

All articles contributed by
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Palmer Town Historian

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Palmer School Staffer Marks 20 Year

Mrs. Pam Henry Meeks began working at Palmer Elementary as a substitute teacher in January 1990, later became a teachers' aide in special education, and in recent years has been the school secretary/lunchroom bookkeeper. She also has served as the cheerleaders' coach for many years.

"Chances are if you phone the school or pay a visit, the first person you'll be in contact with will be Miss Pam", town historian David Patton said. "Over the years, with her dynamic energy and enthusiasm for all things Palmer School, she has become the symbol of this historic Grundy County landmark."

All five children of Mrs. Meeks and her husband Dewayne attended the school and have set a record that will probably never be broken. Jared, Ethan, Brittany, Rebecca, and Sara Meeks all graduated with perfect attendance in grades K-8. "What an amazing feat and testament to good parenting," Patton said.

Mrs. Meeks is a daughter of former Grundy County residents Hobert and Willie Mae Ruehling Henry of Davenport, Iowa. Many of you will remember her grandparents, Hobert and Gladys Davis Henry of Palmer.

Memories of Christmas Past

By Mrs. Beverly Kaye Kilgore Daniel as told to David Patton

Mrs. Daniel grew up in Palmer as the daughter of Rufus, Jr. and Louise (Barnes) Kilgore. Today she lives in Hixson, TN.

"I graduated from Palmer School in 1962, and I remember getting a box of cherry candy when we exchanged gifts in the classroom before Christmas vacation. Every year I just knew I would get one, and I was so proud to get it, too. I also remember

being in the school programs, singing Christmas carols, and carrying a candle while walking down the aisle in the auditorium at Palmer.

Although I don't remember many Christmases as a little girl, one year when I was five or six years old, I got a doll. I fed it too much water in a bottle and almost molded the inside of it. But I was so glad to have gotten that doll. The snow was so deep, but I just had to get down to Nancy (her neighbor on Ducktown Circle) McGovern's house to show everyone. My shoes and clothes were all wet when I got back home from all that snow. That Christmas was and is still so very special to me.

My brothers Jerry and Gary would get cap guns, and I still remember the smell of the caps being fire. The caps were little round red paper rolls that you put in the gun. Gary let a firecracker go off in his mouth one time, and it turned it inside out.

Mother always cooked a chicken for Thanksgiving and Christmas dinner with dumplings and dressing, mashed potatoes, biscuits, pumpkin pie, and chocolate pudding. Mama and Daddy did put nuts, hard candy, an orange and apple in one of our socks for Christmas. Most kids today have too much. (Yes, Beverly, as people often say "kids" these days have Christmas every day. DP)

Daddy always killed hogs, salted the meat down, and Mama would fry it. I remember the lard that was rendered too. Jerry would still use lard to fry his potatoes until his death just a few years ago.

I look back at those times, and I would not take anything for them. I just thank God that we had food and a roof over our heads and clothes to wear."

Memories of Christmas Past

By Mrs. Betty Jo Nunley Turner as told to David Patton

Mrs. Turner grew up in Coalmont, TN, and is a 1978 graduate of Grundy County High School. Today she lives in Gruetli-Laager.

"When I was growing up my Mama loved animals, and we had a horse, cow, hogs, chickens, and guineas. Every Christmas Eve at midnight my brother and I wanted to go to the barn to see if the animals were praying, and Mama would fuss that we were going to freeze to death.

Like most people, Mama did a lot of cooking for Christmas, and I can still remember how good everything smelled in the kitchen. She would bake a peanut butter cake and a peppermint cake. The icing on the peanut butter cake was like peanut butter candy though thinner so she could spread it. The peppermint cake was beautiful. She put egg white icing on it. Then she would take a big stick of peppermint candy, wrap it in a cloth and crush it real fine before sprinkling it on top of the white icing.

One of the gifts I best remember was getting a taper recorder one year. I wanted one to take songs off the radio because radio was where young people heard the latest hit songs before cable TV came along with things like MTV. I almost aggravated Mama to death though because I'd also tape things she said around the house”

Photos from around Palmer

Betty Jo Turner (left) and her daughter Andrea at the Grundy County Post office in 1996. Betty Jo ran the day-to-day operations of the award-winning paper for publisher Y.B. Ashby.

Rufus Kilgore, Jr. is shown in his Navy uniform during WWII. Mr. Kilgore and Douglas Ray "Doug" Brown were the first Palmer men to join the military after Pearl Harbor. The Japanese attack happened on Sunday afternoon local time, and they joined the Navy the next day in Chattanooga, Dec. 8, 1941.

1959 picture of Beverly, Jerry, Gary, Louise and Rufus Kilgore, Jr. of Palmer.

Channel 3 TV meteorologist Paul Barys visited Palmer School and is shown with PTO President Pam Meeks, April 3, 1990.

Palmer & Related Deaths in 1999

Every once in a while someone will ask us, "Is so and so still living?"

Although this list is from 1999, we thought it might be helpful in answering such questions in the future.

Time is endless and these loved ones and friends left us 11 years ago, but we know that they are still missed and extend to you our sincere sympathy.

Deaths in the Palmer town limits were Carl E. Johnson, Bonnie Campbell Meeks Hampton, Charles C. Cleek, May Ellen Shadrick, Frances Elizabeth Conry, who taught 45 consecutive years at Palmer School; Margaret E. Page, Mother-in-law of Don Nunley; and Taylor Rosalee Morrison Dykes, infant great granddaughter of Martin Charles Morrison.

W.M. "Morris" Rogers and Bessie Parmley Grooms were in nursing homes and Dorothy Pry Laymon of Dock White Hollow passed away.

Over in Tatesville-Barker's Cove, we lost Louie Roberts, Ovey May Bennett Cox, Elder Lockhart, and Keenith (correct spelling) Kilgore Anderson, mother of Riley Anderson.

Former Palmer residents living in Gruetli-Laager that we lost were Edna White Burnett, Gladys Barnett Summers, widow of Robert Summers; Teresa RogersTate, daughter of Hade Rogers; and Mary Helen Sanders Hargis.

Outside of Grundy County deaths of former Palmer residents include Edna Barker Patton and her daughter Nancy Petty Odum, Brince Worley, Everett H. Green, Ralph J. Graham, Sr., Betty Jean Green Buehler, Robena Boyd Morgan, Margaret Alyene Merrell Hall, Linda Layne Staley, daughter of Clell Layne; William L. Henry, father of Rodney Henry and Cecil White who lived in Michigan, and Phillip Jason Carpenter, son of Jimmy Carpenter.

Although these well-known Grundy Countians never lived in Palmer, we note the passing of attorney Thomas Dewey Hembree, Beatrice Crabtree Geary, chief deputy Jeff Fults, and football coach Walter "Moose" Bouldin.

Former Palmer Police Chief James "Jim" Cripps of Pikeville and Jerry Denton of McMinnville also died in 1999.

Christmas in Indiana

Beverly Sissom Riley and Steve Kash on Christmas Day with her granddaughters Marisa (left) and Madelin. Beverly is a native of Palmer and is a daughter of the late Buford and Gladys Overturf Sissom.

Frances Elizabeth Conry

Frances Elizabeth Conry, beloved teacher at Palmer Elementary School for 45 consecutive years. 1941-1986.

Palmer News

Happy New Year! It's good to be back with you after the long Christmas break. We had a wonderful holiday season and hope that you did too. Fortified with our New Years Day meal of Hog jaw, black-eyed peas, turnip greens, onions, beets, and corn bread we bravely face the challenges that 2010 will bring.

The big news in Palmer and across the South is the bitter cold that started New Year's Day and still lingers as we come to you on January 11. Helen Arbuckle had zero for two consecutive mornings in Tracy City, and we had -4 degrees on our porch this morning around 3:00. But, it could and has been worse.

25 years ago: North to Alaska? North to Palmer!" In January 1985, we say 27 degrees below zero at Jackie Henry's Texaco Station. Pelham had - 22 degrees, Monteagle -20, and Nashville -17. A young man asked the other day, "How did people stand it?" "I don't know!"

Back in the 1950's singer Johnny Horton had a big hit with "North to Alaska: and part of the lyrics were, "When it's spring time in Alaska, it's 40 below. Every time I think of January 1985. This song comes to mind.

It's a very catchy song, so look it up on the Internet. John Wayne made a movie "North to Alaska" about the gold rush up there, and I believe the song was featured in the movie.

Jerry Harrison's doctor told him right before Thanksgiving that, "You're a lucky man to be alive" because he survived three major surgeries in 2009. Better luck this year, Jerry.

Danny McCullough survived a car wreck, Larry James had a kidney transplant, and Jerry Cannon fell at his home and later was hospitalized with a fluid build-up from his heart condition. All since we were last with you.

Others on the sick list are Velma Jean Grooms, Billy Carl Guffey, Thelma Geary, and Kirby Dan Wileman. Shirley Cunningham was hospitalized with pneumonia and Ida Pearl Brown spent a week at Memorial Hospital in Chattanooga. As we write 94-year-old Velma Cannon is in serious condition after breaking her wrist and hip in separate falls.

Bertha Schulze was a teacher at Palmer Elementary in the 1930's and early '40's. Now Bertha Schulze Ashley lives in Manchester, TN, and is 101 or 102 years old. Mrs. Ashley had been driving and leading an active life until a recent illness forced her into a nursing home. She has hopes of living in her own home again and we'll keep you updated.

We ask you to remember our sick in your prayers, and please place them on your church prayer list.

"I've not seen you in a 100 years." That's what Y.B. Ashby said to Steve Garner recently. Back in the late 1980's Mr. Ashby ran the Grundy County Post, and Steve advertised his Savage Gulf Markets in the paper. Steve returned to his beloved Chiggertown and remodeled the old Bedford Glisson home where he now lives.

We hadn't seen Junior Creighton and Kenny Bivens in a long time and enjoyed our conversation with them recently. Junior escorts funerals for the Grundy County Sheriff's Dept. and looked spiffy in his uniform.

"Who'd a thought it?" A black bear was spotted recently near Scott's Grocery in Barker's Cove and mountain lions have been seen in Grundy County. Are we going back to pioneer days?

Palmer School's Christmas play was the 18th of Dec. in the auditorium. Each class performed and Teeter and Becky Morrison went to see their grandson Brody.

Palmer United Methodist Church had 46 for their Christmas program on the 20th. Carolyn Hargis directed the play and Velma Jean Grooms wrote it again this year and was presented a plaque for her years of doing so. Howard Lewis played "Silent Night" on the harmonica. The children's group that consisted of Vanessa Stinnett, Jordan McCullough, David King, Chloe King, and Bryson Brooks sang.

A delicious breakfast followed with Joyce Hargis bringing 60 sausages and boiled eggs and Elizabeth Privett providing the biscuits. A crock pot of gravy, hot coffee,

and other beverages on a cold morning really hit the spot. Mary Stinnett brought a big cake with a Christmas tree design on top.

Palmer First Baptist had a "Silent play this year with the actors portraying Bible scenes. Lindsey Guffey performed the only song.

Palmer Church of God had their play "Redemption in the Wings on the 18th. The play was about a woman reconciling with her father who abandoned her as a child. Among the actors were Louise Woodlee and Gene Layne's sons Frankie and Marty.

Larry Pocus was among those attending the Christmas dinner of the Gospel Trumpet Holiness Church. Charles Slatton is pastor and the church is in the former Margie Sanders Ramey Store building on School Road.

Some of you may remember "Shooks" Smith. His sister Faye Dent told us he's 80 now. He's a son of the late Leck and Iva Frizzell Smith. Faye is 78.

"Let's go Christmas caroling." That's what second grader Vanessa Stinnett said to her mother, Mary Stinnett.

So, on a cold night Mary loaded up Vanessa and her little friends Maddie Kilgore, Chloe Magouirk and Cassidy Cleek and away they went to sing "Jingle Bells" and other favorites.

They visited several homes and sang "Silent Night" for 92-year-old Gussie Flynn and also performed for Joyce Hargis and at the home of Chloe's grandfather, Jerry Magouirk. I was disappointed to learn the girls came to my house and found me gone. Next year we'll plan to be at home for them.

Lori Henry and Lori Beth Taylor drove home together to see their families for Christmas. Lori is a school psychologist in Tampa and the daughter of Larry and Debbie Henry. Lori Beth, the only child of Billy Wade and Kim Hill Taylor, is an R.N. in Orlando and granddaughter of the late Johnnie Hill.

Lori Beth is the 4th generation of R.N.'s in the Finch family. Louise Finch Arms, Betty Finch Bush, Kim Hill Taylor (R.N. & F.N.P.) and Lori Beth.

Our friend Allene Nunley Hargis of Tucson celebrated with her children and grandchildren out Arizona way.

Lindley Long's widow and children gathered for the holidays at the old Charlie Patrick home. He was Lindley's grandfather and Lindley bought the place and was living there when he passed away.

Harold and Martha James had their two daughters and granddaughters home for the holidays.

The children of Buddy Nolan gathered for Thanksgiving at the home of his daughter Rosa Sanders in Monteagle. Buddy's widow Thelma is at the Haven of Rest Nursing Home, but was able to join the family that day at Rosa's. Buddy's home burned New Year's Eve night and to our knowledge had been empty for some time.

Henrietta Nunley Tucker of Soddy Daisy and her daughter and grandson spent a night at the Opryland Hotel during the holidays. The Nashville hotel is the world's second largest.

Sue Pocus Creighton and niece Jobina spent Thanksgiving in Florida.

Ricky and Fieda Layne and son Lebron moved to Cumberland Heights recently. They are a fine family, and their leaving was a loss for the community. They live on Colony Road not far from Herby and Bonnie Caldwell who were Ricky's Palmer neighbors back in the 1960's. Ricky visited them recently and they were overjoyed to see him "Bonnie hugged my neck", he said.

