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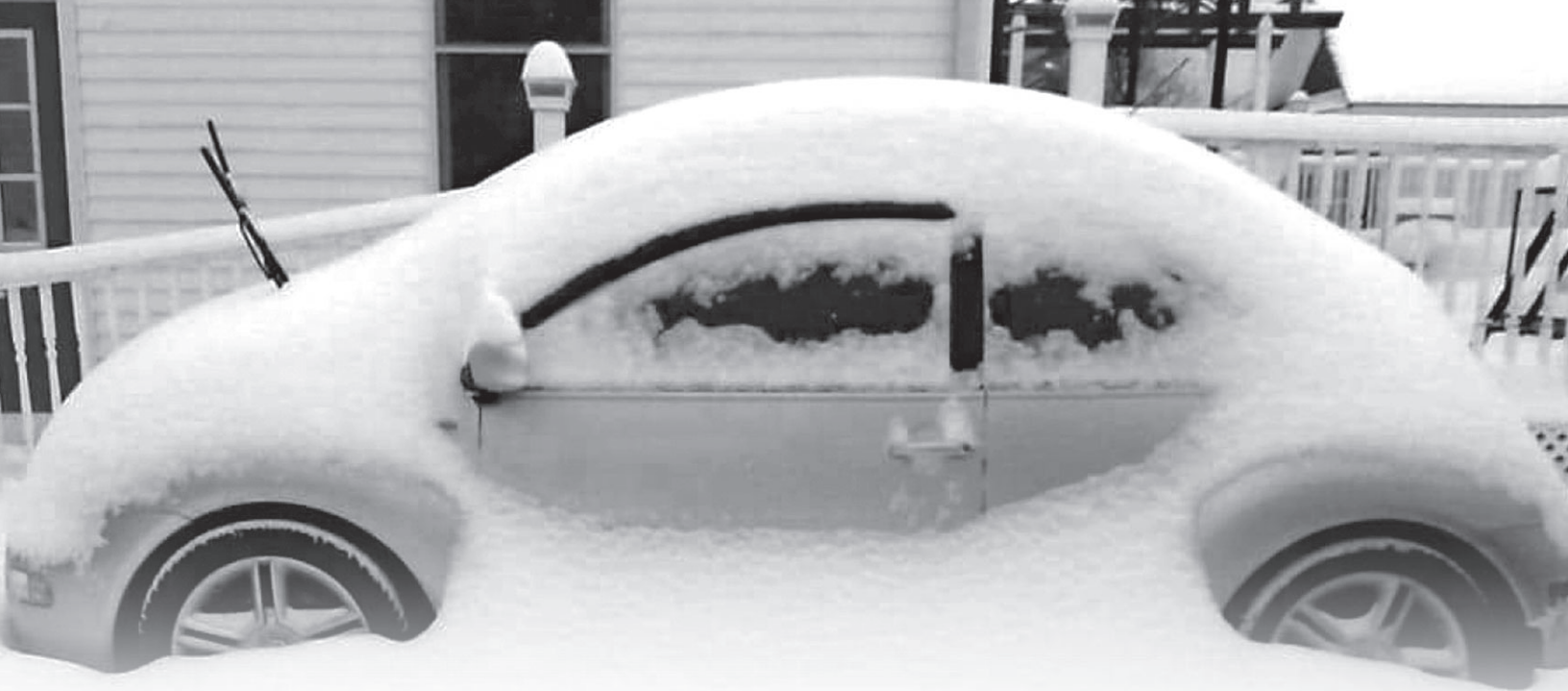
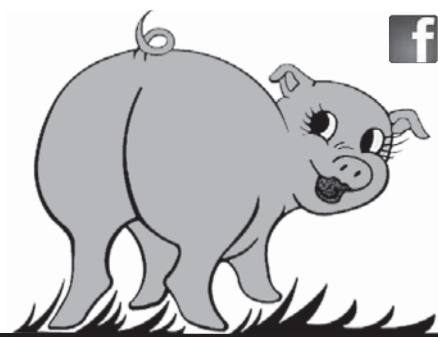


TABLE OF CONTENTS

A COUPLE OF TRAVELERS <i>Your Winter Destination Is Just Across The River</i>	12
AROUND OUR TOWN <i>COVID Positive</i>	6
ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT <i>It Was A Dark And Stormy Night...PHC Arts Council Sponsors Writing Contest</i>	11
BACK IN THE DAY <i>Duke And The Skunk Dog</i>	4
DINING GUIDE 	31
FACES & PLACES 	24
FEATURE <i>What's On Your Bucket List</i>	8
FEATURE <i>Playing Host To Winter Hummingbirds</i>	14
IN THE GARDEN <i>The Winter Gardener</i>	17
JUST FOR FUN 	28
OUR NEIGHBORS <i>Paris Podcast: Falling In Love With Home</i>	23
PARIS CUISINE <i>Hearty Soups To Love</i>	26
REMINISCENCE <i>National Register Sites In Henry County</i>	29
SPOTLIGHT <i>Charlie Atkinson: Loving Her Job For 50 Years</i>	21

PHOTO BY CAROL DOSTER



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A Wintery Read

Winter can seem dreary, but we've had a nice smattering of sunny days. This issue of **PARIS!** gives readers even more reason to perk up with interesting reads about the people and places Henry Countians love.

A great example is our Spotlight on Charlie Atkinson. Karen Geary describes this remarkable lady who's been loving her post office job, her fellow employees, and customers for a half century.

Ever wonder how local leadership continues to work its way through COVID? Travis McLeese, Executive Director of the Chamber of Commerce, offers a birds-eye view of the process, plus some sage advice.

COVID may be the subject matter for more than one entry in the Arts Council's upcoming writing contest. Everyone has a story. Here's your chance to tell yours!

Bill Neese has reams of stories, and fortunately, **PARIS!** readers get to experience many of them through Bill's eyes. Don't miss his new one, "Duke and the Skunk Dog."

If you've ever thought of creating a bucket list, Barry Hart offers a great read that explains the beauty of the bucket list and why we all should have one.

If "hosting a winter hummingbird" is on your bucket list, you'll enjoy this Q and A with master bird bander Cyndi Routledge. Spoiler alert, it could happen in your yard!

Speaking of nature, Garden Guru John Watkins has learned to appreciate the elegance of winter's berries, bark and blooms and shares how to create a lawn of winter wonder.

And Cat McGavin tells us how she fell for this community from 2,000 miles away in "Falling in Love with Home," available on Paris Podcast.

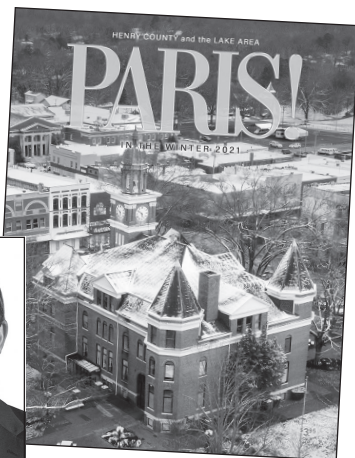
There's plenty more fun with Reminiscence, Paris Cuisine, A Couple of Travelers, the Dining Guide and Faces & Places.

