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At Henry County Medical Center, we are Growing Forward to better serve you. One way is with the addition of James Carruth, MD, Pulmonology and the HCMC Paris Pulmonary Clinic.

Dr. Carruth is no stranger to West TN, growing up in Milan and receiving his undergraduate degree from the University of Tennessee, Martin. He received his medical degree from East Tennessee State University and completed his post graduate work, including his internship, residency, and fellowship at the University of Arkansas. Dr. Carruth practiced in Jackson for over 20 years before deciding to accept the opportunity to move his practice to Paris. He is certified by the American Board of Internal Medicine and is board eligible for certification in Pulmonary Medicine. He is also a member of the American College of Chest Physicians. Dr. Carruth and his wife, Leslie, have one son, Kyle. He enjoys golf, boating, trail riding and spectator sports. He is a TN Vols fan and loves to travel with his family.

Dr. Carruth along with Lachelle Moss, FNP, are now accepting patients at HCMC Paris Pulmonary Clinic. Call us for an appointment today at 731-641-2765 or book online at [www.hcmc-tn.org](http://www.hcmc-tn.org)



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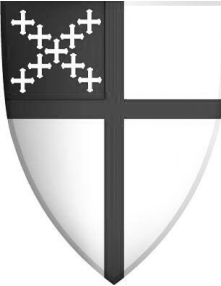
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## AN EDUCATION CELEBRATION

School is back in session with anniversary celebrations on the calendars of both school systems. So education is naturally our theme. It's a little different for me this year with my oldest headed off to college, but thank goodness, I still have one daughter at home to pack lunches for and head out to ballgames to cheer.

In honor of the Centennial of the Paris Special School District (PSSD), Shannon McFarlin brings us heart-warming profiles about two long-time PSSD educators. She has also compiled an interesting "Did You Know?" timeline of the PSSD's last century. If you're like me, you may have had never known these fascinating tidbits.

Of course, PSSD is not the only one celebrating an anniversary. Henry County High School is 50-years old this fall. We invite you to take a walk down Memory Lane and to also check out the events that will be taking place to mark this milestone.

In keeping with the education theme, we learn about a children's book author who will be working with Paris Elementary and Rhea School students courtesy of the Paris-Henry County Arts Council. The council

recently received a grant from an organization whose mission is to advance Southern vitality through the arts.

If you've never been bitten by the genealogy bug, look out! Genealogy buff, Barry Hart is about to take you to school. Not only that, he wants you to call "the teacher" with questions.

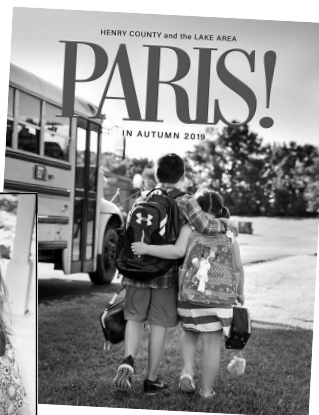
Susan Jones and John Nichols finally made it out to the Homeplace 1850s for a scary night of food and fun.

Even color, sound and downtown fun are in the curriculum with articles from Garden Guru John Watkins' piece on autumn leaves, Bill Neese's take on radio history and Kathy Ray's info on fabulous fall festivals.

There's plenty more in this issue from George Combs' farewell tour, to Helen Roberts-Niemi's unique and poignant job, to the story of Colonel William Travis.

Happy fall, y'all! Have fun and enjoy PARIS! in Autumn!

*Smantha*



### On The Cover

Brother and sister, Caroline and Cooper Carver, support each other on the first day back to school. Their parents are Jonathan Carver and Raychel Sutherland. The photographer capturing this moment is Mary Kate Paschall.

Henry County and the Lake Area

# PARIS!

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# DISCOVERY THROUGH GENEALOGY

BY BARRY HART

**W**hat do Ogden Nash, Mark Twain, and I have in common? We are in the same family tree! I began researching my family history 15 years ago, and I haven't looked back, well, except when I looked back in history. What got me started was my granddaughter Gabby asking me who my grandpa was and where he lived.

If you are thinking about tracing your family tree, and I recommend that you do, you might be wondering if there is any real importance to what you are doing besides satisfying your curiosity and providing your family with some knowledge of their origins.

Those are significant, in and of themselves. However, there is much more to the importance of genealogy than these two things. Having a clear idea for why you are tracing your ancestors can be highly motivating, especially if you come across brick walls

that may frustrate you. I have had my share of those!

If you don't know exactly why you are doing genealogy, if it's not something of a mission for you, then you might be tempted to give up when you come across these brick walls. With a purpose and mission in mind, you will power right through them, eventually. You'll be motivated to keep going until you find the answers you seek.

Your reasons for doing genealogy may be different from someone else's, as well. My reason was to simply answer a question posed by an inquisitive granddaughter, but, when I answered her question, I began to formulate a few of my own.

Everyone has at least one or more unique reasons they are doing family history research. Find your reason, beyond just recording names, dates, and places associated with your ancestors, and you will find your unique genealogical purpose, and your motivation

to continue in the face of adversity right along with it.

Some of the most common genealogical purposes include:

- Validating family legends
- Looking for famous ancestors
- Researching how your ancestors were involved in history
- Looking for heirs to a family inheritance
- Determining who owns land
- Locating birth parents
- Determining paternity
- Proving lineage to join a lineage society
- Preserving family traditions
- Preserving the legacy of a beloved relative
- Reconnecting with long-lost family members
- Gathering historical research for a book

Whatever your reasons for doing genealogy, they are precious, special, and unique to you. Treasure your gene-



alogical journey and know you are doing a wonderful thing for yourself, your current family, and your ancestors. You are doing work that honors everyone and will be treasured by yourself and others for generations.

My journey through court records, family Bibles, and stories handed down by my ancestors has taken me on a trip of a lifetime. I've discovered most of my roots, uncovered a few scoundrels, and ran across some notables as well. We all have them, and I found them in the basement of the Barren County Courthouse in Glasgow, Kentucky; in the Will Books in Columbia, South Carolina; and written on a page in a Hart Family Bible in rural Pennsylvania.

The Hart family migrated to Henry County in 1824 and settled in the Shady Grove Community. My second great-grandfather, John Hart, was granted acreage as a benefit of his service in the War of 1812, and he and his wife Sarah Hart, nee Ragland, built a home and continued to raise their children until Sarah passed away in 1842.

John married Elizabeth Brundage in 1844, and they had three children,



Aaron "Gofer" and Amanda Hart

one of which was my great-grandfather Aaron "Gofer" Hart. He married Amanda Nash of Benton County. Amanda's third great-grand uncle was Francis Nash after whom Nashville was named.

Ogden Nash was discovered tucked away in the line of my fifth great-grand uncle Abner Nash who was the second governor of North Carolina between 1781 and 1782 and represented North Carolina in the Continental Congress from 1782 to 1786.

Samuel Langhorne Clemens, aka Mark Twain, was found by researching the line of my seventh great-grandfather Christopher Clark.

Benjamin Rush was the Physician-in-Chief under General George Washington and signer of the Declaration of Independence and is an ancestral third cousin/5 times removed.

Let me encourage you to ask your parents and grandparents questions and take notes. You have a wealth of historic knowledge right in front of you and it needs to be recorded. Check with the local library and genealogical society; they have a collection that is easily accessible and the office personnel are skilled in the hunt.

If all else fails, you can contact me at hartbn@charter.net, and I will personally help you get started.

Happy hunting!

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BACK IN THE DAY

# TRAVELING MUSIC

BY BILL NEESE

*Bill Neese is a local attorney, a sportsman, a youth shooting team coach and a grandfather. He began writing stories about his family, work, community and coming of age in the South. While composed primarily for his grandsons, his hope is "that these little stories will bring a smile to those who might read them."*

I was putting my grandson in his car seat in my daughter's car when he unfolded the little video screen from the back of the headrest. After they left, it caused me to think about how folks like to have music with them when they travel and how the music available to the traveler has changed within my memory.

In the 1940's and 1950's, a radio was an option on most all cars. Of course, so were a heater and turn signals. Most of the first radios I remember on cars were aftermarket models. There was a brisk business in auto radios with shops all over that sold and installed them. Most companies, like Sears and Western Auto, had a line of car radios, antennas and speakers. They were sizeable affairs since they ran on vacuum tubes. Eventually "factory radios" became much more common.

All the radios were AM (amplitude modulation) and it produced low sound quality, primarily because each station was limited to a narrow frequency band by its federal broadcast license. Further, AM radio was subject to static caused by everything from lightning to electric motors. Even the car's own electrical system could cause static. Radio makers and car companies learned to use filters to reduce the static. Still, I remember some radios that had constant static, none sounded really good, but it was what we had.

Cities usually had several stations and most small towns, like Paris, had at least one. We had WTPR which was 710 on the radio dial. You could also

get Memphis stations at 56 and 68 and by the late 1950's, they were playing a steady diet of popular music.

Until the 1960's, radio was not all music and news. In fact, in the 1940's and 1950's there were all sorts of programs depending on the station and time of day. WTPR had a lot of local programming such as farm shows, local interviews, garden shows and live performances by local musicians.

My parents always listened to WREC's live broadcasts of famous big bands from "The Beautiful Skyway, High atop the Hotel Peabody in Downtown Memphis." The photograph shown is of my mother, dad and me at the Peabody Skyway during a

live broadcast of Chuck Foster and his "Music in the Foster Fashion Orchestra" from about 1960.

I regularly listened to my favorite programs like "The Shadow," "Boston Blackie," "The Lone Ranger," and "Bobby Benson of the B Bar B" on network stations.

As television took over, radio became more focused on news and music and more listened to it in the car. There was good radio coverage during the day and at all times in cities, but traveling presented problems. On trips, we would run out of range of our chosen station and have to find another with similar programming which was not always easy.



Left to right: Fred, Martha, and Bill Neese enjoy Chuck Foster and his "Music in the Foster Fashion Orchestra" at The Peabody's Skyway Room in Memphis, circa 1960.



Out west, there were areas with very limited coverage and maybe only country music and farm reports. During the daytime it was tolerable, but at sunset, the problems with AM radio showed up.