Palmer weather report: It's been a wet 2009 and as the year ended we had 3 ¼" of rain in November and 9 ¾" for December. The wrap up of the year we had a "blue moon" on December 31. Oddly we also had a "blue moon" on Dec. 2 as well. This always reminds us of the great singer Mel Torme's classic "Blue Moon".

A special 82nd "Happy Birthday" to our friend Helen Cunningham Ackerman Arbuckle who celebrates this month. Other birthday wishes go our to Helen's granddaughter Jessica Ackerman, Larry Pocus; Gruetli-Laager Mayor Donna Rollins, Dorothy Knight, Troas Knowlan Layne, Deanna Akins Shadrick and Henrietta Nunley Tucker.

Happy 50th anniversary January 30th to Floyd and Brenda Shrum Jones and Wayne and Loretta Morrison Jones all of Gruetli-Laager.

Floyd and Brenda married in Joliet, IL, and Wayne and Loretta married in Elgin, IL, on the same day. The couples met in Elgin and had a reception.

Wayne & Floyd are brothers and Brenda and Loretta are first cousins. Many of you will remember their grandfather Will Crabtree.

Happy 35th anniversary to Eddie and Rita Smartt Crabtee who were married on January 25, 1975. They live in the Dave Henninger place next to Palmer School

This is more news than you probably wanted to hear from “where the good people live” and we’re exhausted, so that’s a wrap for now.

Stay warm and safe in this winter weather, and let’s all get together again next month at about this same time.

Palmer and Related Deaths in 2009

Another year has passed, and it's once again our sad duty to mark the passing of those who left us in 2009.

Deaths in the palmer town limits includes Frances Morrison Britton, Larry T. Lecroy, Billy Wayne Miller, Melanie Phillips Cleek, Gary L. Cleek, and Jason M. Rogers, grandson of the late James "Burr" Rogers. Mildred McDaniel Phillips, mother of Melanie Cleek, also died in a nursing home. This is the smallest number of deaths in the Palmer town limits that we can recall since we've been doing this yearly report.

Over in Tatesville-Barkers' Cove, we lost Velma Green Cagle, Travis James, Donald R. "Don" Stocker, Treva Worley Land Morrison, and Claude "Possum" Whitman. U on Palmer Mountain, Stanley H. Layne, son of the late Harley Layne died in 2009.

Across Grundy County, deaths of former Palmer residents include Franklin D. King, A.S. Moon, Crystal R. Tate, Jarvis L. Levan, Rodger K. Parson, John W. "Bill" Partin, Floyd "Moe" Garner, Ruby Nunley Long, Warner "Man" Turner, Jr., and our good friend Nellie Bell "Nell" Bone Finch.

Elsewhere in Tennessee, 2009 saw the passing of Hal Gilbert Meeks, nephew of J.T. Meeks; Mary Pauline Tate Hobbs, daughter of Wiley "Bunk" Tate; Perus Alden

"P.A." Green, Jr., D.J. Magouirk, son of Ambrose Magouirk; Lillie Mae Layne Lockhart, widow of James L. "Sandy" Lockhart and her son James L. Lockhart, Jr.; Cecil Stanley Sissom, son of Howard "Dillinger" Sissom; Billy Ray Coppinger, James "Toby" Thompson, Elsie Lucille Green Rhoades, James K. "Doodle" Morrison, Diana Marie Meeks Cordell, 1962 Palmer School graduate and the daughter of John Meeks; Janice Layne Gulas, daughter of Roy Layne; Altha Lucille Henley, Fred Sanders, son of Cecil Sanders; and Franklin "Frankie" Rust, daughter of Ernest "Boog" Rust.

Former Palmer residents living out of state who passed away were Larry Dale Jones of Arkansas and Sebe Edward Disheroon, brother of "Wet Duck" Disheroon; and Bertha L. Green Shrum of Rossville, GA. Mrs. Shrum was a sister of Elsie Lucille Green Rhoades. They were daughters of James Arthur Green.

Although they never lived here, others passing on with Palmer connections were Clifford Tate of Coalmont, Connie Bouldin and Mack Pickett of Gruetli-Laager, and former Palmer Elementary School principal Ronald K. Fults of Manchester.

Please accept our sincere sympathy on the loss of these loved ones and friends. May you have peace and comfort in 2010.

FEBRUARY

Old Sayings and Figures of Speech in Grundy County, TN

If you're new to our website, you'll find this feature to be one of the most interesting things we offer. We started this in January 2007 and have special editions on marriage, religion, and the Roberts family sayings. Go back and look them up for an enjoyable trip back to yesteryear.

The world is constantly changing, and that includes the way we talk. Old people used to say, "Time changes everything," and that's so true.

1.It's staying around waiting on another one. – You don't hear this much anymore, but if you're from Grundy County and are over 50 years old, you'll instantly remember this. Years ago we used to have a lot of snow. After most of it had

melted sometimes stubborn patches would stay around and people would say this. And lots of time it would happen – more snow.

2.I heard it from a third party, or a party told me. – In rural areas we all know everyone else’s business and the third party was from an indirect source, not the actual person who was the subject of the conversation.

3.He’s deaf, or He can’t hear it thunder. – This was a person with bad hearing. Years ago people said “deef” instead of “deaf”.

4.A lie will travel around the world before the truth can get its shoes on. – This is not just a Grundy County saying, but it’s so true that we thought you’d relate to it.

5.You gotta put a little willie in your pocket if you’re going to do anything. – This meant will power, and we all know this old saying is true.

6.He’s a little stubby fellow. – A short person was sometimes described this way.

7.She’s a peculiar person. – These days we’d probably say a “weird person” or even a “nut”. Another description from years ago that fit this type person was “funny turned”.

8.He had to put his two-cents in. – This was a nosey person who put their uninvited opinion into a conversation.

9.Give yourself some leeway. – Be flexible, do something another way if your original plan doesn’t work out.

Friends

David Patton and Kaite Berry are shown in this Feb 2008 photo. David used to visit Kaite and her great aunt Ida Pearl Brown when Ida Pearl lived in the home formerly occupied by the late Lorene Akins here in Palmer.

Today, Kaite is 11-years-old and is a 6th grade student at a middle school in Spencer, TN and says she wants to be a brain surgeon when she grows up. She lives in Rock Island, TN, near McMinnville and describes herself as "extremely hyper, fun, and crazy." (See letter from Kaite- page one / page two. See Valentine's Day card from Kaite- front / inside card).

Kaite's teachers are Ms. Pennie, Ms. Jamie, Ms. Becky White, Ms. Diana , and Ms. Chrissy Young.

"We hope Kaite keeps working hard in school and does become a brain surgeon", David said. "Young people of today have more opportunities to realize their dreams thn any generation in American history."

Palmer News

"I can't give you anything but love, baby. That's the only thing I've plenty of, baby."

The lyrics from this beautiful song cheer us up on a gloomy and snowy Valentine's Day 2010. As we write and glance out the window, snow lightly covers the trees and ground, but the roads are open and the juice is on, so we always have something to be thankful for.

I'm sure it's happened before, but this is the first snowy Valentine's Day that I can remember. Regardless of the weather though, love goes on as Misty Shrum and Roger Martin were married today at the Beacon of Hope Church in Barker's Cove. She's a Granddaughter of the late James and Joyce Shrum.

Happy birthday this month to Ethel Mae Cantrell 96, Velma Cannon 94, Anna Polk Conry Creighton 87, Grundy County Historian William Ray Turner 84, Raymond Hargis 82, and James Henry McBee who went in the U.S. Army in February 1964, turns 68. Mrs. Creighton is the sister of the late teacher Frances Conry and says, "I don't expect this bad weather to break until March. When I was growing up, I didn't get to have a birthday party because my birthday is in February and the weather always was bad."

It costs 44 cents to mail a letter now, but guess what a stamp cost in 1965? Just a nickel and air mail 8 cents. In the days when a lot of people in Grundy County didn't even have phones and had never heard of computer "the mail" was eagerly looked forward to six days a week.

Five generations of the Scott and Velma White Cannon family have attended Palmer School.

Mrs. Cannon was an 8th grader when the school opened November 14, 1927, but didn't graduate with her classmates the following year. Knowing that she couldn't get a new dress for graduation because of the poverty of those times, she chose to go back to the 7th grade that year and never graduated. Her daughter Mary Louise Cannon Stinnett graduated in 1949. Mary's son Jimmy Lovell and his daughter Laura attended, and the 5th generation is Mary's great-granddaughter Vanessa Stinnett. Vanessa is a 2nd grader and has been adopted by Mary and her husband Bobby Lynn Stinnett.

The Working Man: When people think of Mr. Raymond Hargis, they remember a high school teacher, Palmer School principal, and public official as Grundy County Court Clerk and Grundy County School Superintendent. "In 1946 A.J. Layne of Palmer was the valedictorian and I was the salutatorian at Grundy County High School: Mr. Hargis said. "About a year out of high school, I got a job with Lewis Meeks working at his sawmill in Ross Creek for 50 cents an hour and I was glad to get it. I did all the jobs you do around a sawmill except sawyer."

Mr. Hargis also drove a coal truck during his college days and worked part-time in the post office while finishing his college work at the University (now UTC) of Chattanooga.

This is a good example of what made America great. Young people used to be eager to do any hard or dirty job to "work their way up" and become successful. No one thought it was "beneath" them to do manual labor and get their hands dirty. In recent years the flood of illegal immigrants has been blamed on the unwillingness of Americans to do such jobs. What a sad commentary on our nation!

Lois Cleek of Boston and a friend visited relatives here during Christmas. She's a daughter of Arnold Cleek and the late Ann Nunley Cleek.

We enjoy sending and receiving Christmas cards and our friend Bobby Owen sent us an amusing one featuring lumps of coal. We got him back by sending all that February snow to the Atlanta area, so we're even now.

Others sending cards from out of state were Martha Carroll Cox Hensley of Florida, Allene Nunley Hargis of Arizona, Billy Ray Nunley of Colorado, and our good friends Calvin and Charlotte Finch of Riverside, CA. Martha Carroll, Bobby, and Mr. Raymond Hargis are big supporters of this website and we always appreciate their kind comments.

Those celebrating February anniversaries are Don and Brenda Hargis Lecroy 50th, Joe and Joyce Grooms Scruggs 58th, Lowell and Janie Parsons Cantrell 44th, and Keith and Rene Hart McBee 31st.

Our January rainfall in Palmer was 9". As usual we had a variety of weather from bitter cold to mild and Coretta Coffelt Tate, widow of Glenn Tate, ever reported seeing a double-rainbow on the 21st shining through a gentle rain.

On sick call: Glenn James of Nashville made a good recovery from carpal tunnel syndrome as did Ricky Layne after hernia surgery. Sherry Meeks Cannon and her son Kevin are home after a serious car accident and Billy Carl Guffey recovers at home after bypass surgery. Velma Cannon is much improved in a skilled care facility and Crandel McNabb is home from rehab at Siskin after a stroke. School Board member Anita Meeks was treated for kidney stones while Ramey Cunningham, son of Howard Shirley Cunningham, has been stricken with cancer recently. Please remember all of these in your own and in your church prayers.

Kenny Payne and Patsy Creighton were among those faithfully visiting Velma Grooms before her death from cancer last week.

Faye Layne Hanson and Louise Braden of Chattanooga were among the many from out of town here due to the death of Rev. Cotton Ross.

Faces in the Crowd: "Aren't you going to speak?" When Mary Ruth Rogers heard this in Monteagle recently it turned out to be Mike Gifford. "He had a beard, and I didn't know him," she said.

Julie Coffelt, granddaughter of the late Amos Coffelt, has moved into the Chiggertown house occupied for years by the Henry Turner and later Marion Potts, Jr. families.

Here due to the death of Steve Justin "Squeak" Turner was Drema Roberts and her sister Lana, Phyllis Tate, Terry Brewer from the Chattanooga area and former Palmer Elementary principal Dennis Mainord of Jasper. We ran into Paula White Nance, daughter of the late Paul White recently, and also got to talk with former Grundy County School Superintendent Dr. David Dickerson of Altamont.

It was nice making two new friends lately. Kim Magouirk works in the lunchroom at Swiss Memorial Elementary and her grandparents were the late Clarence and Corrine White Griffith of Griffith's Creek. Corrine was a sister of the late Mattie Mitchell. And in the 1950's we'd go to the Griffith's store with Mattie and her husband Pascal Mitchell who were our neighbors.

We enjoyed our conversation with Sandy Long Dycus this week. She's a nice young lady and the daughter of Raymond Long and many of you remember her grandmother Ruby Long.

Carleen Nunley, daughter of Carl Ed Nunley and the late Charlotte Long Cannon visited Inez Green and her daughter in Jasper this week. Inez is the widow of Everett Green and the sister of the late Mrs. Edd (Marie) Nunley. Carleen lives in the Murfreesboro area and stopped in Palmer to visit her stepfather Jerry Cannon.

We were saddened to see our friends Charles Britton and Wendy Berglin move back to Cleveland, Ohio. He's a son of the late Charles Elliot Britton.

Kathleen Bryant Beckham of Mableton, GA, is doing research on the Bryant, Brewer, and Cagle families and it was good to hear from her. She's a daughter of the late Leo Bryant.

That's a finale from the snowy home of "where the good people live", which is right here in Palmer, Alaska, oops, Palmer, Tennessee. There actually is a Palmer, Alaska, you know. The late Howard Kenneth Scissom was born in Palmer, Tennessee, and died in Palmer, Alaska, where he had settled after his U.S. Air Force career. His widow, Carolyn Conry Sissom, still lives in Alaska.