Here's to a happy, healthy 2021 and a great read!

Smantha



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On The Cover

Most people would agree that Henry County has a beautiful courthouse square. But add a dusting of snow, it becomes picture-postcard perfect! This aerial photo was captured by drone videography wizard Sam Hutson, president of Crove Media.

Henry County and the Lake Area **PARIS!**

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DUKE AND THE SKUNK DOG

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."



Hunting has always been popular in Henry County. Over the years, the prey has changed. Sometime in the 1800's, deer and turkey become extinct in this area. Buffalo and elk had been wiped out long before that. For as long as I can remember ducks, geese, rabbits, squirrels, raccoons and opossums were the available game, along with the gentleman's game bird, the bobwhite quail. As far as I'm concerned, no other hunting compares with hunting the bobwhite quail.

The quail is a small ground bird that lives in coveys, and when flushed, can fly a fast and darting course, challenging any wing shooter no matter his skill.

When they hear danger, these little birds sit tight in a group and are almost impossible to see. When you get too close or just out wait them, they burst into the air all at once and

scatter making a lot of noise, startling the unsuspecting.

Successfully hunting quail requires a good bird dog, a dog that will hunt hard, and when he smells the birds, lock into a hard point, almost catatonic in nature. That dog will not move until the birds flush. If one dog sees another dog point, he will also point and this is called "backing." When the hunter sees the point, he walks up to the dog and moves to the birds, ready to shoot when the covey flushes. That is how it is supposed to work anyway.

Henry and surrounding counties were quail paradise. From the time I was 12 years old, it was nothing to flush two to four coveys a day even without a dog. Sometime in the 1980's, the quail population began to disappear until there are almost none left today.

The little royal birds got so scarce I gave up my favorite sport, quail hunting, altogether. When my last bird

dog, Geraldine Ruth, died, I never got another one.

In the 1960's, the Game and Fish Department released white tail deer in the area and, later, wild turkey. Now those species are more than plentiful, but the quail have never returned. Sad, too, because fried quail is the best meal there ever was and quail hunting involves the most art and challenge from man and dog.

Enough history. My friend Duke was a serious quail hunter. He always had a kennel of pretty good English pointers. They worked a little wide and fast for my taste, but got the job done.

One cold winter day, Duke, another friend, Dick, and I were hunting behind two of Duke's pointers. We had bagged a few birds and were moving into a new area. Duke's big dog started acting "birdie" along a brushy ridge and the three of us spread out in a firing line behind him.

Sure enough, the dog went on point and the other dog backed. The way the dog was standing we couldn't pinpoint where the birds were, so we all started walking slowly forward. It was then, through the brush that I saw the prey. It was a full-grown skunk right in front of me, frozen to the ground in fear!

Duke was uphill to my right and Dick was downhill to my left. I knew that skunk could start spraying any minute and that any sudden noise or motion would surely provoke him. I started moving sideways to my left, shotgun at port arms. I said nothing. Dick, not seeing the skunk, thought I was trying to get in position to take the best shot and yelled at me.

When he did, the dog broke point and grabbed the skunk around the middle. The skunk's head was swinging and snapping at one end and his rear was swinging and spraying at the other end.

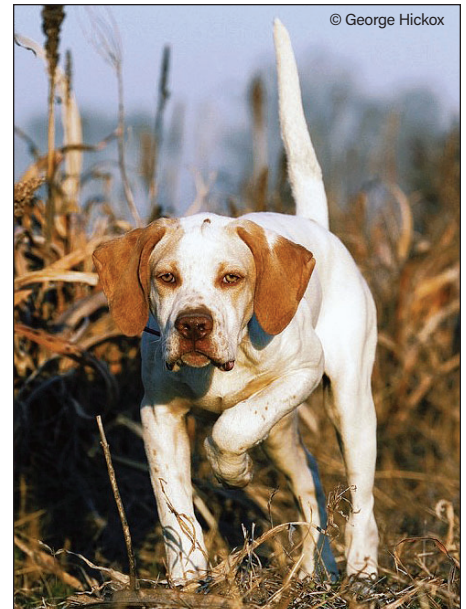
Duke's dog was really proud of himself and, as a trained retriever, was determined to bring the prey to the nearest hunter – me.

I was running and dodging, trying to stay away from the skunk-bearing dog. Duke and Dick were laughing hysterically. It was really funny – until I ran past Dick. Then he was the nearest hunter and now the dog was intent on delivering the game to him.

Now Duke and I were laughing until Duke realized that Dick would likely shoot the dog before getting sprayed by the skunk. Duke fired his shotgun and yelled, the dog dropped the skunk and Dick shot the skunk.

You would not believe how bad that dog stunk! We decided to call it a day. Duke had a "dog box" in the back of his truck. The stinky dog got in; the other dog refused to get in with him being a canine of more delicate sensibilities. The stinky dog got out and Duke finally loaded the other one while ole' stinky ran around looking for praise.

I had a new Dodge SUV with the rear hatch open putting my gear away. Luckily, I saw the reflection in the bumper of the stinky dog coming my way and slammed the rear hatch just as the dog crashed into it. Had he gotten inside my new vehicle, I would never



have gotten that skunk odor out.

Well, we took a few quail that day. No one got hurt. My new vehicle wasn't ruined. What matter if the day didn't go exactly as planned?

That said, it still hurts that Dick would think for a minute that I would try to out flank him just to improve my shot. Me?



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Ethan Fazon, RN, and Hannah Webb, CNA, prepare for the next COVID patient to enter Henry County Medical Center.

COVID POSITIVE

BY TRAVIS MCLEESE

After writing countless press releases, Facebook posts, emails, and other types of communication that relayed negative or disappointing information, I decided to take a pause and reflect on the positive that I have experienced throughout 2020 during the Covid crisis.

FEEDING THE FRONTLINE

Very early in the process we realized that our frontline medical workers were going to be stretched thin. With the necessity to limit the hours of the cafeteria, we knew there would be a need to provide food for those employees. The Rotary Club took the lead in our efforts by reaching out to other civic organizations like the Kiwanis Club, Lion's Club, Quota Club, Athena Delphians and Optimist Club as well as the Board of Public Utilities Round

Up and other individual donations. Within 24 hours of announcing the goal of raising \$10,000, the goal was met and exceeded.

In addition to providing catered meals for those employees, this was a much-needed boost to our caterers who were forced to cease business when people were not able to gather. In total, the effort provided 1,460 meals.

THE COVID TEAM

I have gained a whole new respect for the leaders that "circled the tables" during this process.

Under the leadership of former County Mayor Brent Greer, a team was built of community leaders. The group was chaired by EMA Director Ronald Watkins, City Mayor Carlton Gerrell, City Manager Kim Foster, Director of Paris Special School District Dr. Norma Gerrell, Director of Henry County

Schools Dr. Leah Watkins, Henry County Medical Center CEO Lisa Casteel, Director of Marketing and Outreach for HCMC Tory Daugherty, County Attorney Rob Whitfield, Chief of Police Chuck Elizondo, HCMC Board Chairmen and local physician Dr. Scott Whitby, Chief HCMC Nursing Officer Neely Ashby, Tracy Byrd, and myself.

