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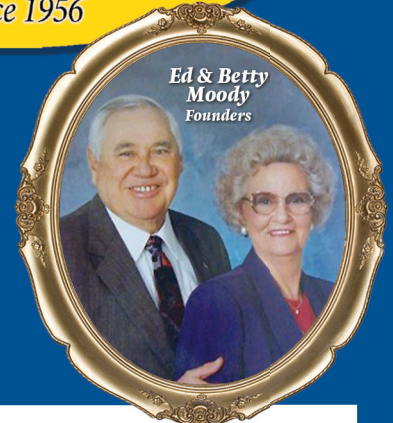
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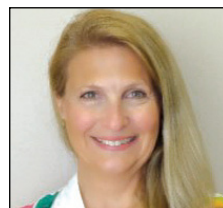
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## JOYOUS READING!

Let me be the first to wish you a joyous Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year! I hope you'll enjoy our selections of holiday cheer as much as I have.

I loved the Chamber staff's heart-warming piece that highlights their Christmas memories and traditions that they carry on for their own families. Spoiler alert, this will fill you with happy tears.

Music is in the air at Christmas and no one loves tunes like our newest columnist, Kathy Ray. In *Soundtracks*, Ray spotlights local artists and tells us what makes them tick...and pick. Don't miss her piece on Rockin' Randall French.

When it comes to music, the Krider Performing Arts Center has become a regional hub. From professional tours to grade school performances, KPAC Director Rhonda Stanton fills us in on her holiday lineup.

Do you like to be entertained without ever leaving the comfort of your recliner? Look no further than Dan Jackson's, "Cats Love Christmas," where his cats, Kevin and Gloria, take center stage.

Armchair entertainment of a different kind is offered in *Paris Cuisine*. Entrepreneur and cooking video guru Sam Hutson explain how he and his

wife, Hannah are building fans for their Crove Food Co. products.

Our community is full of presents disguised as people. Find out more in "Tony Lawrence: Person Of The Year Is A Gift To Paris," "Paris Public Works: The Unsung Heroes Of The Holidays," and "The Berryman House: Calling All Angels."

Our Bicentennial celebration continues with "The Governor's Gift" and "One School, Two Centuries." Don't miss a 19th century holiday tale appropriately entitled, "A Christmas Gift of a Different Kind."

And who better to wrap up this issue than John Watkins with his annual reflection "Thankful Gardener." We're thankful to you, John, for helping us count our many blessings.

*Cheers!*

*Smantha*



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## ON THE COVER

*Hadley Kate, daughter of Griffin and Mary Kate Paschall, enjoyed the sights and sounds of her first Christmas morning last year.*

Henry County and the Lake Area

# PARIS!

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**PARIS!** is published five times annually by Parker Publishing for Paris, Tennessee and the surrounding communities.

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# THE GOVERNOR'S *Gift*



By Shannon McFarlin

**A**t the turn of the century, this ornate vase sat on Governor James D. Porter's mantle in his home on Dunlap Street in Paris. Now, thanks to a generous donation from family, it has found a home in the Henry County Archives.

County Archivist Stephanie Tayloe said Governor Porter gave the vase as a wedding gift to his niece, Sarah Ann "Sallie" Porter, when she married John Samuel Waddy on October 30, 1894. Sarah Ann was the daughter of Dr. Josiah Horton Porter, brother of Governor Porter.

When Sarah Ann Porter Waddy's daughter, Mattie Waddy Sinclair, died at age 38, Sarah Ann gave the vase to her granddaughter, Sarah Elizabeth Sinclair (Stewart). Sarah Elizabeth then gave the vase to her daughter, Judith Ann Stewart (Pratt), who has now donated it to the Henry County Archives.

The vase is now on permanent display at the Archives at 215 Grove Blvd., in Paris. Mrs. Pratt said, "I think it is time to give it back to Paris. It has

been an honor to be part of this great family."

A Whig, Governor Porter was Tennessee Governor from 1875 to 1879. He was an attorney, politician and educator, and after the Civil War, was Assistant Secretary of State during

President Grover Cleveland's first administration and Minister to Chile during Cleveland's second administration. He died in 1912 and is buried along with his wife, Susannah Dunlap and other family members in Paris City Cemetery.

His brother, Dr. Josiah Horton Porter was said to be the first male child born in Paris, and he was a popular and successful physician. He died in 1905 and is buried in Allman Cemetery along with his wife, Judith Clark Porter and other members of their families. There is also a monument in Paris City Cemetery which honors Dr. Porter and other members of the Porter family.

The photo (left) shows Dr. Josiah and Judith Porter's daughter Sarah Ann "Sallie" Porter Waddy, her husband John Samuel Waddy and their daughter Mattie Waddy. They are buried in the family plot at Allman Cemetery.

Their portrait was taken by Paris photographer Thomas Jenkins, who was the first professional photographer in Paris.





# TONY LAWRENCE

## Person of the Year is a Gift to Paris

By Susan Jones



**A**dmit it. We Parisians take our Parks and Recreation Department for granted. While they never make a fuss about their hard work, they do make a *SPLASH!* at the Splash Park, a *WHOP!* at the new pickleball courts, and a *WHISH* at the renovated basketball courts at Johnson and Ogburn Parks. They even make an occasional *WOOF!* at the dog park.

Perhaps it was these splashes and woofs that pushed Tony Lawrence, director of Paris Parks and Recreation, to the top of the list for the Paris-Henry County Chamber's coveted Person of the Year Award for 2022.

Lawrence and his crew care for seven parks, plus the Paris Civic Center. Eiffel Tower Park is the largest and features a splash park, pool, soccer fields, tennis and pickleball courts, two playgrounds, disc golf, and a walking trail that encircles the entire park. Across the street are other trails and a trout pond.

The park is located just down the street from Lawrence's office on Volunteer Drive in the Civic Center, which offers a wide array of exercise equipment. There's also an indoor swimming pool and a performing arts center, both of which are shared with Paris Elementary School.

### THE STORY

Standing next to the popular play area for younger children, Lawrence surveys the scene and considers how far this park has come.

"It's hard to imagine, but when our kids were little, back in the early 2000's, there was nothing here at the playground but a swing set, an old-timey slide and some picnic tables," he says.

Kay Whitby and several local residents did the department a big favor when they formed Friends of Paris Parks and Recreation. "They began raising money for a children's playground near the Eiffel Tower, and they didn't stop until they had new playgrounds in four city parks," remembers Lawrence. It was a Herculean effort that greatly improved life in the community.

### TOURIST ATTRACTION

These days, the park not only serves locals, but plenty of out-of-towners, as well. "Whether there's an event or it's just a regular day, the staff and I are shocked at the license plates on the cars in the Eiffel Tower parking lot. Everybody is having a good time and smiling." They're also buying gas and food and perhaps spending the night.

Although many are from adjoining counties, Lawrence sees lots of Nashville, Dickson, Kentucky and Illinois cars, as well. Much of this interest can be traced directly to Lawrence's ability to keep his thumb on the pulse of new trends.

### TIMING IS EVERYTHING

"It was probably about 10 years ago that Peanut (Gary Paschall) and I went to Kingsport, Tennessee, for a parks and rec conference," he says. Like Paris, Kingsport is a retirement community, so the men were on the lookout for new ideas.

"We were checking out the local senior center where two, older ladies were demonstrating pickleball. They invited us to join them and then they slammed us," laughs Lawrence. Nevertheless, Lawrence and Paschall enjoyed the game, so they brought home the idea and set it up at the Atkins-Porter Rec Center. But despite their best efforts, it failed to catch on.

Fast forward several years and requests to Lawrence for pickleball began pouring in. "We put it back out at A.P., then created a temporary spot at Eiffel Tower Park. As it gained in popularity, we got a grant for courts," he says. And that's the way new ideas unfold.





Paris Parks & Recreation Director Tony Lawrence surveys one of the latest additions to Eiffel Tower Park, the Blue Cross Health Place playground.

While it's among the top senior sports in the nation, in Paris, participants of all ages play pickleball, including one age group that Lawrence feels is sometimes difficult to attract.

#### TEENAGERS

"Teens are probably our most underserved age group," says Lawrence. "So it really made my heart smile after a concert in the park when I saw about 20 kids lined up against the fence of a pickleball court watching their friends play." With just a few rackets and balls, participants can take turns as they enjoy getting some exercise and fresh air.

#### SPREADING THE LOVE

Lawrence and his crew work to serve seven parks throughout the city. Most recently they could be found repairing the basketball courts at Johnson and Ogburn Parks, as well as the skateboard park at Ogburn. Other parks include Atkins-Porter Rec Center/Dog Park, McNeil, Por-

ter Court, and Washington Courts. Lawrence notes that he's proud that his department is often able to make a nickel look like a dollar, thanks to Joel Crosno and his construction talents.

"Just check out the new backstops at McNeil or the work at the dog park," says Lawrence.

While the Krider Performing Arts Center, run by Rhonda Stanton, is not a park, the facility, along with its touring shows, theatre camps, and more are also within Lawrence's purview. "We get a lot of calls from parents who want to know what is available for their children aside from sports. So we've been increasing our summer classes for youth and also have started a special needs arts class."

So this Christmas morning, when you look under the tree, there may not be a box from Tony Lawrence wrapped up in shiny paper, but as the New Year unfolds, you won't have to look far to appreciate his gifts of vision, hard work, and perseverance.

**Happy Holidays!**

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# PARIS PUBLIC WORKS



## *The Unsung Heroes Of The Holidays*

By Karen Geary

**D**uring the holidays in Paris, there's much joy, goodwill — and trash! And lots of it! The job of clearing the refuse and keeping the city maintained year-round falls on the crews of the Public Works Department.

