

2016 Palmer News

January 2016

Palmer News

David Patton

Palmer Town Historian

Old Fashioned Christmas

The Eddie Crabtree family gave me this big two-pound peppermint candy stick for Christmas, and I couldn't have asked for a more enjoyable gift. The young people of today probably don't eat peppermint candy, but us old people will always associate it with Christmas Past.



Thank you Eddie, Rita, and son Drew!

HAPPY NEW YEAR! What will the brand spanking new year of 2016 bring? If it follows the pattern of 2015, pull your seat belt snug and give an extra tug because it will be a roller coaster ride like you've never experienced. Actually, I've got a feeling it will make 2015 look mild by comparison.

How did your holiday go? My friend Angie Northcutt Burnett down in Pelham says she set a "two-turkey table" for Thanksgiving. She says her children like modern pies and desserts of today, but she still likes the old fashioned ones like pecan, pumpkin and sweet potato. Angie's the foreperson of the Grundy County Grand Jury and stays super busy with all kinds of projects to improve our county.

Christmas Day 2015 will forever be remembered for "RAIN". We had 4.0" in Palmer and 13.9" for the month of December. The year 2015 saw an incredible 81.2" fall on rainy Palmer.

Dr. David Dickerson got out in the downpour and brought me a Christmas dinner from Altamont. Thanks, Dear Friend.

Mandy Sanders Phillips of Monteagle is the publisher of the *Grundy County Herald* and says cabbage is her favorite vegetable. So, when we harvested our last fall cabbage on December 3, we gave it to her as an early Christmas present. I like to grow a garden, but eat very little of it in my old age.

Ida Pearl Brown, widow of Paul David Brown, turned 80 back on Thanksgiving day, and I had an article in *The Herald* about it. As a result, she said she got a letter from a woman she hadn't seen since 1963. Ida Pearl started driving when she was 14 and says giving that up has been one of the hardest things to deal with in her old age.

Everybody is talking about the constant deaths and sickness we had in December, and it continues into January as well. It seems that half of Grundy County is dead with old age and the other half has one foot in the grave with the other foot on a banana peel. They say that Grundy County has the highest rate of cancer per capita in Tennessee, and I wouldn't doubt it.

ON SICK CALL: "We need a lift at ____." This has become an all too familiar request over local police scanners. It means that an old person has fallen in their home and police or volunteer firemen are needed to get them back up. Living conditions have changed; years ago families handled things like that.

Jerry Cannon, 79, and Elizabeth "Liz" Henry Privett got an early Christmas present when they came home from the hospital after long stays.

Chris Grooms had his gall bladder removed the old way, by knife, at the VA in Nashville recently, and Sue Ann Land Long is also recovering from surgery.

Dean and Venessa Guffey Cleek were both in different hospitals at the same time, last month. Dean had his gall bladder removed, and Venessa was treated for kidney stones. Also last month, their son Josh Cleek graduated from college with his BS Degree in Mechanical Engineering and immediately went to work full time.

The Town of Palmer had its 30th annual Palmer Community Christmas celebration on December 12 at the community center. Anna Carol Cooke Disheroon and husband E.J. were there from Chattanooga, and she brought some homemade peanut butter candy like her mother used to make. Their church, Oakwood Baptist, came to Palmer School on December 18 and brought presents for all the students before they started Christmas break.

We are sad to report on hearing that Anna Carol suffered a stroke during the holidays and was, or still is, a patient at Siskin Rehab. I'm sure the family would appreciate your prayers.

Chief Eric Birdwell and the Palmer Volunteer Fire Dept. had their fruit giveaway on December 19. I remember back in the 1960's when Mayor Doug McCullough and the town aldermen gave a \$10 check to all widows at Christmas time. You could actually buy something useful with \$10 back then.

SEEMS LIKE OLD TIMES: I was feeling nostalgic and got two cartons of the little Coca-Colas in the glass bottles to enjoy during the holidays. In the late 1950's and early 60's the Tracy City Coca Cola Bottling Plant distributed them all over Grundy County, and boy, were they good. I believe back then they were five cents, and you could get a six-bottle carton for twenty-five cents. Some people use to buy them in the 24-bottle wooden cases.

It was probably a record-setting warm December and Mr. P.C. Flury at the historic Flury's Store in Tracy City says he hadn't fired up his furnace as of the 17th. Grundy County Historian William Ray Turner and wife Marie gave me a big deli tray from the store, and it was delicious. Thanks, dear friends.

Kat King and a big crowd went to Pastor Ronnie Partin's House of the Lord Church on Palmer Mountain and said they really enjoyed the Christmas play on the 18th.

Carl "Teeter" Morrison attended services December 17th at Tracy City's Living Water church which is pastored by Ralph Shrum. Ralph's son, Sheriff Clint Shrum, gave a talk on the threat of terrorism against churches.

We received a holiday visit from Nathan Layne of Savannah, Georgia. He's the son of Darrell and Becky Henry Layne and one of the finest young men Palmer has ever produced. Nathan was an excellent student and could have gone on to college, but wanted to work with his hands. After high school, he went to the Nashville Diesel College and landed a job with Caterpillar. He's now working for another company at the booming Georgia seaport and has a bright future.

Joel Patton says he ran into Kathy Hill Griffith in Tracy City where she has been a rural route mail carrier for several years. She grew up in Palmer as the daughter of Joanne Sanders and the late Don Hill. Kathy is married to Rev. Allen Giffith and

lives in Whitwell where he pastors the Christian Worship Center. It's located in the old Whitwell Church of God.

Sympathy is extended to the family of Allene Nunley Hargis in their loss. Allene passed away last month in Tucson, Arizona, and was buried on Christmas Eve at Fall Creek Cemetery.

Rev. Tony King officiated at the graveside service and Allen's brother Billy Ray Nunley sang, "*How Great Thou Art*". Allene grew up in Palmer as the daughter of Graham and Sarah Cannon Nunley, and she was a great help to me in my history work and will be greatly missed.

After so much rain, New Year's Day 2016 came in dry with a high of 38 degrees and low of 22. That afternoon I visited briefly with Betty Finch Bush and her daughter Dr. Kim Taylor along with Betty's son Johnnie Michael Hill.

Rev. Jerry Daniel of Jacksonville, Florida, had a New Year's Eve "Watch Service" on Facebook from his church down there. He's a former pastor of the Palmer Church of God.

Those of you who know me don't have to guess what I had for dinner on New Year's Day. Of course it was hog jaw (That's hog jowl to the elite and "politically correct" crowd.), turnip greens, and black eyed peas along with all the fixins. This southern tradition is eaten as a good luck charm and is supposed to bring health and prosperity to you in the new year.

Willene Campbell down in Pelham usually eats it too, but this year had a "sick headache" and only had some cornbread and butter that afternoon. Under these trying circumstances, we're going to waive the rules and bestow full health and prosperity on Willene for 2016.

For the Common Good

Give us, we pray, the power to discern clearly right from wrong, and allow all our words and actions to be governed thereby and by the laws of this land. Especially, we pray that our concerns shall be for all the people, regardless of station, race, or calling.

May cooperation be permitted and be the mutual aim of those who, under the concepts of our Constitution, hold to differing political faiths: so that all may work

for the good of our beloved country, and thy glory. Amen. Dwight D. Eisenhower, President of the United States.