It is difficult for me to put my respect for these individuals into words. During the past several months I have heard the challenges that each of these team members have been confronted with and seen us band together as a collective to support each other. Tasked with making difficult decisions, faced with constant criticism, and surrounded by negativity, the group kept the health needs of the community at the forefront of each decision.

Mayor Greer lead the charge in our region by requiring a mask mandate when other county mayors didn't have the courage to do so. Knowing the decision would not be popular, he focused on statistics and the advice of the healthcare community.

Our educators, led by Dr. Gerrell and Dr. Watkins, have faced an uphill battle since Day One. In a rural community with insufficient internet, shifting to virtual education has been a significant obstacle.

Not only did they have to adjust their daily worklife, they had to provide necessary resources for the children that they normally receive at school.

With 63% of our Paris Special School District students on free or reduced lunches, building an infrastructure to feed the students at their homes was a priority. Not only did they meet the needs, they exceeded expectations by having the system in place in a matter of days. In addition, our teachers have learned to teach from behind a mask, without contact, and at times behind a screen.



Amid COVID-19 protocols, Inman School teacher Sarah Anderson conducts her class.

Our hospital – wow! Lisa, Neely, Tory and their entire team have been faced with challenges since the beginning of the virus crisis. In fact, we can't overlook the fact rural hospitals were already underfunded before the pandemic. With their backs against the wall, they made multiple decisions that allowed our healthcare community to function.

A NEW APPRECIATION

After many debates on masking and a divided political season, there's one thing we can all agree on – this year has been difficult. In all things, find the positive. Throw roses when you can. Enjoy your time with your family. Appreciate the small things. Hopefully we can continue to band together and face whatever 2021 has in store.

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WHAT'S ON YOUR BUCKET LIST?

BY BARRY HART

A “bucket list” is defined as *“a number of experiences or achievements that a person hopes to have or accomplish during their lifetime.”*

Not to sound morbid, but some of us are getting on in our years, and it may be time to start considering some of the things we have always wanted to do or travel to the places we’ve always wanted to visit.

Before the term was coined and introduced in a 2007 film titled *The Bucket List*, I have always had a bucket list of sorts, and I have been slowly drawing lines through the entries as I have accomplished them.

In 2011, I traveled to Europe for the second time and visited my mother’s side of the family in England. In 2013, I published my first book – *A Path into the Woods*. In 2019, my youngest son and I revisited Vietnam, the first time I had returned since the Vietnam War.

I do have a couple of entries left – visiting the state of Alaska and Antarctica. If I cross these two entries from the list, then I would have visited ALL 50 states and stepped foot onto ALL continents.

There are some ideas that may sound exciting, but are not for me, such as climbing Mt. Everest, staying in an underwater hotel, or trying skydiving! I have done a few odd things, such as airboat across an alligator-infested swamp, ride in a hot air balloon, and enter a burning house to check for life (This was not on my bucket list!)

Maybe you dream about traveling to Venice to experience the City of Canals, Germany for Oktoberfest, or Taiwan for the Pingxi Lantern Festival. Your personal bucket list can be whatever you want it to be.

But let me tell you why having a one is so important. Making a bucket list is a perfect way to set your life goals and stay focused on making them a reality.

If you put in the time, the thought, and the dedication, you will be able to cross through a few of the entries on your list.

- Having a bucket list gives you purpose. Do not sweat the little day-to-day things, focus on the major goals you have. A bucket list can help you cut through the boredom of everyday life and encourage you to look forward to the things you have always wanted to

do and places you have always wanted to go.

- Having a bucket list brings your goals to life. Short-term and long-term goals are important to have. A bucket list will help make specific goals clearer, and it will help bring your efforts into focus.

- Having a bucket list will help you create lasting memories. Memories are one of our greatest treasures. The new memories you create by working through your list will give you a sense of achievement and give you something to look back on and share with others.

- Having a bucket list will pull you forward. Have you ever felt depressed and just did not feel like doing anything? Focusing on your bucket list will pull you out of that “funk” and challenge you to do something new, exciting, and out of the ordinary. Sometimes, that is all we need to get us motivated.

- Having a bucket list will help you experience life-long learning. When you commit to doing new things, you are committing to learn something new! You will never know everything



Is a cruise ship vacation on your bucket list?

there is to know, but the more experiences you have, the more you will learn and grow.

- Having a bucket list will insure you will never run out of things to do. When you start writing down things you would like to do or places you would like to visit, the possibilities are endless. You may have a list with a few things or a hundred, but it does not have to end there. Keep the list open and add things as they come to mind.

There are other reasons why having a bucket list is important. Don't forget that your list is personal, and it should reflect things that YOU want to do. Keep it simple, and don't be unrealistic. For example, if you are my age,

you wouldn't want to put "taking a vacation to Mars" on the list. Chances of that happening are mighty slim. Opt for somewhere a lot closer, like Branson, Missouri, Pigeon Forge, Tennessee, or Helen, Georgia.

The reason I have such a long bucket list is that most people declare, "I sure would like to do this (or that) before I pass away!" I want my list so long that I never stop moving forward and learning more about this great world in which we live!

Barry Hart is the founder/publisher of Southern Lawman Magazine, published author, and regular contributor to Paris Magazine. You can contact him via e-mail at hartbn@charter.net.

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IT WAS A DARK AND STORMY NIGHT...

PHC Arts Council Sponsors Writing Contest

BY KAREN GEARY

When COVID-19 struck Henry County last year, many government offices and civic organizations quickly had to adjust their schedules and activities to assure public safety. And as the virus spread, one-after-one of the Paris-Henry County Arts Council's yearly events were canceled.

Captured Moments: 28th Annual Photography Showcase had only been opened a few days when the W.G. Rhea Library was forced to close its doors. Then Artist Showcase, quickly followed by the fifth-grade bus trips to Tennessee Performing Arts Center, summer youth workshops, and the Christmas holiday concert.

After a successful outdoor event, Arts 'Round The Square, the Arts Council began the hard work to provide another safe activity for the local community to participate in. The answer was a writing competition to start off the New Year.

"We have never gone down this avenue before, but writing is definitely an important art form," said Karen Sinn, president of the Arts Council. "It is

said that everyone has a story in them. Here's a chance to tell it! Since word has gotten out that we are doing this, people are showing interest in it."

The competition is free to enter and is opened to any Henry County residents, ages 14 and above. The theme is fiction writing and stories are limited to 1,500 word. "Writers may submit humor, science fiction, horror, romance, history, suspense, or whatever inspires the imagination," Sinn said. "All are qualified topics, but strict criteria must be followed for submission. Contest rules may be obtained on the Art Council's website, www.phcart.com, or by emailing phcart@gmail.com."

The competition is now open and submissions must be in a Word document. Entries must be emailed and received by 11:59 pm, February 8, 2021. Blind judging will begin following the deadline. "That way, our judges don't know who wrote the stories, and the writers won't know who is judging the contest," said Sinn.