Phillip Jessie, Public Works director, has overseen the department for 18 years and has worked for the city of Paris for 40 years. His typical workday begins at 6:30 am with his crews on the job by 7 am. He explained that the sanitation department has "...two residential trucks with three-

men crews working Monday through Thursday. There are also two large trucks picking up commercial trash Monday through Friday." If a week has a holiday and the work week is shortened, route crews are doubled up with men from the Street Department and additional trucks are added. "We make sure all the trash is picked up weekly."

And what about holiday trash? "There's a lot of it. And lots of boxes, too," said Jessie with a chuckle. "The loads are much heavier than usual."

One reminder Jessie would like to

pass along to city residents is "to put their trash within 3-to-4 feet from the curb. That saves the crews steps and keeps the guys on schedule."

Trash pickup isn't the only job for the Public Works Department. They are responsible for mowing within the city limits, street repairs, fixing pipes, and any other maintenance jobs. "We do snow and ice removal, tornado clean-ups, water main breaks, and pothole repairs," Jessie said. "It's basically a 365-day, 24-hour on-call job. We are out in all types of weather keeping things working."



"We pick up brush the last week of the month. And we have Bulk Day every Friday. That's when we pick up things like old mattresses, broke furniture, and large items like appliances. All a city resident has to do is call our department, and we'll put their address on our schedule. And if people have a pothole, let us know. We want to get them fixed. All they need to do is call in the pothole's location, and we'll get out there and patch it if it is on a city street."

Leaf pickup is also another responsibility for the department. Two leaf trucks travel the city streets during the months of November through the end of March. Pickups begin with the public calling their department, but as the leaves begin falling more rapidly, the trucks make regular routes for bag pickups and street cleaning. "I like to run the sweepers during this time to help with the leaf clean-up." Leaf removal also keeps the sewer system working properly.

Of course, the World's Biggest Fish Fry has its own challenges for the department, but the crews have their work planned out. While the rest of the city employees are off that day for the festival, Public Works crews are on the job all day. "We get to take another day off, but we are out there working, taking care of business," said Jessie.

Landfill Supervisor Bobby Swayne, stated that waste totals for 2021 were 41,825 tons. This number includes sol-



Whether it's sprucing up for the holidays or snow removal from city streets, the Public Works Department keeps Paris in working order.

id waste, which is household garbage mostly, construction debris, brush, and wood. The least amount of waste brought in last year was in February at 1,988 tons and the most came in October at 8,559 tons.

Jessie didn't want to brag too much but he feels his department has a great work crew. "We are blessed. Our city manager and commissioners understand we have good talent running our equipment. Our city makes it a priority for Public Works to have good equipment so we can function

at our best. Other cities in the area aren't that fortunate."

City Manager Kim Foster offered high praise for the department, too. "I am so proud of how hard our guys work regardless of the weather or conditions. They know residents of the city depend on them, and they are determined to provide good service in a dependable way."

City residents can report potholes, schedule pickups, or ask questions by calling the Public Works Department at 731-642-0473.



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*Thankfully, you can recycle many everyday household items to help promote a cleaner, greener environment. Recycling and reusing items produces less trash, thus reduces harm to the soil, air, and water. One way to recycle trash was seen at the Scarecrows on the Square this past October. Artwork by Patricia Byars.*



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MERRY & BRIGHT



# Berryman House:

CALLING ALL

# *Angels*

By Shannon McFarlin



It was a case of now-you-see-it and now-you-don't, and the results are spectacular. The majestic two-story house seen on Highway 69N on the way to Cottage Grove is jaw-droppingly beautiful, and its history is just as impressive.

The house that is there now isn't the same house that has always been there. Yet, it's identical. The home is an exact replica of the beautiful dwelling that had been in that same location for generations.

John and Marie Berryman had always admired the home and gazed at it longingly for years as they drove by it. But once they realized their dream by purchasing it, they determined the structure which had never been insulated, needed major updates.

Marie Berryman recalled, "We bought the home with the intention of renovating it, but once we took ownership, we started realizing that renovating it would just not be enough. It needed to be modernized and the engineers we were working with said the house just wouldn't stand with the work that we had to do." The original mortar of the foundation was crumbling.

"We were just heartbroken," she said. "We consider it a heritage house and it's always been in this community. So we decided we would need to tear it down and build another as near to the original as we could in the exact same spot. And that's what we did." John Berryman is an architect and put his skills to work in designing the replica.

The Berrymans purchased the property in 2014 and started preliminary work in 2015. The original house came down in 2016 and reconstruction began. The Berrymans – John, Marie and their son, Cole – were able to move into the finished residence in October 2018.

How long did it take? "Forever," Berryman said.

Former residents of the home agree on one thing: the house was chilly, with no insulation and with fireplaces built in each room. Even with the fireplaces, many of the families only lived on the first floor year-round.



The entrance to the Berryman home is adorned with handmade angels for Christmas.

In addition to insulating the structure, the Berrymans built a basement (which the original did not have) and modernized the windows and doors to be energy efficient. "We kept everything from the original house that we could," Marie said. "Actually, we kept something original in each room in the house."

Neighbors and other lovers of the house have been happy to see it back in its rightful place and have been especially pleased to see the Christmas angel decorations that adorned the home for many holidays in use again.

The wooden angels were crafted by Jimmy Barrett. Jimmy and Nola Barrett were the last owners of the home before the Berrymans, and Jimmy built the angels back in the 1970s, which makes them around 50 years old. Barrett would place the angels differently each Christmas season, sometimes putting them on the front steps and other times on the porch.

Over the holidays, the Berrymans place them on the second story porch, secured to the porch railing and lit up with up lights and solar lights. The Christmas angels are a welcome sight to those who pass by the residence, especially those who grew up admiring the angels over the years.

The home, which is considered to be built on the fourth highest spot in

Henry County, was a showplace for generations.

Known historically as the Asa Cox Place, the original dwelling place that was built in the late 1800s burned down, and the two-story home that stood in that spot for generations was built around 1910-1912.

Family names of residents of the place over the years include Cox, Miller, Crowder, Story, Higgs, White and Barrett.

Miller Cemetery is located in back of the property and is the final resting place for eight people. Elder Asa Cox and his second wife, Margarete Belle "Maggie" Akers Cox are buried there along with other members of the Cox family. Members of the Phillips and Dial Families are also buried there.

Touches of old and new populate the home: lights from the former Cottage Grove School used in a front room, a 1936 Chambers stove in the kitchen, and a good ol' screen door emblazoned with 'Colonial Bread' on it serves as the door to the pantry.

The property spans 168 acres where the Berrymans enjoy the beautiful Cottage Grove sunsets. The property includes a historic and picturesque barn. Their dog, Lloyd, can often be found gazing out the window, surveying the countryside, from his favorite perches in the house.



## REMEMBER WHEN

**P**aris always goes all out for the holidays with numerous activities, such as open houses, school programs, and unique decorations lighting up our sweet town each year.

Let's take a stroll down Memory Lane, to the more recent past, for this issue's Remember When section and do just that: Remember the people and beauty of our holiday seasons.

*Photos by Shannon McFarlin and other contributors.*



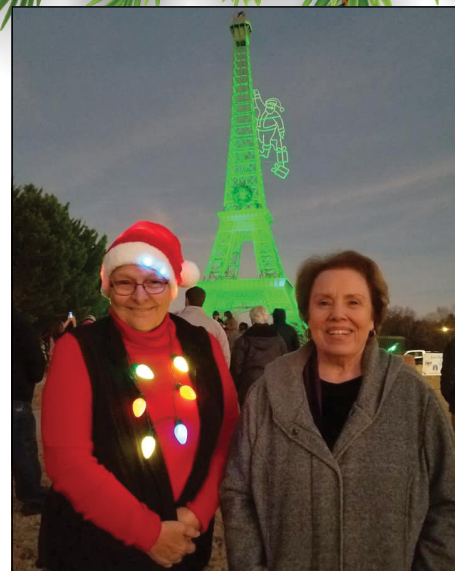
It was 1977 and Santa stopped in for a visit at the Lucy and Roy Wright Daycare. Sitting on his lap are Tammy Brown Owens and Smantha Parker.



In 2017, Ollie McLeese looks lovingly at Santa Claus in his Downtown Paris house.



At the Paris BPU Christmas Open House in 2016, Janine Kemp and Beverly Wood greeted visitors.



Marsha Banasiewicz and Paris Vice Mayor Jackie Jones were among dozens on hand for the unveiling of the new decorations at the Eiffel Tower in 2021.



During this 2018 Christmas event, Paris firemen were busy making s'mores - and warming up around the fire.



The Cops & Kids project involves Paris City Police and Henry County Sheriff's deputies in collaboration with Henry County High School students who take kids on Christmas shopping sprees each year. Here is a part of the group who were on hand in 2017.





Above left: In 2010, Mrs. Linda Mitchell's kindergarten class at Rhea Elementary was all dressed up for their annual Thanksgiving day skit and feast. Pictured (left to right) are Olivia Harper, Victoria Rich, Addy Kate Parker, and Ava Higgins.

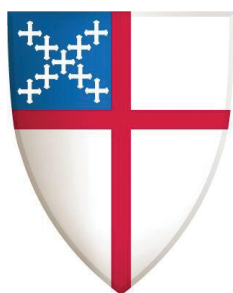


Above right: At The Shed in 2017, Santa Claus visited with Deputy Michelle Brewer and Vicki Miller while handing out presents to kids.