It's time to pull the curtain on 2015 and get started on the new year of 2016.

From here "where the good people live", we send warm wishes for the best of health and happiness to you and yours. The world is crazier than it has ever been in my 68 years and getting crazier by the day. We can only do the best we can in our personal lives and may the prayer of President Eisenhower all those years ago still inspire us today.

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King Coal Falls from Favor



This is the gleaming black mineral that powered the Industrial Revolution and played such an important role in the history of Grundy and our neighboring countries of Marion and Sequatchie. Draped in snow, this big pile of Palmer coal is pictured at the home of David Patton.

Photo of Mr. Hubert “Hube” Henry of Palmer prepares to fire up the big round coal stove at Jack Henry’s Texaco. David Patton took this photo in 1989.



King Coal Falls from Favor

David Patton, Palmer Town Historian

For most of the 20th century King Coal brought affordable electricity to the common man and raised the standard of living beyond the imagination of earlier generations. But, now, it's blamed for global warming, and the Obama administration's so called "War on Coal" has the industry reeling in the United States. However, developing countries overseas aren't ready to give it up, and according to news reports China and India have plans for 10,000 new coal-fired power plants to meet the electricity needs of their millions of people.

Years ago, most homes in Grundy County and many public buildings were virtual shacks compared to the warm and modern ones of today. Coal was burned in fireplaces, more commonly known locally as "grates", or in coal stoves to keep you from freezing to death. If you were a cut or two above most others, your family probably had a coal furnace under the house with heat going to each room. This, of course, was very comfortable.

Mr. Raymond Hargis, 88, lived in the old house I now occupy from 1955-1958 while serving as principal at Palmer School and says, "You could see outside through the cracks, but we didn't think anything about it. That's just the way it was." In his youth Mr. Hargis hauled coal from the Pocket in his dad's coal truck and dumped it in the railroad tipple in front of the Floyd Owen home in Palmer.

Mike Shadrick, 65, grew up in an old coal company house and remembers, "You had to put so many quilts on you that you could barely turn over in the bed."

Rev. Jacob Anderson also grew up in an old company house and after all these years still recalls the water bucket in the kitchen being frozen in the morning after a long night of bitter cold weather.

Former Gruetli-Laager Mayor Ricky Ruehling, and Ben Lomand Connect employee, was just a kid, but he can still see his dad firing up the big coal stove and how it would get so hot that the stovepipe and stove would turn cherry red.

At night people would pour a coal scuttle (special bucket with a snout like shape) or two in the stove and cut off the draft. That was called "banking the fire". The next morning they would open the draft and punch the smoldering coal with a poker to get it burning. We've heard of one family who banked the fire and went to church.

The home burned while they were away. It was thought that the gas in the coal built up and exploded resulting in the home burning with no one there to put it out.

Janelle Taylor, 69, of Pelham says her dad, Ebb Layne, used to go to the Pocket and haul coal for people down there to use. Coal bought in small loads for home use was called “custom coal”. She was with her parents one night while coming down Palmer Mountain on Hwy. 108 with about 9 tons of coal when the brakes gave out. Her dad was able to run the truck into the edge of the ditch and turn the wheel into the side slowing the truck enough to finally get it stopped just a little above Burnt Orchard Circle and the Palmer Baptist Church. Needless to say, this was a life threatening experience you wouldn’t forget soon.

We’re living in a different world now, but King Coal is still a personal part of my life. I’m one of the last to burn it in my home and not for old-times-sake either. Gas and electricity can’t compare to coal for warmth. It gets in your bones with this powerful heat while the others I’ve mentioned are just better than nothing. That’s all!

I enjoyed passing along some real life history by giving all the contestants at the 2016 Grundy County Spelling Bee a souvenir lump of coal. I don’t have enough for everybody and their dog, but I do have a few lumps left for anyone who is interested.

Mr. Turner Turns 90

David Patton

Palmer Town Historian

In June 1989 Paul “Pepper” Sanders and I visited Grundy County Historian William Ray Turner at the museum he maintains outside his Tracy City home, and I snapped some photos from his collection. Both men were coal miners during part of their working lives. Pepper passed away over 20 years ago. All these years later, Mr. Turner celebrated his 90th birthday on February 1, 2016. He has had health problems in recent year, but still stays active in history work and welcoming visitors to his museum.



Much has been written about Mr. Turner over the years, and we've done two articles ourselves. For some 75 years he has collected Grundy County History and saved so much that otherwise would have been lost forever.

Mr. Turner and his wife Marie are dear friends and always bring me a box of Christmas presents which I look forward to and really enjoy. We just want to say a sincere "Thank you" to Mr. Turner for all that he has done and also to Marie for supporting him in this time-consuming endeavor over all these years.

If you would like to send a card or note, the address is as follows: Mr. William Ray Turner, Grundy County Historian, 3066 Brown's Hollow Road, Tracy City, TN 37387

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Paula White Nance

She's one of the lucky few born on February 29. David Patton took this photo in 1989 at Savage Gulf Market in Palmer. Steve Garner opened the store in February 1986. The new owner renamed it Palmer Market as it's still known today.

It's Super Bowl Sunday, and we're coming to you on a beautiful sunshiny and warm afternoon here where the good people live. I always like to see the Super Bowl roll around because I know spring is coming soon. In fact, the first day of spring is just six weeks from today.

I'm not a big sports fan like I was in my youth, but I remember well the first Super Bowl in 1967. The American Football League's Kansas City Chiefs played the National Football League's Green Bay Packers. The AFL was the new league, and I was pulling for the Chiefs led by QB Lenny Dawson and Coach Hank Stram who had developed something called the "moving pocket" to protect the QB. The Packers were a veteran team led by QB Bart Starr and Coach Vince Lombardi. They won the first Super Bowl, but just a few years later the Chiefs won football's big game.

Undertaker Dale Layne and his singing group performed January 31 at Laager Independent Methodist Church. They are called "The Rock", and this was Dale's childhood church where the legendary Cotton Ross pastored for so many years.

Cotton Ross was man of his word, and he expected his congregation to be also. Today, we have so many liars that nobody thinks much about it, but Cotton once told them from the pulpit, "if you tell somebody you'll do something and you don't do it, you've lied!" How refreshing to see a man of God tell it like it is instead of the mealy mouths passing themselves off as preachers in too many churches today. After Cotton's death in 2010, we wrote an article entitled "Preacher Cotton Dead at 85 – Amazing Life Ends on Sunday Morning." It can probably still be viewed on www.gchs.homestead.com or maybe, www.grundycountyhistory.org.

Grundy County has six elementary schools and for as long as most of us can remember they've played as the "Big 8" Basketball Conference in the fall and winter. Monteagle in Marion County and Saint Andrews-Sewanee in Franklin County make it the Big 8. Mayor Daniel Crabtree coached both the boys and girls teams for the 2015 – 2016 season at Palmer Elementary.

Big Breakfast Friday: The following is enough to make an old man like me want to go back to his childhood school. Several months ago we told you that breakfast is free at Palmer School, and the lunchroom staff brings it into the school, and the students eat it in the classroom. A special breakfast each week is officially called Big Breakfast Friday and consists of biscuits, eggs, meat, potato product, gravy and cheese (optional), canned or fresh fruit, milk choice, and fruit juice choice. Mr. Ray Winton and Mr. Raymond Hargis are both retired teachers, and if anyone years ago had told them something like this they wouldn't have believed it. With the condition our society is in today it's a good thing because at least we know the little children aren't going hungry because of things they can't help.