Each judge will consider the story plot, story structure, character development, and setting while reading

each entry. Authors need not be intimidated by those factors, but it might be best to allow someone to proof the stories for grammar mistakes and sentence structure.

Like other showcases sponsored by the Arts Council, prize money will be awarded to the top three stories, plus there will be a Judges' Choice award. "We hope to have an award for our 14-17 year olds who enter," Sinn said. Authors may submit up to three stories but would only be awarded one monetary prize if they won.

If more than 20 stories are entered, the Arts Council plans to publish all entries in book form. "We thought this would be a nice way to commemorate our first effort of a writing competition, and it will be a way for the community to support the Arts Council," said Sinn. The books will be offered for sale in various locations around Paris.

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YOUR WINTER DESTINATION Is Just Across the River

BY SUSAN JONES AND JOHN NICHOLS

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

You don't have to go far for an entertaining, winter jaunt; there's plenty to see just across the Tennessee River in Stewart County. The two of us often marvel at how much Stewart County has to offer, especially in winter.

Bordered by two rivers, the county is home to Cross Creeks National Wildlife Refuge, Fort Donelson National Battlefield, two working ferries, Land Between the Lakes National Recreation Area and more. This makes for a great weekend getaway, but with just 30 miles between Paris and Dover, shorter visits are easy and winter is the perfect season.

For a scenic drive, head to Cumberland City. Kiddos especially enjoy a trip on the Cumberland River Ferry. For 75 cents you can hitch a ride across this river that is steeped in history. (Watching your pennies? Park the car and walk aboard for 50 cents!)

Nearby, TVA's Cumberland Fossil Plant is an impressive sight, generating enough electricity to supply more than a million homes annually. Pull into a public area by the river to view the enormous plant, the coal barges docked near the bank and the resident turkey buzzards looking for a fish dinner.

Don't leave this neck of the woods without stopping for a bite to eat with

the friendly folks at Elk Harbor Campground and Café on Cumberland City Road. We love their patty melts, but their activities get our attention, too. Think kayaking, bonfires, live music and meat bingo – yes, meat bingo! Because this spot lies next to the waters of Cross Creek National Wildlife Refuge, birdwatching is good here, too.

The refuge's headquarters is a good stop en route back toward Dover. Its primary purpose is to provide feeding and resting habitat for migratory birds with an emphasis on providing habitat for wintering waterfowl, so keep your eyes peeled for eagles and other feathered friends.

While the visitor center is currently closed to the public due to COVID, there is still lots to explore outdoors. Fishing, paddling and other activities open up March 15 after the end of winter sanctuary.

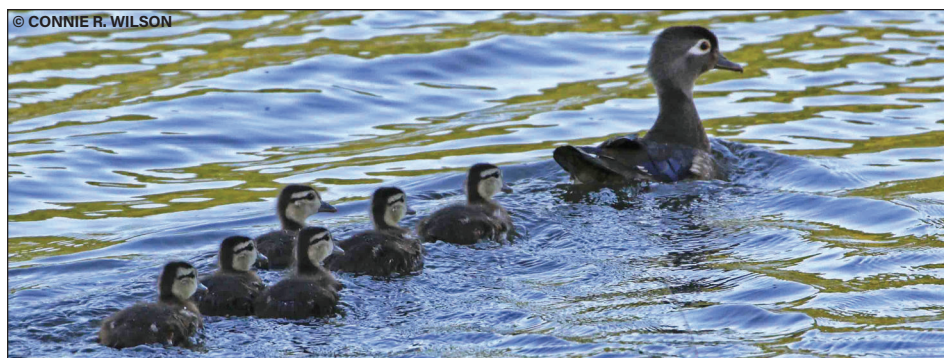
When departing the refuge, head into Dover, home of Fort Donelson National Battlefield, where the US Navy and General U.S. Grant set the tone for the Civil War. Stop by the fort's interim visitor center, the battlefield and battery (phone tour and online video tours available), the National Cemetery, and the Dover Hotel, also known as the Surrender House.

We love the battery, where we can stand among the cannons and imagine the noise, the cold, and the uncertainty that was in the air during the ferocious battle. We even enjoy taking hikes in the bare, wintry forest. But it's the Surrender House, located just up river, that moves us most. With its updated film and accompanying displays, it helps visitors understand the joy, the angst and the toll of war on locals, soldiers and officers. You'll also learn how U.S. Grant got his famous nickname, Unconditional Surrender Grant. (Note: the Battle of Fort Donelson took place in mid-February, 1862. Check Facebook for events commemorating its 159th anniversary.)

The Stewart County Visitor Center, just across the highway from Fort Donelson, also is a must. It offers fascinating local exhibits on everything from moonshining to railroads



Head to Cumberland City and enjoy a ride on the Cumberland River Ferry.



Cross Creek National Wildlife Refuge provides habitat for wintering waterfowl.

to early settlers. There is plenty of free literature to better acquaint you with Stewart County.

Grab a copy of the Civil War Quilts map, which features painted quilts or quilt blocks displayed on barns and businesses throughout the county – yet another winter outing. Did we mention that the visitor center is next door to Mama Mea's Pizza and More?

One word – YUM.

There are plenty of other worthy, winter attractions, including the historic iron furnace in Bear Springs, the Elk and Bison Prairie in Land Between the Lakes National Recreation Area, hiking in Stewart State Forest, and more. But this should hold you over until Spring.

See you in March!



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PLAYING HOST TO WINTER HUMMINGBIRDS

Hanging a hummingbird feeder during the winter feels counter intuitive to most folks. After all, by the time it gets chilly in Tennessee the hummingbirds are all in Mexico or Central America, right? Not according to Cyndi Routledge.

Routledge knows her hummers. She is president of Southeastern Avian Research (SEAR), a non-profit established to promote the conservation and preservation of hummingbirds and other neotropical migrants through scientific study and education. She is also a board member the Tennessee National Wildlife Refuge headquartered in Springville. **PARIS!** recently visited with this federally licensed, master bird bander about her unusual winter work.

PARIS!: Tell us about this new trend that encourages backyard birders to leave their feeders out in cold weather.

CR: It's not really a new trend. Researchers have been asking people to

leave their feeders out since the early 1990s. It started along the Gulf Coast with people noticing hummingbirds in November and December.

At first, they thought the birds might be lost or sick, but they did a study and discovered that hummingbirds were finding insects and nectar in those locales in winter. So instead of risking the flight across the Gulf to Mexico or Central America, the birds are able to make a living to stay in South Georgia, Southern Alabama, Louisiana, Tennessee and even further north.

PARIS!: How long have they been wintering in the Southeast?

CR: We're not 100% sure. Have these birds been behaving like this for millenia, or did we just now notice them when people started feeding Ruby Throats and accidentally leaving their feeders out into November.

But like the Ruby-throated Hummingbirds that we have here in spring and summer, these birds are faithful to their wintering grounds, as well. The

ones who winter in Tennessee, usually Rufous Hummingbirds, if they survive, will return year after year. It's not happenstance.

PARIS!: Are people hesitant to leave their feeders out in winter because they fear that hummingbirds are too frail to survive the cold?