Right: Mrs. Claus (a.k.a. Susan Jones) and 'Chief Elf' Becky Jackson greeted kids at Santa's house in downtown Paris in 2018.



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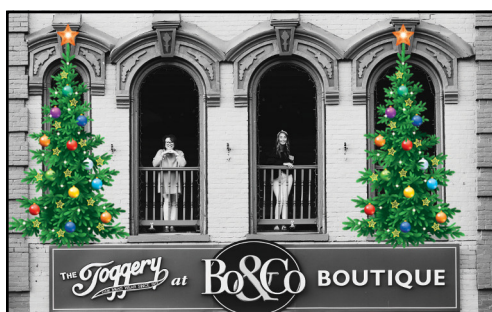
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# Memories, Moments, The People...

## *How We Celebrate The Holidays*

By Travis McLeese

**T**he Holidays are a busy time at the Chamber office. We spend months preparing for events, developing marketing content, decorating, with the hope of creating a special atmosphere in our community. After all, we believe that we can create a festive experience for shoppers that will inspire them to shop local and bring others into our local businesses to do their holiday shopping.

Most years I write this article as an outline of all of the events and festivities happening in our community throughout the season, but this year I needed something different. I wanted to pause and reflect on our staff's favorite Christmas memories or holiday traditions.

### THE COVER PHOTO

Last year, Jesssica and I hosted the staff at our home for our office Christmas party – partially because I love to cook and the reality that we have so many kids amongst our staff that we needed somewhere that wouldn't kick us out for the kids being rowdy.

This photo sums our crew up! Although the staff and spouses weren't in this photo, you can see their faces



PHC Chamber of Commerce Kids – photo taken during a non-rowdy moment.

and their character through the kids. How fun is that?!

### MEMORIES COMING FULL CIRCLE

One of my favorite responsibilities of my job is that the Downtown Paris Association organizes Santa's house on the Square. This has always been a big deal in my family and is my favorite memory/tradition.

As you can see in the photo (see next page), my mom has every photo from when I was a baby, the addition of my sister, and through my kids with their picture on the Square. It

is always nice to look back and tease those who were crying or missing most of their teeth.

As a parent now, I put myself in my mother's shoes and look at the growth of my babies and how much, and how quickly they change. These are memories I will cherish forever.

### FROM KASEY:

Seems like Christmas is always a little different every year, but some things we try to keep the same. Everyone gets a new ornament each year – no specific thing, but usually





Visits with Santa photos: The McLeese's wall is a time capsule from his youth until now with his own children.

a representation of what they loved or were into the most that year. We decorate cookies at my mom's (and they look terrible, ha!) but it's fun! We always make our way to Santa's House downtown.

My church's Christmas Eve Service is where I feel the most genuine Christmas spirit. It's at 8pm on Christmas Eve, it's dim, intimate, and the greatest reminder of the Christmas story. Scripture is read, traditional Christmas hymns sung, communion is taken by intinction. Everyone takes a

candle and forms a circle around the pews in the sanctuary and we sing "Silent Night." It's the most important tradition for me.

#### FROM RACHEL:

As a traditionalist, it is hard to narrow my favorite down. Christmas Eve has always been special to me. Growing up, we always had a big dinner and spent time with family, then my grandparents would come home and stay the night with us. They loved watching our excitement on Christmas morning. Even after my kids were born, we carried on that tradition with them and our parents. My boys look forward to it every year.



This coming Christmas will be the first one that I haven't woken up with Mama Ruby being a part of it. She loved Christmas and giving to others. One of her last requests was for me to make sure and buy my boys Christmas presents from her.



#### FROM IVEY:

My Mamaw always made sure we had a Hallmark ornament each year. Now we make powder sugar pecan cookies that were her recipe. Other than that we get together with family and eat and do all the normal Christmas shenanigans. Anything from watching *The Grinch* 8,000,000 times to decorating gingerbread houses, which I always finish decorating by myself – and the kids eat most of the decorations before I can even take a picture.



#### A REMINDER

Sometimes in the hustle and bustle of the season, we have to remember to pause. In that pause we can reflect on the memories, the moments, people that make the season so special.

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# ONE SCHOOL *Two Centuries*

By Meredith Vajda

**P**aris Academy for the Arts is celebrating its Bicentennial, along with the City of Paris and Henry County, during this two-year period of 2021-2023. The Arts Academy owns a building, and the site has always been the location of a school since the early 1820s when 60 prominent men pooled their resources to build Male Academy. Classes were in session by the 1830s.

During its long life, it has been a private school, a public school, a rebuilt school with more classrooms and a lunchroom added after a fire, an elementary school, a high school, and a co-educational institution. After it was re-named four times, it became an elementary school again and eventually closed in 1975. The building continued to served as the school system's administrative offices for the next 20 years.

The building was saved from the wrecking ball in 2001 when concerned local citizens formed a non-profit organization to purchase it and restore it, using the arts organization as the means of funding the effort.

Paris Academy for the Arts has mounted a display in Room 7 detailing the history of the school building in photos, scrapbooks, textbooks, artifacts, and video reminiscences. There are class photographs, a group photo

of Henry County teachers, school financial and scholastic records, photos of the school in its different manifestations, school desks, lunchboxes, and a timeline.

Founding board member Ray Harding is featured in a video recalling his fond memories of his classes and long-time teacher and principal Miss Charlie McGehee. Harding's friend and fellow founding board member Andy Hooper began attending classes at the then-named Lee School in 1947.

Another founding board member, Suzanne Richter, is recorded reading a letter from a former student, Kathleen Anderson Gaddy, sent when she was 87 years old, telling of her years spent in school at the building.

The school's Board of Directors hope to record more oral histories from former students. Please contact the Academy if you are interested in contributing to this Memory Project.

The Bicentennial display's opening reception was on October 2 and included a ceremony dedicating Room 2 to Miss Charlie, who spent 48 years at the school. Ray and Nora-gene Harding donated a plaque that is affixed to the door of the former principal's office, alongside a photo of her. The brass handbell she used to call classes to lunch and recess is also on display.

Anecdotes that have been shared during the compilation included one about a special privilege for spelling winners – a slide down the exterior circular fire escapes on Friday afternoons. Another is Ray Harding's memory of his favorite teacher, Miss Stella Dunn, reading a chapter of the *Little House on the Prairie* series almost every day after lunch. Jean Owens recalled one teacher's strong rebuke to a student who used the word "ain't" in her class.

In the 20 years that Paris Academy for the Arts has owned the building, all classrooms and the lunchroom have been restored with heating, air conditioning, lighting, and paint to be fully functional for classes, gallery shows, artist studios, concerts, meetings, and other events.

Donations, from friends, grants, city and county support, bequests, and events have made the continued existence of this building possible. The building and display are open to the public. All are welcome to visit and appreciate the school's place in the local history and community.

Paris Academy for the Arts is located at 402 Lee Street near Downtown Paris. For more information about the school, visit their website at [www.schoolforarts.org](http://www.schoolforarts.org) or call 731-624-3411.



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# 'Tis The Season to be...

## ~~Busy~~

# ENTERTAINED!

By Rhoda Stanton

**T**he holiday season is often a flurry of activity with opportunities and obligations to shop, plan, gather, and worship. I hope that this coming season will also include some opportunities to support local arts and school events at the Krider Performing Arts Center (KPAC). The KPAC Calendar is packed, and we hope the house will be packed all season, as well!

Krider Performing Arts Center has a symbiotic relationship with area schools, providing space and offering support for a wide range of events. The official holiday kickoff for school events begins Tuesday, November 29 with the W. G. Rhea Elementary 2nd Grade Winter Shows at 5:30 and 7:00 pm under the direction of Angie Hawkins. Henry County High School Thespians present the one-act play, *A Holly Jolly Christmas* by Chloe Knott on Saturday, December 3 (TBA). Wendy Breedlove, HCHS Theatre instructor, is directing.

Paris Elementary School's 5th grade performs on Monday, December 5 at 6:00 PM under the direction of Minette Veazey. Tuesday, December 6 features Inman Middle School Chorus Concerts at 6:00 and 7:00

PM with Jessica McLeese directing. Inman Middle School Band Director Lucy Presson will present the IMS Band at KPAC at 6:30 PM on Thursday, December 8.

"Christmas with the HCHS Madrigals" is a yearly treat with the intricate a capella group arrangements and fabulous small ensembles and solos by the high school vocalists. This year's "Christmas with the Madrigals" is on Saturday, December 10 at 7:00 PM and is directed by Deanna Cook Brown, herself a former HCHS Madrigal.

Our last school performance of the season is the Paris Special School District School Strings under the direction of Gioia Fazinni. Paris Elementary students perform at 6:00 PM and Inman Middle School students perform at 7:15 PM on Monday, December 12.

Another way KPAC supports area education is in serving graduation events. The Henry County Virtual Academy students will have their graduation ceremony with us on Thursday, December 15, and the Tennessee Colleges of Applied Technology winter graduation is on Tuesday, December 20.

Our featured community performance is the Paris-Henry County Chamber Music Society's Christmas Concert under the direction of R. Michael Holden. "Sounds of the Season" at 4:00 PM on Sunday, December 11. The event will highlight the PHC Community Concert Band and various ensembles in this fabulous concert which is free to the public.

Near and dear to our hearts at KPAC will be the December 13 concert featuring the HarmoniX, the 16 member acapella vocal group of KPAC Young Artists. HarmoniX began five years ago as an opportunity for area young singers to sharpen their skills and gain performance experience. This year's group has singers from 6th to 12th grade who come from public school, private school, and home school.

HarmoniX will perform group numbers as well as some solos and ensembles. The concert will also feature MainStream Vocals, another KPAC Young Artists group for developing young singers.

