



**Christian County Commission**

100 West Church St, Room 100  
Ozark, MO 65721

**SCHEDULED**

**MEETING ATTACHMENTS (ID # 5398)**

Meeting: 04/2/26 9:00 AM  
Department: County Clerk  
Category: Meeting Items  
Prepared By: Madi Hires Raines  
Initiator: Madi Hires Raines  
Sponsors:  
Doc ID: 5398

---

## Meeting Attachments

**ATTACHMENTS:**

- 1 - 02 APRIL 2026 - 2025 MOST ENGAGED NEIGHBOR ARTICLE - ASHLEY MARKS
- 2 - 02 APRIL 2026 - 2025 MOST ENGAGED NEIGHTBOR - CERTIFICATE - ASHLEY MARKS
- 3 - 02 APRIL 2026 - PETITION TO VACATE OUTLINE - DEWITT CAVE ROAD
- 4 - 02 APRIL 2026 - PETITION TO VACATE OUTLINE - RIVERSIDE ROAD
- 5 - 02 APRIL 2026 - PETITION TO VACATE - OSRD - NEAL & NEWMAN LETTER



## Another 2025 Most Engaged Neighbors Honoree from Christian County

### Ashley Meredith Marks: Turning a New Neighborhood Into a Thriving Community in Ozark

Story by David L. Burton, Community Development Specialist, MU Extension

When Ashley Meredith Marks moved into a brand-new subdivision in Ozark, Missouri, she realized something was missing. The streets were fresh, the lawns were perfect, and the homes gleamed with new paint — but it didn't yet feel like a neighborhood. Instead of waiting for connection to happen, Ashley decided to create it herself.

That simple decision has transformed her corner of Christian County into one of the warmest, most connected neighborhoods around. For her intentional acts of kindness and community-building, Ashley was named one of Missouri's Top 20 Most Engaged Neighbors of 2025, part of Missouri Good Neighbor Week — a statewide initiative led by University of Missouri Extension and The Hopeful Neighborhood Project to celebrate everyday Missourians who strengthen the places they live.

#### Creating Connection From Scratch

"After moving to a new place about a year ago, I was feeling more anonymous and isolated than I wanted to. So I decided I didn't need to wait for anyone else — I should try and change that myself," said Ashley. "In a new build neighborhood, it's been fun to meet people as they move in and be on a bit of a level playing field with lots of people in the same boat of being new to the neighborhood."

Armed with a batch of homemade cookies, her husband, and their friendly blue heeler, Ashley began walking door-to-door to welcome new families as they moved in. Those small introductions became the foundation for something much larger — a web of relationships that turned a collection of houses into a true community.

Her nominator wrote, "Ashley goes out of her way to make everyone feel included. Each week she visits new neighbors to introduce herself, remembers their names, and greets them personally, creating a warm and friendly atmosphere from day one."



#### Growing Connection — Literally

A self-described "enthusiastic gardener and sharer of food," Ashley turned her backyard into a gathering place for children and families. Neighborhood kids stop by after school to help tend her flower and vegetable gardens, learning about plants, patience, and teamwork as they wait for cucumbers and carrots to ripen.

That interaction, in turn, drew their parents together — sparking casual cookouts, shared meals, and new friendships.

"It's been fun to think of new ways to meet, connect, or help neighbors," Ashley said. "I like to think our neighborhood is a warmer place because of our efforts to be friendly and thoughtful."

Her generosity has even influenced the physical layout of the community. Instead of putting up fences, several families have chosen to keep their yards open so children can play freely across lawns — a visible symbol of trust and connection.

#### Leading by Example

Ashley's impact extends beyond her own street. She serves on her homeowners association board, where she stays late to prepare agendas, plans events, and ensures every voice is heard. She helped organize a neighborhood pool party and is now developing plans for a community garden inspired by her volunteer work with the Sparta Community Garden.

Her practical advice to anyone who wants to start neighbor-ing is refreshingly down-to-earth: "Start anywhere — maybe linger a little longer when you meet someone out walking and introduce yourself. Plan a front-yard activity where you can say hi to people passing by."