CR: Maybe, but hummingbirds are not frail, they're hearty. They live on the edge of death because of their high metabolism and the need to feed every ten to fifteen minutes. Because food is so crucial to their existence, they are tenacious, sometimes mean little suckers. It's a good thing they are only three inches tall; if they were any bigger we'd be in a world of hurt.

PARIS!: Tell us more about the Rufous.

CR: The Rufus Hummingbirds are known for their extraordinary flight skills, flying upwards of 2,000 miles during their migration. They breed on the mountainsides and forest edges Western North America from South-

ern Alaska through British Columbia and into the Pacific Northwest of California. So, they are used to cooler temperatures and can certainly survive our mild winters.

PARIS!: How can folks get a winter hummingbird?

CR: Grandma used to tell us to take down hummingbird feeders by October 15 or they would stay and would freeze to death. But that's not true; these birds migrate based on a hormonal response established by the shortening of daylight hours.

By leaving out a feeder, you have a chance of getting one of the Western migrants as they are coming across. One may drop by for a drink or even stay with you a while. But if you don't have a feeder out, you'll never even know it was there.

PARIS!: So, this is epitome of the phrase, "Must be present to win"?

CR: Exactly! Put a feeder out and look first thing in the morning and last thing at night. Because they have no competition, these birds act differently from the ones we're accustomed to. They may roost in the sunshine, but you'll probably only notice them when they're drinking.

PARIS!: There must be some sort of pattern to their visits.

CR: If there is, we can't figure it out. I've been leaving hummingbird

feeders out each winter at my house for 18 years, then a novice birder comes to one of my presentations and bam, one shows up at her house that January.

PARIS!: Where have you banded winter hummingbirds so far this year?

CR: By mid-December, I had banded eleven in Montgomery County (one just two miles from my house), Williamson, Rutherford, Haywood, Davidson, and White Counties in Tennessee, plus two counties in Mississippi.

PARIS!: What should folks do if they spot a winter hummingbird on their feeder?

CR: They can contact me at SoutheasternAvianResearch.org and put "Winter Hummingbird" in the subject line. I'll contact them to see if they would allow me to come to their home to catch and band the bird so it can become part of our study. Whether they let me come or not, I can still add their observation to the data.

PARIS!: Where does all your information go?

CR: I'm one of only 200 hummingbird banders in the United States. Our information goes to the bird banding lab that is part of the U.S. Department of the Interior. The data is used in both scientific research, management and conservation projects.

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Above: Close up of a HY Rufous Hummingbird after being banded.

Previous page: Allen's Hummingbird in Rutherford County, banded on November 27, 2020.

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THE WINTER GARDENER

BY JOHN WATKINS

Ah, Winter. When gardeners get to catch their breath and anxiously await those first warm days of Spring, I have to admit that I used to think that winter was the ugliest season for the garden. But as I've gotten older, my perspectives have changed and I now see just how stately and elegant trees in your landscape can be without all the clutter of leaves and flowers in the way.

"So just what trees", you may be asking, "can I plant to make my garden interesting during the dead of winter?" Well, you've come to the right place for answers, my friend. So pull up a chair next to that roaring fire and consider these suggested trees to "spruce" up your winter landscape. (See what I did there?)

Let's start with a handful of trees that actually flower in winter. Wait, trees that flower in winter? Is there really such a thing? Well, remember that winter lasts all the way to the end of February, so it is possible to find a few trees with early flowering times, especially in mild winters. Witch Hazel (*Hamamelis* sp.) are often considered large shrubs but they can reach heights

of 15 to 20 feet with fragrant, bright yellow, ribbon-shaped petals.

Cornelian cherry (*Cornus mas*) is actually a member of the dogwood family that blooms with yellow flowers in late winter or early spring.

Saucer Magnolia (*Magnolia x soulangeana*) is a deciduous member of the magnolia family with probably the showiest of flowers in this group. The fragrant flowers are pink to purple with white interiors and can reach up to 8" across! Alas, even though it can bloom in late February, many is the time that I have woken up to see all those beautiful blooms turned to brown mush after a light freeze or even a heavy frost, so planting in a protected area is best.

So if you can't have flowers, having trees with showy fruit might be the next best thing, right? When you think of winter berries, most of us picture evergreen hollies, which are definitely worth noting.

The American holly (*Ilex opaca*) can grow to 30 feet in a nice pyramidal shape. The bright red or orange fruits ripen in fall and persist through the winter, making it a great tree for attracting birds.

Hawthorns (*Crataegus* sp.) are small, low branching trees with brilliant red fruits lasting throughout the winter. This is actually a great three-season tree with attractive white flowers in spring, colorful fall foliage, and, of course, the winter berries. Just be aware that, as the name implies, the branches do have thorns, so maybe not the best tree for climbing!

Possumhaw (*Ilex decidua*) is a small tree in the holly family that actually loses its leaves every year. But the lack of leaves only enhances the bright red fruits that are abundant on the naked stems. The fact that it is a native plant and one of the best at attracting wildlife makes it even more appealing for the winter garden.

While showy flowers and fruits may grab all the headlines, there are other characteristics of trees that deserve a little closer inspection. Take bark for example. Yeah, I know. You're probably saying looking at bark is about as exciting as watching paint dry. But just imagine if that paint were on fire and started twisting and curling and exposing other colors underneath!

Got your attention now, huh? Birches and crape myrtles are prime

examples that most of us are familiar with. But why not “branch out” and try a couple of these other fine specimens.

There’s a couple of maples definitely worth noting. Paperbark maple (*Acer griseum*) is known for its exfoliating copper orange to cinnamon reddish/brown bark that peels into large curls and remains on the tree rather than falling to the ground.

The Coralbark maple (*Acer palmatum*) is a Japanese maple with very distinctive pink (yes pink!) bark that makes it a knockout in winter. Interestingly enough, that pink color is almost nonexistent in spring and summer giving you something to look forward to every year in an otherwise boring winter garden.

Lacebark elm (*Ulmus parvifolia*) is a medium-sized tree that makes a great shade or street tree. On mature specimens, the bark flakes to reveal patches of gray, cream, orange, brown, and sometimes green.

Japanese Stewartia (*Stewartia pseudocamellia*) while being a slow grower, more than makes up for it with lovely white camellia-like flow-

ers in early summer and exfoliating, reddish-brown bark providing good winter color and interest.

Of course, I would be remiss if I didn’t expound on the virtues of branches and overall shapes of the tree in winter. Looking for rigid and linear? The ginkgo, while taking a while to reach its glory, tends to be a no-frills brancher and remains very proper. Looking for soft and relaxing? The weeping willow is about as graceful and wispy as they come.

How about stately? Oaks are a classic. Long-lived and worthy of respect, you just can’t beat a grand white oak. Small and intricate you ask? A small Japanese maple can have branches that twist and turn more than a Rubik’s cube. Finally, what about something conical and uniform? With a cypress or dawn redwood you can’t go wrong.

While this is only a small list out of many possibilities, I hope that I’ve created a little interest in making your winter garden a little more interesting.