This is MainStream Vocals' second year and the program is growing! The concert begins at 7 pm and free to the public.



KPAC's Touring Artists event is coming direct from Las Vegas! Do you remember all the wonderful variety shows we all grew up on in the 70's and 80's? "The Ultimate Christmas Variety Show" will dazzle on Friday, December 2 at 7 pm with your favorite "stars." Now is your chance to see them live and re-created by Las Vegas' #1 impersonators of all time. Anthony and Eddie Edwards use state-of-the-art make-up to look and sound like the superstars of today and yesterday.

NBC's Today Show says, "It's one of the most extraordinary shows we have ever seen." The Edwards Twins re-create the performances of Sonny & Cher, Billy Joel, Elton John, Lady Gaga, Neil Diamond, Celine Dion, Rod Stewart, Bette Midler, Olivia Newton John, Barbra Streisand, Andrea Bocelli, Frankie Valli, Tom Jones, and many more. The Edwards Twins are celebrating 37 years of performing their must-see show. Tickets are \$37 and \$27 and can be purchased at KriderPAC.com. Call Paris Civic Center at 731-644-2517 for more information.

Join us at KPAC during your holiday season!



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# ROCKIN' RANDALL

## "I Want Everyone To Have A Good Time"

By Kathy Ray

**T**he state of Tennessee is home to seven genres of music – blues, bluegrass, rock 'n roll, rockabilly, country, gospel, and soul. Nashville, Tennessee, might be known as Music City USA, but Henry County is a community filled with talented musicians and songwriters, too.

In this article of "Soundtracks" meet a local favorite, Randall French. Who is Rockin' Randall? "I am just a working man with a family to take care of," said French. "I am a journeyman lineman at Paris BPU. I have been a TSSAA basketball official for 24 years. My wife of 18 years, Brooke, is a kindergarten teacher at PSSD. We have two beautiful daughters – Alley is 16 and Annie Kate is 11."

When I asked what inspired him to start playing music, he replied, "A lot of my family are musicians and the others love music, so music runs deep through us. My mother, Linda Barrett, has a beautiful voice and has

supported me. My dad, Ken French, has been a bass player and singer since his young days. My grandmother, Lamoine Barrett, gave me my first guitar. That pretty much got me started!"

Rockin' Randall is a rhythm guitar player. He plays all types of music – from Skynyrd to Vince Gill and heavy metal to funk. He also plays the bass, the keyboard, and drums. His favorite tune is the one that keeps the folks happy. And Rockin' Randall does it very well!

When asked who inspired him, it was very clear that it was his family and friends. He said watching his Granny and Paw in church influenced him. Listening to his parents' musical stories spurred his interest. He could not get enough of "the pickins'" as he called them, at Patty and Donnie Akers' house.

French said the best part of being a musician is seeing people have a good time, spending time with some of his

best friends, and making new friends.

As we talked about the band, French said the band was not actually his idea. Ryan Holladay and Jeff Gregory approached him about it. They all wanted it to be a different musical experience that is not usually played at a live performance. The band was put on hold by COVID, and different things occurred that pushed it back. When French was asked to have a band in the Tennessee River Jam, it seemed to be a good fit. "I don't think the band name would have originally been headed with my name but after River Jam it seemed to stick!"

We talked about his favorite performance. "Of course the experience of the band playing the Tennessee River Jam wins on performance." Darryl Worley said he and John Rich were backstage talking while Rockin' Randall and band were performing. John asked Darryl, "Who is that guy?" Darryl said, "That is Rockin' Randall, the guy you have to follow and I am



glad it is you and not me!” French said another great experience was when the band played to a sold-out crowd at The Breakers.

When he was asked about his favorite musician, French replied, “I can’t name one favorite. I have played more music with my lifelong friend, John McDaniel, than anyone. John is one of the best. I must mention a great night when John and I sat on each side of my buddy, Darryl Worley. We also sat on each side of Rolling Stones legend Bobby Keys. I wish I could name them all. People just don’t realize all the serious talent that surround these parts. I don’t take y’all for granted! You are all my faves!”

I asked him, “What is the best advice another musician has given you?” “Drink this water. You are getting loose,” he replied. “Thanks Mac! This is a learn-as-you-go industry. If you are new and just getting started, learn as you go.”

With all French has going on in his life, he loves watching his girls be and do different things. He said, “Alley is such a hard worker at getting better at softball. We spend a lot of time together working on that. I love to watch her play the game. Annie Kate is a cheerleader and does a great job. She is a sixth grader at Inman and worked hard to make the team and continues to get better. By the way, she is a doll! She has got all the moves too! We are very proud of her! I personally love to hit the golf course.”

I asked Randall what he wants



Above: John McDaniel (left) and Rockin' Randall French (right) jam at Blues Landing with country entertainer Darryl Worley.

Left: Randall French performed to thousands of fans at this year's Tennessee River Jam.

fans to remember about him. “That is simple,” he answered. “I want everyone to have a good time. I am there to please the crowd.”

And he does please the crowd! As a loyal fan, I have witnessed venues filled with fans enjoying an acoustic performance by Rockin' Randall, venues filled with fans eager to experience Rockin' Randall and the All-Star Band, as well as the opening act in front of thousands on the Tennessee River Jam stage. If you have not experienced the sounds of Rockin'

Randall, I encourage you to give him a listen. He will not disappoint your musical experience. Check out his Facebook page, Randall French, for upcoming performances.

Multiple venues in our community host great musicians most weekends. It has been said that our local musicians are as good as any music in Nashville. There are great musicians right here in your own backyard.

Kathy Ray is a retired Executive Director of the Downtown Paris Association.



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*Merry Christmas & Happy New Year!*





**P**ARIS! was able to catch up with busy Sam Hutson, President of Crove Media and Crove Food Co., to ask him about his latest venture – rubs and seasonings! Joining him in the companies is his wife, Hannah, who is a Physician Assistant and professor at the Bethel University PA Program.

**Q: You and Hannah are seen everywhere with your media company! Why did you two start a food company?**

**A:** My wife and I started Crove Food Co. in 2020 to share our passion for food and love of cooking with people near and far. Growing up in rural West Tennessee, we are surrounded by fresh ingredients, great people, and amazing opportunities to grow our love for food.

“Crove” represents home to us. We wanted our brand to reflect growing up on our family farm in Cottage Grove. We started Crove Food Co. in our kitchen with little to nothing but a huge dream! We have poured our hearts into it since day one, and we are loving every minute of it.

We have a media company so we already had all the professional equipment for video production, so I was able to start our food channel easily.

**Q: Your food videos are so fun! You leave in your mistakes and bloopers. What’s next?**

**A:** We always try to be authentic and have fun doing what we love. We

make a lot of mistakes when cooking, just like everyone else, and we like to be transparent. A lot of people are turned away from cooking when they make a few mistakes, but that is all a part of the process. We certainly like to keep that in there when we can.

**Q: How many followers do you have on your YouTube Channel?**

**A:** We currently have around 640,000 followers total, with the largest following on TikTok with just over 580,000 followers and over 6.5 million likes. Our Instagram has also grown this year to over 56,000 followers on that platform. One purpose of the Tailgate Tour, is to grow our following on our YouTube Channel where we currently have around 6,500 subscribers. If we get to 100,000 subscribers on our YouTube Channel, we will be taking the Tailgate Tour to the Superbowl in Arizona.

**Q: You’ve been tailgating during football season with your rubs. What have been the reactions to your food samples?**

**A:** At each tailgate stop, we have been cooking 3-4 recipes using our rubs and products like Allegro Marinade as ingredients. We have been cooking on our Traeger, Big Green Egg, Hasty Bake, and Weber Kettle using Cowboy Charcoal and GrillGrates.

We always tell our fans on social media what time the food will be ready, invite them to hang out with us, and play games while they wait.

When the food comes off the grills, they line up and can’t wait to try it!

I will say we have had some really funny reactions, but they have all been very positive! We will put together a compilation video of the best reactions once we finish the tour. Be sure to look for that.

They all want to buy our rubs and want to know where they can find the recipe. Thanks to our sponsors, GrillGrates, Tennessee River Jam, Cowboy Charcoal, ORCA, and Allegro Marinade we are able to hand out all of this food for free.

**Q: What’s been your favorite reaction to your food?**

**A:** We have had some interesting ones for sure! One of the coolest things we have had happen was when Gordon Ramsey reacted to one of our videos! On Tiktok, Gordon makes comments where he reacts to food videos and picks on the person who made it in a funny way.

I had actually tried two separate times to make a video to get his attention, like Beef Wellington Nachos and a Beef Wellington Burger. One day, I woke up to my phone blowing up. Ramsey reacted to a different video of ours – a pizza cheeseburger. He had a lot of fun with it, and it was an absolute honor to even catch his attention. A month or two later, we were asked to interview for Season 2 of his show on the Fox Network called “Next Level Chef”! We didn’t make the final cut, but it was an honor to be considered.



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- 1 tablespoon mustard



### DIRECTIONS

1. Start by removing the membrane from the back of the ribs. Use a paper towel to help you do this. Use mustard or olive oil to act as a binder for the rub to stick to the meat. Liberally apply the pork rub to the meat and let it sit out at room temperature while you prepare your smoker to 250° F.
2. Once the smoker is up to temperature, smoke the ribs for 3 hours over your preferred wood. Every 30-45 minutes, spray the ribs with apple juice or apple cider vinegar to keep them moist.
3. After 3 hours, lay out two sheets of aluminum foil. Prepare a bed of butter, brown sugar, and honey on the bottom and lay your ribs over the bed. Add more honey, butter, and brown sugar to the top, as well as a spray of apple juice.
4. After 1-1/2 to 2 hours, remove ribs from the foil and place on the smoker. Reserve the liquid from the inside of the aluminum foil. Mix your favorite BBQ sauce with the juice from the aluminum foil to create a glaze and brush on the ribs. Let glaze set on the ribs for 15-20 minutes and then remove from smoker.
5. Let the ribs rest for 10-15 minutes and enjoy!