MARCH

Preacher Cotton Dead at 85-Amazing Life Ends on Sunday Morning

The Rev. Charles Osbon Ross, known to everyone as "Cotton" passed away on the snow-covered Sunday morning of January 31, 2010. As befitting a man of God, he was dressed in his "church" clothes when found by family members outside his

home. Cotton had lived alone since his wife was confined to a nursing home last year and speculation is that he went out to get the Sunday paper or start a car and had been there only a short time when discovered.

Like many raised in the rough-n-tumble world of coal mining, Cotton was a rowdy drunkard in his young days with a reputation for being ready to fight at the drop of a hat.

We often tend to forget that some of the great men of the Bible were roughnecks or worse in their younger days. Thousands of years later, people are still people.

Cotton often told stories about his days of living in sin, not to boast or appear tough, but to give an example of how the power of God has changed his wicked life and could change yours too.

The curse of “drinking” has been on Grundy County and the rest of the world as far back in history as you want to go. Instead of “pot” and “drug dealers” you had “whiskey” and “bootleggers”. Almost every family in Grundy County has been affected in some way by drinking.

Back during Cotton’s day in the early 1900’s it was common practice for drunks to gather on the weekend at the old Palmer Ball Diamond and other places. Someone would bring a jug of whiskey and others would bring or go steal chickens which they’d fry on a big campfire and “party” as they say today. Cotton fell into the fire and was badly burned at one such gathering.

“I saw the light. I saw the light. Praise the Lord. I saw the light.” This gospel classic by Hank Williams was known by almost everyone in Grundy County back in those days.

And, on February 13, 1950, Cotton did see the light and was “saved” during a revival at the Barker’s Cove Congregational Methodist Church.

Cotton not only “made it right” with God, but like many other new converts from that time, he felt compelled to “make it right “ with those he had wronged.

One of his first acts as a Christian was paying a man for chickens he had stolen from him. The man said, “It’s a good thing I didn’t catch you.” This may seem comical to us in 2010, but back then almost everyone in Grundy County grew their

own vegetables and meat with chickens and eggs being an important source of food. "Cholesterol" was an unknown word then.

Cotton led several different churches until June 1961 when he became the pastor of Laager Congregational Methodist Church, thus beginning a legacy that will probably never be matched in Grundy County history.

Over the next 48+ consecutive years, the church became the most well-known and influential one in this part of Grundy County, if not the entire county. When you said "Cotton's" everyone knew what church you meant. Some in religious circles became miffed by this term thinking Cotton was being deified, but that's just how the common people in rural areas describe things. They get right to the point instead of using long, drawn-out terms.

This span of time pastoring one church must be a record locally if for no other reason that even if the pastor had wanted to stay, more than likely a dispute in the congregation would have resulted in him being "run off". If you know of anyone even approaching this record, please let us know.

Cotton was what churchgoers call a "good preacher" meaning he was a good speaker who held your attention and didn't bore you to death or put you to sleep. During his sermons he stressed the importance of Christians doing the right thing so they could be a good example to the lost.

Once upon a time in America, a man's word was his bond, and if you told someone you would do something you were expected to keep your word. Cotton once told his congregation from the pulpit, "If you tell someone you'll do something and don't do it, you've lied." (Amen! to that.)

Also once upon a time in America, lying was considered to be a terrible thing, and if a person had a reputation as a liar, they were disgraced. A man at the church once told Cotton that "It was just a little white lie." Cotton replied, "There's no such thing. A lie is a lie". The man's definition of a lie shows why confidence and trust in church people by the general public has hit rock bottom.

After almost 60 years of Christian living, Cotton had touched so many lives that visitation at Layne Funeral Home was Tuesday, Wednesday, and up until the 2 PM funeral on Thursday, February 4th in order to give everyone a chance to pay their

respects. Close to 50 preachers were in attendance in what was probably the largest funeral in Palmer history.

The service was conducted by Cotton's assistant pastor Jacob Anderson, his son Bill Ross, and Plainview Community Church pastor Mike Rigsby. Singing and praising the Lord filled the air in what one person described as "more like a church service than a funeral."

Harry Joe Hooper, a legendary undertaker (funeral director as it is known today) and retired as owner of Hooper Funeral Homes in Whitwell and Palmer, was a special speaker.

His career and Cotton's ministry began at about the same time. They became friends and had an agreement that the survivor would serve as a pallbearer at his friend's funeral. In very poor health, Harry Joe wasn't able to fulfill that agreement and said of Cotton, "Over the years he always helped me in any way he could, and never turned me down".

According to our information, Harry Joe said he had handled some 6,000 funerals in his career and that Cotton had preached about half of those. "The only other person that I can think of who would have preached more funerals would be Joe V. Colston of Marion County," he said.

After all the funerals preached, weddings conducted, sermons delivered, and revivals held, Cotton will be remembered best of one thing above all others, "Visiting the sick".

Matthew 25:36 "I was naked and you clothed me. I was sick and you visited me. I was in prison and you came to me." If you, a family member, or friend were in the hospital in the last 50 years, chances are some of you got a visit from Cotton. It didn't matter what church you went to or whether you went to church at all. He could be seen in hospitals and nursing homes from Chattanooga to Nashville and all points in between. We hope that those who knew Cotton best will put together a collection of stories on the thousands of miles traveled in his ministry of visiting the sick. Many times someone from the church would be with him, and I'm sure it would be an inspiration to everyone.

The road to Heaven was made for Marathon runners and everyone familiar with the Bible knows that "He that endureth to the end shall be saved." (Matt. 10:22)

II Timothy 4: 6-8 said it so well. “The time of my departure has come. I have fought the good fight; I have finished the race; I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will award to me on that day, and not only to me, but also to all who have loved his appearing”.

Cotton knew he'd have to finish the race and endure to the end to win his heavenly crown and on the obituary pamphlets at Layne Funeral Home was his picture and one of his favorite sayings about eternity.

“I'd like to take my Bible and shake it in the Devil's face and say, “You've lost. You've lost, Devil, and I've won. I've won!”

The Devil met his match and “Cotton” won. “Cotton” won!

Remembering Cotton Ross

Rev. Cotton Ross' last baptism just a few weeks before his 85th birthday. The girl's name is Makenzie.

Charles O. "Cotton" Ross at his 85h birthday party at his church in Gruetli-Laager. This party was on Dec. 10, 2009. Cotton turned 85 the next day.

Laager Independent Methodist Church sign

Cotton Ross' Obituary

Cotton Ross' Funeral announcement

Grundy County Spelling Bee

The 26th annual Grundy County Spelling Bee was held Feb. 23, 2010, at Coalmont Elementary School with all six of the county's elementary schools participating.

After 23 rounds Kaitlyn Evans of Tray City won the contest. Coming in second was J.R. Clay of Pelham Elementary while Sarah Scott and Hunter Wolkonowski of North Elementary finished third and fourth respectively. All four were awarded the

David Patton Spelling Award with Kaitlyn receiving a \$100 Savings Bond, J.R. Sarah and Hunter took home \$50 savings bonds.

Brianna Weaver of Swiss Memorial Elementary won the Louise Geary Layne Courtesy Award and a \$100 savings bond while the youngest award winner, 5th grade Alexa Fults from North, won the Y.B. Ashby Teamwork Award and a \$100 savings bond.

“In 2006 we founded the David Patton Spelling Award followed in 2007 by the Louise Geary Layne Courtesy Award and the Y.B. Ashby Teamwork Award in 2008”, Mr. Patton said. “The Spelling Bee contestants represent the best and brightest of our students and it gives us great pleasure to publicly recognize and reward them for their academic achievements.”

For those of you across the country that haven't lived in Grundy County for a long time, please note that North Elementary is in Altamont and Swiss Memorial Elementary is in Gruetli-Laager.

“We want to thank director of schools Joel “Jody” Hargis, supervisor of instruction Donna Layne, and Phyllis Gulley from the central office for supporting and carrying out our spelling bee awards program,” Mr. Patton said. Donna and Jody both have Palmer connections. She's the granddaughter of the late Mr. & Mrs. Clell Layne, Sr. and he's the son of former Palmer Elementary Principal Raymond Hargis and wife Doris Brown Hargis.

“We also want to give a special ‘thank-you’ to Grundy County Trustee Lucyle Pirtle Hampton,” Mr. Patton said. “From the very beginning of this awards program, Mrs. Hampton has been a constant supporter and her words of encouragement are greatly appreciated.”

Thank You card (front) (back)

Y.B. Ashby Teamwork Award Winner

Bob & Bettye Sherwood with granddaughter Alexa Fults, winner of the Y.B. Ashby Teamwork Award. The Sherwoods are members of the Grundy County Historical Society. Bob has worked on restoring the cemeteries in the area around Hubbard's Cove and Viola. Both he and Bettye are researcher. They have just completed Law

Enforcers of Grundy County, TN and are currently working on Law Enforcers of Coffee County, TN. Bob is also working on a cemetery book on Wesley's Chapel.

Palmer News

Hallelujah! hallelujah! hallelujah! hallelujah! Hallelujah!

No, we haven't cracked up as we come to you on the first day of Spring 2010. After going through one of the longest and coldest winters in many years we are just overjoyed to finally see spring arrive.

Just to show you how long the cold lingered, in recent years our buttercups have been in full bloom starting the last week of February. They didn't start blooming this year until March 19.

Harbingers of spring: Our first crocus bloomed February 19th, and we heard the first frogs singing over n Chiggertown on the 24th. According to an old saying, the first thunder in February wakes up the snakes, and we heard that on the 21st. The rainfall total for February was 5".

We've noticed over the years that a lot of people are born in March, so Happy Birthday his month to : Delbert Hargis, 90; Y.B. Ashby, 89; Calvin Finch, 86 (the only living member of the John and Carrie Partin Finch family); Monroe (Junior) Roberts, 80; Billy Carl Guffey, 75; Willie Dee Meeks, 74; Teeter Morrison and Randal Nolan, who both served with the U.S. Army in Vietnam,, turned 62; Gary Bouldin had his 55 birthday this month.

Pastor Doug and Della Sissom Tate of Chattanooga celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary January 30 at Suck Creek Baptist Church. Among the many guests were Della's brother Jack Sissom and family and Doug's cousin Billie Lynn Sissom Hatfield of Soddy Daisy. Billie Lynn is a daughter of the late Clyde and Lorene Tate Sissom.

"A lot of wrecks have happened on that 4-mile straight". Harold James said that's what people use to call this stretch of Hwy. 10 in Gruetli-Laager. We had never heard of it, but I'm sure Mr. Raymond Hargis and Ida Pearl Brown will know what Harold's talking about.

Savanna Cleek was a member of the Grundy County High School Girls' Basketball team that won the District 7-AA championship this season. She's a granddaughter of Billy Carl and Becky Guffey and Arnold Cleek and the late Ann Nunley Cleek.

Jon-Luc Roberts, grandson of Junior and Lucille Roberts was an all-star player for the Palmer Elementary School team this season. He's a straight- A student and will be going to GCHS this fall. Many of you will remember his other grandfather, the late Dwight Shadrick.

Faces In The Crowd: We ran into Joe David Tate recently. He's a son of the late Mr. & Mrs. Arthur "Dock" Tate and says that he's 77 now.

Bobbie Lloyd and Perkie Greene, along with their children Beth and Bobby, Jr. were here from Florida due to the death of her mother Velma White Cannon.

Jerry Cannon saw Perkie at the funeral home visitation and said, "That's the first time I had seen Perkie since they left Palmer over 25 years ago". Susan Faye Sissom got to see her childhood friend Beth and Kat King got to see Bobby, Jr. "He remembered me," Kat said. Kat had a flower shop for 17 years and Bobby, Jr. said, "You're the one that had the flower shop." Others seen during visitation were Leon Patton, Jimmy Northcutt, and Mary Lillian Henderson and her son Mike Givens, all of Chattanooga. With Mrs. cannon's passing, Mary Lillian is the only survivor of the Dock White family.

Continuing with our faces in the crowd, it was good to see Angela "Porky" Partin. It was good to see Johnny Lamz the other day. She's a daughter of the late Larry Partin and he's the son Joan Crabtree Lamz and grandson of the late Gordon Crabtree.

That was just the second time in my life I've shaken hands with a 100 year-old". That's what Donna Gifford Basham said about greeting Mr. Alf Rogers of Pelham at his birthday party recently. He's the father of retiring Grundy County Court Clerk Jimmy Rogers. Donna's cousin through the Lockhart's, Betty Carrick of Tracy City, also lived to be 100.

Another big birthday gathering was held in Coalmont to celebrate Mr. Ray Winton's 80th birthday. He's a well-known Church of Christ preacher and school teacher and among those attending were Sis Cannon Layne, Kat King and Bobby Stinnett.

"Oh, I've got the wrong number." We're glad she did though because we enjoyed talking with Reggie Sweeton, widow of Delbert "Cooney" Sweeton. Reggie's from Yonkers, NY, and met Cooney when he was in the Navy in the New York City area. After marriage they moved to Burnt Orchard Hill where his family lived and built a home. " We worked on the home for 5 years, but when we got it finished we didn't owe anything. Since he's gone I'd like to just pick up this piece of ground and house and move it, but because of the memories I'll probably stay here." Reggie's daughter, Samantha "Sam" Sweeton Stevens is an award winning math teacher at GCHS, but is glad to be back in the classroom after a stint as assistant GCHS principal.

Back in our January "Palmer News" we told you about seeing 27 below zero in January 1985 at Jackie Henry's Service Station here in Palmer.

