Bearcat Event Center lobby.

Teachers and staff to be honored are Cindy Justice, Summer McGowan, Camie Richard, Belinda Delay, Rhonda Duckworth, Aaron Pixley, Kris Rudd, Stacey Roe-Goode, James Sneed, and Barb Long.

The public is invited for punch, coffee, cake, and cookies as Dexter Public Schools honors the district's retirees!

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# Bernie School Board Meeting Minutes - April 11, 2022

APRIL 15TH 2022 BY DEE LOFLIN

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## Bernie School Board Meeting Minutes - April 11, 2022

The Board of Education met in regular session on Monday the 11th of April.

Summer school was set to be held tentatively from May 23, through June 10, 2022.

The Board approved the Vocational Program Evaluation.

New Board Members, Kristopher Powell and Jason Shelton were sworn into office. Judy Zoll was elected president. Denny Riddle was elected vice-president. Dena Mouton was named secretary/treasurer. Rhonda Shipman was named alternate secretary/treasurer. Dena Mouton was named custodian of records. The regular meeting time for the Board of Education was set for the second Monday of every month with the meetings to be held in the Central Office Boardroom at 7 p.m.

The Board approved awarding certified and classified staff a step on the salary schedule and also approved an increase in the percentage of the Extra Duty Salary schedule.

Bills were reviewed and approved.

During executive session the recipient of the Rutland Scholarship was selected.

The Board accepted resignations from Lari Jean Hardin, Beth Shaffer, Kelsi Jones and Paige Griffin.

The Board approved hiring Brandi Stanley, 1st Grade Teacher and approved adding Christine Young to the Substitute list.

The Board approved Extra Duty Assignments as follows:

Athletic Director, Jason Long; Boys Basketball HS Head, Jason Long; Boys Basketball SH Asst, Marcus Massey; Junior High Basketball Head, Jason Long; Junior High

Basketball Asst, Jordan Ellsworth; Basketball Elem, Jordan Ellsworth; Baseball Head (fall and spring), Marcus Massey; Baseball Asst (fall and spring), Jordan Ellsworth; Baseball Junior High, Jason Long; Baseball Junior High Asst., Mark King; Cheerleading JH, Kelli Anthony; Cheerleading HS, Kelli Anthony; Softball SH Head, Brad Botsch; Softball SH Asst, Cendyl McGowan/Cassidy Freed; Softball JH Head, TBD; Softball JH Asst, McKenzie Bess; Volleyball SH Head, TBD; Volleyball SH Asst, Rachel Vernon; Volleyball JH Head, TBD; Volleyball JH Asst., TBD; Volleyball Elem, Jayme Harris; Cross Country Coach, Jason Long; Cross Country Coach Asst., Curt Miller; Band, Mark King; FCCLA, Tammy Boyle; FFA, Matt Blevins; FBLA, Leigh Ann Kincy; Senior Beta, Pam Foster; Senior Beta Co-Sponsor, Bridget Heiser; Junior Beta, Jayme Harris; Junior Beta Co-Sponsor, Crystal Presson; Scholar Bowl, Alex Beaird; Explore Club, Alex Beaird; Drama/Speech, Kristy Bates; Student Council, Kristy Bates; Yearbook/Newspaper, Leigh Ann Kincy; Prom Coordinator, Lindsay Beaird & Lisa Henry; and ESports, Curt Miller.

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Channell Signs to Attend State Technical College of

# Missouri this Fall

APRIL 13TH 2022 BY DEE LOFLIN

Channell Signs to Attend State Technical College of Missouri this Fall

Dexter senior Drake Channell has been attending Poplar Bluff Technical Career Center and signed to go to the next level.

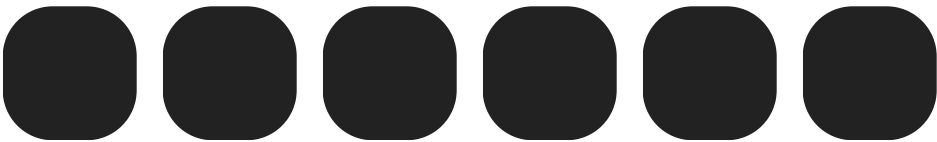
Drake will be attending State Technical College of Missouri this fall!

Pictured: Tony Kirkley Computer Maintenance and Repair Instructor, Charles Kinsey Director of PBTCC, Channell's family, and Alana Dowdy Dexter High School Principal.