During the day, AM signals travel by conduction over the surface of the Earth and the range is limited to about 100 miles for even a powerful station. However, at night the ionosphere layers change and the AM signals travel hundreds of miles by reflecting off the atmospheric layer. So, if every AM station kept up its daytime broadcast power, the whole spectrum would be a mess of massive interference since stations in different parts of the country use the same broadcast frequency.

To address this issue, the FCC requires most stations to go off the air and others to greatly reduce their power from sunset to sunrise. Every day at sunset, WTPR announced its evening demise, explained why, played the National Anthem and went silent. At the same time, people in or traveling from Memphis to Paris lost the Memphis stations.

To make up for this loss of service, there are certain “clear channel” stations that operate at super high power from sunset to sunrise. The effect of all the above was that we could listen to Memphis radio all the way to Paris in the daytime, but lost it at sunset at the Memphis city limits. Then we were stuck with WWL from New Orleans, WSM from Nashville, or WLS from Chicago. WSM was all country, WWL was aimed at over the road truckers, and WLS was mostly ads for drag racing, as I recall. As a practical matter, traveling at night meant traveling without music for me.

Around 1965, Sears, Radio Shack, and independents started selling 8-track tape players for after market installation in cars. The 8-track was a tape unit encased in plastic that had four “sides” of two stereo tracks each.

While cassette tapes had been invented in 1963, 8-tracks took over in cars. Just about any music sold in album form was sold as an 8-track. Everyone was going to the audio store to have an 8-track system installed to play through the car radio or with an amp

and speakers for a real stereo sound.

Now we could travel at night, listen to the music we chose without commercials, but at a cost. Slowly the compact cassette began to take over, and by the late 1970’s, the 8-track was obsolete but still in wide use.

In the 1970’s, another radio source started becoming popular – FM (frequency modulation.) The sound was better but the range was shorter so local stations could broadcast day and night. By 1978, more people listened to FM more than AM. Radios started being sold with AM/FM dials and more FM stations were becoming stereo.

Now we have satellite radio, cellular radio over our phones, digital radio, movies, video discs, internet connectivity – all that as we ride down the road, day or night.

Heck, I really don’t know what all is available. No wonder drive-in movies lost out. If a kid can talk his or her date into the back seat now, they can watch the headrest and there’s no admission.

Maybe the “good old days” weren’t all that good. Who am I kidding? They sure were!



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# It's Festive! It's Fun! IT'S FALL, Y'ALL!

BY KATHY RAY

In Paris, there is a time for all seasons. FALL is the season between summer and winter when temperatures start to gradually cool down. Fall is a FESTIVE time of year in Paris. There are so many FUN things to do in Downtown Paris.

## SAVE THE DATES:

**August 27 with The Old Spirits**  
**September 24 with The Chill Tonics**

The fourth Tuesdays in August and September bring classic cars, live music, and barbeque to the Court Square for the **Downtown Cruise In**. This is a free event sponsored by the Downtown Paris Association. Bring your classic car and register to win great prizes. Grab your lawn chair or a blanket and head downtown for a fun evening from 5:30 to 7 pm on the east side of the Court Square. Enjoy Perry's barbeque and listen to the music of local artists.

**SAVE THE DATES: Fridays,**  
**September 6, 13, 20, and 27**

The month of September is packed with fun events. **Noon on the Square** is sponsored by Commercial Bank & Trust and brings live music, food, and

fun to the Court Square from 11:30 am to 1 pm each Friday during the month. It is a wonderful time to visit with friends and enjoy lunch on the Court Square with our historic courthouse and lawn as a venue.

## SAVE THE DATES: September 20-21

**Bavarian Oktoberfest** is a new event coming to Downtown Paris September 20-21 from 5 to 9 pm with dinner served at 6 pm in The Old Paris 5 & 10 Event Center located at 110 West Washington Street. Miss D's Kitchen will be catering the event. Advance tickets are required as seating is limited to 60 each night. Tickets are \$30 and include dinner and a cash beer garden. Call 731-336-0278 for tickets.

## SAVE THE DATE: September 28

The last weekend in September brings a festive celebration of the arts to the Court Square. **Arts 'Round the Square** is a free event sponsored by the Paris-Henry County Arts Council on Saturday, September 28, from 9 am to 4 pm. This event will fill the lawn with artists creating and selling their pottery, woodcarvings, jewelry, mixed media, fiber art, photographs, sculp-

tures and canvas art. There are many different genres of art and music.

Children can also get in touch with their inner artist at **KidsZone Live!** – a special area for interactive children's projects. These projects are free and help children connect their artwork with the professional work that is taking place that day. The art demonstrations have become one of the well-loved hallmarks of this event.

## SAVE THE DATES:

**September 28 - October 31**

**Scarecrows on the Square** is sponsored by the Downtown Paris Association. The scarecrows add a seasonal look to our beautiful Court Square. The courthouse lawn is decorated for fall each year by the Downtown Paris Association.

Scarecrows are a great opportunity to let your creativity take hold and have some fun. We encourage you to be environmentally conscious and recycle items to fit with the theme of your group, school, or business. Use a theme and name that fits your group's personality.

Application forms are available at the DPA office, 203 N. Fentress Street.



Scarecrows will be judged on originality, construction, and presentation during the second week of October. Cash prizes will be awarded for People's Choice, Most Original, Best Constructed, and Best in Show. Winners will be announced on October 19 at Spooktacular.

#### SAVE THE DATE: October 19

The 14th annual **Spooktacular**, a signature event sponsored by the Downtown Paris Association, promises a howling good time on Saturday, October 19. It is a free event for the entire family that gives the youngsters an opportunity to trick-or-treat during daylight hours and enjoy fun activities on our historic courthouse lawn.

Organizations and businesses will provide free crafts, entertainment, contests with prizes, with live music from the Inman Pep Band and friends, and concessions from noon until 3:00 pm. Downtown merchants invite children to trick-or-treat in the stores and this is a tradition for many families.

Don't have a costume? It's fun to come out and just enjoy the show.



Festive scarecrows on the Court Square

There are hundreds of costumed children and adults on parade.

The Lions Club – a Spooktacular partner – will have contests and games from 12:30 to 1 pm.

The DPA's famous Pumpkin Patch Pete will be on hand so you can guess his weight. On Halloween Day, the winner will be announced and will receive \$100 in DPA bucks.

Along with Downtown's variety of restaurants serving delicious fare, Perry's BBQ and the Inman Band Boosters will be on-site with concessions.



Fun selfies during Spooktacular

The Downtown Paris Association is a 501C3 non-profit organization that promotes prosperous business activity and community involvement while encouraging preservation of the downtown area. We welcome new members who love our community and donations for the efforts of the organization. We are making memories for a lifetime! It's FESTIVE! It's FUN! It's FALL Y'ALL! See you there!

*Kathy Ray is the Executive Director of the Downtown Paris Association.*

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# GEORGE COMBS, JR.

## *His Farewell Tour*



BY SHANNON MCFARLIN

George Combs Jr. is on his 'farewell tour', leading to his retirement in October after 44 years working for the Paris Board of Public Utilities (BPU) and he's having a blast.

It's a journey he couldn't imagine making as a teenager, but maybe it's just in his blood. His father, George Combs Sr. retired from BPU after 42 years, and George still marvels that he "got to walk the same halls" as his dad.

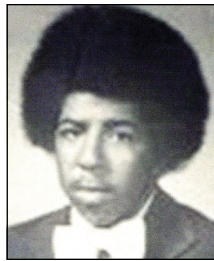
His father was one of the original employees of the city's former light and power plant before it was purchased by BPU. He began working for the city in 1939 and retired in 1976.

Remarks by Combs, Sr.'s former boss, BPU General Manager Jimmy Huffman, could easily apply to Combs, Jr.'s career: "George has been a most dedicated worker, with a deep sense of loyalty to his employer. He has performed his duties faithfully through all the years and it has been a pleasure to be associated with him in this capacity. It has been a privilege to have him for a friend."

Combs Jr. graduated from Henry County High School in 1975. As he puts it, he had "no idea what I wanted to do" even though he was in "...the best-looking class ever to graduate."



Left: George Combs, Sr.



Right: George Combs, Jr.'s high school photo

He took a summer job at the court house, and one day his father told him, "Mr. Jimmy wants to see you." He went to see Huffman the next day and recalls the manager saying, "Little George, your dad told me you can't seem to make up your mind what you want to do, but you don't need to be sitting around doing nothing. Come Monday morning, I want you to start working for us."

George's father took him to the National Store and bought him two pair of overalls and one pair of work boots so he could be ready for his new job. "He told me that I could refund him with my first check and I did."

The elder Combs was strict about punctuality, so "Little George" arrived at 6:30 am instead of the opening time of 7:00 am for his new job in the water and sewer department.

"My first boss was Mr. Percy Williams. He was the sewer superintendent, and he always treated everybody fair. I never saw him sit down. He was always on the job sites with us," George said.

His new job wasn't without mishaps, though. "I laid sewer pipe all over this town, but that first pipe I dropped and it broke. I looked around and everybody laughed at me and they were saying, 'Your Dad may have pull, but he's not going to help you now'. But I didn't get fired."

A couple years later, he was transferred to the water department and worked for Huffman's son Derek. "I read water meters all over town and I'm still in the water department," Combs said.

But that's not all he's been doing. For 41 years, Combs has also worked after hours for Commercial Bank & Trust, and for a time, worked for the former Show Thyme catering business in Paris.

"I started with the bank because one day Bob Collins, the loan officer, asked me what I did in the afternoons after I got done at the BPU. He asked if I could help out as a janitor for three to four months until they found someone permanently," Combs said. "Well, that



turned into six and then nine months and then he finally admitted to me that he never really looked for anybody permanently because everybody liked me and liked the way I did the job, so I've been there ever since."

The Show Thyme work was fun and it involved his whole family, Combs said. "I met people I never would have crossed paths with, but my favorite to work for was former Governor Ned McWherter. He always had us cater every event he had at his house in Dresden, all his Christmas parties. He was a great man."

Combs said he always gave a speech at the end of every catering gig, thanking everyone for allowing them to be part of their event. "My dad taught me to always have good manners," Combs said. "I always wore a red vest and apron that said 'George' on it."