In a casual conversation about the cold winter this year, Junior Roberts said it was 24 below zero at his grocery at the same time. "I sold a lot of soft drinks at that time, and I still remember hearing them bursting inside the store," he said.

Wednesday is called "Bingo Wednesday" at the Gruetli-Laager Senior Citizens Center and this month it fell on St. Patrick's Day. Ann Creighton and all the others dressed in green and enjoyed refreshments in addition to the regular non lunch. Oscar Howell (named for the late Dr. Oscar Howell Clements) McDaniel is a new member and Nancy and LaVaughn Reeves and Betty Watts Hart Golston have also been coming recently.

On Sick Call: Lowell Lockhart and Herby Caldwell have been surgery patients. Lowell's brother Harold is home from the hospital after a serious illness and Rodney Layne, son of the late Andrew Layne, is in Vanderbilt. Ethel Mae Cantrell, 9, suffered a mild stroke, but seems to have made a complete recovery and is back home. Gary Bouldin has also been a surgical patient while Melvin Hampton has been hospitalized with a heart condition. Church of Christ minister and school teacher Paul Cooke has been in poor health and James Henry McBee and Jerry Cannon's daughter, Pam, are also sick. Please remember all of these in your thoughts and prayers.

On a brighter note, James and Minnie Lockhart McCullough celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary march 11. They were married at the Palmer Church of Christ.

Dennis and Betty Jo Nunley Turner celebrated 28 years of marriage this month. Betty Jo worked for years on Mr. Y.B. Ashyb's newspaper, "The Grundy County Post", and is always a nice and friendly person anywhere you see her. Congratulations to both of these fine couples.

This was a very special "first day of spring" 2010 for me here "where the good people live". I returned from the hospital that day after a scary episode of gastrointestinal bleeding which struck in the middle of the night.

A sincere thanks to the Grundy County EMS crew of Tyler King and Mandy smith and the emergency room staff at Emerald Hodgson Hospital for their good care. Once I got to Southern Tennessee Medical Center in Winchester, Dr. Patrick Greer and his "angels of mercy" ICU nurses Lori Evans, Sandy Pickett, Stacy Brown, and Debbie Nunley gave me the best of care and made me feel like one of their own. Needless to say, I will forever be grateful and thank them from the bottom of my heart.

Dr. Greer is a son of retired circuit court judge Tom Greer of Dunlap and says his father is 86 now and still mentally sharp. Dr. Greer and his father are both history buffs, and we passed along our Historical Society website address to him and other hospital staff members. Sandy Pickett lives in Monteagle and Debbie Nunley lives in Estill Springs and is married to a former Pelham resident Felix Nunley.

If our health permits, we'll be back with you next month. In the meantime let's all get outside enjoy this wonderful season of spring, when the earth comes alive once again in all the glorious colors of God's creation. Good bye for now.

APRIL

Spelling Bee Thank You cards

[Thank You card 1](#)

[Thank You card 2](#)

[Thank You card 3](#)

[Spelling Bee Newspaper Article](#)

Church Sign

Church sign in Palmer

Palmer News

Ah, the beautiful month of April. We're coming to you on the 20th and as we look out the window a gentle rain is falling. A misty veil hangs on the green mountain sides, and the bright white, red, and pink of the dogwoods almost takes your breath away.

Happy birthday wishes this months to Howard Lewis 87, Herby Caldwell 80, Mary Ruth Rogers 77, Harold James 75, Larry James 63, Ricky Layne 54, and Rev. Brett Meeks 47.

It's been a long time: To those of my generation the Vietnam War seems like yesterday, but Bruce Coffelt says he got home on April 12, 1970, from that country on the other side of the world. Bruce served with the U.S. Army and some 20 years later went overseas again with the National Guard in Operation Desert Storm.

Our March rainfall was 6.6. It was a good month this year with plenty of rain and no serious storms.

We planted cabbage yesterday and onions a few days before. Cut up green onions mixed with leaf lettuce from the garden used to be really looked forward to in Grundy County each spring. Known as killed or "kilt" lettuce you would sprinkle salt and a little vinegar on the mixture and they pour hot bacon grease over it that wilted the lettuce which is why they called it killed.

Kilt lettuce, along with bacon, pinto beans, fried potatoes and hot cornbread with butter was a southern tradition and makes us hungry to even think of it.

We saw in the Chattanooga Times Free Press where Anthony Jackson of Chattanooga died last month in a traffic accident. His father, Phillip Jackson, was a classmate of mine at Palmer School in the 1950's. Anthony's grandfather was the late Dave Jackson and his grandmother Esper Dishroon Jacks is still living. She's a sister of the late Wet Duck Dishroon.

Happy 45th anniversary to Howell Gilbert & Sylvia Clements of Chattanooga who were married on April 2, 1965. He's an attorney and grew up in Palmer as a son of the late Dr. Oscar Howell Clements.

We saw our first snake on April 2, so let's all be careful in these warm weather months.

This has been a beautiful April and Easter Sunday was no exception with sunny skies and warm temperatures.

Palmer United Methodist had a good crowd and Howard Lewis sang "Thirty Pieces of Silver" and "How Could You Refuse Him Now?" At Palmer First Baptist, Pastor John Henry Coffelt sang the new version of "Amazing Grace".

After coming home from a walk today we found the Palmer School yearbook for the 2009-2010 term in our door. This full-color book has been put together for several years by first grade teacher Angie Hudson who does an excellent job. The title is "CSI (Cool Student Information)". Thanks, Mr. Hudson!

The congregation at Laager Independent (Cotton's) Methodist Church has chosen Rev. Jesse Lockhart of Tracy City as pastor to succeed the late Rev. Charles "Cotton" Ross. He's a grandson of the late Rev. Mutt Lockhart. Bill Merciers recently attended services at the church.

Faces in the crowd: Jerry Cannon was at the funeral home visitation in Tracy City recently for his cousin Carl Robin Geary and saw Ray (brother of Riley Anderson, Jr.) and Mrs. Jean Foster, widow of Robert Hill Foster. We talked with Greg McBee, son of the late Jim Dave McBee, the other day and also Horace Ray Slatton whose father was the late Houston "Huke" Slatton.

We also talked with Bruce Knight, son of the late Horace "Gid" Knight and Glenda Collins, daughter of the late Hallie Jean White Lanford.

Betty Tate of Chattanooga, daughter of the late Harley Tate has been on the sick list as well as Charlie Campbell of Powell's Crossroads, son of the late Alec Campbell. Oma McNabb of Tracy City was here due to the death of her nephew Rev. Malcolm James. Lonnie B. James was a pallbearer and according to Harold James went to see Malcolm every other day while he was in the South Pittsburg nursing home. Lonnie B. lives in Gruetli-Laager and was a true friend.

Lest we Forget: The West Virginia coal mine explosion that took so many lives earlier this month reminds us of a similar disaster in our area.

In 1983 at the Grey's Creek Mine near Palmer 13 men were killed in an explosion. Two of those were Gaylon Parsons of Coalmont and Lee Grimes of Gruetli-Laager. Their fathers, Hershel Grimes and Johnny Parsons, are still living and both are World War II veterans.

We received a nice letter yesterday from Mr. W.H. "Harold" Knight of Warren, Michigan. Harold grew up in Palmer and like so many of "the greatest generation" served in the U.S. Army during World War II along with his brothers Raymond "Babe" and Horace "Gid".

After the war he moved to Michigan and worked for Chrysler Corporation for 7 years before starting a career in the architectural precast industry. He's 87 now and worked until he was 79, Harold's one of our website visitors and reads the Grundy County Herald online. We hope he comes back to visit his old hometown this summer and look forward to meeting him.

We're gonna "mosey" out of here for this month and on behalf of everyone here "where the good people live", get outside and enjoy the spring weather and make the most of each day. Walk and be as active as possible and you'll feel better physically and mentally. Goodbye for now and remember our troops around the world in your prayers.

Palmer Veteran's Appreciation Awards

Palmer town historian David Patton (right) presents the first annual Palmer veterans' appreciation award to World War I veteran Malcolm P. Rankin as Rev. Cecil Walker (left) and James "Burr" Rogers look on.

David Patton (left) presents the 3rd annual Palmer Veterans appreciation award to Rufus Kilgore, Jr. at small cemetery near Palmer School known as the "Indian Graveyard". Also on this date the deed to the cemetery was presented to the city of Palmer by Richard Winsow on behalf of Tennessee Consolidated Coal Co.

Marion McNabb and David Patton with Patton presenting him as 1987 vet of the year on Veterans Day 1987 in the annual Palmer Veterans Appreciation Award.

David Patton presents Charles E. "Gene" Brooks with the 9th annual Palmer Veterans appreciation award plaque officially presented on Veterans Day, Nov. 11, 1994. This photo taken Nov. 13, 1994. Photo by Y. B. Ashby.

Palmer town historian David Patton (left) presents the tenth annual Palmer Veterans appreciation award to Bedford R. Glisson of Palmer, TN, a WWII veteran

William Jackson "Jack" Partin - WWII

MAY

PALMER NEWS

Time is moving on and here it is already May. It's always a welcomed month for people like me who like warm weather. Years ago when most everyone heated with big coal-burning stoves, they'd take them down about May 15th because by that time the cool mornings and nights were about over.

Happy birthday greetings go out this month to Rev. James Roberts, 91; Hazel Hornbuckle, 91; Stella Mae Lockhart Dodson, 80; Charles Edgar Sanders, 78; Donna Gifford Basham, 64; and Dennis Kelley of Kelley's Grocery, 63.

Our April rainfall in Palmer was 7 1/8". We planted cabbage on the 19th and the rain has really made them grow.

Helen Cunningham Arbuckle recently placed a big 8X10 photo of her late husband Reyburn Ackerman, his nephew Bobby Owen, Nick Nichols, and Harvey Brown in the Coal Miners Museum. The photo was taken in 1986 at the Palmer School reunion and Bobby is the only one still living.

Reyburn was elected mayor of Palmer in 1962, and Helen put his framed election certificate in the museum as well. At that time, the Grundy County Election Commission had only three members and their signatures on the certificate were Alder Brewer of Palmer, Wade Bouldin of Gruetli-Laager, and Taylor Partin of Pelham. All are deceased.

The homes of Carl Nolan in Barker's Cove and Terry Nunley in Palmer on Camp 4 Curve burned April 19. Carl's a son of the late Claude Nolan and Terry's dad is Ronnie Nunley.

The world is full of bad news, and we like to report good news when we hear it.

Mary Ruth Rogers and I had a conversation recently about the lack of friendliness of so many leaders today. Our "turn" or personality means so much, and Mary Ruth said, "That's what I always liked about Raymond Hargis. Anywhere you saw him, he had a smile on his face and would speak to you." Mr. Hargis is a retired Grundy County Clerk and School Superintendent.

The great Nashville flood: The weekend of May 1, 2010, will always be remembered as the great Nashville flood, and we had some former Palmer residents affected by it.

Opal James, 96, and her daughter Linda live on Sawyer Brown Road and woke up Sunday morning, May 2, the flood waters everywhere. Opal had to be carried through the water and Linda cut her foot wading out. Three feet of water got inside the house and it ruined her car as well. As of today (May 17) they are hoping to move into a small apartment this weekend until repairs can be made.

The home of Opal's son, Glenn, escaped damage. Ann Creighton's son, Eric, lives in Goodlettsville and also escaped damage.

Cindy McCullough Lecroy of Gruetli-Laager attended a Jimmy Buffett concert on Saturday night, May 1, but got back home safely.

Palmer United Methodist church had 46 for Mother's Day services. All the ladies received a rose. Hazel Hornbuckle's daughter Carl, daughter Connie and niece Drema Roberts came with her. Howard Lewis sang a special song about his mother who died in 1961 and also performed "If I Could Hear My Mother Pray Again".

School Day Memories: "I went to Palmer School, but in my 8th grad year I went to school at Tatesville", 75-year-old Harold James said. "I would run at a slow pace from the "other end" of Palmer through the 'bottom', go past Bob & Effie Overtuf's and up to

Atwood Layne's where there was a short cut to the school. "Now I can't hardly walk from my repair shop (just a few feet away) to the house." "That's old age", Harold!

Speaking of old age, with the divorce rate sky-high these modern days, marriage has become "a joke" as one person described it. Some outfits are working on their third or fourth spouse and looking for another.

But, all is not lost, let's salute some couples who are in it for the long haul. Happy 55th anniversary this month to Leonard and Troas Knowlan Layne of Palmer. Billy Carl and Becky Coffelt Guffey of Palmer marked their 49th while another Palmer couple, Jimmy and Lynn (daughter of the late Glenn Nunley) Nunley Campbell, have been together 35 years.

We've heard a lot of bad things about politicians and marriage lately, but Congressman Zach Wamp and wife Kim of Chattanooga made it 25 years of marriage this month. He's running as a candidate for governor in the Republican primary this August.

Smart Boy: Jarret Birdwell, grandson of Ronnie and Judy Partin is the valedictorian of the 8th grade graduating class at Swiss Memorial School this month.

Earlene Bryant and Bobby Stinnett made good recoveries from recent surgery. She's the sister of Helen Arbuckle. These two sisters and their brother Shirley are the only survivors of the Webb Cunningham family.

Ann Creighton, 87, fell and suffered a head injury May 11, but after a short stay in the emergency room seems to be making a good recovery.

Faces in the crowd: We received a most welcome visit from Sara Swann Shipley of Johnson City this month. Sara graduated from Grundy County High School in 1935, so she must be about 93 now.

We hadn't seen Carl "Tubby" Tate in years and ran into him recently. He said he's 71 now and has a new home on the property of his late father Fred Tate after Fred's old home was torn down. Tubby and his brother Charlie were talented musicians, and Charlie still plays.