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## Student-led Group Volunteers to Remove Invasive

# Trees from Campus

APRIL 12TH 2022 BY DEE LOFLIN

## Student-led Group Volunteers to Remove Invasive Trees from Campus

A voluntary group of students and district personnel has begun to remove hundreds of non-native, invasive pear trees from the Poplar Bluff High School campus.

The PBHS Science and Environment Club partnered with the FFA to take on the project on Sunday, March 27, soliciting help from the Maintenance Department, among other individuals.

“It matters to our students,” explained PBHS biology teacher Gretchen Pendley, who sponsors the club. “We can’t fix all the big problems, but we can do some small work.”

Two years ago the Science Club, which concentrated mostly on chemistry, expanded to consider issues related to human impact on the environment, according to Pendley. The new organization decided to start by making a difference in their own backyard, but the pandemic caused the postponement of their first major project.

PBHS agriculture teacher and FFA sponsor Kathryn Clark said that Callery pear trees, better known as Bradfords, have been on her radar since the campus relocation of 2016. “It’s a beautiful campus, but we also want it to be sustainable and environmentally friendly,” she said. “Bradfords do more damage than good.”

Native to China, the white flowering trees are popular for landscaping because of their “ornamental value,” according to junior Emmalein Pendley, Environment Club vice president, but they have no “wildlife value.” They crowd out habitats needed by birds and wildlife, out-competing native vegetation for light, water and nutrients, according to state conservation experts.

In addition, Bradfords have “no predator” or natural enemy, said Gretchen Pendley. The aggressive Callery pears were made available here in the 1950s because of their resistance to diseases such as fire blight. They became invasive when new cultivars cross-pollinated with the commercial variety, producing trees bearing small fruit with viable seeds that birds such as starlings eat and spread, allowing for escaped trees, according to the University of Missouri Extension.

Lastly, Bradfords are “weak trees,” Clark went on. Since they are known to grow quickly with poor branch angles, the soft-wooded limbs are often split in high winds, according to

the Missouri Department of Conservation. The expansive root system, partial to soil types common in the Midwest, deems the tree difficult to kill

R-I Maintenance Supervisor Colt Sievers headed up the eradication last weekend, along with his brother David, PBHS health teacher and football coach, later disposing of the downed trees with a tractor and grappling hook at an approved burn site. Sievers said treating the stumps with herbicide would also be necessary to destroy the root.

“Education and learning to be good stewards” will be essential going forward, since “one day I will be too old to hold a chainsaw,” Sievers pointed out. He joked how his daughter Audrey, a PBHS junior, informed him what he would be doing with his time that day and he simply agreed. “I was volun-told,” he continued.

Incoming president for Missouri FFA Area 16, Audrey Sievers completed a supervised agricultural experiment over the summer involving a pesky weed known as sericea lespedeza also identified on the hillside east of campus, and her father helped her get its spread under control as well. She admitted that prior to educating herself on its ecosystem, she—like many—just thought the Bradfords added some color to campus.

“If it’s not helping, we don’t need it; it serves no purpose,” Audrey Sievers said. “It’s a long process, but if we start working toward a goal now, future generations will benefit.”

Alternative options of flowering trees, the group variously suggested, include Eastern redbuds, dogwoods, tulip poplars, white fringe trees and serviceberries. The Missouri Invasive Plant Task Force, formed several years ago, is collaborating to host buy-back events later this month throughout the state, including in Cape Girardeau, to replace Calleries cut down by property owners with free native trees. Visit [moinvasives.org](http://moinvasives.org) for more information about state invasive species management efforts.

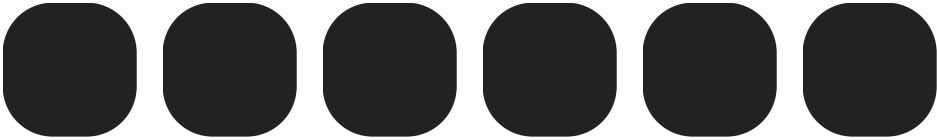
PBHS students drag Bradford limbs cut down around Mules Stadium by David and Colt Sievers to a large pile.

Pictured: With the supervision of teacher sponsors, students volunteer to gather clipped branches along the Oak Grove Road campus on a recent Sunday afternoon.

Article and photo by Tim Krakowiak, Communications/Marketing Director, Poplar Bluff R-I School District

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