In June, Combs was presented with one of his biggest honors when he was given the Reader's Choice Awards' Laura Dougherty Award. It is given to a Paris native who shows creativity and hard work – making him the third recipient of the award.

Was it a surprise? "It sure was," Combs said. "Tony Brown told me that they wanted me to go to the banquet because everyone wanted to thank us for all the work BPU did during the storms over the weekend. He also said that Terry Wimberley would take it as a personal favor if I went."

Combs and his wife, Daphne, were seated with the others from BPU when



George Combs, Jr. with his wife, Daphne; daughter, Khadijah; and granddaughter, Emilee.

Dougherty took the stage and started describing the award winner.

"She talked about how everyone would see this person at 5:30 in the morning at McDonald's, and that this person had worked for the BPU and had been in the catering business and worked a second job at the bank, and Daphne said, 'Does this sound like anyone you know?'"

"I really knew she was talking about me" when Dougherty said this man also goes by "Tink" and "Dr. Love."

"Tink" was a name given to him as a child growing up in the Peden Hill community. "Kids called me 'Tinkerbell' and it just stuck" he said. As for "Dr. Love"? "I used to have a license plate on my car saying I was Dr. Love."

Combs was also named Quinn Chapel Man of the Year this year "for

his dedication and loyalty" to the church all these years.

Combs said he isn't sure how he'll fill his days after retirement, but knows he will find something. His wife, daughter Khadijah, and granddaughter Emilee agreed that he won't have trouble finding things to do.

"But really, I'm blessed to have worked for good people all these years," he said. "Everytime I get in that utility truck I think the words 'thank you, love and friend'. We all have to love someone because someone loved you. Someone encouraged you. 'Thank you' are two words that everyone should say. And it's always good to have friends. You don't get anywhere by yourself."

Combs remembers his upbringing by his father and mother, Delores. Both taught him his strict work ethic, with his dad working waiting tables for various civic groups around town and being active in the Civic League, in addition to his BPU job. His mom worked at a laundromat, but she mostly was a homemaker and raised the six kids in the family.

George's parting words on his Farewell Tour? "I just want to thank everyone who ever flushed a commode, turned on a light switch, took a bath or cooked a meal because all of you put food on my table and a roof over my head. But seriously, my Dad always told me 'thank you' are two words that you should say every day... thank you."

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# AUTHOR

## In The Schools

BY MEREDITH VAJDA

Every morning, Ernestine shouts out her window to the Great Smoky Mountains, “I’m five years old and a big girl!” When Mama asks Ernestine – who helps with chores around the farm while Papa is away at war – to carry two mason jars filled with milk to their neighbor, Ernestine isn’t sure she can do it. After all, she’d need to walk through thickets of crabapple and blackberry by the creek, not to mention past vines of climbing bittersweet. But Ernestine is five years old and a big girl, so off she sets. Along the way, one mason jar slips from her arms and rolls down the mountain-side into the river, and Ernestine is sure it’s lost forever...until her neighbor’s son shows up with a muddy jar – and there’s a surprise inside!

Thus begins a charming children’s story set in 1942 east Tennessee. It’s a story of family love, neighbors in need, community responsibility, and hardship in time of war. The story in *Ernestine’s Milky Way* came to the author Kerry Madden-Lunsford after hearing her friend and neighbor talk about

growing up in the Smoky Mountains in the early 1900s. Kerry’s imagination added new details and her publisher paired the story with the beautifully lush illustrations of Emily Sutton.

The result is a delightful hardcover children’s book that has garnered excellent reviews from educators, librarians, and other authors. Published in March by Penguin Random House, the book is appropriate for ages three through seven, but the lessons therein

and the classroom teaching that can be based on the book are applicable through ages nine to ten.

The Paris-Henry County Arts Council has been awarded a grant from South Arts to sponsor a two-day visit to Paris by the author. South Arts is based in Atlanta, GA, and their mission is to advance Southern vitality through the arts.

It’s an organization to which the Arts Council has never applied before, but their Regional Touring Grant program of matching grants for authors from outside the sponsor’s state caught the eye of the council and began a search for the appropriate author. Madden-Lunsford and her story are a perfect match for Paris, with the setting in Tennessee’s Great Smoky Mountains.

Madden-Lunsford is a professor at the University of Alabama-Birmingham, and the director of their Creative Writing Program. She has written six previous books, numerous articles and essays, and has toured extensively to promote them.



Author Kerry Madden-Lunsford



Her Paris visit on October 10 - 11 will focus on Rhea and Paris Elementary Schools and W.G. Rhea Public Library. For the pre-K through second grades, she will read her book and show the students how to make butter by shaking jars of cream – the surprise that was in the jar that rolled down the mountain in her story. For third and fourth grades, she can follow up the reading with workshops on writing and drawing.

There may be a presentation at Inman for the middle grades students that would be a writing workshop, something Madden-Lunsford is particularly adept at leading. “As my students’ teacher and mentor, I try to help them make that trip as writers and storytellers with joy, curiosity, and hope,” she explained. “Through a series of writing sparks, I encourage my students to delve into their own lives to mine for material.”

Dr. Norma Gerrell, director of the Paris Special School District and creator of the district’s new STEAM (science, technology, engineering, arts, and math) initiative, is planning

a Family Engagement Night at Krider Performing Arts Center on Thursday, October 10, that would involve the whole community.

The Arts Council plans to reach out to writing groups, book clubs, the home-school community and library patrons to invite them to listen to the Madden-Lunsford discuss how she became a writer, her process of finding an agent and a publisher, and, most of all, how parents can encourage their own children to express themselves creatively.

The event at Rhea Public Library will be a morning story hour for patrons, in-home day care centers, a Head Start program, and anyone else who wants to hear from our visiting author. Books will be available for purchase at all events but some giveaways are also planned.

“This is the perfect combination of author, story and audience,” said Jason Wade, president of the Arts Council’s Board of Directors. “People in west Tennessee can relate to this story set in the Smoky Mountains, and Kerry Madden-Lunsford is a college



Kerry Madden-Lunsford will present a reading program to Paris Elementary students in October.

professor who is a masterful teacher. Her visit to Paris will create memories for people of all ages, and hopefully inspire some to follow in her path as a professional educator and a published author. The Arts Council is proud to have this be our first literary event.”

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# Kindergarten MEMORIES



BY SHANNON MCFARLIN

## ALICE WILLIAMS *Grasping those teachable moments*

Alice Williams' importance to the Paris Special Schools District, and the Paris community as a whole, cannot be overstated.

She was the first African-American teacher to be hired at the Paris Schools and the first African-American kindergarten teacher in the state of Tennessee – in the first integrated kindergarten subsidized by the state board of education.

Now 96, Mrs. Williams was honored at the PSSD's school year kick-off July 31 as the staff gathered to celebrate the district's 100 years.

Her teaching career was fulfilling, but it wasn't without barriers for her to overcome. With a bachelor's degree in religious education from the American Baptist Theology Seminary in Nashville, and a degree from Murray State, she already had more degrees than

many of the teachers who worked for the district.

### **"YOU'LL NEVER TEACH A WHITE CHILD"**

When she first applied for a teaching job in 1967, the former superintendent told her, "You'll never teach a white child." Mrs. Williams said she gathered up her papers and walked out of his office. "I thought I had taken my credentials with me, but I guess I left them behind, and he must have looked them over. Three weeks later, he called me and said he had sent my credentials to the school board and they said I could teach" but that she needed more education. She went on to earn her master's degree, also from Murray State, plus more certification in grades 1-9.

From then on, there was no looking back for Williams. She started teaching kindergarten at the former Fairview



Alice Williams in her early teaching career

School and said, "I loved it, loved it. I loved the children."

### **TEACHING THROUGH PLAY**

Mrs. Williams' teaching philosophy was "teaching through play", which was more possible in bygone days.



For the children of Paris, kindergarten was a totally new experience. Many of the children were drawn from the rural areas of the county. “I remember we were teaching them the Pledge of Allegiance and taught them the words to ‘My Country ‘Tis of Thee’. One little girl said, ‘But I don’t live in the country!’ Well, that was a teachable moment. We made a lesson out of it.”

Mrs. Williams knew how to grasp those ‘teachable moments.’

Gale Tharpe recalled, “I went over to her house one night and she took me to her music room. She started with, ‘Now tell me where middle C is’ and before long, I was playing a little. When I got ready to leave her husband said, ‘You had a piano lesson and didn’t even know it.’”

Her classroom was a fun place, where kids were taught how to count by playing jump rope and taught important lessons with other activities, such as cooking. “We cooked a lot in the school,” she recalled, even with the little kindergartners. It was fun for them and the teachers – but also taught the kids a lot.

After nine years, Mrs. Williams was transferred to the third grade at Lee Elementary. “I wanted to see if I could teach the older kids, too.” She stayed there for a couple years.



Former kindergarten teacher Alice Williams, now 96, reflects on her early teaching days.

#### THE BEST KINDERGARTEN TEACHER

On the last day of school, the Inman School principal told her he would like her to fill the position of kindergarten teacher the next year. He said he had lots of applications for that position from within the school and without. “He said he was at a meeting and was told, ‘Why would you hire

another kindergarten teacher when you have the best kindergarten teacher at your school now?’ He was talking about me.”

Mrs. Williams accepted the position, teaching kindergarten at Inman until the district began the clustering concept of dividing grades between schools. She then moved to Rhea Elementary, also teaching kindergarten, and worked there until her retirement in 1990 after 25 years.

In that time, she said, color was not an issue in her teaching. “No matter what color the children were, I could teach them. They’d kiss me when they came in and they’d kiss me when they’d leave. Children are hungry for love. Children think they’re independent today, but they’re still hungry for true love. The real thing.”

#### TEACHING WITH CHRIST IN MIND

Williams’ late husband, the Rev. George Williams, was minister at Progressive Baptist and the two shared a strong bond for 60 years until he passed away. Even after retiring, she continued teaching piano and played organ at the church.

“What you want to do with the children is look at them the way Christ would look at them,” she said. “Then you can teach them.”