"We used to date when I was 18, and I hadn't seen her since." That's what 73 year old Jerry Cannon said after seeing former Palmer resident Judy Tate. Judy's mother, Ruth Morrison Tate, sister of Dorothy Garner, was brought back to Palmer

for burial after being in Ohio for many years. Judy's brother, Kenneth Tate, lives in Murfreesboro.

"I remember Haskel 'Hack' Tate, Ruth's husband, very well, " Harold James said. He was a brother of Harley Tate and both of them and their families lived on the big hill above my house where Dennis Kelley lives today. I'd be home for lunch from palmer School, and I'd see Hack walking up that big hill already coming in from the Big Mine. They said he'd load 30 cars of coal. I don't see how he did it and got home so soon, but he might of went in early of something."

All of us here "where the good people live" are looking forward to a very enjoyable summer , so make it a good one in your part of the country too.

Memorial Day is when we pause and show our respect for all those killed in our nation's wars, so don't forget that. If you know of a veteran whose grave won't be marked by a flag, get one yourself and mark that grave.

Please urge your church to remember all those serving in Iraq and Afghanistan in your services on Memorial Day weekend. That's the least we can do.

We hope you'll join us next month at about this same time. Good-bye for now.

JUNE

PALMER NEWS

We're coming to you on June 16 and according to the old saying, If it rains on the first day of June, it will be a rainy summer. Another version is if it rains on June 1, it will rain every day through June 15. That hasn't happened at my house, but it could have other places nearby with these "pop up" showers.

The gardens look pretty good and we got our first squash today. We're all hoping the tomato blight stays away after it wiped them out last summer.

The 83rd graduating class hit the auditorium stage to receive their diplomas May 25 at the historic Palmer Elementary School.

The graduates for the class of 2010 were destiny Rhea Campbell, Caleb Cannon (Jerry's grandson), Jordan Trace Hornbuckle, Anthony Logan James, Anna Lenae Joslyn, Amber Nicole Layman, Zachary Lecroy, Anthony Keith Nunley, Bree Payne, Maddie Payne, Jon Luc Roberts, Stefan Rollins, Courtney Tate, Terra Nichole Trussell, Dustie Kyle Turner and Scotty Brandon Williams. Jon Luc Roberts, grandson of Junior and Lucille Roberts, was a brilliant student his entire time at the school and was the valedictorian. Maddie Payne was salutatorian and best all-around girl while Zachary Lecroy was best all-around boy. He's the great grandson of the late Duke Lecroy and the late Barney Shadrack.

Mr. Y.B. Ashby, president of the Grundy County Veterans' Historical Society, held his annual memorial day weekend service to read the names of local veterans who had passed on in the last year. Big Don Hill of Beersheba springs played the national anthem on a red, white, and blue fiddle. What a patriot!

Palmer weather report: Our May rainfall total was 5 7/8" The weather is always a topic of conversation and 80+ year-old Betty Creighton Coffelt said, "We've always had strange weather on this mountain. I've seen it turn cold in the spring and snow on the corn when it would already be up and growing."

Eddie Crabtree and James and Theresia Campbell took antique vehicles to the recent Hillbilly Car Show in Monteagle. The Campbell's love in the old Ewing Hampton place on Big Mine Road.

A.J. Layne, Chris Layne, Joel Patton, Leon Patton and his sister Clara, Benny Burnett and his brother in law Shirley Cunningham, Larry and Gayle Crabtree, Ann Nunley and her father Ralph Burnett and George and Andy Burnett were among the current and former residents paying their respects to David Ricketts at a Chattanooga funeral home.

David's mother Georgia Burnett Ricketts is 96 and still lives in her own home.

Happy birthday to Crandel McNabb 97, Gussie Flynn 92, Anita Crabtree 74, Preston Kowlan 64, Danny McCullough 63, Mike Gifford 59, and Clayta Hargis Cleek 48. Also celebrating this month are Dr. Vin-Paul Hua, Ted Nunley, Glenn Basham, and Leon "Gabby" Tate.

Rev. Billy Joe Keener is reportedly interested in the former Fairview Holiness Congregational Methodist Church to use as a recording studio for Christian music. It's the church on Hwy. 399 across from where the old Barker's Cove School stood.

The Great Tatesville Tour: Wanda Hampton Meeks, "The Queen of Tatesville" knows more about Tatesville-Barker's Cove-Palmer than any living person in our opinion. She recently took us through Tatesville and showed us where "Uncle Ludie" Brewer once lived and the William Penn Adams, Bass Overturf, Atwood Layne, Herman and Maudie Brow, Cox places, Fred Myers Store, Shelton Store, Fred Layne place and on and on. Thanks so much, Wanda. We really enjoyed it, and if any of you have questions about this part of Grundy County call Wanda at 931 779-3821.

Mrs. Jackie (Norma) Henry made a good recovery after cancer surgery and Rev. Ronnie Partin's grandson Jody survived a terrible car wreck and is recovering at home.

Happy 59th wedding anniversary wisher this month to Herby and Bonnie Cook Caldwell. They lived for years in the old Ira Dugan place on Dugan's Curve, but have lived on colony Road near Altamont since 1972. Happy anniversary wishes also to Lonnie and Anna Thomas Cleek who celebrate 11 years this month. He's the Democrat Party nominee for Grundy County Mayor in the august General Election.

Almost the entire Palmer School student body enjoyed a day of fun at Lake Winnepesaukah on May 21. They were joined by parents and grandparents on this annual trip. On May 27 the graduates, teachers, family members, went to Pigeon Forge for their 8th grade trip.

Faces in the crowd: "I didn't know Ida Pearl", Jerry Cannon said about seeing Ida Pearl Brown for the first time in years.

Retired Palmer school teacher Dennis Mainord of Jasper visited Mary Ruth Rogers recently and Mary Ruth says she saw Hoyt Rogers at the home of his mother Clara Rogers. While in Chattanooga she also ran into Rosemary James, widow of Benson James and a former Palmer neighbor.

A census worker came by and it was Diedra McBee, daughter of the late Garry and Judy Coffelt McBee. She's a very pretty and friendly young woman and we enjoyed meeting her.

We also ran into Danny Sanders of Chattanooga on Memorial Day. He was over doing some yard work for his mother Shorty Sanders on his day off from his railroad job.

While in Gruetli-Laager, we enjoyed visiting Randy King at this home. He's a son of the late James Lowrie "Jim" and Margaret Rankin King. We gave the first Palmer Veteran's Appreciation Award to his grandfather Malcolm Rankin and in later years gave it to his father Mr. King.

We talked with Leon Christian and he says his grandson went with him and Dewayne Brewer to Bryan's Cove on 4-wheelers during Memorial Day weekend and saw a lot of campers enjoying the good weather. James Pocus Passed us the other day and as far as we know he's still working at the TVA Widow's Creek Steam Plant in Alabama.

"I thought you might have been to Bonnaroo." Old men sit and visit outside the Corner Market in Altamont, and that's what Ricky Layne heard recently when he went in the store. He looked around and the old gentleman was Nick Creighton and they talked for a few minutes. They both used to live in the palmer area and now live in or near Altamont.

It's about super time here "where the good people live" and we're going to skedaddle and fry some of the fresh squash from our garden. We hope to have cabbage next week and cucumbers soon. Nothing from a store or farm can match the taste from your own back-yard garden.

so, get the ice cream and watermelons ready and have a wonderful "4th". We plan to do just that and hope that you'll pass along our website address, www.gchs.homestead.com and www.grundycountyhistory.org to others along the way.

Good-bye for now.

JULY

PALMER NEWS

We're coming to you on the red-hot day of July 21. This morning Wanda Meeks and I traveled out to Altamont to "vote early" in the August state and local elections. Palmer native Donna Gifford Basham is the administrator of the Grundy County Election Commission, and we spoke with her briefly.

Land of the Midnight Sun: Want a break from the July heat? Donna and her husband Glenn got it when they vacationed in Anchorage, Alaska, area earlier this month.

"We flew up and had a great time," Donna said. "We got to see glaciers close up from a ship and took a ride in a small plane over Mt. McKinley. An old World War II base we toured looked like it did during the war and had civilians living on it. I didn't know salmon were that big until we saw them close up and the river was completely full of them.

Going from one temperature extreme to another will get your attention fast. "I had long sleeves on, but wore sandals and almost froze until I got some socks. The warmest it got was 60 degrees. We had to close the curtains tight to sleep because of the continuous sunshine. I had sunglasses on at 11 PM. About 2 AM it got "dusky-dark " and then at 4 AM it was daylight again."

Here's an interesting sidenote: The late Kenneth Sissom retired from the U.S. Air Force and settled in Alaska. He was born in Palmer, TN, and died in Palmer, Alaska. His wife, the former Carolyn Conry, still lives in Alaska. Palmer is in the Anchorage area, and Donna says, "We saw a road sign pointing to Palmer". Kenneth was a son of Howard "Dillinger" Sissom.

Happy birthday wishes go out this month to Oma James McNabb, 93 and her nephew Rev. James Roberts, 91. Oma Boyd Lewis turns 86, Clayton Hargis, 8; Allie Jean "Shorty" Sanders 77 and her son Danny Sanders 61. Tom Burnett and his twin brother Dick 65, Mrs. Ricky (Freida) Layne 53 and her son LeBron 21, town librarian Susan Faye Sissom 41; Peyton Curtis 14; and Jayden (Mary Ruth's great grandson) Rogers 11. Out in Tracy City, Grundy County High School's number one fan, Rayburn Anderson turned 64 this month. We usually don't do this, but belated

birthday wishes to Joe "Proxy" Curtis and Rev. Danny Coffelt who both hit the big "5-oh!" last month. Danny pastors Tracy City United Methodist Church.

Palmer weather report: We had 4 3/8" of rain in our gauge for June. Howard Lewis had his first ripe tomato on the 29th which is early for the mountain, but said he planted them real early and covered them up three times.

"I've never watered one." That's what Joe D. "Jody" Summers told us about his garden which survived three weeks of blazing sun and no rain.

It finally started raining again on July 9th which saved the gardens." Daddy (Robert Summers, Jr.) used to water his, and he'd have to do it every evening." Corn likes a lot of rain and Rev. Jacob Anderson and Rev. James Jacks both said the dry spell really damaged it. Joe Nunley, former county school superintendent sang "How Long Has It Been" (since you talked to the Lord) at the Father's Day service at Palmer First Baptist. "He has a beautiful voice," said Billy Carl Guffey and Mary Ruth Rogers.

In the Baptist Church the members vote whether to accept new members, and Joe and his wife, the former Ann Burnett, were accepted as new members recently. Joe's father was the well-known Methodist preacher Jim Mutt Nunley of Coalmont, and Joe says he stayed in the Methodist Church until his father passed away.

Rev. Jesse Lockhart is the new pastor at Laager (Cotton's) Independent Methodist and Rev. James Roberts, 91, and Tyler McCullough, 23, were honored as the oldest and youngest fathers at their Father's Day service.

The fathers at Palmer United Methodist were honored with a round of applause on their special day. John Ross Jones was the guest preacher for Pastor John Kennedy of Pelham.

Carl "Teeter" Morrison retired last month after many years at the Sequoyah Nuclear Plant in Soddy-Daisy.

"Spam, George Jones, and 'vi-anys", now what could be more country than that?

A man told me about a recent visitor of his: "My cousin came by and wanted a sandwich. I told her all I had was some Vienna (pronounced by country people as

"vi-ainys") sausage and spam. She fixed her two spam sandwiches and put on a George Jones record while she ate." It sounds like this visit could be made into a good county song.

Vacation (VBS) Bible School was a big success this summer at Palmer Church of God. It went on for several nights with 94 there on one night and 84 another. It concluded July 2 with a fireworks display which Jerry Cannon enjoyed from his front porch.

Leon "Gabby" and Willie Mae Flynn Tate hosted a dinner for family and friends at the Barker's Cove (Riley's) Congregational Methodist Church on July 4th weekend.

The main attraction was 175 pound fresh hog cooked slowly in a big cooker along with all kinds of side dishes and desserts. Among the guests were Willie Mae's cousin Gwen and her husband, Hugh Gerald Hill of Beersheba Springs and Gwen's brother Larry Flynn of Marion County. Others feasting were Larry and Debbie Henry, James and Reatha Jacks, and Gabby's aunt Helen Arbuckle.

Borrowing and paying back: Back years ago when almost everyone in Grundy County was "poor as Jobe's turkey" neighbors borrowed a cup of sugar, flour, meal from each other all the time and didn't think anything of it.

We hadn't heard of it in year, but Mary Ruth Rogers says she and her neighbor Coretta "Cody" Tate still do. "If I run out of something on the spur of the moment, I'll borrow a half-cup of sugar. I'll take back 3/4 or a full cup. My mother did too and the Bible says something about giving good measure."

Happy anniversary wishes for July go to Joe Willard and Jean Fults, 64th President Jimmy & Rosalyn Carter, 64th; Earl and Brenda Rogers Grimes, 45th; Bruce and Gail Bryant Coffelt, 25th; former Palmer Church of God pastor Greg and Angie Williams Jones, 25th; Buford and Jackie McCullough Jones, 19th; James "Roster" and Kristie Reeves Guffey, 19th; Don, Jr. and Dusty Geary Adkins, 10th (son of Wilma Smith Adkins and daughter of Donna Basham), and Mike and Melody Knight McGee Oliver of Pelham, 6th.

Faces in the crowd:

Retired teachers Dennis Mainord and Miles Thomas visited Mary Ruth Rogers. Both taught at Palmer Elementary, and Mr. Thomas said the Palmer students were the nicest and politest in his career.