Speaking of Mr. Winton, he has been a church of Christ pastor for many years and is still going strong at 84. He has been preaching funerals since 1963 when he officiated at the funeral of Paul Warren in Coalmont who was buried in the old city cemetery in Tracy City. Back then the deceased was brought back to the home where friends came to pay their respects instead of going to the funeral home in most cases. In January, Mr. Winton went to Selma, Alabama to preach the funeral of Gordon Gibbs, himself a church of Christ preacher. He was a son of the legendary preacher Luke Gibbs of Tracy City.

I've made so many good friends over the years through my history work, and one of my very favorites is Bobby Owen. Bobby grew up in Palmer as the son of Mr. and Mrs. Floyd Owen, and not many years ago I wrote a two-part article for the Grundy County Herald about his growing up days in Palmer entitled "You Can Go Home Again – The Bobby Owen Story." I think it still can be viewed on www.gchs.homestead.com.

After high school, he served in the U.S. Navy, and upon discharge got his college degree and enjoyed a career as an air traffic controller. Now 86 and living in Peachtree City, GA, his wife Judy tells us that back in October he suffered severe injuries in a fall at his home. He was in an Atlanta hospital for a month and is now in a skilled nursing facility just a mile from his home where Judy visits him every

day. Floyd Owen was a boss at the Palmer Big Mine, and they were wonderful citizens of our town.

We had lost contact with Bobby recently and sadly report that his sisters Ruth and Carolyn have passed away since. His sister, Rosalyn, lives in Smithville, and Mary Lillian lives in Cookeville, TN. Please keep Bobby and Judy in your prayers during this trying time.

Faces in The Crowd: We ran into Rexie Magouirk and his dog walking in the warm sunshine this afternoon. Ricky “Rock” Layne says he ran into Vicki Wideman Bivens and Frances Partin Moon the other day. “I bet I hadn’t seen Vicki in 40 years,” he said. She’s the sister of my old Palmer School classmate Dennis Wideman. Frances and Mrs. Wayne (Linda) Gipson are the only surviving members of the large Barney Partin, Sr. family which included T. G., Bill, and Barney, Jr. who all served in World War II where Junior lost his life.

“Are you Mr. Hargis?” Indeed he is, and that’s what a stranger in Manchester’s Captain D’s asked Mr. Raymond Hargis who was enjoying a meal. The stranger turned out to be Dot Layne Lockhart who was a student when Mr. Hargis was Palmer School principal from 1955 – 1958. She told him that she had been sent to his office by her teacher and thanked him for being so good to her. That was a scary experience for a kid back then because you might get a paddling. “I don’t think I’d seen Dot since I left Palmer School and told her that I had always found it was better to be good to people instead of mean.”

The Weather: We had a mild January 2016 compared to a lot I’ve seen over the years with just 3.3 inches of rain in my gauge and about three of four inches of snow near the end of the month.

Groundhog Day was mild and old Punxsutawney Phil up in Pennsylvania didn’t see his shadow so we’re supposed to have an early spring. Reckon I should go ahead and take my coal stove down? Billy Ray Nunley, 82, says as a boy he would groundhog hunt with Grover Caldwell. “That’s the only thing he would hunt.” Bill said.

I always listen for the first frogs singing in the winter as spring approaches, and I heard them January 29th at Foxey Sanders Memorial Field next to the Palmer Library. This swampy area used to be where the old railroad “Wye” was and now has a ball field with a community park and walking track.

A person told me that a friend had an old weather saying. "If it rains on the first day of the month it will rain 15 days that month." Here in rainy Palmer that probably happens a lot.

Late last night Randy Stoker was seriously injured in a car wreck on Hwy. 399 in Barkers Cove and airlifted to the hospital from Foxey Sanders Memorial Field where the helicopter picks up the sick and injured. He's a son of Betty McCarver Stoker Uselton and the late Don Stoker. Betty's retired, but for years fixed women's hair and cut men's hair at her home in Barkers Cove on Hwy. 399 right at the Grundy-Sequatchie County line. Mildred Rogers used to go to her.

Keith McBee is hobbling some but about recovered from a broken ankle. "At least, it was a clean break, and I didn't have to have surgery," he said. He's retired as the Grundy County Trustee and also retired from Ben Lomand Connect which used to be called a telephone company but is much more today with cable TV and internet service.

Billy Wade Smith and his sister, Robena Smith Tate, were here due to the death of their nephew Scotty Dent. I believe Billy Wade lives in the Manchester area, and I think Robena and her sister, Bonnie Smith Watts, widow of Junior Watts, live in the Whitwell area.

Gary Bouldin continues his wonderful work spreading cheer and goodwill through his card ministry. He sent over 105 anniversary cards and 538 birthday cards in 2015. He sent 178 Valentine's Day cards in 2016, and during Christmas 2015 himself got 81 cards and pictures. Gary received some good English toffee candy made by his friend and former Tracy City resident Butch Kildgore who lives in the Nashville area. My, my, how I do love candy! Please, send me some of that English toffee so I can evaluate your candy making skills, Butch! You may be like the man who started the famous Werther's candy in a little village in Germany.

We sadly report that former Grundy County High School football coach Ray Keylon passed away last month in Spring City at the age of 85. He must have been at GCHS in 1961 and possibly 1962. Mr. Hargis, Mr. Winton, Willene Campbell, Janelle Taylor, and Ralph Thompson probably remember him. For a complete obituary go to: www.vaughn-funeral-home.com.

Leap Year 2016: Every four years February has 29 days instead of the usual 28, and it's called Leap Year. Women yearn to be born on Leap Year because they get to stay young so much longer. For example, those born on February 29th just have a birthday every four years, don't you know? Paula White Nance is the only one locally that I know born on this special day. She's a daughter of Louise "Lou" Shrum White Rollins and the late Paul White.

The "Old Country Church" held their first service on Super Bowl Sunday. The building used to be a video store and is owned by Raymond Borne who serves as pastor. This group of Christians had met for several months in the home of Darwin and Carolyn Grimes Shipley. The new church is located at the junction of Hwy. 108 and 399 across from Layne Funeral Home.

For The Armed Forces

O God, we ask that Thou wilt be with our soldiers.

May they feel that they are supported by the God of Jacob.

May they know that Thou art with them in the day of battle.

In the day of peace help them to feel the Spirit of the Prince of Peace.

May they serve with a faithful spirit.

Give them great courage to serve their country as good servants.

In Jesus' name. Amen.

Don Sanford

I don't have television, and Mike Shadrick told me by phone tonight that the Denver Broncos and QB Peyton Manning won Super Bowl 50 over the Carolina Panthers by the score of 24 – 10. Manning has a sterling reputation in the sports world for his good deeds off the field and his unquestioned talent on the field. How encouraging to see nice guys finish first!

On that cheerful note, the final whistle has blown on this February edition of the **Palmer News!** From your friends here "where the good people live" stay warm and safe in the winter weather because we're counting on your visiting with us again as we welcome spring next month.