## ELIZABETH COVINGTON *“I just like the little ones.”*

**Y**ou wouldn’t know it by looking at her, but Elizabeth Covington has been a teacher’s aide for the Paris Special Schools District for over 50 years! But when you see her walking the halls of Rhea Elementary, you might think she’s one of the students.

She has truly loved her time in the district and doesn’t see any retirement in her foreseeable future. “I really have loved it,” she said.

Covington started in 1967 in a perfect situation for a teacher or teacher’s aide – at the former Fairview Elementary. To listen to her talk about her

time at Fairview, it sounds ideal for the students, teachers and parents.

She has always been a teacher’s aide, starting at the same time that kindergarten was introduced to the local district. It was a perfect fit for her.

The Fairview Elementary School used to be located on Mineral Wells Avenue and was empty before kindergarten began here. School officials decided it would be the ideal location where kindergarten could be taught.

“It was perfect. We were the only ones in the school. Alice Williams and Jean Wilson were the teachers and there were 20 kids in each class,” said

Covington. “We had a big front and back yard and we could take the kids outside to play. We had trikes and little wagons at the school and we’d let them ride. There were tire swings and even a big sandbox inside the building.”

Following Alice Williams’ belief in “learning by playing,” Covington said, “We did a lot of play activities. We did Double Dutch on the jump rope, taught them nursery rhymes, acted out London Bridge, did Duck, Duck, Goose, Red Rover, Simon Says, Red Light, Green Light.”

The children at Fairview “were free and they loved it”. There was a lot of



parent involvement at Fairview and the parents “took to the idea of kindergarten right away. We always had volunteers helping us.”

The school had its own kitchen and cook and the children learned to cook, too. “We taught them how to make pizza and burgers and cookies. They cooked a lot. Our building always smelled so good.”

There were not the confines of a structured curriculum like in current programs “and we could learn in a lot of different ways then,” said Covington. “We took a lot of field trips. We went to farms that were nearby and visited farm animals. We went to the post office, Commercial Bank, churches, the fire department, the library, city hall, and even the jail! You could do things on the spur of the moment in those days.”

The school’s maintenance man, John Mustain, “could make anything,” Covington said he made all the play areas for the kids. For instance, for the housekeeping area, he made all the play refrigerators, stoves, cupboards, little tables and chairs for the kids.



In her 50 year career, Elizabeth Covington has seen many changes in the Paris Special School District and the kindergarten curriculum. She is currently a teacher’s aide at Rhea School.

She stayed at Fairview School until it was closed in 1982 when kindergarten classes were absorbed by the other schools in the district. She started working in other areas, being a second grade aide and a library assistant, but she came back to kindergarten, where she still works as an aide at Rhea.

“I just like the little ones. I love it, really,” she said.

Covington has seen many changes in the Paris school system over the years – a change in structure as well as more involvement by the state in

instruction. She’s seen several changes in school superintendents and principals, too, and has worked for at least six superintendents, starting with J.T. Miles and continuing with Dr. Norma Gerrell.

One of her funniest experiences, though, is when she was an aide for a teacher who she used to teach. “There are so many of the kids I used to teach who are teachers now themselves – Brooke French, Terry Howard, Kelli Lassiter, Alicia Jones. You just have to smile when that happens.”



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1. Lee School postcard
2. Sidney Boone's third grade class at Lee School, 1957
3. Fairview Elementary School, Principal Joy Call, 1967
4. Lee School, 1948, Ann Blanton Crosswy's first teaching year
5. May Day at Lee School, 1955
6. Henry County Training School



# 100th Anniversary of PARIS SPECIAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

BY SHANNON MCFARLIN

**D**id you know that in its early days, the Atkins-Porter School had no kitchen and meals were transported there from Lee School everyday?

That young people in Paris and Henry County were treated to classical education from a wide variety of foreign noblemen – at the same time that wooden sidewalks were used to get around the downtown area?

That the gong in the Henry County Courthouse tower served as the school bell for the Paris Female Seminary?

Education was important to the people of Paris from its earliest days. As its settlers were still carving out a community from the wilderness, they were figuring out ways to provide education for the youngsters. So much so that there were numerous private

schools, boarding schools and tutors popping up to teach the children in our still rugged town as early as 1832.

## CLASSICAL EDUCATION

The young ladies of Paris were taught music by an Italian nobleman and the young men were instructed in Latin by an alumnus from the University of Belfast. The Paris Academy was already seeking pupils in January of 1832, with the Paris Female Institute underway shortly thereafter.

From looking at their advertisements in the early newspapers, they offered quite a curriculum, from the usual ABCs to Physiology, French, Latin, Greek, Hebrew, Moral Philosophy and more. For your basic spelling, reading and writing, the cost of a semester was \$6. For the advanced courses of Logic,

Rhetoric, Elements of Criticism and Philosophy, the cost jumped up to \$15.

A contract was executed in August of 1848 to build the Paris Male Academy and that became the building block for what we now know as the Paris Special School District. The Paris Male Academy later became the Robert E. Lee School, which was the first school in the Paris public school system.

Schooling was not co-educational in those days and a strangely-named school for girls was started – called the Odd Fellows Female Institute, later the Paris Female Seminary.

According to the late County Historian W.O. Inman, the school was built on the corner of McNeill and Market Streets and was known to most as “The College.” It was two-story brick with a large front porch on each floor



and the gong in the town clock at the Courthouse served as the school bell.

*Goodspeed's History of Tennessee* in 1887 listed the schools of Paris to include the S.H. Welch High School, Mrs. Bruce's Infant School, Mrs. McAnulty's Primary School and a school for African American pupils was located on "Methodist Hill."

Other sources mention a one-room school located in the Chickasaw section of Paris. Another little school was on Sprowl Hill. There was also a dance school in Paris taught by an Italian count. According to Mr. Inman, it was about this time that free education began in Paris.

### CO-EDUCATION ESTABLISHED

During the Reconstruction period after the Civil War, the people of Paris and Henry County became serious about providing education to all, and they began operating a joint city-county system of common schools that lasted until Paris established its own school system in 1919 – 100 years ago this year.

### PARIS SPECIAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

In 1915, Atkins-Porter School became the city's second public school, with grades 5-8 initially. Clara Roach was the first principal. In 1919, the Paris Special School District was created and later Fairview School was added to

the city system. In September 1921, the first public school for African American youth was opened as the Henry County Training School.

It is interesting to note that in its early years, the Atkins-Porter School operated without a proper kitchen. According to *A History of Henry County, Tennessee* by E. McLeod Johnson, soup for the children was transported to Atkins-Porter from Lee School and was served for five cents per bowl. Milk could not be served because of lack of refrigeration.

After a few years, the school board and the PTA equipped a small kitchen for the school "which for a long time served only sandwiches." Later a hot plate was secured and finally a stove. Then Atkins-Porter could start making their own soup.

Additions were built to both Lee and Atkins-Porter Schools, and as more private and country schools began closing, the Paris Special School District steadily grew over the decades in enrollment. A major milestone occurred with the 1969-1970 school year when the seven county high schools consolidated into Henry County High School.

### CONTROVERSY & RESTORATION

Fast forward to March 1989 when the controversial clustering of grades in the Paris district was introduced, resulting in a protracted and heat-

ed lawsuit. Under the plan, grades K-1 would be at Rhea School, grades 2-4 at Atkins-Porter, and grades 5-6 at Inman. The clustering plan was eventually approved by the courts and implementation began.

In 1996 when the roof collapse at Atkins-Porter, the fate of the once prized landmark ended with its eventual demolition. Meanwhile, citizens banded together to save the Lee School Building, which was restored and is now the Lee Academy for the Arts.

### A JOINT VENTURE

In 1999, the clustering concept continued with the construction of Paris Elementary School, which was a joint venture with the city of Paris. PES is located on one side of the building, with the Paris Civic Center on the other.

The complex includes a multipurpose gym with suspended walking track, indoor swimming pool, fitness center, community meeting rooms, and a performing arts center.

Our early settlers would hardly recognize the Paris School District now – tornado-safe areas in the schools, changes in curricula to match a computerized and technological society, secured entry ways, and much more testing. But as the times change, so does the Paris Special School District.

## 50th Anniversary of HENRY COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL

BY SHANNON MCFARLIN

The late John Underwood had the distinction of being the last principal of Grove High School and the first principal of Henry County High School. He oversaw an emotional transition, as Henry Countians traded in the treasured Blue Devil gear for the brand-spanking new Patriots mascot and colors.

His daughter, Amy Underwood Veazey, who followed in her father's footsteps and is now principal at Lake-wood Elementary, has vivid memories