The Creighton reunion was held again this year in Coalmont, and Opal James, 96, and Arthur Creighton, 85, were the oldest present.

"Hello Rock." That's what Ricky Layne heard at a convenience store. It was Connie Layne Patton Tate, daughter of the late Leander Layne. "I hadn't seen Connie in years and told her I didn't know how she recognized me since I'm so ugly and gray-headed now. " A lot of people his age call Ricky, "Rock".

Wanda Meeks got a surprise phone call from her Uncle Weldon Hampton of Ohio recently. He's the last surviving member of the Smartt Hampton family of Tracy City and a half-brother of Wanda's father the late M.C. "Bud" Hampton. We have received a word that Wanda's first cousin Naoma Patrick Price has moved from Chattanooga to the Atlanta area to be close to family

It was good to see Mrs. Bobby Joe (Donetta Morrison) Campbell at the Palmer Veteran's Memorial Park. They lived in Tracy City for several years.

Others we talked with recently were Angel (daughter of Arnold Cleek) Cleek Elledge and Renee Harrison Layne. Renee's been a hairdresser for nearly 30 years and lives in Whitwell now.

Jackie Henry's daughter Christy was married June 29 at Palmer United Methodist. Palmer's oldest church was the site of many weddings and funerals years ago.

How did you get the name, "Cookie"? we asked recently. Mrs. Cookie Cleek Anderson drives a SETHRA Public Transportation van and is such a nice friendly person. "My real name is Charlestine she said. After I was born and still in the hospital my grandmother Cleek came to see me and said she's no bigger than a Cookie. I've been called that ever since."

Cookie's a daughter of the late Charles Cleek and Venova Cannon Cleek and granddaughter of the late Hearl and Lillie Ross Cleek and Freddie and Agnes Cannon. "Cookie was one of the prettiest girls in Palmer School", Ricky Layne said.

On the sick list: Mrs. Keith (Renee Hart) McBee had cancer surgery, and Mrs. Edward (Betty Campbell) McHone is recovering from bypass surgery. Mrs. Carl (Juanita Crabtree) Worley is another recovering surgery patient.

Others having hospital stays recently were Margaret Crabtree, widow of Jip and Mrs. Raymond (Doris) Hargis. Freddie Meeks has also been a surgery patient and Betty Fults, widow of Earl Fults, suffered a broken arm.

Rosa Nell Sweeton Scissom, widow of J.C. "Tommy" Scissom, has been in a nursing home for several years, and her nephew Glenn "Pete" Smith visited her recently.

We also have to sadly report that our friend Ethel Mae Cantrell, 96, is now at the Monteagle Nursing Home.. "The news" reflects life, some good and some bad, and it's not pleasant to report some of it, but let's stay positive and count our blessings.

That's it from "smack dab" in the middle of "where the good people live", but don't forget to come by for a visit in August. Good bye for now.

August

Old Sayings & Figures of Speech in Grundy County, TN

This used to be a regular feature on our website. We haven't done it in quite a while, so let's do so this month.

1. "old girl" People used to say this when angry or irritated about something. Recently, an older woman and a younger woman had an argument. The older woman said "old girl, I'll show you." The younger woman replied, "old woman, I'll do this or that or whatever." This surprised me, and I'm sure infuriated the "old woman".
2. "I-zeer" What in the world is this? A new plant or animal or something? No, it's what people used to call anyone named "Isaiah". We got tickled at when an old person said "I-zeer" recently. Years ago old man "I-zeer" Layne was a well-known Palmer man.
3. "Look what the dogs drug in." Years ago dogs roamed free and were always dragging junk or a dead animal in someone's yard. A person could go to visit someone and if they hadn't seen them in a while, the visitor might get teased by his friend saying "Look what the dogs drug in."
4. "It got gone." A person would go to the "smoke house" to get a shovel or other tool and wouldn't be able to find it. "It got gone." they might say meaning someone probably stole it.

5. "Bring me a yard stick." Years ago this was an important device that about every household had to measure things. Hardware stores would give them away as an advertising tool with their company name or a paint company's name on them.

Jerry Harrison said Mr. Raymond Hargis carried one as he patrolled the halls as principal at Palmer Elementary School from 1955-1958. Mr. Hargis maintained discipline and had a great staff of teachers such as Fayna Nunley, Margaret Brown Coppinger, Frances Conry, Martha Hampton, Rachael Geary and Nelly Geary to work with. He will be remembered as one of the greatest principals in the history of Grundy County's oldest school.

6. "He drives like a bat out of hell." I've not heard this in a long time. Have you? It meant the person drove their car absolutely too fast. It didn't necessarily mean the person was drunk. Some people just drive too fast.

PALMER NEWS

The prolonged heat wave this summer has eased up a tad and do you realize that the first day of fall is just a month from Sunday?

"Shall We Gather at the River," and the words continue, "the beautiful, beautiful, river, that flows by the throne of God." What a beautiful old song. On August first Shawna Worley, granddaughter of Bobby and Ima Jean Geary, was baptized by Pastor Brett Meeks in Elk River at Pelham. You seldom hear of this anymore, but years ago before churches had their own inside baptisteries, creeks, ponds, and rivers were the only places. The "Cat Hole" on Mill Creek was a famous baptizing spot in Palmer as was the "Blue Hole" below the railroad near the old Scott Cannon place. Where were you baptized? Tell us about it.

Happy Birthday greetings go out this month to Joyce Conry, 84; Sara Bouldin Grooms, 82; James McCullough, 70; Jerry Harrison, 69; Johnny Brewer, 61; Mrs. Teeter (Becky Taylor) Morrison, 60; Mrs. Bruce (Gail Bryant) Coffelt, 60; John Rogers, longtime teacher at Swiss Memorial Elementary, 46; our new Grundy County Mayor Lonnie Cleek, 42; and the "young pup" of the group, Josh Meeks turns 20. He is the son of Pastor Brett Meeks.

"Rock "Layne (Ricky) told me you had some of the best pink tomatoes he'd ever eaten. I'd like to buy some from you."

We were sitting on the porch the other day when a white van drove up and it turned out to be Vincent Scott, owner of Scott's Grocery in Barker's Cove. Mr. Scott said he had an inoperable aneurism on his aorta and we're sure he'd appreciate your prayers. He also said his brother Ralph was in a Spencer, TN, nursing home. We just have a little backyard garden and don't have enough to sell, but were happy to give him some of our "Pink Girl" and "German Pink" tomatoes. They are very tasty this year.

Ethel Mae Cantrell's home burned July 25. She is 96 now and has been in a nursing home and living with relatives. The "Tyke" Partin home burned August 1. He had a newer home where the old "Huke" Slatton place was near the place of the late Lewis "Poose" Tate.

Our July rainfall was 45/8". Many of our older people worry constantly that we're not getting enough rain. They watch the Chattanooga weather reports and don't realize that their "official" total is just what falls at the airport. We have had more than enough rain in Palmer and Ann Creighton said her sister Carolyn called and said it had been a rainy summer in the Anchorage, AK, area.

"For Whom the Bell Tolls: Come home. Come home. It's supper time." Who was the singer years ago that had a big hit with the song "Come home. It's super time"? Seems like it was Red Foley. (David, it was Jimmy Davis) Anyway, have you ever seen the big bell on a stand in Clayton Hargis' yard? "I paid Roy Neal \$75 for that bell years ago," Clayton said. "When our kids were little, we'd ring it at suppertime, and you'd see little heads pop up everywhere as the neighborhood kids came in to eat with them."

Teresa Shrum, daughter of Joe and Mary Turner, is teaching third grade this fall at Swiss Memorial Elementary.

"Where you headed?" "Just out walking. I'm an old man. What else can I do?" That's what Joe David Tate, 77, said last week as we ran into him walking by the Harold James home. It must be working because he is still "slim & trim" among so many fatties and pot bellies.

A retirement dinner was held August 4th for Palmer Elementary Principal Sadie Carrick Smart. Among the guests were Phyllis Lusk form the central office of the Grundy County Board of Education, Charles Edgar Sanders and his sister Margie

Ramey, Larry and Gayle Crabtree, and Dale “Undertaker” Layne, owner of Layne’s Funeral Home. The “Undertaker” lives in Coalmont and was recently appointed as a commissioner on the Coalmont City Council. Mrs. Smartt’s 1996-2010 stint as principal was the longest in school history, and we wish her good health and happiness in her retirement years.

Happy anniversary wishes for August go out to Crandel and Ethleen Sitz McNabb, their 74th, Harold and Betty Grimes Kilgore, their 59th, Mike and Laura Bouldin, their 36th, Jackie and Norma King Henry, 27th, Dale and Sudonna Nolan, 24th, Kyle and Christel Nolan Shrum, 15th, Rev. Andy and Wendy Stiefel Lockhart, 12th.

“I worked for Cullen and Nelmon Savage for \$2 a day and my dinner from sun-up to sun-down, hoeing and doing farm work. I’d have a jug of water sitting in the shade at the end of the rows.” And, I’m sure he was glad to get the work in those hard times. Rev. John A. “Junior” Creighton visited us recently to bring a copy of a photo made about 1939 at the old “Union Tabernacle” which stood near where Palmer First Baptist is today. In the photo was Hub and Pearl Smith and Pearl’s sister Stella Cannon and many others gathered a prayer “rock pile” outside the church.

Junior, in his late 70’s, continued on with memories of the good old days. “I also worked for Uncle Will Meeks as an off-bearer at his sawmill for 75 cents an hour. If you got all your hours in, you could make \$30 a week. Later I worked in a sawmill for Oscar Rhea of McMinnville. Back then you had to come in early to get the equipment ready for work, and you didn’t get paid for that. We all drank water from the same jug, and I don’t know how we kept from catching something.”

Today, the poor old man has a “cushy” job driving a patrol car and escorting funerals for the Grundy County Sheriff. Dogs and cats live a more comfortable life today than people did back in the good old days. saved at the July 25 service at Laager Independent (Cotton’s) Methodist. Rev. J. Darrell Turner, Herby & Bonnie Caldwell with their daughters Patty and Cynthia were among those attending the August 2 service.

Jacquelyn “Jackie” Cantu, granddaughter of Jack Sissom, was on the dean’s list recently at Vanderbilt. Her twin sister Alex is a student at Berea College in Kentucky. Both were brilliant students at Palmer Elementary and GCHS.

“You’re not Mike James are you?” Ricky Layne’s the luckiest fellow we know about running into people he hasn’t seen in a long time. When he called an anonymous number on the GCTV trade line, that’s what he heard. It turned out to be an old friend, Jimmy Meeks, son of the late Francis Huh Meeks. Jimmy lived in the Chattanooga area for years and was a well-known musician. He moved back recently and lives close to the Gruetli-Laager Post Office.

“I used to live in Palmer myself.” Rick called another anonymous number and it turned out to be Lois Slatton who lives on Harrison Ferry Mountain near McMinnville. She’s the sister of Robert Earl Slatton and daughter of “Cobby” Slatton.

August was homecoming month at Palmer First Baptist with former pastor Bob Ruehling returning to preach the service. Among those present were Charles Edgar and Betty Sanders and former members Oma McNabb and Wilma Smith Adkins. Wilma lives in the Jasper, TN area, and her son don Adkins, Jr. was recently elected a Marion County commissioner. He’s married to the former Dusty Geary, daughter of Donna Gifford Basham.

Good eating is the main event of any homecoming and Mary Ruth Rogers said, “Oma Lewis’ cherry cobbler was the best I’ve ever tasted. Dorcas Shadrick Coffelt’s dumplings were good too.”

On July 28 Ethleen McNabb and her daughter Janice McAnally came up from Dunlap and we rode out to Tracy City and toured the new HQ of the Grundy County Historical Society. We were very impressed by the renovation work being done on the old bank building and hopefully by the end of the year it will be completely finished. While there Jackie Layne Partin talked with Ethleen about old days in Tracy City. Jackie’s doing wonderful work by going near and far interviewing our senior citizens. Keep up that important work, Jackie!

When we got back to Palmer Ethleen got to visit with Joyce Hargis and Mary Cannon Stinnett, two of her former students at Palmer Elementary and also with Joyce’s sister Nancy.

Becky Ivey Teague and her sister Dola visited the Coal Miners Museum recently and we’re so sorry we missed them.

“Dan Coffelt and I are double first cousins.” I walked up Big Mine road recently and visited with Buck and Kat Coffelt Brewer. We talked about old times in Palmer and Kat said her mother died of leukemia in 1947. “That was the 1940’s and it was the first case of leukemia we’d heard of,” Buck said. He’s had a stroke in recent years and doesn’t get out much, but they’re still in their home and that’s the main thing when you get old.

Faces in the crowd: We stopped at the Guilt-Laager Senior Citizens to get some water while walking and saw Kenny Payne, Lavaughn Reeves, Charles Totherow, Dave Borne, an Leon Crisp gathered around a table talking. They’d been eating watermelon and enjoying the fellowship. The center is a wonderful place for our seniors and for many it’s a big part of their lives.

Mary Ruth Rogers said she ran into Carmelia McCullough while at the Kimball Wal-Mart. Carmelia works there and lives in Marion County.

On sick call: Doris Hargis at last report was recovering well from hip-replacement surgery and Mrs. Raymond (Nell) Long was recovering well from double-knee replacement surgery. Joe Willard Fults suffered a broken hip and Junior Roberts and Allen Hobbs had surgery. Kevin “K.T.” Mainord, son to the late Corky Mainord, suffered a serious burn at work. A few years back he was a star football player for GCHS.

I’m giving you all more news than you have a right to expect, but that’s all for August here “where the good people live”. Happy Labor Day to all! Get out and enjoy it!

September

PALMER NEWS

If you've read this column over the years, you know September is my favorite month.