**March 2016
Super Tuesday
David Patton
Palmer Town Historian**



David Patton presents a souvenir lump of Palmer Coal to Daniel Stiefel on Super Tuesday, March 1, 2016, outside Palmer City hall where Daniel was a poll worker for the presidential primary. The Election was also called the SEC primary by the media because so many of the states had football teams in the Southeastern Conference.

Daniel is 19-years-old, from Gruelti -Laager, and attends Motlow State Community College where he's studying mechanical engineering. He's the son of Chad and Crystal Caldwell Stiefel. His great-great grandfather, Rev. Gilliam Brown, was a legendary coal loader at the Palmer Big Mine, and he preached all over Grundy County. The Grundy County Election Commission is to be commended for bringing young people in as poll workers. Maybe someday fine citizens like Daniel will be candidates for our county offices.

Grundy County's Beloved Buttercups



Mention “Buttercups” and people who have never planted a flower in their lives will know what you mean, especially this time of year. Winters in Grundy County are cold, wet, and gloomy, and nothing signals the coming of spring like the blooming of the buttercups. The right name is probably jonquils or daffodils, but the common people always called them buttercups because of their rich yellow color.

People years ago also called the Buttercups “Easter Flowers” because they would be blooming around the time of that great resurrection morning which is March 27th this year. Yes, the earth is coming alive once again, but the greatest coming alive happened in Jerusalem some 2,000 years ago. Have a blessed Easter!

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I don't know the official name of this beautiful tree or shrub, but I believe people years ago called them "tulip trees". They really aren't suited for mountain weather because they start blooming in early March and usually frost ruins the blooms.

We got lucky this March through as the first two-thirds of the month were unusually mild. This tulip tree is located where Fred "Humpy" and Bessie Brown Morrison lived for so many years behind Palmer United Methodist Church, and they probably planted it in the 1950's if not before.

It's official: Spring has sprung, and we're coming to you on Sunday, March 20th, the first day of the new season. What a relief to say good-bye to another cold and gloomy winter and see the world come alive once again with beautiful colors.

In Memory: This month we want to honor the memory of the McCormick brothers, James, Clyde, and Leon. You've never heard of them? Few have because they lost their lives to a killer called pneumonia way back in 1929. It was January 1929 when the horror started for the Bransford and Mary Elizabeth "Molly" McCormick family in the White County community of Quebeck. Between January and March, these parents watched helplessly as Leon, just a few weeks old, Clyde 2-years-old, and James 8 and ½ -years-old, passed into eternity.

Mrs. Ray (Doris) Winton of Coalmont, a sister of the brothers, told us this story. It bears repeating to make us all thankful each day for the modern medical care we now have. Mrs. Winton remembers when she was growing up that her mother cried a lot. No wonder. A mother's grief this deep could never be understood by anyone else.

The "A-frame" house occupied by the late John Shrum burned to the ground recently. It was on Hwy. 108 near where the late Monk Land had a Gulf gas station years ago.

Girls' Volleyball has really caught on in the elementary schools of Grundy County. The season runs from February – April and draws a lot of players and fans. Eighth grade teacher Seann Lewis coaches the Palmer Elementary varsity and junior varsity teams.

What's for supper? A few weeks back Larry Henry brought us some chili his wife Debbie had made. It was really good in the cold and wet winter weather. When you live alone, like me, you get tired of your own cooking, and something like that is always a treat.

Former Palmer resident Hobert Henry of Davenport, Iowa, was in the U.S. Army during the Korean War. Last fall he got to take one of the Honor Flights to see the Korean War Monument in Washington, D.C. Hobert was featured in a story about his flight on a television station there, and Mike Shadrick showed it to me on his computer. I think it was local 4 in Moline, Illinois, but Mike said the best way to find it on your computer would be a name search of "Hobert Henry". He's probably been in Iowa at least 60 years.

On March 16 I walked out to Griffith's Creek and visited with Lowell and Dot Layne Lockhart. We sat on their front porch on a sunny and warm day with the buttercups blooming and talked about old times. They graduated from Grundy County High School in 1966, and the class will have their 50th reunion in September with a "cruise in" and other activities.

Dwight and Linda Shrum Tate are members of the '66 class, and he's helping organize the "cruise in". Dwight suffered severe burns recently on his hands and neck after stopping to help a stranded motorist. He was pouring gasoline in the carburetor when the car back-fired and caught him on fire. "I was lucky it didn't get

in my eyes”, he said. He didn’t have to go in the hospital and is being treated by Dr. John McKeown at the Palmer Clinic.

Linda is a daughter of the late Lawrence Shrum of Tracy City, grew up there, but spent most of her life in Nashville. Since marrying Dwight, she seems to be in hog heaven here in Palmer, attending the Barker’s Cove (Riley’s) Community Church and getting her exercise with good friends Troas Knowlan Layne and Troas’ daughter-in-law Millie Layne on the walking track at Palmer Community Park.

“**Angel Eggs**”? Do you like deviled eggs? I surely do, but may have to change the name. A saintly woman from Palmer Church of God says, “My family and grandchildren love them, but we call them angel eggs. I don’t like to give the devil credit for anything.”

March 11 I found a little black thing on my side, and it was a tick, of course. It doesn’t take them long to come out when spring gets close.

Lola Jones Cox, the janitor at Palmer School, is back on the job, I think, after a serious illness recently. She’s the widow of Paul Summers; they lived on Ranger Creek Road in Coalmont. She’s now married to Tim Cox, son of the late Ray Hoyt Cox of Palmer.

My 1961 Palmer School classmate Sandra Carol Morrison Stewart of Illinois suffered a broken hip as a result of a recent fall. We hope she’s back at full speed soon.

It seems that so many people have gallstones now, and that includes Rolanda Layne Summers who was treated this winter. She’s the sister of undertaker Dale Layne. Danny Mankin and Arthur Huling were among those attending a memorial service for Mike Nunley at Layne Funeral Home on March 5th. His parents, the late Ed and Marie Sweeton Nunley, had a popular store here over in the “Other End” during the 1950’s and ‘60’s.

We saw the first buttercups blooming February 23rd at the home of Howard and Oma Lee Boyd Lewis on “Tabernacle Curve” across Hwy. 108 from the Palmer Clinic. They live in the old coal company house where her father Clyde Boyd lived.

We Never Know: Life is uncertain. After talking with Willene Campbell by phone on February 24th, sickness suddenly struck, and she had to be taken by ambulance

to the hospital that very night when her heart acted up. At last report she was home and doing better.

When I hear of things like this, I often think of lyrics from a Frank Sinatra song that says, "Flying high in April, shot down in May". The year 2015 marked the 100th anniversary of the great singer's birth with special events across the country. You may have seen the news reports just a few days ago about Frank Sinatra, Jr. dying unexpectedly of cardiac arrest at age 72 while on a concert tour in Florida.

Mr. Raymond Hargis celebrated his 88th birthday back in February and was joined for lunch at Captain D's in Manchester by his son Jody Hargis, daughter-in-law Dee Underhill Hargis, and great-grandson Ethan Hargis.

Happy March Birthday to Calvin Finch, 92, out in Riverside, California, and Alfred Randal Nolan, 68, over in Choo-Choo Town. Danny and Betty Meeks Sanders celebrate 45 years of being hitched this month. He's a son of the late Sham Sanders, and she's the daughter of the late "Little Norman" Meeks.