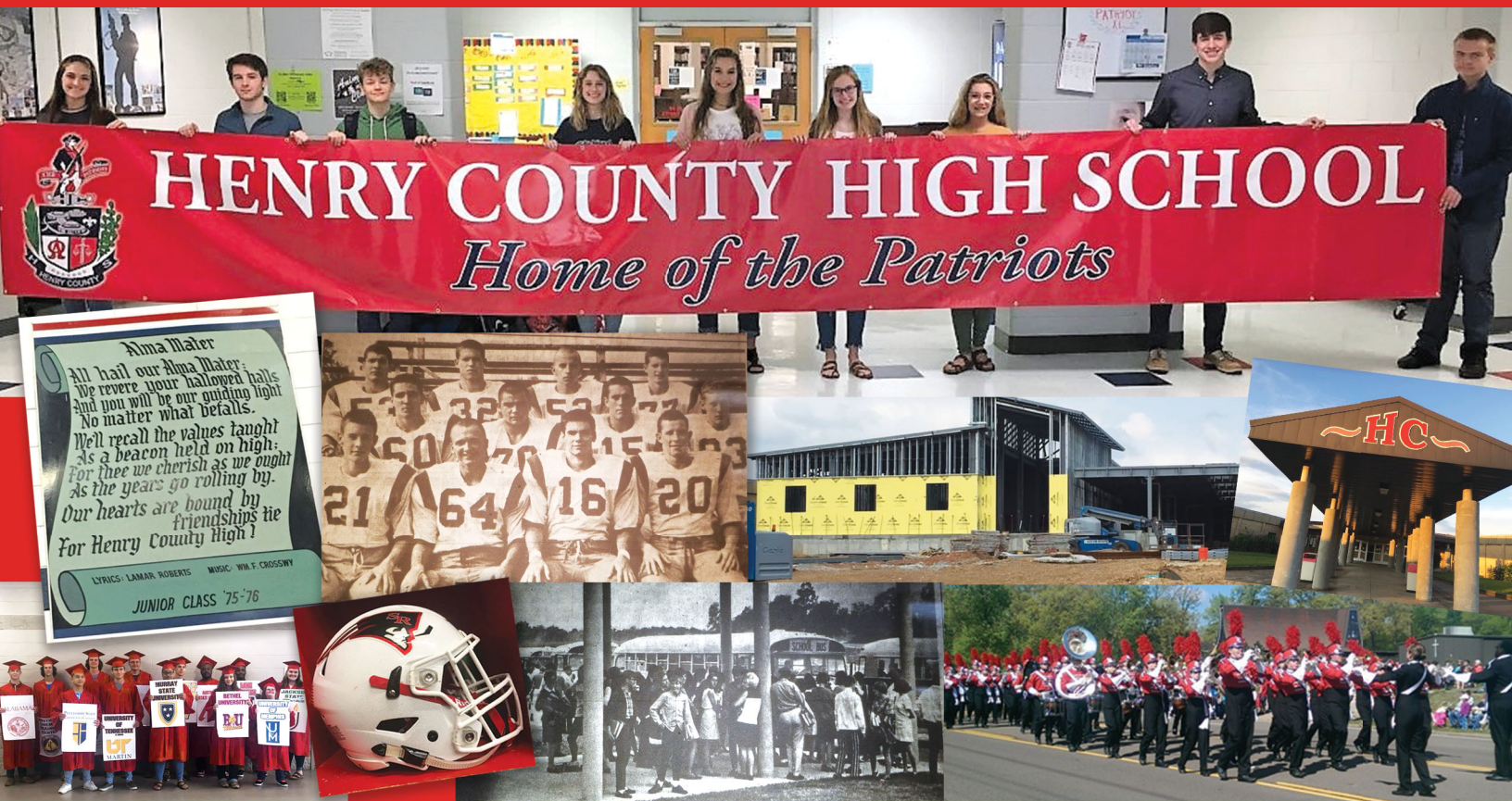
from that period. "I remember most about the building period. We would go out to the building site seems like every day. It was much like building your first house! He knew that blueprint by heart!"

Seven high schools were consolidated into the new Henry County High School, and the 1,200 first students were walking into a building unlike any school they had been in before. It was ultra-modern with circular pods, and it took four long years to plan and con-

struct. It cost \$2.6M, which was a huge amount of money in those days.

Veazey said one of her biggest memories was the decision about the colors and mascot. "They went with colors, mascot, even the crest because of Patrick Henry, if I remember correctly. No one could wear their previous school mascot clothing to try and prevent division."

Her father "was huge on making the campus new to ALL students. He was an all or nothing type leader,



meaning he ate, breathed and slept HCHS!”

The new high school didn’t even have a mascot when school started and the new county football team played its first games without a nickname. The names of the new football team were announced in the local papers in early September right before the first game, which was played against McKenzie at Legion Stadium in Paris. The first team consisted of Walt Inman, Neely Owens, Randy Melton, Jeff Parker, Alan Harris, Danny Owens, Jim Cullivan, Earl Anderson, Alf Caldwell, Pat Vogel, Mac Doss and Johnny Taylor. They were called “the brand new Henry County High School Football team.”

In an article in *The Paris Post-Intelligencer* on September 4, 1969, Underwood said, “We’ll probably elect seven representatives from the home rooms to decide (what the school nickname would be) in the next week or two.”

There were a lot of other pressing matters on everyone’s minds and those became apparent in the first few days of school – transportation was a biggie. Seventy-five parents attended the first school board meeting of the year to protest the way the bus routes were being handled. It was said that

was the largest number of people to attend a local school board meeting.

Consolidation was still fresh on everyone’s minds and the local newspapers had just published special editions honoring “the last class to graduate from Grove High School” shortly before the new school opened.

A special tour and BBQ meal was held at the new school for city and county leaders on July 2, followed by an open house for the entire community August 10, 1969. It was estimated that between 4,500 and 5,000 people toured the new facility. Everyone wanted to see it for themselves – the new ‘pods’, the closed-circuit television in the classrooms, all of it.

It was a time of great changes outside of Paris and Henry County with the Apollo Moon Landing happening in July of 1969, as well.

In the school’s first yearbook – *The Patriot, Volume I* – students gave their opinions of their new surroundings. Cathy Winsett said, “The first day I walked into Henry County High I felt like a lamb going to the slaughter.”

Thomas Stubblefield said, “O, how I had missed and yearned for my former school!” Margaret Mobley said, “Unity can’t be achieved overnight. In fact,

it can never be achieved until it is felt in the heart of every student at Henry County High School.”

They elected the first senior class officers for the new school: President Thomas Stubblefield, Vice President Cornelius Littleton, Secretary Gail Atkins and Treasurer Beverly Shankle.

Stubblefield said, “Being a part of such a grand school should make us all feel a sense of gratitude. This year, we have witnessed the successful and unobscured consolidation of our county’s seven high schools. We have had the chance to meet and make new friends. The opportunity to attend one of the finest schools in the state has, I’m sure, been a rewarding experience for all of us.”

They were on their way to a new and exciting future. It seems only fitting that with the passage of 50 years, the high school is now experiencing a renewed future with an ambitious renovation project that will produce a new entrance, updated main offices, security system, library, new sports facilities, new gym floor and more.

In other words, the new generation of students are also on their way to a new and exciting future with Henry County High School.



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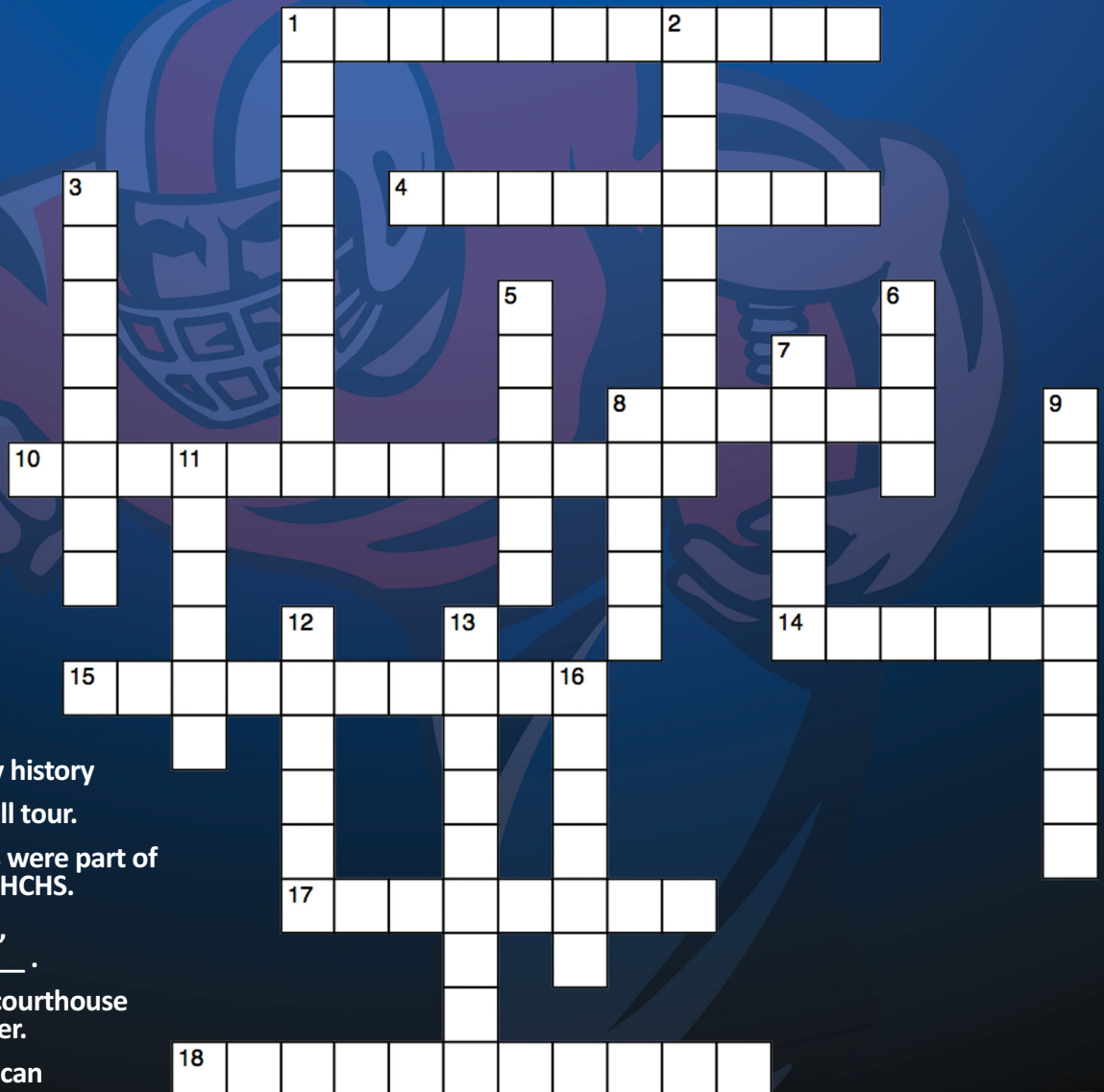
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## ACROSS

1. \_\_\_\_\_ is a pigment in leaves.
4. The study of family history
8. He is on his farewell tour.
10. Seven high schools were part of a \_\_\_\_\_ to form HCHS.
14. Everyday at sunset, WTPR went \_\_\_\_\_.
15. Find these on the courthouse lawn during October.
17. First African-American kindergarten teacher in Tennessee
18. Lauren Ballard May is this.