It's September 15th with the first day of fall just a week away. I love late summer and the anticipation of the seasons changing and hearing people say, "Do you think we'll have a bad winter?"

September is a "little bit summer and a little bit fall". I'm sure we're all hoping for a mild winter, but only the Good Lord knows about that, and he's not telling.

"This looks like Hee Haw", we said teasing Howard Lewis as we stopped by on a hot and sunny morning yesterday. Howard was leaned back in an easy chair on his small porch while his wife Oma and their friend Mary Lou "the Goat Woman" peeled apples for winter use as baby chicks scrambled around. Something was said about Junior Samples on Hee Haw and Oma, 86, said when she went to Palmer School boys had their hair full of oil which was common back then. But they didn't catch head lice." she said.

Mary Lou moved over in Barker's Cove a few years back. She seems to be a very nice person, and we've got to find out her last name. She enjoys raising goats and takes a big part in activities in Palmer United Methodist Church and the Gruetli-Laager Senior Citizens' Center.

Dr. Vin-Paul Hua, 80, and wife Ruth, 70, were featured in an August 12th article in the Chattanooga Times Free Press. Both are members of the Chattanooga Table Tennis Club and play weekly against tough competition which is great exercise. In January Dr. Hua will mark 30 years as our town doctor at the Palmer Clinic.

"Rain drops keep falling on my head"---Bobby Stinnett attended the Tennessee football game against Oregon and witnessed the heavy rain and lightning storm at Neyland Stadium. Bobby was a star player at Grundy County High School and watches or attends every game possible. "Back in the 1990's my wife Mary and I attended a Tennessee and Florida game in Knoxville and got caught in a gulley-washer in the stands, but no lightning. The next morning our picture was in the Nashville Tennessean." Tennessee won that day, but this year after the storm delay Oregon beat Tennessee badly.

Charles Edgar Sanders is back on the Grundy County School Board after winning the August election. The Sanders family has a long history of attending Palmer School, and it's great having Charles on the board to speak up for Grundy's oldest school (building). "Mother would take a stool out in the yard and watch the night sky." Last month we had a meteor shower and Ann Creighton, 87, called and told me to watch for it. "Of course TV is the thing now, but I guess back then Mother would see in the paper that it was coming, or maybe she would hear about it on the radio."

Ann's sister Joyce Conry also had memories to share. "Mother had looked forward to drawing her Social Security. She started drawing it in January 1966 and died in

March. Shortly before she died in a Chattanooga hospital, a meteor shower was predicted. I was living in Chattanooga, and some friends and I saw it, but just barely because of the air pollution being so bad over there at that time. I walked to work and many times you'd have to wipe your face when you got to the office. And the pigeon droppings were terrible." Even at her age, Ann still has good teeth. "Mother would pour baking powder and salt in our hand, and we'd use this mixture with twigs to brush our teeth. Then she would bring us water to rinse our mouth. The sisters are the daughters of the late James Polk "Jim" and Anna Rieder Conry.

Earl Grimes and other descendants of Hershel Grimes had a family reunion at the Palmer Community Center. Mr. Grimes passed away earlier this year.

"Come to our revival. We're going to have a dinner after the Friday night service." I got this invitation from Elijah Slatton, 10. The revival was at Gospel Trumpet Holiness Church on School Road pastored by Elijah's father Charles Slatton. Elijah's a 4th grader and has been preaching himself since age 8 according to his proud grandfather Horace Ray Slatton.

Nathan Sanders, grandson of Charlie and Evelyn Taylor Brewer, has been hired as his administrative assistant by our new Grundy County mayor Lonnie Cleek. Nathan has a degree in financial matters and should do good.

"I hadn't seen him in forever." That's what Nick Creighton said after seeing Bobby Stinnett.

Wanda Meeks and her brother Melvin Hampton get together with their cousins Nick and Patsy Higgins for a restaurant meal occasionally and Nick saw Bobby in Dunlap. Bobby was down there taking therapy on his knee and didn't know who he was talking to until days later when I told his wife Mary.

Our August rainfall total was 6 3/8 ". but the first half of September has been "dry as a bone".

David Taylor of Pelham, husband of Janelle, was astonished to hear we'd gotten that much. "There has to be a reason. Maybe it's geographical. We can sometimes see rain in the distance, but many times it doesn't get to us. We don't know what the difference is, but I've always noticed that as a general rule Palmer has been a rainy place over the years."

This month in Palmer history: In September 1964 the Gordon Northcutt Store burned in the Camp 4 area of Palmer. The only thing left from this landmark is the little concrete block building with stood next to the store, and I think was used to put animal feed in. Many stores sold feed back in those days. In recent years the Wagon Wheel Restaurant has been located on Hwy 399 property, but it has been closed for several months.

"Is that peanuts in that bottle?" We were walking and stopped for a Coke at the BP store in Gruetli-Laager when we met a couple from Alabama coming through on a motorcycle. They got cokes and the woman poured peanuts in hers. First time we'd seen that in years, and it used to be popular here.

Relatives and friends returning due to the death of Ethel Mae Gifford Cantrell were Henrietta Nunley Tucker, Mary Kat Campbell Gifford, Larry Finch, Butch and Pam Patterson, Pete Smith and his sister Wilma, Tonya Gifford, and Anna Lou Hill Hatfield. "I hadn't seen Anna Lou since we went to school together, " said Mary Stinnett, 75.

The Robert Summers family was neighbors of Ethel Mae for years. Jack still lives here and returning were his brothers Lewis, James, Tony, as well as their sister Faye and her husband Roland Smith.

Happy birthday in September to Ethleen Sitz McNabb, 94, Joe Willard Fults, 83, Doris Brown Hargis, 81, Jerry Cannon, 74, Donna Shadrick LeCroy 68, Mike Yarworth of GCTV, 56, former Grundy County Commissioner Gary 'Rooster' Brewer, 55, and musician and Grundy County Herald columnist Shane Worley, 36.

Donna LeCroy has been disabled with Huntington's Disease for several years and Betty Coffelt, Mrs. Carl (Patricia) Hornbuckle, Mamie LeCroy, Don and Brenda LeCroy, Bonnie Henry Meeks, and Donna's sister Johnnie Ruth were among the many coming by to visit and enjoy birthday cake with her.

"I told Mama I wanted 100 biscuits." That's what Bonnie Gipson Payne, 76, widow of Doodle Payne, told her mother. "I took my lunch to Palmer School one day. The biscuits were delicious. I asked Mama that evening what she put on them, and she said blackberry jam. She could really make it, and I told her the next morning I wanted her to bake ma 100 biscuits."

As usual, Labor Day weekend and the big day itself was sunny and breezy for Palmer's big celebration to wind up the summer. Palmer United Methodists had their annual fish fry to benefit the volunteer fire department. Ann Creighton and Joyce Conry brought me over one of the dinners. Jim Crabtree, son of the late Gordon Crabtree, was one of the gospel singers. Among the big crowd enjoying the festivities were Gabby and Willie Mae Tate and Drema Roberts of Chattanooga and her aunt Hazel Hornbuckle. James and Theresia Campbell drove an antique car in the parade.

Memories of Richard: The late Richard Smith was a nice man who was always ready to help anyone and had a good name in the community. "Graham Nunley and Hershel Harrison had a Coal Mine on Daus Mountain and I drove a mule and Richard loaded coal," Harold James said. "His place would sometimes have water in it knee-high, but he'd just keep on working and never complain or say anything bad about anyone. Graham and Hershel were good men too." Richard's widow, Kat Sweeton Smith, is still living.

"I wish I could walk like you. I've had 18 surgeries in my lifetime." That's what Juanita "Wandy" Crabtree Worley said to me as I passed her house recently. She's recovering from major surgery this summer, moving slow, but still moving.

Others on the sick list are Pat Tate, husband of Robena Smith Tate, Larry Crabtree, Glenda Lanford Collins and her cousin Everett Lee White, Gail Coffelt, Tootsie Cannon Smith, and Dutter Morrison.

Our friend Joe Willard Fults was in high spirits on the phone today as he recovers from a broken hip. With the help of his wonderful wife Jean, he's able to go to church with his walker and tomorrow is heading out for some Chinese food. "I love the noodles with the different toppings," he said. "It has been hard on my wife pulling and tugging on me, but I'm better now, which makes it easier on her."

Happy Anniversary wishes this month to Rev. Robert & Ruby Hart Johnson, their 43rd; Rev. John A. "Junior" and Sue Pocus Creighton, 44th. Big Don and Ruby Roberts Hill out Beersheba Springs way, 16th, and Ronald and Angela Crabtree Jones, 19th.

"Air it out." What am I talking about? These days it's a popular football term which means the quarterback throws a long pass downfield. "Air it out," many years ago meant taking your mattress outside and letting it stay in the sun and

breeze all day. It was such a day Tuesday when we stopped to visit Kat Slatton McHone, 78. She had two mattresses in the yard. I wish I had taken a picture. Most outfits these day are too "trifling" to open a window, much less do that. Kat lives on Palmer Mountain just over the Marion County line, an some will remember her dad, the late Fred Slatton.

Faces in the Crowd: The Cunningham sisters, Helen Arbuckle and Earlene Bryant, saw Marie Pocus recently in Jasper. She's a daughter of the late Joe Pocus an was a classmate of Earlene's at Palmer Elementary.

We ran into Amos Sanders who drove a school bus for over 17 years and also Ruth Magouirk Layne Cleek, widow of Boot Jack Layne.

Shorty Sanders got a visit from her longtime friend Vinnie Ruth Crabtree Bouldin, widow of J.W. "Sot" Bouldin. Shorty also went to the Worley reunion last week an saw her Aunt Ivla Worley, the last of her dad's brothers an sisters.

We enjoyed talking with Tim Cox, son of the late Ray Hoyt Cox. He bought the Buddy Nolan property on Gifford Road after the house burned last year.

Mr. Raymond Hargis sent us a wonderful newspaper article about Mrs. Bertha Schulze Ashley of Manchester who turned 102 on August 22. Mrs. Ashley is a retired teacher and "Bertha Schulze" taught at Palmer Elementary in the 1930's and '40's. Among her students wee Ann Creighton, Joe Willard Fults, and Nancy Roberts Rigsby. She's a widow in a nursing home, but seems to be doing well and hopes to return home soon.

My goodness, I've got to get out of here! Our typist, Janelle Layne Taylor, will kill me for writing so much :), but we like to let our former residents across the country know what's going on here "where the good people live".

The October leaves will soon be falling and the crisp nights and mornings will get your attention , so enjoy fall and check us out in October.

You Can Go Home Again - The Bobby Owen Story

1986 Palmer School Reunion

Standing from left: Bobby Owen, Harvey Brown, H.C. "Nick" Nichols, and Floyd Owen. Seated is Robert Ackerman.

Recently, on a sunny September afternoon, we noticed someone walking up on the porch. "Hello, Bobby," I said. "How did you know who I was?" the visitor replied.

It had been almost three years since we had seen Bobby Owen and for the next three hours sat spellbound as he told stories about his life growing up in Palmer and beyond.

Bobby was driving from Cookeville, TN, back to his home in Peachtree City, GA, when he stopped in Tracy City to join the Grundy County Historical Society, make a donation to the building renovation, and tour the impressive facilities. His next stop was his old hometown of Palmer, which still holds a special place in his heart.

He was born November 1929 in Palmer to Floyd and Rossie Burr Ackerman Owen and was the only son among five daughters. Growing up in the history making years of the Great Depression and World War II when coal was king and Palmer a busy place with a theatre, railroad, bus route, stores, and one of the finest schools in the state made for an action packed boyhood that sounds like something out of Tom Sawyer and Huckleberry Finn.

Wasn't it Hillary Clinton who said, "It takes a village to raise a child"? "It was a good place to grow up", Bobby said. "People looked after the kids, and a parent over in Chiggertown would whip me just as fast as my own parents would if I misbehaved. Johnny Morgan Hill, Nathan and Charles Barker, and Herschel Finch, Jr. were some of my friends, and we were all over town."

The persimmon tree in front of the Tennessee Consolidated Coal Company Store was a Palmer landmark and a meeting place for all ages, especially men gathering to talk after a day of work at the Palmer Big Mine. "If we wanted to go somewhere together, we'd say, "Meet me at the persimmon tree". Every Thursday the county sheriff would send out a deputy, and he'd park by the persimmon tree. And, if you had a complaint, he'd take care of it.

They say a child never forgets anyone who shows it kindness, and almost 81 years later that still holds true. "The town drug store was in the Company Store and Dr. T. L. Harris was the pharmacist. He was a wonderful role model. He'd ask how I was doing in school and encouraged me to make good grades. He'd say the next time you get a report card bring it to me and let me see it. I'd work extra hard in school because I didn't want Dr. Harris to see any bad grades. At Christmas they'd

block off the top floor of the Company Store to kids and fill it with toys and gifts, which parents would buy and pick up on Christmas Eve. I'd be in the store and Dr. Harris would tell me to come by the next evening near closing time and he'd let me go up and look at the things for Christmas."

What a thrill that must have been for a kid in those days.

Before the days of television and later computers and video games, playing cards was a popular past time. "We had a spot near the creek where we played "setback" after school," Bobby said.

If you're familiar with Palmer, you know what a steep climb Hwy. 108 is from the town up Palmer Mountain to the Marion County line. "One time a group of us went camping for a week at Ketner's Mill between Whitwell and Jasper. My parents were finally persuaded to let me go, and we gathered our bikes and supplies and met at the stone bridge dreading having to push them up the mountain, an empty coal truck stopped and the driver said he would pull us up the mountain. We grabbed the truck with one hand and guided the bike with the other. He stopped several times to see if we were OK, and when we got to the top it was an easy bike ride through Griffith Creek and down the mountain to Whitwell. When we came home another truck pulled us up Whitwell Mountain.