Faces in the Crowd: We ran into Mark Shrum yesterday at the Palmer Garbage Dump. He's just got one eye now and says he lost it due to a stroke he didn't even know he had until later. Mark and his brother Mike are sons of the late James and Joyce Brewer Shrum.

We also ran into Kirby Dan Wideman at the dump. He's on dialysis now, but looks good and gets around good. He says his father-in-law Leon "Gabby" Tate was hurt recently by a cow, but not seriously, we think. Gabby tends to cattle in his retirement years and is still active in his 80's.

Margie Sanders Ramey of Chattanooga visited Mary Ruth Rogers earlier this month. Margie's a retired teacher from Swiss Memorial Elementary and Palmer Elementary and is doing some tutoring in Chattanooga. "Margie looked better than I'd seen her in years", Mary Ruth said.

Greg McBee, brother of Keith McBee was saved recently and attends First Baptist Church of Palmer.

Bobby Stinnett of Newburgh, Indiana, visited Ray and Doris Winton recently. Bobby and Doris attended Grundy County High School together, and he still has a house in his old hometown of Palmer. Last fall Michelle Campbell Travis moved

into the historic Harris house on Big Mine Road. The old home was occupied for years by the late Jay Harris and Johnnie Gates Harris. He was a mining engineer at the Palmer Big Mine, and she was a teacher at Palmer Elementary and other schools.

Albert Smith was at Scott's Grocery on Hwy. 399 the other day. He's the only surviving brother of a large family that included Bill, Jack, Dennis, Kenny, Anthony, & Ronnie. Albert also has a sister, Gail Smith Rollins. Their parents were the late James and Flora Layne Smith.

Here in "rainy Palmer" we recorded 10.2 inches of the wet stuff in February. In 1996 we had 9.9 inches.

Wanda Hampton Meeks and her first cousins Patsy Higgins and Nick Creighton had breakfast recently at Cleek's Restaurant on Hwy. 399 where Gordon Northcutt's Store stood over 50 years ago. Longtime friend Clifford Cordell was also there that morning and paid for their meal.

The first day of spring is always a joyous time for me because there's nothing I hate worse than cold, gloomy wintertime. The old clock on the wall is beckoning me to pocket my pen on this spring edition of the Palmer News, and we'll do just that. But, never fear, all of us here "where the good people live" send our April Love, as the song says, and know you'll surely be with us again next month.

April 2016

Palmer News

By David Patton

Palmer Town Historian

Games People Play

Over the years, Americans have become increasingly obsessed with “things”. If they have something big, they want something small. If they have something white, they want something black, and the list goes on and on.

But, in the end, the search for happiness and contentment through things in a false hope and reminds us that “All is vanity.” as the good book says.

Are you enjoying spring in your part of the country? We’re writing on April 21, and so far it has been one of the best in years around these parts.

We had 6.4 inches of rain in March. The first day of spring was March 20, and we enjoyed a mild month up until then. But Mother Nature threw a fit that day which was cloudy, cold, and even had snow flurries just before dark. Easter Sunday was cloudy, but mild with 0.4 inches of rain and a high of 61 degrees and a low of 42 from the official NWS reporting station at Big Creek Utility District’s dam in Coalmont.

Charles Edgar Sanders drove over from Tatesville in the light rain to bring me an Easter dinner, and we want to thank Charles and his wife Betty for their kindness.

The late Martha Hampton was one of the most popular teachers in the long history of Palmer School. Mr. Raymond Hargis was principal from 1955-1958 and said that Miss Hampton didn’t let students take textbooks home during his time at the school. I don’t remember that, but I’m sure it made her even more popular with the students because they didn’t have homework.

During his last year as principal in 1958, Mr. Hargis was elected Grundy County Court Clerk. My classmate at Palmer School during that time was Dennis Wideman who told me, “Mr. Hargis married my wife Carol and me in 1963”. My, my, how times have changed!

In 2015 Grundy County Court Clerk Tammy Cleek Sholey and Grundy County Mayor Michael Brady both announced that they would no longer perform marriages.

What's for supper? I was walking late one evening recently and stopped for a hamburger at the Southern Oven Restaurant on Hwy. 399 behind Layne Funeral Home. The burger was really good. The business is operated by granddaughters of Tom Coffelt and the late Chet Cleek, and is located where Gordan Northcutt had a store many years ago.

Heavyweights are not just in the boxing ring any more. Wallethub's list of "fattest cities of America" was dominated by Tennessee. Number one was Memphis. Chattanooga was sixth. Knoxville was number 12 followed closely by Nashville at number 14. Yet, according to news reports, millions and millions of Americans are going hungry.

We saw in the *Chattanooga Times Free Press* that former Palmer residents Buddy Grimes and Johnny "Digger" McDonald had passed away. A lot of you will remember them both. Way over 50 years ago, Buddy played the electric guitar along with Bedford "Lefty" Glisson on acoustic guitar and Ruth Crabtree Bouldin playing piano during services at Palmer Church of God. I guess you could call them the Church Band. Buddy, 85, is survived by his wife Elouise, son Donnie Grimes, and daughter Rhonda Broome. Johnny grew up in Tatesville. His dad was Fred "Digger" McDonald, so some called Johnny that nickname too. His mother was Marie Hickey, and his grandfather was John Hickey.

Several months ago **Rhonda Pickett retired** as an announcer on WSMG – 104.7 FM Radio Station. Dr. Byron Harbolt started this Christian radio station in the early 1990's. Rhonda's the daughter of Earl Pickett of Gruetli-Laager. The station is located on Hobbs' Hill in Tracy City.

The Preaching Sheriff: You don't often see a situation where a lawman is also behind the pulpit. Grundy County Sheriff Clint Shrum preached during an April revival at the Christian Worship Center in Whitwell. He's a first-term sheriff, but has been a well - known preacher for years. He can be heard every Sunday morning at 9:00 on WSGM 104.7 FM.

"Did you ever know Wanda Patton"? Dwight Tate was putting gas in his '56 Chevy at the Palmer Market when a stranger asked him this question. He said he was from Dunlap and was married to Wanda at one time. "Of course, I remembered Wanda and thought a lot of her," Dwight said. "My sister Phyllis and Wanda graduated from Palmer School in 1961 and were friends." Wanda passed away in recent years and has sisters Sonya and Vicky still living. Their parents were the late Hampton Edward "J.R." and Alma Overturf Patton. Dwight graduated from

Grundy County High School in 1966 and ran into classmate Jimmy O'Dear recently for the first time in 50 years.

If you've got any age on you at all, you'll probably remember the late Lewis "Poose" and Florence Graham Tate. Preston Knowlan says he remembers that "Poose" made a lot of wooden boats out of marine plywood. I don't remember that at all, but it's a good example why it's important to talk to people if you want to understand things. Most of the time you'll get information that you just don't remember yourself.

We saw Parker Hampton working today at Tracy City Save-A-Lot. His set of Hamptons came to Grundy County and settled in the Altamont area in the 1930's, I believe. They relocated from Alabama due to the building of Guntersville Lake by TVA. Back in the late 1980's as a high school boy, he worked for Steve Garner at Savage Gulf Market in Palmer. That store is known today as Palmer Market.

"Okey-Dokey": Of course, this old figure of speech means "OK" or "yes", but I hadn't heard it in a while. "I'm a country person," the woman said laughing.