## DOWN

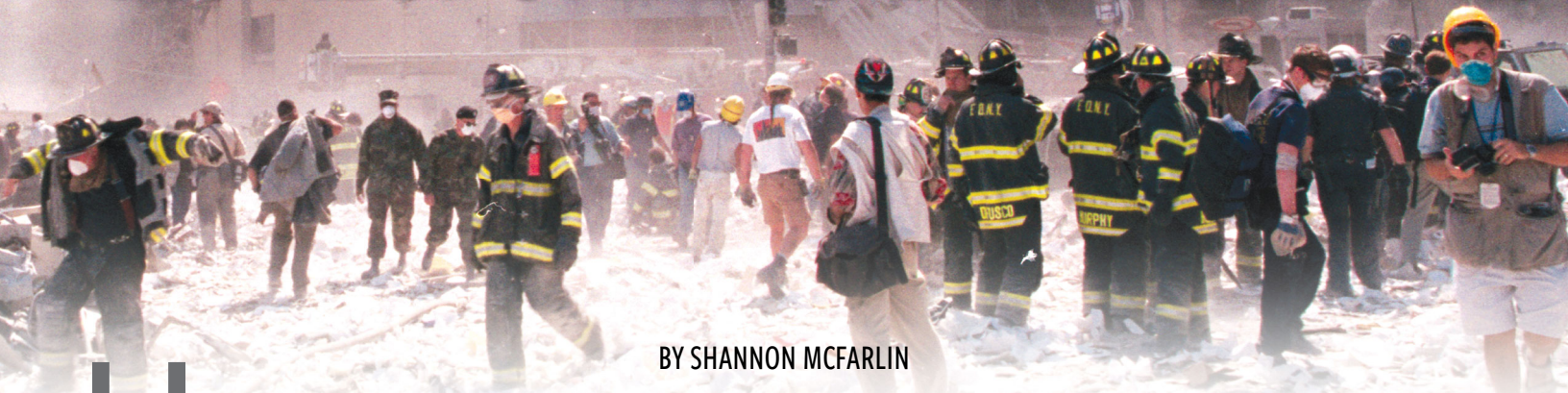
1. Italian nobleman taught this type of education in Henry County.
2. Spooky holiday
3. HCHS football team's name
5. September 11 \_\_\_\_\_ Compensation Fund
6. School where Elizabeth Covington works as an aide
7. Famous citizen of Paris
8. Aaron Hart's nickname
9. Ernestine lives in the Smoky \_\_\_\_\_.
11. "The Beautiful \_\_\_\_\_, high atop the Hotel Peabody..."
12. Aspen trees can produce this color of fall leaves.
13. Snap Apple Night happens at this location.
16. \_\_\_\_\_ BOLT\$

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# NO RESPONDERS LEFT BEHIND



BY SHANNON MCFARLIN

**H**elen Roberts-Niemi of Cottage Grove feels strongly about what she does. “It’s my job but more importantly, it’s my passion.”

For the past few years, she has worked for the World Trade Center Health Care Program, building provider networks for first responders and survivors of the 9-11 terrorists’ attacks.

That has put her at the center of one of America’s most horrendous tragedies and it’s an experience that has been sad, frustrating, distressing, but at times very fulfilling – fulfilling

when those first responders and survivors can be helped.

In these years, Roberts-Niemi has come to know many of the people we all see on our television sets, like Luis Alvarez, the retired New York police detective who sat next to comedian and activist Jon Stewart. Both pleaded before Congress to extend the September 11 Victim Compensation Fund which provides financial assistance to first responders who developed illnesses after responding to the 2001 attacks.

She has also worked with John Feal, who was a first responder and now is

an activist who started the FealGood Foundation whose motto is “No Responders Left Behind.”

Alvarez had endured some 70 rounds of chemotherapy for cancer developed as a result of breathing in clouds of toxic air in the aftermath of the attacks. Alvarez entered hospice and died shortly after his testimony.

“I met a lot of these people in waiting rooms. That’s how I met Lou Alvarez. I was sitting beside him while he was waiting for one of his doctor appointments. We hoped that he would live to see the Victim Compensation Fund extended before he died. But that’s not what happened,” she said.

The compensation fund bill was supposed to have been passed without controversy but it came up against one obstacle after another. However, the Senate passed legislation to extend the September 11 Victim Compensation Fund through 2090, despite the efforts by Sen. Rand Paul (R-Ky) and Sen. Mike Lee (R-Utah) to block it.

“I’m glad this bill passed, but it shouldn’t have had to go on and on like this. Stress causes a lot of issues for these first responders and these delays just make their conditions worse. Lou had wanted it to pass before he died so that he could go peacefully. He knew he was going to die, but he wanted his family to be taken care of. That’s what all of us who knew him had hoped and prayed for. But it’s not just Lou. Every day someone dies from



Helen is standing in front of the plaque located at FDNY, 9 Metrotech, Brooklyn, NY. Memorialized on the plaque are the names of the FDNY first responders either killed on September 11 or who have died since due to toxic exposure while working rescue and recovery after the attacks.





this and it will really help knowing they don't have the stress of worrying about whether their families are cared for," she said.

Roberts-Niemi was brought up in Henry County, the daughter of Everett and Mary Lou Roberts, growing up on a Century Farm on Gum Springs Road. In her adult years, she had worked a variety of jobs in the health insurance field living in several big cities along the way.

She had been working for United Healthcare in Nashville before becoming ill herself with a rare disorder called ankylosing spondylitis. Her condition worsened and she decided it was time for her to give notice when she received a call from a friend who told her there was an opening to build provider networks for the first responders and survivors.

"She told me I would be a consultant and I flew to Dallas to meet with the president of the company and he wanted to hire me full-time and that's how it all started," Niemi said.

Her responsibilities, and the responsibilities of others in her field, have grown dramatically in recent years. "From 2001 to 2011 we saw illnesses develop in the first responders, but in 2011, we started seeing the odd cancers develop – men with breast cancer and young women with ovarian cancers, that sort of thing."

The victims live all over the United States, not just in the New York City area, Roberts-Niemi said. "I have a

couple of victims right here in Union City. When the attacks hit, there were people in the area of the World Trade Center who were just living their lives. Some were there on vacation. There were daycare centers right in the World Trade Center. There were people who just happened to be walking down the street at the wrong time."

In 2012, cancer became a certifiable condition for which first responders and survivors could be treated, she said. There were six clinical centers of excellence and victims could pick which one they wanted to go to.

"Before 2012, six centers could handle all the patient care, but since cancer was recognized as a certifiable condition, they could no longer handle all the cases. When cancer came on board, they needed to start contracting with companies like mine to build a provider network and that's what I do," she said.

Roberts-Niemi used to go to New York City at least once a month but that has lessened in recent years as technology allows her to work from home more. Recently, she was preparing to conduct a webinar from her home in Cottage Grove.

For Roberts-Niemi, her own medical condition is frustrating and exasperating. "My disease does limit me now. I didn't expect this to be my life," she said, noting she loved to go horseback riding and live an active farm lifestyle.

She was living in Atlanta when she

met her husband Larry Niemi, who is a retired Navy man from the Upper Peninsula of Michigan. Their love story was unique – it all began with an AOL internet disc. "I had no interest in that but I put the disk in the computer and found my way to a chat room and started talking to Larry. We started talking on the phone the next month and in April, he drove to Henry County to meet me. I took my parents along and we met in person for the first time at the Minit Mart in Puryear."

The couple married that July. "It all just worked out. I can't explain it," she said. They initially lived in the Chicago area but the traffic was driving her crazy. Larry said, "Why don't we just move to Tennessee and you can work from home."

They found a "perfect place" in the country at Cottage Grove but she was still having second thoughts. "We were in Chicago and I'm thinking all this over and I was rear-ended. I said, 'This is God telling me to get out of here.'"

The couple moved to Cottage Grove in 1997 and in the years since have built their farm to include plenty of animals, including Tennessee walking horses. Larry really took to the farm life, too, and she can be close to her family and her roots.

She said all her jobs in health care over the years "prepared me for the job I have now. The people we're serving are heroes. They rushed in and were just doing their jobs. And their whole lives changed in an instant."

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Austin Abbott went with Full Count Ministries to Nicaragua in June. He and his baseball teammates passed out equipment and gave testimonies and witnessed to players while there.



Henry County Extension Office Director Michele Atkins showing how it's done at the "Adventures In The Kitchen" cooking camp for youngsters.



Librarian Jackie Mann shows just how brave she is during a presentation by Safari Greg during the Summer Reading program at W.G. Rhea Public Library.



Jenna Sanders and Olivia Perry from Perry's BBQ greets everyone to the Downtown Cruise-In.



Down on the farm in the Henry County Schools booth at the ice cream social are Denton Jordon, Daniel Armstrong and Christy Thompson.



Henry County Chief Deputy Damon Lowe and Sgt. John McElroy hand out produce from the inmate gardens at the Henry County Health Department's "Baby Shower" event.





It's hard to tell who is happier. Gideon Shepherd, age 12, pictured with his teacher, Dan Knowles, won the National Championship Country Music Beginners Banjo Player Award at the annual Smithville Fiddlers' Jamboree.



Right: Local commercial fisherman Neil Matlock of Paris shows the size of the Asian Carp they pulled out of Kentucky Lake. This one was 80 pounds.



Kathy and Bo Caldwell were laid back listening to the music at the Tennessee National Wildlife Refuge during the Tennessee River Jam.



Redbox? No, it's Readbox and that only makes sense at the W.G. Rhea Library booth at this year's Back to School Blast, with Children's Librarian Kayla Nation.

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# FORTUNES, HOT CIDER & SCARY TALES

## Snap Apple Night at the Homeplace



BY JOHN NICHOLS & SUSAN JONES

*Too often, travelers forget about extraordinary attractions that are just down the road.  
We hope this series encourages readers to visit some nearby jewels.*

The “Travelers” had been meaning to go to the Homeplace at Land Between the Lakes (LBL) for Snap Apple Night for more than a decade – which is embarrassing. It’s less than an hour drive, and we love Halloween, so last October we made it happen.

With a picnic supper and our friends, David and Robin Bell all packed in the car, we headed to Dover and up the scenic Woodlands Trace, which winds its way north toward Grand Rivers, Kentucky.

The Trace is a captivating place, but in the fall, it takes on a magical quality with its colorful forests and meadows, roaming wildlife, and starry nights.

Near the South Bison Range, we communed with the bison, who assured us that they were pleased with the cooler temps and looking forward to winter. In the nearby picnic area, dinner was spread on a concrete

picnic table, which I have always considered an indicator of fun times and delicious food.