Sam Hutson concluded, "The past few years have been so much fun and we have grown so much. We have some really big plans for the future and we are so thankful to be able to run our business in Downtown Paris. The community support we have seen has been amazing. We really hope to offer more local opportunities for people to try our food in the near future."

"The Tennessee River Jam has come on as a sponsor for our Tailgate Tour, so we will certainly be around for the four-day event right here in

our hometown, and hopefully we can find an opportunity to cook for everyone at the event!"

Sam and Hannah invite PARIS! readers to shop for their new line of rubs at [crovefood.com](http://crovefood.com). You can also find the seasonings in these local stores: Trolingers, The Iron Place, My Favorite Things, IGA, and Jack's Java.

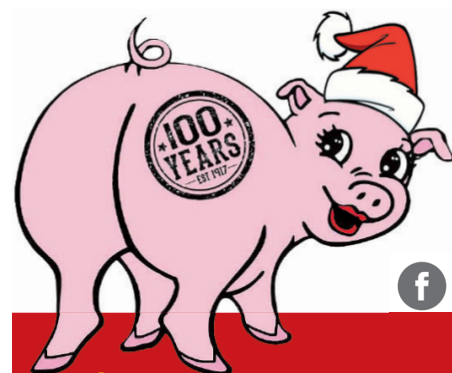
Crove Food Co.'s website is full of videos and easy-to-follow recipes that showcase their rubs. Follow them on TikTok, Instagram, Facebook, and subscribe to their YouTube Channel.



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From the Crew at IGA





## FACES & PLACES



Henry County High School senior Harlee Veazey was named this year's Homecoming Queen. She was escorted by Sam Smith. Photo by Preston Pooler



Brian and Kim Foster spent time with their grandson Riley picking out a pumpkin. Uncle Harrison Foster came along to The Clay Sheds with them.



Long-time volunteer Joyce Bass cooks up some fried oreos at this year's Henry County Relay for Life.



At First Christian Church's Blessing of the Pets, Jocelyn Rosenzweig brought two of her cats, her friend Hope Ahrens brought one, and they all gathered with dozens of canines in Atkins-Porter Dog Park. Alex McDaniel looks on.



Judge Vicki Snyder and Sheriff Josh Frey help put school supplies in backpacks for this year's Back to School Bash. Hundreds of backpacks were filled and distributed to local children.



Caleb and Brian Wimberley celebrate the University of Tennessee's 52-49 win over the University of Alabama.



Congratulations to the Peppers Family! They received a special acknowledgement from Toyota for 25 years of successful business.





The Commercial Bank Scarecrow Band at Scarecrows on the Square is flocked with their "groupies" Mallorie Hutson and Shannon Daigle. Clint Davis, Rod James and Brett Stoots make up the band.



At the grand opening of "Fall at the Clay Sheds" at Whitlock, Future Visions co-owner Jessi Smith wrangled twins Ada and Lila for a photo.



Ray Harding dedicates Room 2 to long-time former Lee School Principal Charlie McGhee at a program on the school's history at the Paris Academy for the Arts.

Photo by Marsha Banasiewicz

Paris Quota Club 2022-23 club officers were installed by Jane Sinnema, using a puzzle theme. Left to right, President Jill Snow; Vice President Mary Kathryn Moore; Secretary Martha McFadden; Treasurer Deborah Mell; Parliamentarian-Historian Geraldine Sykes, Directors Cassandra Perry, Martha Smith and Elizabeth Craig. Not pictured is Assistant Treasurer Janice Teas. Kayla Nation was named Quotarian of the Year.



## Year-End Tax Planning Ideas for Individuals

**N**ow that fall is officially here, it's a good time to start taking steps that may lower your tax bill for this year and next. One of the first planning steps is to ascertain whether you'll take the standard deduction or itemize deductions for 2022. Many taxpayers won't itemize because of the high 2022 standard deduction amounts (\$25,900 for joint filers, \$12,950 for singles and married couples filing separately and \$19,400 for heads of household).

Also, many itemized deductions have been reduced or abolished under current law. If you do itemize, you can deduct medical expenses that exceed 7.5% of adjusted gross income (AGI), state and local taxes up to \$10,000, charitable contributions, and mortgage interest on a restricted amount of debt, but these deductions won't save taxes unless they're more than your standard deduction.

### Bunching, pushing, pulling

Some taxpayers may be able to work around these deduction restrictions by applying a "bunching" strategy to pull or push discretionary medical expenses and charitable contributions into the year where they'll do some tax good. For example, if you'll be able to itemize deductions this year but not next, you may want to make two years' worth of charitable contributions this year.

### Here are some other ideas to consider:

- Postpone income until 2023 and accelerate deductions into 2022 if doing so enables you to claim larger tax breaks for 2022 that are phased out over various levels of AGI. These include deductible IRA contributions, child tax credits, education tax credits and student loan interest deductions. Postponing income also is desirable for taxpayers who anticipate being in a lower tax bracket next year due to changed financial circumstances. However, in some cases, it may

pay to accelerate income into 2022. For example, that may be the case if you expect to be in a higher tax bracket next year.

- If you're eligible, consider converting a traditional IRA into a Roth IRA by year end. This is beneficial if your IRA invested in stocks (or mutual funds) that have lost value. Keep in mind that the conversion will increase your income for 2022, possibly reducing tax breaks subject to phaseout at higher AGI levels.

- High-income individuals must be careful of the 3.8% net investment income tax (NIIT) on certain unearned income. The surtax is 3.8% of the lesser of: 1) net investment income (NII), or 2) the excess of modified AGI (MAGI) over a threshold amount. That amount is \$250,000 for joint filers or surviving spouses, \$125,000 for married individuals filing separately and \$200,000 for others. As year-end nears, the approach taken to minimize or eliminate the 3.8% surtax depends on your estimated MAGI and NII for the year. Keep in

mind that NII doesn't include distributions from IRAs or most retirement plans.

- It may be advantageous to arrange with your employer to defer, until early 2023, a bonus that may be coming your way.
- If you're age 70+ or older by the end of 2022, consider making 2022 charitable donations via qualified charitable distributions from a traditional IRA — especially if you don't itemize deductions. These distributions are made directly to charities from your IRA and the contribution amount isn't included in your gross income or deductible on your return.
- Make gifts sheltered by the annual gift tax exclusion before year end. In 2022, the exclusion applies to gifts of up to \$16,000 made to each recipient. These transfers may save your family taxes if income-earning property is given to relatives in lower income tax brackets who aren't subject to the kiddie tax.

**These are just some of the year-end steps that may save taxes. Contact our ATA team to tailor a plan that will work best for you. © 2022**



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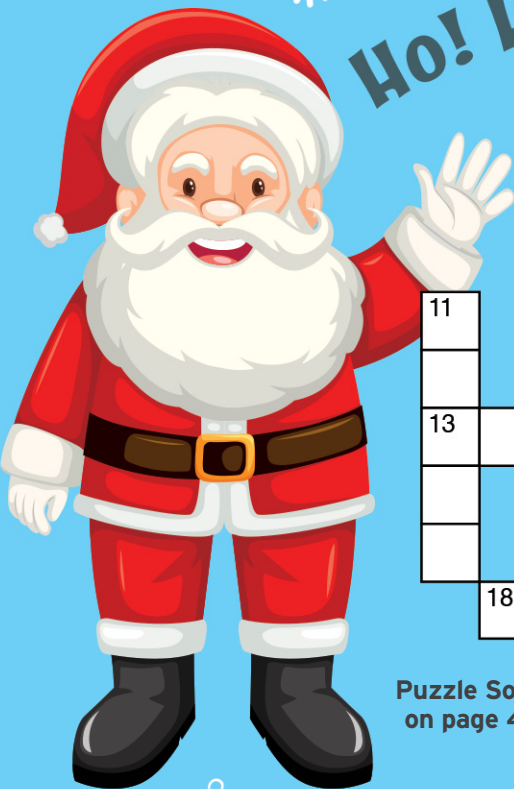


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# JUST FOR FUN

## Ho! Ho! Ho!



Puzzle Solve  
on page 44



### Across

1. This department maintains the city of Paris.
5. A crunchy snack or a type of ball
7. Crove Food Co. has a seasoning for these.
10. Rhea School had a skit and feast for this holiday.
12. Dog's name
13. The \_\_\_\_\_ Christmas Variety Show
15. She is having a Women & Wealth Wednesday event.
18. One type of fruit Bill Atkins poisoned
20. He is dressed in a big pink rabbit costume
21. Barry Hart said this was his worst Christmas gift.
24. Christmas movie character
25. HCHS \_\_\_\_\_ Patriots

### Down

2. Celebrate the season with these treats!
3. Governor James D. Porter's gift
4. On Poplar Street, First \_\_\_\_\_ Church
6. Organization that developed a botanical garden
8. Who is the Chief Elf?
9. Downtown \_\_\_\_\_ is a holiday tradition.
11. Ford's top-selling vehicle
14. Mr. Tin Man says "\_\_\_\_\_ your trash."
16. Cancer specialty
17. He was this year's person of the year.
19. He's hanging on the Eiffel Tower.
22. He opened for Big & Rich at TN River Jam.
23. Christmas cat's name



# CATS LOVE CHRISTMAS!

By Dan Jackson

**T**he best thing about cats and Christmas is you don't have to worry about that Elf on the Shelf. Okay, I'm kidding, sort of. If you've got a cat in the house, you definitely would have to worry about the Elf on the Shelf.