Thanks to Gary Bouldin for that nice Easter card. Gary's taking art classes in Franklin, TN, near his Brentwood home and says a woman at the Williamson County Trustee's office bought one of his paintings and said that it was so pretty she just had to have it.

We saw a sign for James' Trash Service operated by Jerry, Frank, and Jesse James. This set of Jameses are probably the grandsons of the late Frank James of Tatesville, who had brothers Jesse, Fred, and Gordan, that I know of.

Wally Nolan, son of Carl Nolan and grandson of the late Claude Nolan, has moved from Barker's Cove and bought the land on Hwy 108 in Gruetli-Laager where the late John Henry McBee lived for many years.

Gruetli Church of Christ is pastored by Eddie Birdwell, who is the son of Roy Lee Birdwell. The church had a series of meetings on March 27-30 with Don Blackwell as the speaker. He's the executive director of GBN (Gospel Broadcasting Network). Kat King says the old church was full and everyone had supper before the meetings. Among those attending were Gerald & Melba Knight Smith and Johnny Dickerson. Kat says that on one of the nights a bus-full of people came from the Piney Church of Christ in Spencer, TN.

"Picture Day" at Palmer School was March 9. The school year is just about over.

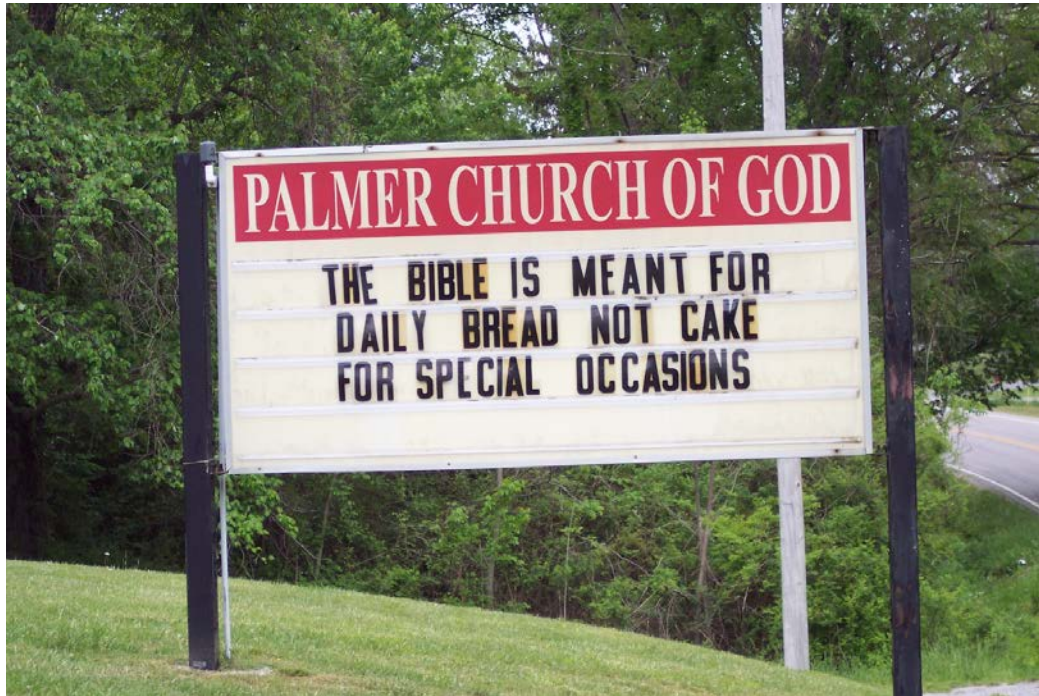
I planted about a dozen Flat Dutch cabbage plants on April 8 and some on April 12. They like rain, and they'll start growing soon.

Anniversaries: Happy 15th wedding anniversary to Eddie and Melissa Layne Birdwell. Rev. Joe & Cindy Turner Sanders have been married for 30 years, and Lowell and Dot Layne Lockhart tied the knot on April 17, 1969. Rev. J. Darrel & Gwen Birdwell Turner said, "I do", on April 4, 1980.

Happy April birthday to Mamie Layne LeCroy, widow of Duke LeCroy, who is about 96 or 97, I think. Howard Lewis celebrated number 93 this month, and Mary Ruth Mayes Rogers turned a "mere" 83.

It's time to pull the curtain on the Palmer News for April 2016. Here, "where the good people live", you still see a number of people with little backyard gardens like mine. Gardening is one of the most enjoyable and peaceful things you can do, especially if you're retired, so give it a try. We'll visit again during the month of May.

May 2016
Palmer News
David Patton
Palmer Town Historian



Our Daily Bread

Another school year has come and gone as the 2015-16 term ended May 20 with students going back long enough to get their report cards. Palmer Elementary's graduation was on the 18th and Grundy County High School had theirs the 19th with Dr. Keith Brewer as the featured speaker. He's a former Palmer principal and former Grundy County School Superintendent.

We ran into **James Pocus** the other day, and he said he retired four years ago from TVA's Widow's Creek power plant. The plant is now closed, and Google will use it.

In the summer of 1995 **David Campbell** of Coalmont roofed my house, and I hadn't talked to him since until May 10th. He said he'd been a roofer for 50 years. His father, the late Floyd Campbell also lived in Coalmont, but drove a bus here

carrying students to Palmer Elementary and GCHS in the 1950's, 1960's, and 1970's.

Rev. Clayton "Tater" Jones is now the full-time pastor of the Pelham United Methodist Church. He's married to Beverly Brewer, daughter of the late "Tooter Bill" Brewer. Clayton has pastored churches all over Grundy County, including Palmer United Methodist Church.

On May the first **Jerry Harrison** had beans up about three inches, and they survived a long and cold "blackberry winter" this month. But, now, rabbits are eating the vines. Such are the travails of a gardener.

Remembering Tenny Will: If you have any connection to Palmer and you're a senior citizen, you should remember the late Tenny Will Henley Parsons who lived across Hwy. 108 from where the Palmer post office is today. Back in the winter we met her grandson Josh Layne whose mother is Shirley Parsons. He lives in Chattanooga.

For the past several years Penny Morrison has operated the "**Pit Stop**" **drive-through** restaurant and package store on Hwy 108 next to the now abandoned Monk Land Gulf Service Station. Back in March or April, Penny turned it over to new owners, and it's still open.

What's for supper? Potted meat and Vienna (pronounced "vi-ainy" sausage were popular food items over 50 years ago in Grundy County, but, after all, this is 2016. Never -the-less, potted meat is still a favorite of Grundy County Historian, William Ray Turner, 90, of Tracy City. "William likes potted meat sandwiches with mayonnaise and a slice of tomato, and that's what he is having for supper," his wife, Marie, told me on the phone recently.

We got a **nice card from Delores Shadrick Silver** of West Bloomfield, Michigan, last month. She's a daughter of the late Joe Brannon Shadrick of Palmer, and her mother is Arlene Brown Shadrick of Coalmont, who still lives in Michigan.

Good News: Getting a college degree is a wonderful accomplishment, and congratulations to Sierra Rose Shipley of Palmer. On May 7, she got her B.S. Degree in criminal Justice Administration from Middle Tennessee State University, and was among the top 5% of criminal justice graduates. She is the daughter of Steve and Bobbye Summers Shipley.