True to my instincts, the picnic baskets were filled with all sorts of culinary delights. There were different breads for homemade chicken salad, pimiento cheese, and peanut butter and jelly sandwiches, plus chips, fruit, a thermos full of coffee and cookies galore. In a wink, the sun had set and we were running late. Thankfully, the Homeplace 1850s Farm was right up the road where Snap Apple Night was about to begin!

We bought our tickets in the visitor center and opened the back door. Darkness enveloped us as we stepped into the 19th Century, where the lack of street lights, car lights and porch lights was jarring. Thankfully, jolly, carved jack-o-lanterns lined the path to the cluster of cabins where a bonfire danced near the storytelling stage.

Because we had lingered over dinner, the first round of stories was already over. We positioned our chairs for the second set, which was touted as including even scarier stories. In the meantime, hot cider was being served at the cabin – nothing says “old timey autumn festivities” like steaming apple cider.

Outside the cabins, folks were in line to play fortune telling games that had been popular in the Victorian era. My favorite was one that had dried beans in a bowl. Participants were asked to swirl them around with one hand, pick some up and then open their hand to the fortune teller. I listened in on each fortune. Everyone’s future appeared to be merry and bright, which made the fortune teller’s task an easy one.

Back in our spot under a tree near the stage, the storyteller had begun. The first story was the tale of a young





At the Homeplace 1850s, fortune tellers and storytellers from the 19th Century add to the Snap Apple Night spooky atmosphere.

man who lived in a swamp with his mother. He had become possessed by a murderous demon named Enoch who lived on top of the boy's head. Needless to say, this saga did not end well. The second was about a young man who would lure women to the cemetery to their demise.

Although captivating, neither story seemed too scary until we were on our

way home, driving slowly through the dark to avoid the deer on the Trace. I think it was John who said, "I wouldn't want to meet that boy with that demon out on this road."

The fact that I kept my eyes glued to the woods the rest of the way home is a testament to some fine, scary storytelling and a successful Snap Apple Night at Land Between the Lakes.

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# COLORS OF AUTUMN

BY JOHN WATKINS

**A**h, Fall. The time of year when the weeds stop growing and the mowers stop mowing. A time to catch your breath and take in the beautiful displays of color that mother nature provides us free of charge. While fall colors seem to magically appear this time of year, there is a little science behind just why we get them.

Let's start with a little basic biology (don't worry, there won't be a test on this later). So why, exactly, are leaves green in the spring and summer to start with?

The answer is chlorophyll. Chlorophyll is a green pigment that is abundant in the leaves during the growing season. Because of its abundance, it tends to overpower any of the other pigments in the leaf. Chlorophyll also captures energy from the sun and uses this energy to split water molecules into hydrogen and oxygen. At the same time, carbon dioxide is taken in by tiny

pores in the leaves called stomata and are then broken down into carbon and oxygen.

Now, here comes the magic part. After all of these components have been simplified, the leaves begin rearranging the atoms of carbon, hydrogen, and oxygen into molecules of glucose that nourishes the plant. This magical process is what we all know as photosynthesis. All of this activity tends to destroy chlorophyll but during spring and summer, enough is produced to make up for what is lost, helping the leaves remain green. There, that wasn't so bad, now was it?

So, you may be asking, what gives us those brilliant reds, oranges and yellows during the fall? Back to the botany books for the answer. During autumn, daylight begins to shorten and temperatures begin to fall. This triggers a reaction in the leaves to form a cork-like substance at the base of the leaves which cuts off the water supply

from the roots. Take away the water and sunlight and you've taken away the key components for photosynthesis. No photosynthesis, no chlorophyll production, and no more green leaves. This is obviously oversimplified, but you get the gist of what's going on.

Now, on to the colors. The yellows and oranges, which are the dominant colors of aspen, birch, hickories, tulip poplar, and some maples come from compounds called carotenoids. Carotenoids (which are also responsible for the color of carrots in case you were wondering) are present in the leaf all throughout the growing season but are masked by chlorophyll. When the chlorophyll becomes colorless it allows the leaves to show their "true colors."

What about the reds and purples? Well, these leaf colors come from a different pigment called anthocyanin. Unlike chlorophyll and the carotenoids, anthocyanin is not always present in the leaf cells. These pigments



are actively produced towards the end of summer when complex interactions inside and outside the plant break down sugars in the presence of bright light. It is also dependent on the levels of phosphate in the plant.

When autumn days are bright and cool, and the nights are chilly but not freezing, the brightest colors usually develop. Trees that usually develop vivid red colors are maples, sourwood, dogwoods, tupelo, cherry trees, and persimmons.

So why do we have some years with fall color that look like a Jackson Pollock painting and some years that it seems the leaves just say the heck with it and drop to the ground with a whimper? Weather can play an important role in how vibrant the fall color will be. According to the experts (and yes, evidently there are people who study fall color for a living) the best colors tend to develop when there is a warm, rainy spring, a summer that's not brutally hot, and a fall season with sunny days and crisp cool nights. On the other end of the season, a warm, wet period during the autumn will



decrease brightness and a severe frost early in the season will most likely kill the leaves and they'll drop faster than a fat man on a see-saw.

Whatever the weather brings us year in and year out, we are always blessed with a pretty amazing show of fall color if we just take the time to go out and find it. So take some time for a relaxing Sunday drive and behold the beauty that mother nature provides!

*John Watkins is the grounds director at Discovery Park of America and resides in Henry County.*



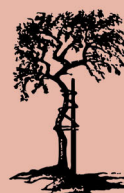
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"Foot pain is not normal," said Long, who explains that "some of the main culprits are often easily treatable." Long also handles diseases, injuries and deformities of the foot and ankle.

A fellow of the American Board of Podiatric Surgery, Dr. Long is a long-time member of the Tennessee Podiatric Medical Association and a fellow of the American Society for Laser Medicine and Surgery.

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## WHEN BULLETS FLEW

As part of his quest to help save our forgotten and often ignored history for future generations, Larry Ray is compiling articles detailing the history of some local families during the Civil War. This is the 39th in the series. Previous articles can be read online in the archives of [MyParisMagazine.com](http://MyParisMagazine.com).

# COLONEL WILLIAM “BUCK” TRAVIS

One of the most famous citizens of Paris

BY LARRY RAY

Henry County furnished eight Confederate colonels during the Civil War and one of them was William E. “Buck” Travis. The others were C.D. Venable, J.J. Lamb, E. Fitzgerald, J.M. Clark, Jonathan Dawson, J.D. Porter, and William C. Swor. (The stories of J.D. Porter, Jonathan Dawson, and William Swor have previously been published.)

William Edward Travis was one of the most famous citizens of Paris. He was highly respected and excelled in everything he did. He was considered one of the best speakers in Tennessee and inspired anyone that heard him.

### EARLY HISTORY

Travis was born in Virginia on July 3, 1824. He came to Henry County at age 2 with his parents, Major Edward Travis and Margaret Blanton Travis, who were some of the early pioneers in Henry County. William’s sister, Martha Travis Harris, became the wife of the Tennessee Civil War governor, Isham Harris, also from Paris.

Travis became an attorney and farmer with a home near Johnson Chapel, northwest of Paris. He was married to Narcissus Hagler Travis, who was the daughter of Major Hagler. They had 11 children – seven sons and four daughters.

After the annexation of Texas and the start of the Mexican-American War, Travis became known for raising

a company of local men for that war. He was a well-known Democrat who was elected to the Tennessee House of Representatives and the Tennessee Senate prior to the Civil War. Many believed that he was destined to be a future governor of Tennessee.

### THE CIVIL WAR

After the war started, the Fifth Tennessee Regiment was organized in Paris on May 20, 1861. William Travis was elected Colonel by 1,200 men and placed in command of the regiment. J.D.C. Atkins became lieutenant colonel and W.C. Swor was elected major. It was said that Travis was unsurpassed in how he looked in his uniform. His command idealized him and felt that under his leadership, they would follow him anywhere and face any foe. The men expected great things of him and the other officers.

So popular were these officers with Henry County men that the regiment was authorized to add two more companies than was needed. Later in the war, Travis resigned due to poor health and Swor would become colonel and command the Fifth Tennessee in the final stages of the war.

The regiment occupied Humboldt and Union City until September 4th and then moved to Columbus, Kentucky, to participate in the Battle of Belmont. When nearby Fort Donelson fell the regiment was moved to New

Madrid where they had several skirmishes with Federals.

The Fifth marched to Corinth on April 6-7 and fought with notable bravery at Shiloh, losing heavily. They then moved to Tupelo and Chattanooga. Later at the Battle of Perryville, Kentucky, they sustained another heavy loss. Afterward, they fought some of the bloodiest battles of the war – Murfreesboro, Chickamauga, Missionary Ridge, Atlanta, Franklin and Nashville. In the spring of 1865, a mere remnant was surrendered in North Carolina. The few that remained in the regiment were paroled and made a long and dangerous trip back home.

### LETTERS HOME

Travis’ sister was married to Governor Isham Harris who was also from Paris. During the war, when William wanted to send a letter home, he would forward it to Governor Harris who would make sure it got to William’s wife.

In one letter he wrote: *“There has been many others who suffered in my old regiment that was dear to me but I am proud of that old regiment. Proud that I had the training of it for she has never faltered and never quailed before the enemy and although her number is only about 1/3 of what it formerly was, still she stands proudly forth as a living monument of the gallantry and patriotism of the sons of Old Henry.”*



He also wrote: "Now, my dear, these are not all my troubles. I am constantly tormented with fears for the welfare of you and the children. My confidence is in the Lord. I pray to him daily that he may shield and protect those of my household from all danger who are dear to me as the blood that visits my sad heart. Bear up, my dear, under these trials and although I know well that it is no easy matter to be brave, still I hope that you may be able to go through them in triumph. Oh, how I would love to see you and our dear children again, but my dear John tells me that our neighborhood is full of Union men and he thinks that they would glory in seeing me captured and begs me not to attempt to visit home. If I thought that I could do any good by attempting, I would do it at all hazard, but I fear that it might make things worse for me to try it. So, I shall remain for the present in Alabama."