Can you cat owners out there imagine an elf sneaking around in the middle of the night, trying to move to another spot? Kevin, our 15 pounds of muscle and killer instinct, would take that elf out faster than Kim Kardashian filtering a photo. I'm saying it would be fast!

You'd wake up Christmas morning and your present would be under the tree. It would also be under a paw.... an exhausted, limp, lifeless, shelf elf. Which shows you right there, cats are giftgivers. And we all know, Christmas is about giving. Cats are givers. Cats love Christmas.

Seriously, cats and Christmas go together like peas and carrots. And speaking of food, what is better after a huge Martha and Sue Christmas dinner (that's my mom and aunt who cook SO MUCH great holiday food) than to have your cat snuggle up on your lap for a nice nap?

What, you don't believe me? Oh, it's a huge dinner. The cousins try to kick in, but Martha and Sue have us whooped. Ham, roasted turkey, smoked turkey, mashed potatoes, dressing, gravy, peas, October beans, white beans, bean salad, grape salad, seven-layer salad, slaw, Mom's sweet potatoes, somebody else's sweet potatoes, corn, someone else's corn, corn casserole, casserole number two, casserole number three, Aunt Sue's sour dough rolls, Shawnaree's cheese ball, macaroni and cheese, deviled eggs...and then dessert!

It's an embarrassment of riches, but it's certainly a reminder to enjoy the bountiful gifts we as Americans enjoy. It would also be great if Gloria, our seven pounds of downy soft cuddles and claws, could crawl up and take a nap as I recline back to watch some NBA. That, however, is not happening in Martha's house. No pets inside. Not even cats.

We once tried the Aunt Bethany move from the movie "National Lampoon's Christmas Vacation." We wrapped Kevin up as a present. By the time we got there, he had eaten the entire box and wrappings from the inside out. That was some litter box the next morning!

Talking about litter boxes, cats love Christmas trees! And why wouldn't they? It's a tree! In the house! And you don't have to call the fire department to get them out of it.



It just falls over on the floor, over and over and over again. And cats love tinsel. They love tinsel so much they don't know if it's coming or going. And trust me, it can do both. You've heard of a cat of nine tails? Well, you get the picture.

And ornaments? They adore ornaments! What is the point of a glass ball just hanging on a tree? From a cat's perspective how would you feel if you were locked up in a box for 11 months, and then when you're finally freed, only to hang on a tree? Cats know a ball needs to be free! It needs to roll! It needs to bounce! And yes, it needs to break. *O Christmas tree, O Christmas tree, how the cats love to destroy thee.*

And what would the holidays be without dress up? We all like to look nice. We all have our favorite sweater. Look good...feel good...be good. Cats are no different.

Kevin has been modeling Christmas wear since his pound days. It's what first got him noticed, and hence his first modeling gig with Cheryl, his cat mom. Now it's unlimited riches of



Above: Kevin has been a holiday fashionista since kittenhood.



Left: Gloria stays close to the Christmas tree, ready to swat an unsuspecting ornament.

cat toys and scratching pads!

Gloria on the other hand prefers to spend her holidays a bit of um, au naturel. Get my drift? That's right, if she was a human, she'd spend the holiday in Jamaica at an all-inclusive resort. However, though clothes aren't her thing, she doesn't mind a warm swaddling of blankets so when we put that

live nativity scene together, she plays the part to perfection.

And whilst I don't wish to argue with the author of that infamous scene, shouldn't there have been a part for a cat written in there? It was a manger. It was a barn! A cat had to be in there somewhere. I'm just waiting on the Hallmark movie.

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# WORST CHRISTMAS PRESENT *Ever!*



**D**uring the holiday party gift exchange, were you the one who received a large box of chocolate covered cherries that nobody wanted? Or did you receive camping gear from your beloved — the same equipment he had been eyeing in the store — with the promise, “You’ll love the great outdoors”? Could it be any worse than the women in your office receiving dish towels from their clueless boss?

Well, some **PARIS!** readers can top the “worst gift ever” list. Here’s a few replies from our online questionnaire on gift giving:

**Andy Collins:** “I was young, back in the mid 1980’s and my grandparents came to stay with us on Christmas Eve. We got to open one of the presents they had brought us that night and I received a new watch that had a “light” on it. So cool, until my two older sisters kept waking me up all night to use the “light” on my new watch to see what time it was about every 15 minutes in anticipation of the next morning...I was exhausted...”

**Renette Bonds Mann:** “A *I HATE EVERYONE I WORK WITH* mug.”

**Jonathan Lodge:** “When I was a kid my mom used to try to find useful gifts. Sometimes they were great! Others not so much. One year, my mom got us all ‘soap on a rope.’ It’s exactly as it sounds. Never a Christmas goes

by without someone in the family reminding Mom of this terrible gift.”

**Stephanie Hart:** “An empty plastic mason jar.”

**Monte Belew:** “Last year I was given a mild case of COVID from a friend for Christmas. I got to watch everyone celebrate Christmas from the front porch, looking through a window, and sitting in a lawn chair in the cold. It was terrible but also made me realize how lucky I was not to be bad sick and how special Christmas is.”

**Barry Hart:** “Fruitcake.”

**Shirley Daugherty:** “An ironing board when husband knew I didn’t iron anything. I hang up immediately straight out of the dryer. I yelled saying, “This is what you got thinking of me. Cleaning! Take it back and get your money back.” He’s the ex now.”

**Michael Thorne:** “When I was a kid, clothes. Since I’ve been an adult, clothes. LOL!”

**Lisa Sanders Young:** “Five telephones. He ran by Lowes on his way home on Christmas Eve. We had just moved into new home and there were phone jacks in bathrooms as well as normal places. I was ok with the first one I opened, but by the time I opened the fifth one, I turned into The Grinch.”

**Tracy Scott:** “A deep fat fryer and a toilet tank lid (that he broke)...he became an ex soon after.”

**Debra Stoope:** “A bread box and canister from my husband when we had no counter space.”

**Tonette Landgren:** “A bag of coal. My youngest daughter arranged it.”

**Don Baker:** “Grave plots.”

**Linda Trolinger:** “My first can of hairspray with the nozzle missing.”

Yet for every “bad gift” answers we received, many grateful hearts posted their happy memories. Most replies were similar to these:

**Emory Bradley:** “I’ve been grateful for every gift I have ever received and do not recall a gift that wasn’t appreciated.”

**Mary Alice Campbell:** “I can’t think of any gift I received that I didn’t like. I might not remember the gift, but I remember the love.”

**Bill and Joan Whalen Tellin:** “Never had a bad gift. If someone thought of me to take the time to get one, that was a blessing. Had plenty of special things from my little kiddos that they made or found themselves, and they and I thought were special.”





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# A Christmas Gift Of A *Different Kind*

By Thomas "Gary" Wallis

**T**he week prior to Christmas 1879 was a very wet one in Paris, Tennessee, so much so that *The Paris Post* would bemoan, "Mud is thriving in our town!" Things were not all bad, for the newspaper also reported, "*Saturday [the 20th] was a good day for trade, notwithstanding the mud and slosh the people came in and dealt extensively, and much liquor found a resting place before the day closed.*"

Among those shopping that Saturday was William Edward Travis Atkins, better known as Bill. He was a bit odd, so unlike his older half-brother John DeWitt Clinton Atkins, the popular Congressman and Paris favorite son. Some might credit Bill's eccentricities to his falling from a train way back in 1862. Whether or not that explanation was accurate, truth be told, Bill was more than a little paranoid. For instance, in 1875 he had written an alarming letter to President Ulysses S. Grant:

*"Pleas excuse me for writing you I could not have don so but my life is*

*in Danger & it is no use appealing to the civil courts here for they are all friends of the partys... Now they threaten my life they say they will waylay me & shoot me like a dog."*

Needless to say, no one shot him; neither did President Grant respond.

Even if those past threats were imagined, Bill had good reasons to be paranoid now. He had suffered through accusations, indictments and trials for forgery and murder. Even though he was eventually acquitted in both cases, the experiences left a bitter taste in his mouth. It was bad enough that many Henry Countians felt he was guilty; the last trial was particularly unsettling as in-laws and neighbors had been his accusers and State's witnesses.

And so on this Saturday before Christmas, Bill Atkins wasn't satisfied to purchase just the traditional apples and oranges. He wanted to make this fruit basket memorable. To that end he visited several drug stores in town. That night, after carefully poisoning and wrapping the apples and oranges,

he placed the fruit in his estranged wife's yard.

It's not known how the family detected the poison. Neither is it known if anyone became ill. However, among the witnesses later subpoenaed was a medical doctor. It's possible that Dr. S. C. Edmunds had attended some who became sick.

Thankfully, no one died.

The following Monday, W. C. "Will" Cooper, Bill's brother-in-law, went before Justice of the Peace T. H. Tayloe charging under oath that "*the offense of an attempt to commit murder in the first degree by poison upon the persons of R. S. Givens, J. S. Givens, W. C. Cooper, Sharpe Givens, Ephraim Givens, Mrs. S. U. C. Atkins, Hortie Atkins, Eddie Atkins and Sue Atkins was committed...on the night of the 20th of Dec. 1879 and from all the circumstances he is of the opinion and belief that W. E. T. Atkins is guilty of the same, therefore prays a warrant for his arrest.*"

If the charge was true, Bill Atkins had attempted to kill, incredibly as it



seems, his wife, his children, and his brother-in-law, among others.