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



Bark of a Lacebark elm (*Ulmus parvifolia*)

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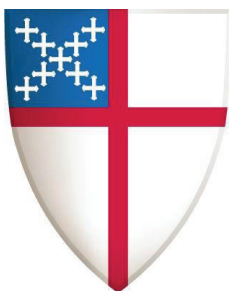
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CHARLIE ATKINSON

Loving Her Job For 50 Years



BY KAREN GEARY

One thing is for certain, floors don't clean themselves. Neither do countertops, glass doors, or brass fixtures. If you frequent the Paris Post Office and noticed the number of people who are in and out of the building, the thought of keeping the facility clean all day would seem like a daunting task. But Charlie Atkinson kept the post office floors shining and the lobby tidy for 50 years.

Miss Charlie hung up the mop for the last time, raised her last American flag, and recently retired from the custodian job she loved. "Some people wouldn't like the work, but I enjoyed it. I wasn't embarrassed to mop the floors. I loved the job; I loved the people I worked with," said Atkinson. "I was asked once if I would like to be a carrier, but I turned it down. My body doesn't like cold weather. And I really liked what I was doing. It was inside and the pay was good."

In 1970 at the age of 35, she took the job because she was raising six children by herself. "All my children went to college," Atkinson said with pride.

Her twin daughters, Brenda and Linda, live in Memphis and Collierville. One is retired from her job with the Federal Bureau of Investigation; the

other works for the Internal Revenue Service.

Her son Victor works for the City of Nashville and is a minister. Her other son, Eric, is a supervisor for the Tennessee Department of Transportation. Two sons live here in Paris. George Atkinson works for McCartney Foods and his brother, Torrence, works for the City of Paris.

When asked about her unusual first name, she laughed and said it was her parents' decision. "My mother thought I was going to be a boy. And when I was born, my father said to just keep the name. I've had people ask me if I was cashing my husband's check, and I told them 'No, that's my name.'"

Atkinson has seen many changes in her 50-year tenure at the post office. "I've seen the good and the bad. I've seen a lot of postmasters come and go. I've seen children grow up, become adults, and then see their children coming to the post office."

Some of her favorite times at the post office were the annual Thanksgiving and Christmas potluck breakfasts for the employees. "Every time, they would ask me what I was bringing to eat, but I made them guess. I didn't tell them what I was fixing. And they would always look for my food.

There were no leftovers," she said. "I wouldn't call myself a great cook, but I'm pretty good at it."

Her maternal instincts became a part of post office culture. "They are my children," Atkinson said, referring to her fellow employees. "They would ask me to pray for them and I would. And they would ask me about my faith. I would pray for them; they would pray for me. We became prayer warriors."

"She's my mama!" said P.J. Conger, an 18-year career mail carrier, about Atkinson. "She's so precious to me and I thank God for putting her in my life."

"Everyone loves her; she is very well loved," she said, expressing the feelings of many employees at the Paris Post Office. "She is everybody's prayer warrior. If anyone was down, she was on her knees."

Not only was "Miss Charlie" an excellent federal employee, but she was an example of dedication, hard work, respect, and tenacity that was admired by many. Employees like her are "few and far between," as the old saying goes. But she was also a part of something more grand. Atkinson embodied a U.S. Postal Service's code: to be a trusted face of the federal government in (her) community.

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FALLING IN LOVE WITH HOME

BY SUSAN JONES

Over six-decades I've only moved a handful of times, and each undertaking was traumatic. The first time was when I began college. After helping me move into the dorm, my parents were so certain I'd have second thoughts that when my mother started the car, my father reportedly yelled, "Gun it, Joanie, before she grabs the bumper!"

It's this and a few other experiences that put me in awe of individuals who can pick up and move to a new location. So when a soon-to-be friend moved to Paris several years ago and

told me her story of coming to Paris from California, I was astonished.

Who actually moves 2,000 miles from their home state? One answer is Cat McGavin. Why? To find out that answer, you'll need to hear her interview on Paris Podcast. Spoiler alert, she also explains how she made her new home feel like, well, home!

In the interview, you'll find someone who is tenacious, does her homework, has an open mind and an open heart, a sense of adventure and a sense of humor. If you look up the phrase "contagious smile" online, there's a picture of Cat. She is comfortable

in her own skin and with her new surroundings. She is in love with Paris, Tennessee, and she wants you to be in love with it, too.

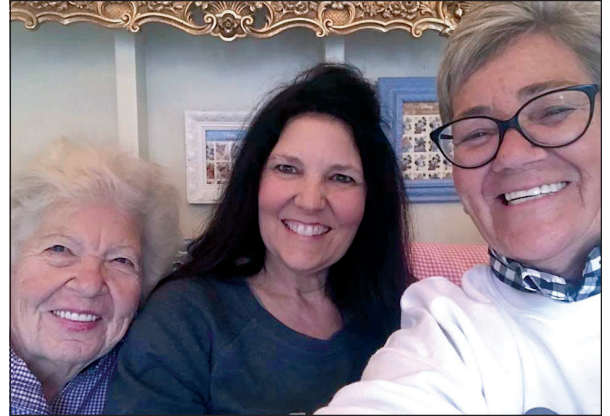
So whether you're from a Henry County pioneer family or have just changed your address from Paris, France, to Paris, Tennessee, give this interview a listen at SusanJonesPR.com/podcast or scan the QR code with your phone.

It's a great primer for those who are new to the area, and for the old guard, it's a reason to fall in love with home all over again.

FACES & PLACES



Boy Scout Troop 28 spent a chilly Saturday mulching the Historic Atkins-Porter Neighborhood Botanical Garden. From left are Riley McDevitt, Lee Hays, Jonathan Lickert, Johnny Lickert, Butch Powers, Matt Hays, A.J. Diaz, Avery Jackson, Tony Jackson, and Wade Hays. Not pictured are Scott McDevitt, Keegan Kyle and Kenson Kyle. The group's sponsoring organization is First United Methodist Church. The park is the first of its kind in Paris and Henry County.



As Sally Lane's Candy Farm changed hands, Pam Freeman Rockwell took a selfie of herself (at right) with her Mom Shelby Freeman, and new owner Cathy Robbins.



Left: Uncle Billy's Downtown Eatery got creative and had employee, Gage Sherrod, dress up in a chicken costume and make lunch deliveries all over downtown Paris.

Right: Henry County Clerk Donna Craig and her staff went all out for Christmas Eve this year. Posing on the front steps of the Henry County Courthouse, from left to bottom, Gracian McElroy, Jamie Miles, Janet Scott, Patricia McClain, Donna Craig, Carol Whitworth.

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Long-time BPU employee Bethany Edwards was appointed Vice President of Administration and Finance. BPU and Paris Utility Authority CEO Terry Wimberley and Board President David Flowers pose with her at the December meeting.



As HCMC front-line employees received the new COVID-19 vaccine, photos were taken at the historic event. In photo are Dr. John Carruth and Nurse Practitioner Lachelle Moss. Employees said they felt like Christmas came early this year.



Virtual Academy staff members Amy Wilson, Jessica Pryor, Tammy Wells and Principal Daniel Armstrong were all smiles at the Henry County Virtual Academy's first graduation ceremony. Nine seniors were graduated.