#### AFTER THE WAR

Travis was an unsuccessful candidate for the U.S. Congress in 1872 and 1880, then ran as an Independent

in 1877 and was again elected to the Tennessee House of Representatives. He later held a position in the Federal Land Office during the first administration of President Grover Cleveland. He retired to his farm around 1884.

#### DEATH AND LEGACY

On May 16, 1904, William Travis died at age 80 in Paris, Tennessee. He was buried in Johnson Chapel Cemetery in Henry County.

A notice in the local paper, read: Colonel William E. Travis, a well-known figure in local politics in the years preceding and following the war, but who had lived in retirement for the past twenty years, died at his home near Paris yesterday.

Colonel Travis was a man of strong mind and upright character. He is survived by his wife, children and a large circle of family and friends.

Larry Ray is past Executive Director of the Paris-Henry County Chamber of Commerce and Economic Development. He has had a life long interest in the Civil War.



Colonel William Travis is buried in Henry County's Johnson Chapel Cemetery.



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## CALENDAR



### ON-GOING AUTUMN ENTERTAINMENT & CLASSES

**GO TEAMS!** – Support the PSSD's and Henry County School System's talented sports teams. Call individual schools for up-to-date schedules. Don't forget Saturday mornings are "kicking" with sports too! Upward Flag Football at Eiffel Tower Park (731-642-5074) and Paris Soccer at McNeil Park (731-333-9464).

**COME PLAY INSIDE** – The Paris Civic Center has an indoor pool, track, weights, and fitness machines. Pay by the visit or become a member. Located on Volunteer Drive. Call 731-644-2517.

**PICKIN' 'N GRINNIN'** – Jam with fellow country music lovers or just listen in at the Civic Center on Volunteer Drive. Call Bob Perry at 731-641-7577.

**THROW A POT!** – Lee Academy for the Arts has all sorts of classes from painting to pottery to dance. Visit them at [www.SchoolForTheArts.org](http://www.SchoolForTheArts.org)

**LEARN ABOUT HEALTH** – Henry County Medical Center offers monthly seminars including Chronic Disease Management Screenings, Childbirth Education and many more. All are free but you must pre-register by calling 731-644-3463.

**POPCORN ANYONE?** – Enjoy a new movie at the Parisian Theatre with nightly shows on six screens and matinees also on Saturday and Sunday. For more information and movie schedules call 731-642-7171.

### — AUGUST —

**AUGUST 17 – Jim Stafford in concert** at the Krider Performing Arts Center at 7:30 pm. General admission tickets and VIP meet & greet tickets available. For more information call 731-644-2517.

**AUGUST 24** – Head to **Paris Landing State Park** and enjoy a kayaking adventure from the park to Camp Hazelwood where you can camp overnight. There will be food and take an owl prowling that night. It runs from 10 am – 10 am and there is a small fee. To find out more contact Regina Lowry at 731-641-4465.

**AUGUST 27 – Downtown Cruise-In** at 5:30 pm. Bring your classic car or truck and have a good time listening to "The Old Spirits." For more information log on to [www.VisitDowntownParis.com](http://www.VisitDowntownParis.com).

### — SEPTEMBER —

**SEPTEMBER 2 – LABOR DAY!** Hats off to our country's workforce. No school for PSSD or Henry County Schools.

**SEPTEMBER 5** – Give Blood and Save a Life! **Lifeline Blood Mobile** will visit First United Methodist Church from noon until 6 pm. For more information call 1-800-924-6572 extension 310.

**SEPTEMBER 6** – Show your **BIG RED PRIDE** at the **first home football game of the season** at Henry County High School. HCHS vs. Dyer County, 7 pm. For more information call 731-642-9733.

**SEPTEMBER 6** – It's **Noon on the Square**, 11:30 am-1 pm, sponsored by Commercial Bank. Concessions available. So bring a lawn chair and a friend to beautiful downtown Paris. For more information call 731-642-3341.

**SEPTEMBER 7 – Relay for Life** starts at 5 pm on the courthouse lawn downtown. For more information on participating or the evening full of events call 731-512-5003.

**SEPTEMBER 7 & 8** – Looking for fun this weekend? Head to the lake for the **Arts and Crafts Festival** from 10 am-5 pm each day.

**SEPTEMBER 8 – Grandparent's Day** so hug your Nanny or Papaw!

**SEPTEMBER 8 – Paris-Henry County Heritage Center** will have a display for PSSD's 100th Anniversary with an opening reception. Exhibit all month.

**SEPTEMBER 9** – Need a little playtime? Join the fun at the W. G. Rhea Library for **LEGO Free Play** from 3:30-4:30 pm. For information call 731-642-1702.

**SEPTEMBER 13** – Enjoy a little music at **Noon on the Square**, 11:30 am-1 pm sponsored by Commercial Bank. Bring a lawn chair and enjoy this autumn tradition. Call 731-642-3341 for information.

**SEPTEMBER 14** – Stop by KPAC and watch **"Love Ain't Supposed To Hurt"** at 6 pm. It's a powerful theatrical performance by Kingdom Keys Entertainment addressing domestic violence. Tickets are \$20. For more information call 731-644-2517.

**SEPTEMBER 19 – PSSD 100th Anniversary Homecoming** at the Inman Middle School vs. Henry County Middle School football game. There will be tailgates that coincide with the Rhea School tailgate. Food, fun, and a photo booth will be available. Former PSSD staff and students will be invited on to the football field at halftime.

**SEPTEMBER 20 & 21** – Head downtown to the **Bavarian Oktoberfest!** This new event will be from 5 to 9 pm with dinner served at 6 pm in The Old Paris 5 & 10 Event Center located at 110 West Washington Street. Miss D's Kitchen will be catering the event. Advance tickets are required as seating is limited to 60 each night. Tickets are \$30 and include dinner and a cash beer garden. Call 731-336-0278 for tickets.

**SEPTEMBER 20 – Noon on the Square** from 11:30 am-1 pm, sponsored by Commercial Bank. Bring a lawn chair and a camera. For more information call 731-642-3341.

**SEPTEMBER 20 & 21 – Operation Christmas Child Yard Sale**, First Baptist Church gymnasium. Feel free to donate or come buy a bunch for a good cause. For information call 731-642-5074.

**SEPTEMBER 24 – Downtown Cruise-In** at 5:30 pm. Bring your classic car or truck and have a good time listening to “The Chill Tonics” and enjoy Perry’s delicious Barbeque. For information log on to [www.VisitDowntownParis.com](http://www.VisitDowntownParis.com).

**SEPTEMBER 27 – Come out for the last Noon on the Square**, 11:30 am -1 pm on the courthouse lawn, sponsored by Commercial Bank. Concessions available. Call 731-642-3341.

**SEPTEMBER 27 – Homecoming at HCHS!** Several classes plan to tailgate for 50th Anniversary prior to the 7:30 pm kick-off. Special recognitions will take place during the game.

**SEPTEMBER 28 – Arts ‘Round the Square** is downtown from 9 am- 4 pm. This event will fill the lawn with artists creating and selling their pottery, wood-carvings, jewelry, mixed media, fiber art, photographs, sculptures and canvas art. Children can also get in touch with their inner artist at KidsZone Live! For more information log on to [www.VisitDowntownParis.com](http://www.VisitDowntownParis.com).

**SEPTEMBER 28 – HCHS All Classes Alumni Gala**, an event open to all HCHS alumni, educators, and guests at the Henry County Fairgrounds with doors opening at 5 pm, dinner and program at 6 pm, and dancing afterward. Tickets:

\$25 per person available at the main office of HCHS from 8:00 am-2:00 pm, Monday through Friday. 400 tickets will be sold on first-come basis.

**SEPTEMBER 29 – HCHS 50th Anniversary Open House** will take place from 2-4 pm. The Little Theater will be renamed the Linda Wilson Miller Theater with ceremony at 2 pm. Time capsule burial at 3 pm. Tours of the building and exhibit will be available.

#### — OCTOBER —

**OCTOBER 3 – Lifeline Blood Mobile** is open from 12-6 pm at First United Methodist Church. Call Tammy Hurst at 1-800-924-6572, extension 310, for more information.

**October 3 – Community Health Screening** by HCMC at Farm Bureau, 8:30-10:30 am. For more information call 731-642-1220.

**OCTOBER 5 & 6 – Paris Century Bike Ride** starts at 7 am at Paris Landing Conference Center. Showcases the best of Henry and Stewart counties. With four distances to choose from each day, there’s a ride for everyone. Pre-registration is required. For more information call Heather Spiva at 615-306-0611.

**October 5 – Oktoberfest** is at the Henry County Fairgrounds, 11 am- 7 pm! Don’t miss the booths, games, funnel cakes, silent auction, petting zoo, bake sale, homestyle German meal, authentic Mexican meals and much more. Brought to you by Holy Cross Catholic Church. Call 731-642-4681 for info.

**OCTOBER 14-18 – Take a break! It’s Fall Break** for kids in the Henry County School System and the PSSD. For more information call 731-642-9733 or 731-642-9322, respectively.

**OCTOBER 14 – Need a little playtime?** Join the fun at the W. G. Rhea Library for **LEGO Free Play** from 3:30-4:30 pm. For information call 731-642-1702.

**OCTOBER 19 – Spooktacular**, 12-3 pm. Grab a costume and come to downtown Paris for the FREE events featuring silly fortune tellers, activity booths, trick or treating with the merchants and costume contests for kids, adults and even pets! For more information go to [www.VisitDowntownParis.com](http://www.VisitDowntownParis.com).

**OCTOBER 19 – Legends of the Ladies of Soul** featuring Grammy nominated **Diane McIntosh** will perform at the Krider Performing Arts Center at 7 pm. Tickets are \$25 in advance. For more information call 731-644-2517.

**OCTOBER 25 & 26 – Get out and enjoy the KPAC Young Artists** as they perform “Sleepy Hollow” at the Krider at 7 pm Friday and 3 pm Saturday. For more information call 731-644-2517.

**OCTOBER 26 – Halloween Show** at the **W. G. Rhea Library** from 2-4 pm. For more information call 731-642-1702.

**OCTOBER 31 – It’s HALLOWEEN!** Watch out for those little ghosts and goblins on your way home from work.

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