Bill was quickly arrested and taken that same day before Judge J. L. Boothe. The ensuing "court of inquiry" had the feel of a full-blown trial. Attorneys R. P. Cole and John C. Swee-ney assisted Attorney General Rice Pierce for the State. Somehow, Bill Atkins secured the services of well-known attorneys Stacker J. Taylor, W. E. Travis and Charles D. Porter. In a flurry of activity, Sheriff T. O. Barbee and his deputies delivered more than a dozen subpoenas.

From the testimonies of Paris grocers and druggists, it's clear that the State intended to prove that Bill Atkins had methodically purchased fruit and poison. His actions were cold and calculated to cause death. As there was not enough time that Monday to complete the inquiry, Judge Boothe ruled that the case would continue Tuesday at 9 a.m. when William would answer the charge of attempting to maliciously, willfully, and feloniously kill by poison.

He was granted a bail bond of \$1,000. Two of his attorneys, Taylor and Porter, agreed to sign as sureties. Bill had an unexpected bonus: the Honorable Isham G. Harris, former Tennessee Governor and present U. S. Senator, was in Paris that day and he agreed to be the third surety.

The Paris Post editor was not as charitable:

*"B'latkins is again before the public." "Every time B'latkins gets into trouble the county is at heavy expense."*

On Tuesday morning, both the State and the defense announced to

Judge Boothe they were ready to proceed. Then a funny thing happened. It seems Bill had borrowed from the judge a pen, ink and paper to write a letter. But when his name was called to answer the State's charge, he was no longer present. Lo and behold, *"it was discovered that he had 'skipped' out. He was last seen going out of town in a southernly [sic] direction."* William Edward Travis "Bill" Atkins was never seen in Henry County again.

But he was seen in Texas. His name was listed in the 1880 Van Zandt County census record. Bill did not bother to change his name. And he listed his occupation as a physician!

Bill's stay in Texas was short-lived. By September 1882, he had "departed this mortal coil" as succinctly stated in the Henry County Circuit Court minutes. Consequently, Henry County had to absorb the court costs for the attempted poisoning, just as *The Paris Post* editor had predicted!




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# The THANKFUL GARDENER

By John Watkins

**A**s I was going back over some of my notes for this Holiday issue of *PARIS! Magazine*, I realized that this will be my 10th year of writing “Thank-you” notes for things I’m thankful for in the gardening world. I guess that’s something to be thankful for right there, so I’ll start out by saying “Thank You” to Samantha Parker and the staff at *PARIS! Magazine* for putting up with all of my last minute submissions and crazy ramblings for almost a decade!

It is an honor and privilege to feel like I’m giving back at least a little something to the Paris community. What a great place to live and raise a family! Now on to some more garden-related thank-you notes that are probably long overdue.

## THANK YOU, GRASSES!

A big Thank You to all of you grasses out there (you know who you are). And I’m not just talking about turf grass here. Did you know that there are over 10,000 different types of grass in existence across our planet? They include everything from turf, rice, wheat, corn, to even bamboo.

In fact, grasses make up almost 26% of plant life on earth! There are

about 1,400 species of grass in the United States alone. If you want to focus on just that lovely lawn surrounding your house, grass cover can cool ground temperatures by as much as 20 degrees and even a small 2,500 square foot lawn can produce enough oxygen for a family of four.

And if that weren’t enough to be thankful for, grasses are used to make alcohol! Everything from barley, rye, wheat, and rice are the base ingredients for producing your favorite cocktails. So raise a glass and say a big Thank You for all the grasses out there.

## THANK YOU, PUMPKINS AND GOURDS!

I know, kind of weird things to be thankful for, but just picture if you would, a world where we used potatoes or turnips to decorate for Halloween or at the fall festival. I can only imagine strolling into your favorite coffee shop and asking for a “yam-spiced latte.”

Plus, they come in such wonderful shapes, sizes, and colors. No longer just your basic orange, you can find pumpkins in white, pink, red, and even blue. And don’t get me started on all the funky shapes of those ornamental gourds. Makes you wonder if Mother Nature might have dipped

into her own magic mushroom stash when she created some of those.

## THANK YOU, RAINFALL!

Sure, we all know you do your thing to keep plants alive and healthy, but rain is also good for the soul. Ever gone out either during or after a shower and get hit with that awesome “just rained” aroma? So clean and fresh, it will instantly give you a mood boost or even bring back the nostalgia of running barefoot through the grass.

There is actually some chemistry behind this. When rain moistens the ground, it mixes with certain compounds like ozone, geosmin, and plant oils. Petrichor is the term given to that unique scent and it comes from the Greek words *petra*, meaning stone, and *ichor* which in Greek mythology refers to the golden fluid that flows in the veins of the immortals. And all this time I thought it was the rain fairies bringing all that joy!

## THANK YOU, HAND CLIPPERS!

Whether you call them clippers, shears, snips, or pruners, you make our gardening life a lot more manageable and enjoyable. There’s something therapeutic about strolling around the garden and snipping





The HAPNA Botanical Gardens has become a pleasant resting spot for its neighbors.

Photo by Shannon McFarlin

off dead limbs, errant branches, or otherwise unsightly growth. Not to mention you help us harvest flowers and fruit for our tables.

My favorite pair of clippers are Swiss-made, have been in my possession for almost 30 years, and they are still as sharp and useful as ever. In fact, I've had these clippers longer than I've had children (but I will admit my kids are pretty sharp and useful, also).

#### THANK YOU, COMMUNITY GARDENS!

And finally, Thank You community gardens. While we all love our home gardens, not everyone has the space or the resources required to plant and maintain a truly inviting and diverse landscape. Whether it's a

full blown botanical garden or even a small community driven vegetable plot, it's nice to know that we all have a place we can enjoy nature's beauty.

And that brings a special thank you to Paris's own Historic Atkins-Porter Neighborhood Botanical Garden. Back in 2017, local residents pitched in to transform a plot of land that has since become a haven for having lunch, reading, taking photos, educating, or just relaxing under the pavilion. Kudos to everyone that has made the garden such an open and inviting space.

*Happy Holidays everyone!*

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

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Please peruse our restaurant guide and drop in for a meal. \*Beer and/or other alcohol available.

## Ace's Restaurant \*

1516 E. Wood Street, 731-644-0558

## Blues Landing Restaurant\*

130 Tate Drive, Buchanan,  
731-407-4926

## Carmelita's Comida Mexicana \*

15575 Hwy. 79N, Buchanan,  
731-407-9173

## Dairy Delight

1324 E. Wood Street, 731-642-1795

## Dew Drop In Grocery \*

125 Cypress Road, Buchanan,  
731-232-8300

## El Vallarta Mexican Restaurant \*

1113 Mineral Wells Avenue,  
731-642-3626

## El Vaquero Mexican Restaurant \*

600 Spruce Street, 731-641-0404

## Esha Country Kitchen

14300 Hwy 79N, Buchanan,  
731-642-4111

## Fourmans

3615 Hwy. 79N, 731-407-7191

## 4-Way Grill

6121 E. Antioch Road, Springville,  
731-641-0100

## Golden Dragon Chinese Restaurant

114 W. Washington Street,  
731-644-3288

## Hong Kong Chinese Restaurant \*

1021 Mineral Wells Avenue,  
731-644-1810

## Jack's Java Urban Cafe

210 N. Poplar Street, 731-407-4410

## Kenny's Meat Market

Highway 79S, 731-644-1123

## LL's Bar & Grill\*

334 E. Washington Street,  
731-644-1888

## Laird's BBQ

77 W. Main Street, Puryear,  
731-247-3060

## Meo Mio's Sportsman Grill \*

14275 Hwy. 79N, Buchanan,  
731-924-5060

## Miso Japanese Restaurant\*

915 Mineral Wells Ave.  
731-704-6030 / 731-407-6029

## Moustos Pasta-Grill\*

1305 E. Wood Street, 731-407-9155

## Old West Steakhouse

1122 E. Wood Street, 731-924-5180

## Oishii Japanese Hibachi Steakhouse \*

1055 Mineral Wells Avenue,  
731-642-7778

## The Olive Pit \*

905 Mineral Wells Avenue,  
731-642-5030

## Perrylodgic Brewing Co.\*

3465 Hwy. 79N, 731-407-7100

## Perry's BBQ and Catering

1055 Mineral Wells Avenue,  
731-407-9040

## Prater's Taters

1055 Mineral Wells Avenue,  
731-642-7224

## Southside Cafe

1875 Highway 69S, 731-407-4694

## Spanky's Country Kitchen

9505 Hwy 641N, Puryear,  
731-247-5527

## Sweet Jordan's

849 Volunteer Drive, Ste. 123,  
731-642-0161

## Take Me Back Cafe

302 W. Wood Street, 731-642-1952

## The Breakers Marina & Grill \*

(Seasonal)

526 Shamrock Road, Buchanan,  
731-232-8299

## The Family Table

9 Dogwood Street, Henry,  
731-243-5117

## The Fresh Market Restaurant \*

2255 E. Wood Street, 731-644-1900

## The Lodge at Paris Landing \*

400 Lodge Rd, Buchanan,  
(731) 924-4300

## The Point BBQ

510 Pleasant Grove Road, Springville,  
731-225-4488

## The Spot Bar & Grill

11180 Hwy. 79N, Springville,  
731-227-2134

## Tickled Tummy

206B Tyson Avenue, 731-407-9012

## T-N-T Pizza

14244 Hwy. 79N., Buchanan,  
731-642-2246

## Tom's Pizza & Steak House \*

2501 E. Wood Street, 731-642-8842

## Trolinger's BBQ

2305 E. Wood Street, 731-642-8667

## Uncle Billy's Downtown Eatery

200 S Market Street, 731-407-9277

## Westside Market & Restaurant

45 Hwy 69, 731-642-7796

## Woody's Hand-Tossed Pizza \*

849 Volunteer Drive, Suite 10, 731-  
641-2222

## Yoder's Country Store

75 Anderson Rd, (731) 644-7535



## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

### ONGOING HOLIDAY EVENTS

**Visit with Santa** – Stop by and let Santa entertain your wee little guests at his gingerbread house in Downtown Paris on the square November 25-December 18 on Saturdays, 10am-2pm, and Sundays, 2-4 pm.