Ashley says people love context and connection — so help give some context -- tell who you are -- and connect - tell what do you love to do.

"It's been fun to think of new ways to meet, connect, or help neighbors - it keeps me engaged in something positive I can control," Ashley said. "I like to think that our neighborhood is a warmer place because of our efforts to be friendly and thoughtful!"

#### The Ripple of One Neighbor's Effort

Through cookies, conversations, and community gardens, Ashley Meredith Marks has done more than make friends — she's cultivated belonging. Neighbors describe her as the heart of their community, someone whose kindness bridges differences and whose actions remind everyone that neighborhoods aren't just built with wood and concrete, but with warmth, empathy, and shared life.

What does Ashley have for someone who wants to be a better neighbor but isn't sure where to start?

"I'd advise them to start anywhere. Maybe lingering a little longer when they meet someone out walking and introduce themselves. Or plan some kind of front yard activity. I think these little actions can help spark something larger," said Ashley.

***Ashley will be honored at our March 26th County Commission meeting. We invite you to attend and congratulate her in person.***



# CERTIFICATE OF RECOGNITION AS A GOOD NEIGHBOR

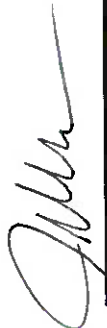



This certificate is awarded to

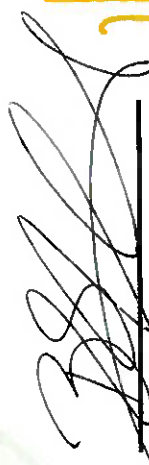
*Ashley Meredith Marks*



for being selected as one of Missouri's  
2025 Most Engaged Neighbors from Christian County

  
Johnny Williams  
Western District Commissioner

  
Lynn A. Morris  
Presiding Commissioner

  
Bradley A. Jackson  
Eastern District Commissioner



## PETITION TO VACATE DEWITT CAVE ROAD

1. THIS IS THE 2<sup>ND</sup> MEETING, IN THE TERM AFTER THE READING OF THE PETITION TO VACATE DEWITT CAVE ROAD
2. THE PETITION WAS READ ALOUD AT THE JANUARY 8, 2026 REGULAR SESSION
3. NOTICE WAS POSTED PER RSMo 228.110 ON MARCH 4, 2026
4. AT THIS TIME, WE WILL TAKE PUBLIC COMMENT
  - a. IS THE PETITIONER PRESENT, WOULD THEY LIKE TO SPEAK AND OFFER ANY EVIDENCE
  - b. WOULD ANYONE ELSE LIKE TO SPEAK AND OFFER ANY EVIDENCE

\*ANY DOCS/PICS/ETC. OFFERED BY PUBLIC NEEDS TO BE COLLECTED FOR PUBLIC RECORD
5. CLOSE TO PUBLIC COMMENT
6. COMMISSION DISCUSSION, QUESTIONS
7. COMMISSION VOTES TO ACCEPT/DENY THE PETITION, OR ANY PART THEROF
8. ORDER WILL BE DRAFTED, AS NEEDED, AND PROVIDED TO PETITIONER AT A FUTURE DATE

## PETITION TO VACATE PORTIONS OF RIVERSIDE ROAD

1. THIS IS THE 2<sup>ND</sup> MEETING, IN THE TERM AFTER THE READING OF THE PETITION TO VACATE DEWITT CAVE ROAD
2. THE PETITION WAS READ ALOUD AT THE JANUARY 8, 2026 REGULAR SESSION
3. NOTICE WAS POSTED PER RSMo 228.110 ON FEBRUARY 26, 2026
4. AT THIS TIME, WE WILL TAKE PUBLIC COMMENT
  - a. IS THE PETITIONER PRESENT, WOULD THEY LIKE TO SPEAK AND OFFER ANY EVIDENCE
  - b. IS CITY OF OZARK PRESENT, WOULD THEY LIKE TO SPEAK AND OFFER ANY EVIDENCE
  - c. IS OZARK SPECIAL ROAD DISTRICT PRESENT, WOULD THEY LIKE TO SPEAK AND OFFER ANY EVIDENCE
  - d. WOULD ANYONE ELSE LIKE TO SPEAK AND OFFER ANY EVIDENCE