We haven't confirmed it, but we've heard that **Bruce Ivey has passed away**. He grew up in Palmer as the only child of the late R.B. & Hilda Sitz Ivey. I believe Bruce lived in Birmingham, Alabama, for years. Harold James said the went to Palmer School with him. (Confirmation – See below)

Robert Bruce Ivey Obituary

May 20, 1937 - Feb. 9, 2016 A Chattanooga, Tennessee native and long-time Birmingham resident, he was the only child of the late Robert Bradford and Hilda Sitz Ivey. He is survived by Robert Jason, aunt, Mrs. Henri Shaeffer of Moss Point, Mississippi; other relatives as well as many friends. Bruce was an Auburn University graduate, Tau Kappa Epsilon fraternity member, who served in the U.S. Army Reserves and a realtor with Realty South for over twenty years. As requested, Mr. Ivey's ashes were taken to rest in his beloved New Orleans.

Hassie James Bivens and Daffie Nolan attended services recently at Palmer Church of God. Hassie's a daughter of the late Kenneth James and Daffie's a daughter of the late Marshall Nolan.

April Weather Report: My goodness, what a dry April with just 1.3" in what is usually rainy Palmer. Where were you in '96 when Bill Clinton was President and running for his second term twenty years ago? I recorded 5.4" of rain in April that year, and it was a cold month to boot. Easter Sunday was April 7, and I had a low of 20 degrees that morning. Guess who's running for president in '16?

Honey Must – What has happened to the art of civility in our country? We've all heard of the "Honey Do" lists wives make to get their husbands working on projects around the house. I recently read a list that was entitled "Honey Must" with assignments for the husband. What's to come of us poor men?

Former Grundy County School Superintendent Joe Nunley preached May 1 at the historic old church next to the Orange Hill Cemetery in Tracy City. The Congregational Methodists and the Primitive Baptists alternate weeks to use the church, and Joe preached for the Methodists.

"He's blackguarding." This expression was pretty common back when America had morals, but that was a long time ago. As far as I remember, it meant someone used an inappropriate sexual comment. The 81-year-old woman said one of the presidential candidates was blackguarding.

Sympathy is extended to the family of Buford Newsome of Monteagle in their loss. Buford had fond memories of Palmer School since he began his teaching career there back in 1966. Last year he called and asked for my help in locating students from that class and was planning a reunion with them 50 years later. What a shame that he didn't get to do that.

It seems in these modern days outfits that get hitched soon unhitch, and before you can turn around hitch up with someone else. Twasn't always so, though. **Happy 45th anniversary** to Allen & Linda Rogers Morrison. She's a daughter of the late Maurice "Marsh" and Clara Tate Rogers. Happy 49th to Bobby and Janie Stampfli

Layne. They're on cruise control heading for that golden anniversary. Janie's on the Grundy County School Board.

Years ago **Donnie Magouirk** had a package store and gas station on Hwy 399 in the Camp Four community. Now, it looks like he's back in business. He's a second cousin of Janelle Taylor down Pelham way through his mother Amelia Payne Magouirk.

Good News: Alexis Rollins Bennett of Tracy City got her doctorate degree in physical therapy on May 7th from the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga. As a brilliant student at Tracy City Elementary, she won the Grundy County Spelling Bee in 2001, 2002, and 2003 and got to compete at the National Spelling Bee in Washington, D.C. Alexis was the guest speaker at the 2014 Grundy County Bee. She's the daughter of Barry and Rhonda Rollins, and her grandfather is former Monteagle Mayor Charles Rollins, who is now a Grundy County commissioner.

On that happy note, we'll sign out on this May 2016 edition of the Palmer News. Your friends, here, "where the good people live", want to wish all the school kids across the country a safe and fun summer. You're just a kid once, so live it up. All of us old people will do our thing and meet up here again next month.

June 2016

Palmer News

David Patton

Palmer Town Historian



David Patton took this photo of the coal miner figurines atop the sign in 2005.

Palmer Clinic Turns 60

It was 1956 and Dwight David Eisenhower was running for re-election as President of the United States. His opponent was Adlai Ewing Stevenson, who picked a Senator wearing a coonskin cap as his VP running mate. Do you know your Tennessee history? He was the famous Estes Kefauver.

On the music scene, a young singer from Memphis was ushering in something called rock 'n roll, and one day he would be called "The King" of it.

In the Town of Palmer, which had been without a medical clinic for several years, miners and officials of Tennessee Consolidated Coal Company worked together to remedy the situation, and the Palmer Medical Clinic is still going strong 60 years later.



David Patton took this photo of Dr. Hua and American Heart Association Representative, Tina Brooks, at the clinic in 1990.

Dr. Vin-Paul Hua

Dr. Hua was Palmer's town doctor longer than anyone else, for some 30 years. His wife, Ruth, was an R.N., and they lived in the Everett Roberts homeplace on Big Mine Road.

After leaving Palmer, Dr. Hua moved to his Chattanooga home. In November 2015, the Huas reportedly moved to California to be closer to their children.

Angel of Mercy

In my opinion a doctor's job is to relieve the pain as soon as possible, then try to cure the ailment.

Dr. Oscar Howell Clements was Palmer's town doctor in the grim days of the Great Depression and World War II. His healing hands delivered babies, treated TB, and countless other sicknesses and accidents.

We take the miracles of modern medicine for granted in 2016, but in Dr. Clements' day, physicians had to treat patients and relieve pain without any of that.

Dr. Clements could be seen flying down the roads in his car to reach a patient at home and even rode a horse on occasion due to big snowstorms. He was indeed an angel of mercy, and many babies were named for him.

Before the Palmer Clinic, there was the Clements Clinic which was located behind the Palmer Theatre near the Tennessee Consolidated Coal Company “Company Store”.

Dr. Clements is pictured with his trademark cigar, and the Palmer Theatre in the background.



Hello, Everyone. Welcome to the June 2016 edition of the Palmer News.

First, let me say that this is not the official history of the Palmer Clinic. The photos I used are the ones I had on hand.

To my knowledge, the late Dr. Walter Huling was the first permanent physician at the Palmer Clinic when he brought his family to Palmer in 1956. He and his wife Jo and their children Arthur and Melanie were wonderful citizens of Palmer.

Thanks

Time surely does fly, especially the older you get, and this month makes a year that we've been on grundycountyhistory.org. A sincere than you to our webmaster Ralph Thompson along with Donna Landon Lovelace, Janelle Layne Taylor, and Mike Shadrick for making it possible.

New Palmer School Principal

Drum Roll, please! When school starts back in August our leader will be Donald Partin, son of Ronnie and Judy (Meeks) Partin. It has to be a special thrill to come back to the old school you graduated from and walk the halls and go in the classrooms like you did in your childhood. His grandfather was Alvin “Alvie” Partin of Palmer, and his great-uncle was T.G. Partin of Coalmont. Many, many of you will remember his late grandmother, Jewel Meeks, who was a cook at the school for so long.

Palmer Church of Christ Sold

Tennessee Consolidated Coal Company has reportedly sold the landmark Palmer Church of Christ to Shasta Coffelt Floyd and husband of Griffith’s Creek. Jerry Coppinger of Whitwell was the last pastor when the church closed in 2005. After that, the late Y.B. Ashby tried to use it for a Grundy County Veterans Museum, but the “Great Recession” hit at about the same time, and the project failed.