Newly married, Wessley and Ashton Thompson White, stole a moment away together.



Proud parents, Michael and Tabitha Melton, watch as their daughters Summer (15), Madison (12), Lyla (6) and Sophia (3) admire their new baby brother Liam. Photo by Don't Blink Photography



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HEARTY SOUPS TO LOVE

Taking stock of what makes soup so soothing and satisfying is simple. A warm bowl of soup is a classic comfort food, especially when the weather turns chilly or you have a cold. There's a strong association between soup and

comfort and often a reminder of loving care. Did Mom or Dad give you chicken noodle soup when you had a cold as a child? That warm, fuzzy feeling it gave you can extend into adulthood as well, and certainly doesn't need to stop at

chicken noodle. A well-made soup can be a mouth-watering appetizer or a flavorful main course. Either way, check out these recipes for inspiration and warm up the heart of a loved one with a comforting bowl of soup.

THAI-STYLE CHICKEN PUMPKIN SOUP

INGREDIENTS

- 1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil
- 6 boneless skinless chicken breasts, cut into 1-inch cubes
- 1 large white onion, thinly sliced
- 3 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 tablespoon fresh minced ginger
- ½ teaspoon crushed red pepper (increase to ¾ tsp for spicy)
- 2 celery ribs, thinly sliced
- 2 carrots, halved and thinly sliced
- 15 oz. can solid-pack pumpkin [NOT pumpkin pie filling]
- ½ cup creamy peanut butter
- 4 cups low-sodium chicken broth
- 2 cups water
- ½ cup mango nectar
- ½ cup fresh lime juice
- 3 tablespoons rice wine vinegar
- ½ cup minced fresh cilantro, divided use
- ½ cup heavy cream
- 1 tablespoon cornstarch
- 4 cups hot cooked rice (preferably jasmine or basmati)
- ½ cup roasted unsalted peanuts, coarsely chopped
- Lime wedges

Instructions:

- Heat oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Add chicken and cook, stirring occasionally, about 3 minutes. Add onion, garlic, ginger and red pepper flakes; cook for 1-2 minutes longer or until fragrant. Transfer to slow cooker crock.
- Stir in celery, carrots, pumpkin, peanut butter, broth, water, mango nectar, and lime juice. Cover; cook on LOW 8 hours or on HIGH 4 hours.
- Stir in rice wine vinegar and ¼ cup cilantro. Stir together cream and cornstarch in a small bowl, then stir into soup. Turn to HIGH and simmer, uncovered, for 10 minutes or until soup thickens.
- To serve, place about ½ cup of hot cooked rice in bottom of bowls and ladle soup around rice. Sprinkle with remaining cilantro, green onions and peanuts. Squeeze fresh lime juice over soup.

SUBSTITUTIONS: Feel free to substitute either sweet potato or butternut squash puree for the pumpkin. Cashew butter and coarsely chopped cashews may be used in place of peanut butter and chopped peanuts. Flat-leaf parsley may be substituted for cilantro or you may use a combination of cilantro, parsley, mint and/or basil, instead.





VEGETABLE BEEF-BARLEY SOUP

INGREDIENTS

- 1 lb. stew beef or small chuck steak, cut into small cubes
- 1 tablespoon olive or vegetable oil
- 1 16-oz. can of petite diced tomatoes, undrained
- 2 cups cubed potatoes
- 1 cup shredded cabbage
- ½ cup celery, chopped
- ½ cup carrots, chopped
- ½ cup onion, chopped
- ¼ to ½ cup uncooked barley
- ½ teaspoon black pepper
- 6 cups beef broth
- 2 teaspoons salt

INSTRUCTIONS

- Brown meat in large pot in vegetable oil until no pink is showing. Saute onion in the same oil until tender.
- Add broth or water with beef bouillon cubes to pot, followed by tomatoes, potatoes, cabbage, celery, carrots, salt, and pepper.
- Simmer mixture for at least 1 hour. Add barley to soup approximately 15-20 minutes or until tender.

BLACK-EYED PEA SOUP

INGREDIENTS

- 1 cup diced country ham or lean ham
- 1 small onion, chopped
- 2 celery ribs, chopped
- 2 small carrots, sliced
- 2 teaspoons minced garlic
- 2 15-oz. cans black-eyed peas, undrained or prepare 1 lb. of dried beans according to package directions
- 6 cups chicken or vegetable broth
- 1 15-oz cans fire-roasted diced tomatoes, undrained
- 2 cups cropped kale or collard greens, stems removed
- 1 bay leaf
- 2 teaspoons Cajun seasoning or to taste
- Salt and pepper to taste

INSTRUCTIONS

- Saute in oil ham, onion, celery, carrots, and garlic in Dutch oven on medium heat until vegetables are tender.
- Stir in black-eyed peas, chicken broth, tomatoes, bay leaf, and seasonings. Bring to boil.
- Reduce heat and simmer 1 hour with lid on pot. After simmering 1 hour, stir cropped kale or collard greens until wilted.
- Continue to simmer an additional 30 minutes without lid. Smash some peas on side of pot to thicken soup. Discard bay leaf before serving.



BE A HELPING HAND

Henry County Helping Hand **2021**

Although our Live Auction has been cancelled this year, we are planning to make an impact in Paris and Henry County as we have for the last 41 years.

We cannot do it without your continued involvement. Here are ways you can help:

BY MAIL: Send donations to: **HELPING HAND • P.O. BOX 22 • PARIS, TN 38242**

SPECIAL ACCOUNT: An account has been established at Commerical Bank and tellers know that all Helping Hand donations should be deposited into this account. Donations may be made during business hours at any Commercial Bank branch.

VENMO: We have set up a special Helping Hand Venmo account. Donations may be sent using **@HenryCounty-HelpingHand** or by scanning the QR Code on this ad.

ONLINE AUCTION: We are hosting an online auction in January and February. Check **BidLastandWin.com** for more details.

As always, we are grateful for your support. If you have any questions, please contact "Henry County Helping Hand, Inc." on Facebook or by email at helpinghand1695@gmail.com



JUST FOR FUN



ACROSS

5. Brent Greer issued a mask _____ to combat COVID-19.
7. One of the Two Travelers
11. _____ Chapel Church and school are on the National Register.
13. Smelly animal
14. Keep your feeders up during the winter for _____.
18. Their heating and cooling keep you comfortable.
19. New office location for the PHC Arts Council
20. Type of Magnolia
21. Hitch a ride on this for 75¢
22. _____ medical workers were fed by local civic groups.

DOWN

1. Name of Indian mounds on National Register
2. Gentleman's game bird
3. President of Crove Media
4. Cat McGavin moved from this state to Paris, TN.
6. Type of ocean vessel
8. Ring those phones for this yearly fundraiser!
9. BPU will help you prepare for this.
10. This device took our magazine cover photo.
12. Barry Hart's _____ list
15. PHC Arts Council is having a _____ competition.
16. First time Susan Jones moved was to go to _____.
17. Type of pea in homemade soup



REMINISCENCE

NATIONAL REGISTER SITES In Henry County

BY SHANNON MCFARLIN

In 1966, the National Register of Historic Places was established as an official list of districts, sites, buildings, structures and objects deemed worthy of preservation for their historical significance.