**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.

**Learn about your 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.

**Quota Club Annual Pecan Sale** – Pecans are for sale beginning in November! \$12 for the 1 lb. bag; \$10 for the specialty pecans such as dark chocolate, milk chocolate, cinnamon and glazed. Stop by Commercial Bank, First Bank, Security Bank or Paris Family Chiropractic to purchase them. Call Dr. Elizabeth Craig at 731-642-3761 for info.

**Be An Angel** – Pick a tag off a **Salvation Army's Angel Tree** and fulfill a Christmas wish for a child. Trees are located at Kroger, Walmart, and Burkes Outlet in Paris. For more information, call 731-642-4105.

**Sponsors Needed - Henry County Carl Perkins Center is seeking sponsors** to provide Christmas for local children. For more information, call 731-642-8455.

**It's holiday movie time!** – Enjoy a night out at the Parisian Theatre with nightly shows on six screens and matinees on Saturday and Sunday. **Special movie prices on Mondays through November.** For movie schedules, call 731-642-7171.

### NOVEMBER

**Now until November 3 - Early voting** is underway for state and federal general and municipal elections. Two locations: Election Commission at 215 Grove Blvd., 8:30 am - 4:30 pm M-F and 8 am - Noon on Saturday, and Tennessee College of Applied Technology, 312 S. Wilson, M-F 9 am to 3 pm.

**November 2 - Join Kingsview Wealth** manager Ashli Newcomb at Jack's Java for **Women & Wealth Wednesday** at 9 am. This casual conversation will discuss financial planning topics that specifically impact women. For more information, call 731-540-9086.

**November 3 - A delicious tradition** known as the **Carl Perkins Center Pancake Day** will be at First Baptist Church, 7:30 am-6:30 pm with all-you-can-eat pancakes and sausage. Tickets: \$10 at the door. Call 731-642-8455.

**November 3 - Lifeline Blood Mobile** is open from 12-6 pm at First United Methodist Church. Call Dan Rogers at 731-427-4431 for more information.

**November 4 - Reign Down on Me** with guest pastor, Bishop Jeremy Myles, and many musical guests including Rev. Andre Richardson. Event starts at 7 pm with tickets being \$10. For more information, call 731-227-3444.

**November 4-6 - It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas** in festive downtown Paris! **Candlelight Open Houses** are Friday and Saturday 6-8 pm and Sunday from 1-5 pm. Call 731-642-3431 for more information.

**November 5 - Get out and support the Henry County Marching Patriots** as they host the **Division 1 State Championship Marching Contest** at Patriot Stadium. All day tickets are \$20. There'll be live music, food trucks and concessions.

**November 8 - Exercise your right to vote!** Election day for state and federal general and Municipal Election will be decided today.

**November 11 - Veterans Day.** Thank a veteran who fought for our freedom.

**November 11 - Krider Performing Arts Center** presents **A Salute To Our Veterans** at 7 pm. Guest speaker is LTC Tony Lacy and a special recognition will be given to (Ret) ISG James Dougherty. Music by HarmoniX and gospel artist Randy Crowder. Free to the public.

**November 12-13 - Get a jump on holiday gifts!** Stop by the **Christmas In Paris Shopping Extravaganza** at the Paris Convention Center. Saturday 9am-5 pm; Sunday 12-4 pm. Admission is free! For more information, please email [christmasinparisn@yahoo.com](mailto:christmasinparisn@yahoo.com) or find them on Facebook.

**November 13 - Bethel University Renaissance Bluegrass group** will be at the KPAC for a night of fabulous music. Starts at 7 pm. For more information, call 731-644-2517.

**November 13 - Operation Christmas Child Packing Party** at First Baptist Church. Kick off the holiday season by giving back. For more information, contact Pam Moultrie at 731-642-7893 or call Scott at 731-642-5074.

**November 16 & 17 - Henry County FCE Club** presents **Homemaker's Holiday** in the Enoch Building at the Fairgrounds from 3-6 pm on the 16th and 10 am-1 pm the 17th. On Thursday be sure to come hungry, they're serving soup and sandwiches from 11-1 pm. Lots of goodies to buy! For more information, contact Michele Atkins at 731-642-2941.

**November 22-December 18 - Festival of Trees** will be at The Old 5 & 10 Event Center at 110 W. Washington Street in Downtown Paris! Open Monday-Friday, 11 am-4 pm; Saturdays, 10 am-2 pm; Sundays, 1-4 pm. Call 731-642-3431 for more information.

**November 23-25 - Thanksgiving break** for city and county schools.

**November 24 - Thanksgiving Day!** Spend time with loved ones as you celebrate all that we have to be thankful for.

*"Oh, Santa!"*

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**November 25** – Head to beautiful Downtown Paris for the **North Pole Family Fun Day**, 10 am-2 pm. Enjoy Santa, Rudolph and the Elves rolling in on a fire truck. The **Light Up Paris Christmas Lights Tour** begins this evening. For more information, call the Chamber office at 731-642-3431.

**November 27** – Join the fine folks at **Paris First United Methodist Church** for the first Sunday of Advent and the traditional “**Hang-ing of the Greens**” at 8:30 am and 11 am. For more information, call 642-4764.

## DECEMBER

**December 1** – Take time out of your busy schedule to give back. Visit the **Lifeline Blood Mobile** at First United Methodist Church, 12 pm-6 pm. For more information, contact Dan Rogers at 731-427-4431.

**December 1 - January 1 - The HAPNA Gift of Light**, including the spectacularly lit Botanical Garden, takes place in the Atkins Porter Neighborhood. Awards will be presented by the Board of Public Utilities on December 11.

**December 2 - The Ultimate Christmas Variety Show** is live at KPAC from Las Vegas with the #1 impersonators, Anthony and Eddie Edwards, who recreate hits from yesterday and today. Show starts at 7 pm and tickets are \$37 and \$27. For more information, call 731-644-2517.

**December 2-4 - New Harmony Baptist Church Live Nativity** is 6-8 pm nightly. Remember the “reason for the season” and start it with a beautiful drive through this community treasure. Call 731-593-5276 for information.

**December 3** – Head out to the Paris Convention Center for the **Tinsel Town Shopping Expo** from 9 am-5 pm. There'll be shopping galore with music, door prizes, food trucks and you can even have your photo taken with Santa! For more information, call Keisha Norwood at 731-223-9761.

**December 3** – Inman Middle School PAC is hosting the **7th Annual Mistletoe Market** in the Inman gym with over 25 booths with local small businesses and crafters from 10 am- 4 pm. This would be a great place to do some early Christmas shopping and find those one-of-a kind gifts. For more information, call 731-642-8131

**December 4** – Get out and enjoy the **53rd Annual Arts Council Christmas Concert**. Location and program TBA. Call 731-644-2517 for more information.

**December 7** – Join **Kingsview Wealth** manager Ashli Newcomb at Jack's Java for **Women & Wealth Wednesday** at 9 am. This casual conversation will discuss financial planning topics that specifically impact women. For more information, call 731-540-9086.

**December 10** – Get in the holiday spirit by listening to the elite group of singers from Henry County High School in **Christmas with the Madrigals**. Starts at 7 pm at the KPAC. For more information, call 731-644-2517.

**December 10** – For fun galore, check out the **Downtown Christmas Festival** from 3-5 pm and the **Holly Jolly Electric Parade** at 5 pm. Awards include Clark Griswold, Golf Cart, Cutest Critter, and Best Decorated. Go to VisitDowntownParis.com for details and entry information or call 731-642-3431.

**December 11** – The **Paris-Henry County Chamber Music Society**, under the direction of Mike Holden, will perform their **Christmas Concert** at 4 pm at the Krider. For more information, call 731-644-2517.

**December 13** – Support the youth of Henry County as the **KPAC Young Artists HarmoniX** acapella group and the **MainStream Vocals**, present their **Christmas Concert** at the KPAC at 7 pm. To learn more, call 731-644-2517.

**December 19 - January 2** –Joyeux Noel!  
**Winter Break** for all schools.

**December 21 - First Baptist Church's Candlelight Communion Service** in the sanctuary at 6 pm. Everyone is welcome. For more information call 731-642-5074.

**December 21 - Paris First United Methodist Church** is observing a **Longest Night/Blue Christmas Service** at 5:30 pm in the sanctuary. This is for anyone who has suffered the loss of a loved one, a job, relationship, security, health or other loss. For more information, call 731-642-4764.

**December 24 - Christmas Eve Services** are held at many area churches. Programs include carols, special music, Christmas messages and communion. Call churches for information.

**December 25 - Have a blessed Merry Christmas!**

**January 1 - HAPPY NEW YEAR!** Time to make those resolutions for 2023.

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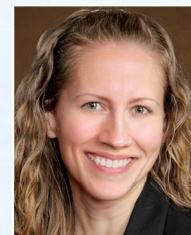
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