The property then reverted to the original owner, T.C.C.C. I assume Shasta will have some type of church, but I don’t know that. She’s a daughter of the late Dan and Nell (Brewer) Coffelt.

Working for the Donald

Billy Ray Nunley, 83, of Gruetli-Laager put up over 200 Donald Trump signs all over Grundy County during the presidential primary in March 2016. This great patriot is waiting to see who the Donald picks as his VP, and then will be putting those signs up. The Donald won 94 of the 95 counties in the Tennessee Republican Primary, and Ted Cruz won Williamson County.

Billy Ray is the only son of the late Graham and Sara (Cannon) Nunley. He grew up in Palmer. He went “up north” to Michigan and became a successful businessman. He later lived in Florida and Colorado before returning to Grundy County to marry Vinnie Ruth (Crabtree) Bouldin who also grew up in Palmer. Both of their spouses had died.

Summersfest 2016 A Success

I don’t know what this Christian gathering is officially called, but it’s held on the property of the late Hobert and Bessie (Parmley) Grooms, now owned by Joe D. “Jody” Summers. It was a June Saturday filled with preaching, singing, and good food. Jerry Cannon and Richard Meeks attended.

New Palmer Aldermen

The Palmer Board of Mayor and Aldermen recently appointed retired Palmer postmaster Darlene Brooks and Jamie Cooper, grandson of Ralph Burnett, to fill vacancies. Alderman Randy Privett resigned due to moving outside the city limits.

Good News About Donna

Our faithful assistant, Donna Lovelace, has been such a help on bringing you the Palmer News. She's been sick a long time, but finally was able to drive on June 14th for only the second time in the last 18 months. She's a retired R.N. and we hope she'll soon be well again.

New Grundy County Herald Sports Correspondent

Joel Raymond "Jody" Hargis was named to that position recently. He's been a lifelong player and sports fan and should do well. Jody's a native of Palmer, having been born at the Palmer Clinic in 1959. The son of Raymond Hargis and the late Doris Brown Hargis, he's a retired Grundy County Director of Schools, which used to be called Grundy County School Superintendent when his father held the post.

"Steamboat & Harold"

"Steamboat, when I die I want you to bury me in my ball suit." Steamboat's reply was, "I'll do it, Harold." Charles D. "Steamboat" Layne said he was sitting on his porch several years ago when Harold Grooms drove up and told him that. Steamboat and Harold grew up as neighbors in Palmer, and Harold played softball and baseball in his young days. Steamboat is the father of undertaker Dale Layne and works at Layne Funeral Home himself.

Harold passed away just a few weeks ago, but unfortunately didn't get his request. I'm sure, like most of us, he waited around too long. When you have a special request like that you've got to have things in order way ahead of time.

Cotton's Camp For Sale

Several years ago when Cotton Ross pastored Laager Congregational Methodist Church (now Laager Independent Methodist Church) the congregation bought land atop Palmer Mountain on Highway 108 and built a very nice church camp for kids to enjoy during the summer, and they even had revivals for adults and those of all ages.

But, as we so often say, "Time changes everything". Cotton took his heavenly flight a few years, and now the congregation has the camp up for sale "We got to where we didn't have enough people to watch over the kids at the camp," church member Joe Turner said.

"Happy as a Lark"

You seldom hear that old expression these days. That's what Cecil White said when I asked about his brother McArthur White McPherson. "Mac" as everyone calls him, moved back to his ancestral home last year in Dock White Hollow. Now he's happy as a lark.

Class of '46

Can you imagine what the world was like in 1946? It was less than a year after atomic bombs fell on Hiroshima and Nagasaki ending World War II when the Grundy County High School class of 1946 graduated.

A.J. Layne of Palmer was the valedictorian and Raymond Hargis of Gruetli (not yet called Gruetli-Laager) was the salutatorian. Both are still living and of sound mind. Both were principals during my days at Palmer Elementary School.

I've already told you that Donald Partin is the new Palmer principal. He is probably the first Palmer School graduate to come back as principal since Mr. A. J. Layne in 1962.

Richard "Rick" McDaniel

For many years Richard "Rick" McDaniel of Fredonia Mountain has brought his "Dunlap Recycling" truck to Grundy County buying aluminum cans and other types of metals that can be recycled. There's no telling how many tons of metal this has kept out of the landfills over the years. That's over now because Rick has closed the business. He's such a nice guy, and we want to thank him for coming all these years. He has made a bunch of friends in Grundy County, and best wishes for the future go to Rick and his family.

The Witty Uncle Abe

Abraham Hargis of Gruetli was born in 1869, just four years after the Civil War ended, and lived until 1961. Mr. Raymond Hargis told us the following story:

It seems in his old age that Uncle Abe would sometimes come to the Gruetli Church of Christ with one of his daughters, probably Hazel Scott. One Sunday he came and Leck Pickett was a little late in starting Sunday School. Luke Gibbs was the preacher, and he preached a few minutes longer than most preachers would. After the service, Horace Moore Jr. greeted Uncle Abe and told him to be sure and come back again. The answer probably stunned Mr. Moore because Uncle Abe said he wouldn't be back. When asked, "Why", Uncle Abe's reply was a classic. "Well, Leck couldn't get started, and Luke couldn't get stopped." What a character!

Speaking of characters, the late Tom Moore of Palmer and Gruetli was sure one. Mr. Raymond Hargis says he and Tom rode the school bus to Grundy County High and were good friends. Mr. Hargis took his lunch to school and on pretty days, he and others who did the same would sit on the football bleachers and have lunch. Tom ate in the lunchroom, but one day came out and joined Mr. Hargis with a lunch brought from home. This surprised Mr. Hargis, and when he asked why he brought his lunch to school Tom replied, "The last time I ate in the lunchroom they had cabbage, kraut, and slaw!" "Mrs. Esther (George) Sitz ran the lunchroom, and I'm sure Tom was pulling my leg," Mr. Hargis said.

Palmer Church of God

Palmer Church of God had its Vacation Bible School the week of June 20. Other churches will also be having theirs this summer, and I'm sure the kids enjoy all of them. This seems to be an event where religious differences are put aside, and that's rare these days.

Remembering Mr. Turner & Marie

Grundy County historian William Ray Turner and wife Marie passed away recently just a couple of weeks apart. I had known them for some 30 years, and we became close friends. I also want to remember Harold Grooms. I hadn't seen him in years, but he was always nice to me, and I considered him a friend.

Church Sign Messages



They're thought provoking. Some are really comical, while others will bring a tear to your eye. But, in the end, I've never seen one that wasn't true, and I really enjoy seeing them during my walks on the highways and byways. We photographed this one June 21, 2016, at the House of the Lord Church on Palmer Mountain pastored by Ronnie Partin.

"My Way"

"And, now, the end is near, as I face the final curtain." These lyrics are from the great Frank Sinatra's swan song, "My Way". I am a great believer in the individual, don't want to copycat anyone, and do it "my way".

Due to circumstances beyond my control, this will end our Palmer News on grundycountyhistory.org. What a great ride it has been and once again we thank Ralph Thompson and the others mentioned before for the privilege of the past year. But who knows? Our paths may cross again, or we may see you around the next bend. In the meantime, from right in the middle of "where the good people live", we wish you godspeed and a fond farewell.