Since that time, 14 sites (including entire commercial districts and neighborhoods) in Henry County have been placed on the National Register. They represent historic homes, churches, Native American mounds, and commercial and historic districts within the city of Paris.

Some of the historic places that have been placed on the register are

easy to spot, such as the magnificent Grove Tower, the former home of Governor James Porter on Dunlap Street and the white house in Whitehall Circle.

Others are not so easy to find nowadays, such as the Obion Mounds whose exact location is restricted to preserve Native American ground, and the Mt. Zion Church and Cemetery located inside the Old 23rd District.

Still others encompass entire districts in Paris, such as the North Poplar Street Historic District, which includes the elegant Cavitt Place (now the Paris-Henry County Heritage Center),

the former home of former Governor Thomas Rye, the West Paris Historic District (which includes the former home of the Nelson-Neal musical performers), the Paris Academy for the Arts, and the downtown commercial district which includes the Henry County Courthouse and the historic downtown buildings. Even with all their differences, what they all have in common is historical significance and that all have been preserved.

Let's highlight a few of Henry County's National Register treasures:

- Barr's Chapel Christian Methodist Episcopal Church rests at an especially

scenic bend of the road at 5560 Briarpatch Lake Road. The church property consists of a church building, former school-house and cemetery, all of which are on the National Register.

Barr's Chapel was founded on land donated by John Barr around 1864. The church and school became the center of an African-American community after the Civil War as more and more black landowners bought land and developed farms in that area.

The church that still stands was built in 1953, on the same plot of land where the three previous buildings stood that were built in 1864, 1900 and 1933.

The school was in operation by 1906 and closed in 1958 when the Henry County Central School was opened. The school building then was used as a community center.

The picturesque cemetery was established in 1870 and contains at least 250 burials.

During World War II, Barr's Chapel Church was especially important to the black soldiers at Camp Tyson outside of Paris. Camp Tyson was the nation's only barrage balloon training facility and both white and black soldiers were headquartered there.

For the black soldiers, Barr's Chapel was a place they could congregate for sing-a-longs and picnics. Barr's Chapel was also the home of the Double V girls, a group of teen girls who organized events and helped morale as church members hoped for victory in Europe and victory in Japan to end the war.

Barr's Chapel was listed on the National Register in 2005.

- Mt. Zion Church and Cemetery is a historic church building located on the peninsula which most old-timers refer to as the Old 23rd District. Without a community surrounding it anymore, it's remote and takes a while to get to from the county seat of Paris, but it's worth the drive.

The church was built sometime between 1872 and 1899 (most likely 1893, according to researchers) and is the only surviving building in the Old 23rd, a community which has been extinct since 1944 when the creation of Kentucky Lake prompted relocation of the district's homes and businesses.

The TVA purchased the church building and agreed to leave the building standing. It is still used for annual Homecomings for the former Old 23rd families. The historic cemetery is located behind the church and has over 250 graves, with burials still held there.

- Obion Mounds, also known as the Work Farm Site, is an archaeological site of the Mississippian Native American culture on the north fork of the Obion River north of Paris. The site is the largest Mississippian site in western Tennessee and, according to research, was probably inhabited by 1000 Common Era (CE). The Mississippian culture were Native American mound builders and the Obion Mounds consist of seven platform mounds surrounded by a plaza.

A stone statue was discovered in one of the pits by the owner of the site, Solomon Hartsfield in 1845. The statue was damaged in a house fire in the late 19th century and its current location is unknown.

Most of our other local National Register sites are probably well-known to Henry Countians:

- Former E.W. Grove High School, referred to as Grove Tower on Grove Boulevard in Paris, placed on National Register November 25, 1980.

- John L. Hagler House on Poplar Grove Road near Springville. Placed on National Register March 13, 1980.

- E.K. Jernigan House, 207 Dunlap Street, Paris. Placed on Register September 7, 1988. This was the home of K.B. Humphreys and his family for many years.

- Thomas P. Jernigan House, 918 Dunlap Street, Paris. Placed on Register September 7, 1988. This was the home of Bill and Ann Crosswy for many years.

- Former Paris Public School, then changed to Robert E. Lee School in 1906, and recently changed to the Paris Arts Academy, 402 Lee Street. Added to the Register September 7, 1988.

- North Poplar Historic District, along North Poplar and Church Streets in Paris.

Added to Register September 7, 1988. This would include Quinn Chapel AME Church, Paris City Cemetery, Governor Rye's former home, and the Heritage Center.

- Paris Commercial Historic District, along West and East Wood, Market, Fentress and Blythe Streets, Paris. Added September 7, 1988. This would include the courthouse, the former Crete Opera House (now the courthouse annex) and downtown buildings.


- Porter House, former home of Governor James Porter, 407 S. Dunlap Street, Paris. Added April 11, 1973. This is the current home of Dr. John Vandyck and his wife Lilly.

Judge John C. Sweeney House, 1212 Chickasaw Road, Paris. Added September 7, 1988. This was the home of Dr. Robert Adams and his family for many years.

West Paris Historic District along Washington and College Streets. Added September 7, 1988. This includes numerous stately properties including the former home of Nelson and Neal who were internationally known musical entertainers.

Charles White House, 403 Whitehall Circle. Added September 7, 1988. The home is how Whitehall Circle got its name and is the current home of Dr. John Hudson and family.

Preparing an application for National Register status is an arduous and time-consuming task, especially in listings involving entire commercial districts, and it provides an important measure of protection for historic properties. Local history-lovers owe a giant debt to those who worked hard to preserve these important properties in our midst.



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First Baptist Church	19	Paris Pharmacy.....	18
Forever Communications	24	Parisian Theatre.....	31
Foundation Bank *	22	Peppers Automotive	18
Grace Episcopal Church.....	20	Perry's BBQ and Catering	9
Helping Hand, Inc.....	27	Second Harvest Food Bank	2
Henry County Medical Center*....	Inside Front Cover	Serra of Jackson	20
Henry County Monument Works	30	Servall Restoration	2
Joe Mahan Ford	13	Tennessee Valley Community Church.....	10
Lakeway Animal Clinic.....	7	The Toggery at Bo & Co.	7
Lakeway IGA	10	Trolinger's	2
Landmark Realty	15	TruGreen	18
LPL Financial	19	Twin Lakes Dental Associates	2
Lura Lee's Gift Shoppe.....	9	Wells Fargo Advisors.....	16
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- Slow and steady wins the race, especially in winter. Don't get in a hurry.
- For increased balance, keep your hands free and out of your pockets.
- Keep rock salt and some sand or cat litter on hand. Salt helps melt ice and cat litter or sand can offer temporary traction.
- Plan your steps to the car, office and elsewhere to avoid snowy, icy walkways.
- Look at the bottom of your footwear. Make sure your shoes/boots have good tread.



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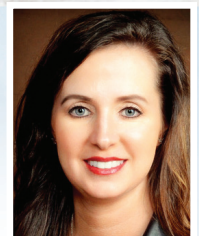
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