\*ANY DOCS/PICS/ETC. OFFERED BY PUBLIC NEEDS TO BE COLLECTED FOR PUBLIC RECORD
5. CLOSE TO PUBLIC COMMENT
6. COMMISSION DISCUSSION, QUESTIONS
7. COMMISSION VOTES TO ACCEPT/DENY THE PETITION, OR ANY PART THEROF
8. ORDER WILL BE DRAFTED, AS NEEDED, AND PROVIDED TO PETITIONER AT A FUTURE DATE



# Neale & Newman

*Established 1903*

---

**Patrick J. Platter**

*Partner*

Email: [pplatter@nnlaw.com](mailto:pplatter@nnlaw.com)

Main: 417.882.9090

Extension: 162

March 30, 2026

Christian County Commission  
The Hon. Lynn Morris, Presiding Commissioner  
The Hon. Johnny Williams, Western District Commissioner  
The Hon. Bradley A. Jackson, Eastern District Commissioner  
100 West Church Street  
Ozark, Missouri 65721

c/o Paula Brumfield County Clerk  
[pbrumfield@christiancountymo.gov](mailto:pbrumfield@christiancountymo.gov)

**In re: Petition to Vacate/Bloom/adjacent to Riverside Bridge**

Dear Ms. Brumfield:

Our firm represents the Ozark Special Road District. The Commission kindly offered us the courtesy of appearing at the hearing scheduled for Thursday April 2<sup>nd</sup> about the Petition to Vacate a road (or property) adjacent to the southeast corner of Riverside Bridge. The District thanks the Commission and this letter states our report over the Bridge.

The District believes that it is premature to make a final decision on the Petition to Vacate. The reason is that it is possible that a portion of the real estate sought to be vacated may fall within the necessary right of way to maintain and repair Riverside Bridge. Surveyors need to determine whether this is the case.

The District is responsible for the maintenance and repair of the Bridge under an IGA signed before the Bridge was rebuilt after flooding. This rebuild happened largely due to FEMA funding. The District has performed repairs on the Bridge as recently as 2024. General contractor Carson Mitchell performed the repairs in 2024. The repair bill was \$43,000 +/-.

The County conveyed real estate at/about the southern corners of the Bridge to the City of Ozark in 2020 and 2023. The 2023 conveyance is next to or possibly overlaps property owned/claimed by Mr. Bloom and his family. I also understand from the Road District surveyor that a portion of the legal description in the 2023 quitclaim deed was in error. The County has produced a legal description to reflect

**NNLaw.com**

*Physical Address:* Farmers Park, Building F, 2144 E. Republic Rd., Suite F-402, Springfield, MO 65804

*Mailing Address:* P.O. Box 10327, Springfield, MO 65808 • *Fax:* 417.882.2529

Christian County Commission  
Petition to Vacate  
March 30, 2026  
Page 2

the correct legal description, at least to demonstrate the right description for the 2023 quitclaim deed. That description, however, does not tell the Road District Commissioners whether that conveyance encroaches on necessary right-of-way.

The lawyers for the City of Ozark, the County, and the District (myself) met a few weeks ago and the County has requested its surveyor to provide a report about what the correct legal descriptions represent and if there is proper right of way already reserved. Both the City and the District will refer the County report to their surveyors, to make certain that all parties are working from the same facts.

At this time, I cannot recommend to the District Commissioners that it take a position either for, or in opposition to, the Petition to Vacate. The decision is premature. Many other issues concern the Bridge, but they are not material to the Petition presently before the Commission.

I plan to attend the hearing scheduled for Thursday, April 2<sup>nd</sup>, but I intend to refrain from remarks. However, if the Commissioners have questions for me, I will be prepared to answer them as best as possible.

I look forward to seeing you and the Commissioners on Thursday.

Very truly yours,

/s/ Patrick J. Platter  
Patrick J. Platter

PJP/dsw  
CC: Ms. Amanda Callaway  
Mr. Austin Fax  
Commissioners of OSRD  
Mr. Michael Bloom