In those days a coal tipple was located in front of the Floyd Owen home. Trucks dumped coal from the Pocket and Palmer Ball Diamond Mines into railroad cars for shipment. "We'd sometimes take water or popcorn we made out to the drivers," Bobby said. Mr. Raymond Hargis, 82, former Grundy County School Superintendent, hauled Pocket coal to that tipple in his young days.

Johnnie Hill was a full-of life prankster and back then the "Cat Hole" in Mill Creek near the TCC Sawmill was a popular baptizing spot with the boys attending one such gathering. "Johnnie decided he wanted to be baptized, and when the preacher dipped him under the water, he didn't come back up. People got concerned and the preacher said, 'He's drowning.' as men jumped in the creek for a rescue. Someone finally spotted Johnnie sitting on a log not far away. He'd slipped the preacher's grip and had swum under the water to the log."

Herschel Finch, Jr. (U.S. Navy, Ret.) recalls another Johnnie story. "Johnnie and I, along with Mitchell Flynn and his brother Red and Bobby Gene Brown went camping on the mountain above the Palmer Ball Diamond, but it started storming and we came back. Johnnie was carrying a tow sack with quilts in it as we crossed

a foot log over Mill Creek. I had taken carbide for the lamps and had on two pairs of pants so the carbide in my pockets couldn't touch my skin. Johnny hit me with the tow sack, and when I fell in the creek the water activated the carbide and blistered my leg."

Everything wasn't all fun and games though as boys of that time had plenty of chores such as carrying in wood and coal for stoves and buckets of water for cooking, cleaning, and drinking. Running water later meant indoor plumbing, but back then the only running water most families had was when they went running to the well and carried it back to the house in a bucket.

Daddy and Mama didn't have money to hand out to kids and most had to work for "spending money" to get o the theatre or whatever. "TCC ran a power line down into the Pocket and hired Will "Buck" Sanders and myself to cut the brush and small stuff out of the right-of-way with bush hooks," Bobby said. "We'd stack it up to burn and must have killed a hundred snakes out there." Buck is a retired Tracy City postmaster.

When was the last time you say a tennis court in Palmer? "The Company had a bulldozer and some of us built a tennis court behind Mrs. Henry (Martha Hampton's mother) Hampton's house. We practiced with the dozer in the woods and learned enough to build the court. People came from all around to play." The Mike Shadrick family lives in the Hampton house today. We also think there might have been a tennis court behind the Everett B. Roberts home on Big Mine Road now occupied by Dr. Vin Paul Hua.

What's the old saying about "curiosity killed the cat"? The KuKlux Klan was a force in Grundy County at that time, and Bobby and his friend Johnnie Hill almost saw too much of this secret group. "We watched as they were having a cross burning and after it was over two of the men took of their hoods. We recognized them, and it scared me so badly that my chest got tight, and I could hardly breathe. We didn't tell who they were and every time I passed those men after that I got the chills."

The Great Depression of the 1930's was followed by World War II from 1941-1945. Jobs were plentiful and coal poured out of Palmer and other mining towns to power the defense plants that made weapons and supplies to defeat Nazi Germany and Imperial Japan. "Dad had a world map, and as we listened to the war news on the radio, he'd point out the different countries to me, and by the time I got to high

school, I knew more about World War II than almost anyone. One of Dad's favorite radio reporters and commentators was H.V. Kaltenborn."

Convoys of soldiers traveled through Palmer, and the locals did their part to boost morale. " Mother had roses planted on the bank of the highway just below our home. My sisters and other girls would cut them, attach their address, and toss them to the soldiers as they passed. We got back letters from several of them and one was later on leave, came through on the bus, and spent the night with us. He was so nice, and Mother thought the world of him."

Look for Part II of this story in a coming edition.

OCTOBER

PALMER NEWS

Hallowe'en

Tonight is the night
When dead leaves fly
Like witches on switches
Across the sky,
When elf and sprite
Flit through the night
On a moony sheen.

Tonight is the night
When leaves make a sound
Like a gnome in his home
Under the ground.

When spooks and trolls
Creep out of their holes
Mossy and green

Tonight is the night
When pumpkins stare
Through sheaves and leaves everywhere,
When ghoul and ghost

And goblin host
Dance round their queen,
It's Hallowe'en.

author unknown

Yes, Halloween is one of my favorite times of year. The October weather with its cool temperatures and beautiful leaves make for a perfect celebration time as the little kids are full of excitement going around in their masks and costumes trick or treating.

Welcome Back. It's October 13, and we're enjoying this fall time of the year and hope you are too.

Let's kick things off by sending happy birthday wishes for October to Dola Ivey Rector, 92; Herschel L. Finch, Jr., 81; Faye Layne Hanson, 75; Richie Sissom, 70; Faye "Perkie" Greene, 68; retired Palmer Postmistress Darlene Brooks, 68; David Patton of Palmer and his first cousin George Henry Rogers of Pelham were both born on October 12, 1947 and hit 63; Bruce Coffelt, 62, John W. "Archie" Jones, 59; Brian Coutu, 53; and Jacob Alan Meeks, candidate for Grundy County Circuit Court Clerk earlier this year, turns 29.

Halloween memories: Ricky Layne, 54, remembers going "spooking" as we used to call trick or treating. "One year we went around and got candy as usual, but one place had little sacks of popcorn. It was salty, and as we kept going, I got so thirsty, I didn't know what to do. When we got to Harold James', his wife Martha was giving out glasses of Kool-aid. I turned a glass up and drank it all. " Kool-aid was cheap and a popular cold drink years ago. Does anyone still drink it? (Yes, David, your typist Janelle Taylor serves it to her grandchildren, Riley and Ryan Benton, often.)

The last Friday of the month is "Birthday Friday" at the Gruetli-Laager Senior Citizens Center. That's when everyone with a birthday that month is recognized and refreshments are enjoyed.

At the September gathering special guests were the new Gruetli-Laager Mayor Donna Slatton Broom and her parents R.B. and Carolyn Slatton. Also coming were a new alderman Dewayne Brewer and his wife Glenda. Many of you will remember

his parents, the late Grady and Marie Crabtree Brewer. The center is having repair work done and is a wonderful asset to the community.

Wanda Meeks, Patsy Higgins, and Margie Tate enjoyed a trip to the famous Oren Wooden "apple house" in Pikeville, TN, recently where all kinds of apple products and vegetables are for sale. Margie's the widow of Johnny Vernon Tate.

My brother, Joel Patton said he ran into our first cousin Jimmy Paton recently. Jimmy, 80, was asking about his friend from years ago, Tom Moore. Jimmy's retired from DuPont in Chattanooga where he lives, and some of you will remember his dad Jim Patton who was a coal mine operator in the Pocket.

What's for supper? Bobby Stinnett brought us some chili and Charles Edgar Sanders gave us a dozen of big pretty fresh eggs from his laying hens. His wife Betty gave us a jar of her squash pickles we're anxious to try. Thanks very much to all.

On sick call: John Owen, son of Bobby Owen, has had an extended illness, but seems to be on the mend as does Edward McHone who was on life support before making a miraculous recovery.

Ida Pearl Brown visited Delbert Hargis and Jimmy Northcutt in the Dunlap nursing home and faces open-ear surgery very soon herself. Jerry Cannon has leg blockages and faces probable surgery, and his daughter Pam is recovering from back surgery. Gerald Smith is recovering well from shoulder surgery and at last report Mrs. Gabby, Willie Mae, Tate was at Siskin for rehab after suffering broken bones in a fall.

In an especially pitiful case, we've heard that Jonathan Grimes, son of Wayne Grimes, is left paralyzed after a car wreck. Remember all of these sick ones in your prayers and place their names on your church prayer list as well.

Tonya Guffey Kilgore spent a week in New York City recently as a guest of her first cousin Jon Coffelt. He's an artist and designer in "the city that never sleeps" as they used to say, and I know it was a thrill for Tonya to see the sights of America's most famous city.

"I still know my history." That's what John Doug Shrum said to us about Columbus Day as he recited, "Columbus sailed the ocean blue, in 1492." It used to

be a big day at Palmer school, and I still remember the ships, Nina, Pinta, Santa Maria.

Palmer weather report: Our September rainfall total was 3 7/8" . As of October 13, we've had a beautiful month with the leaves getting prettier every day.

The White-Tate reunion was Oct. 9 for the descendants of Dock White and Joe Tate. Locals attending were McArthur White McPherson and his brother Cecil and coming from Nashville was Raymond (Winkle's Brother) Burnett.

Retired Grundy County Tax Assessor Lynda Borne Ruehling told us her son Chad Schoenmann is a nurse practitioner in Ooltewah, TN. Chad's 37, and we remember him as a nice guy when he worked for Steve Garner at Savage Gulf Market in his high school days.

The Sissom Brothers, Carl Wayne, Richie, and Roger Dale visited the Coal Miners' Museum last month and talked with Bobby Stinnett and Jack Sissom while here.

Many of you probably saw in the news media that citizens of Chattanooga tried to recall mayor Ron Littlefield recently. After a court hearing the recall effort failed on legal grounds. The mayor hired Jack London, Jr., CPA, to check the validity of the recall petitions according to news reports. Jack grew up in Palmer as the grandson of the late Mr. & Mrs. Everett B. Roberts, Sr. We heard from his first cousin Beth Weidman Burgess of Richmond, VA, last week. His mother Harriet and Beth's mother Peggy were sisters.

Oldies but goodies: Happy 61st anniversary to W.H. "Buck" and Dot Conry Sanders of Tracy City. And, a very happy 59th to Glenn and Betty Camp King of Monteagle. Mr. King is chairman of the Grundy County Election Commission. Two very nice couples.

Memories of Floyd: I know Mr. Raymond Hargis will remember when Floyd Campbell of Coalmont drove a school bus carrying students to Palmer Elementary and older ones on to Grundy County High School. Mr. Campbell started in the 1950's to the best of my memory and drove at least into the 1970's

"All of my five kids rode his bus from the oldest to the youngest", Bonnie Payne of Palmer Mountain said. "After he retired I was a cook at the Ridge Inn Restaurant in Coalmont. He'd be there for breakfast every day, but I don't guess he liked our

bacon and sausage. He would go to the store, have them slice a big thick slice of bologna off the stick, bring it back, and I'd fry it good and brown and fix him eggs, gravy, fried potatoes, and about 3 biscuits. He was a big man and a big eater." Fried bologna is good, and a breakfast like that would "stick to your ribs" as they say.

We ran into David "Bologna" Crabtree recently cleaning out the pond next to where Tom Creighton and later Bill Nunley had the car dealership on Hwy. 108. "I caught a 6 pound bass here back in the 1960's when I was just 11-12 years old," he said. I carried it home, and it is still the biggest I've ever caught. I think Tom must have had this pond dug about 1963-64 because Daddy (Gordon) died in 1966".

Ross Sissom, grandson of Jack Sissom, was the student body homecoming king at the GCHS homecoming football game last month. He's a fine young man.

We received birthday cards this month from Jim & Martha Carroll Cox Hensley, the Crandel McNabb Family, Alfred Randal Nolan, Mary Ruth Rogers, Ida Pearl Brown, Katie (Ida Pearl's great-niece) Berry, Raymond & Doris Hargis, and Gary Bouldin. And also a gift from Steve Garner and Lindsey Gunter. Thanks, friends, for your thoughtfulness.

Speaking of birthdays, last month we told you about former Palmer Elementary teacher Bertha Schulze Ashley's 102nd celebration. "She was a good teacher," Helen Arbuckle, 82, remembers. "She would drive every day from Tracy City and had the prettiest black hair and dressed so well. She taught us how to conduct ourselves as well as our school lessons. She whipped me once, but I'm sure I deserved it."

Joe Willard Fults, 83, also had good memories in this note:

Hi, David,

"Thanks for sending me the clipping to see about Miss Schulze's 102 birthday. I have often wondered about her. She was my 5th grade teacher in the 1940's. She was a wonderful teacher, but I didn't have sense enough to know it at the time." Your friend, Joe Willard.

We're glancing out the door at the pretty leaves as we write so we'll wrap up for this month here "where the good people live". Enjoy the fall weather and Halloween. Isn't it hard to believe that "turkey" month is about here, but I guess that it's true that "the older you get, the faster time flies."

SANDERS TO RECEIVE PALMER VETERANS APPRECIATION AWARD

Charles Edgar Sanders, a U.S. navy Veteran of the Korean War, is the 2010 recipient of the 25th annual Palmer Veterans Appreciation Award. Presented each November by town historian David Patton, the award is sponsored by Citizens Tri-County Bank.

Mr. Sanders was one of 10 Grundy County men joining as a group in 1952. Others were Lee Doug Ross, Bobby Lloyd Greene, Walter E. Kilgore, Paul Marler, Andrew Jackson Anderson, Jr, James Houston Weaver, Franklin King and Delbert "Cooney" Sweeton and his brother Alton David Sweeton.

After basic training in San Diego he served overseas in the far east aboard the heavy hull repair ship U.S.S. Jason ARH-1 as a signal man with the rank of QM3C. His military decorations include the National Defense, Korean Service, United Nations, and Good Conduct Medals.

The highlight of Mr. Sanders' Navy time was serving aboard the same ship all four years with his good friend Lee Doug Ross. "We would spend nine months in San Diego, leave and stop in Hawaii for supplies, then spend nine months making port calls in China, Japan, and Korea," he remembered. Andrew Shrum, Jr. of Palmer was also in the Navy, and they got to visit in San Diego. Another enjoyable visit was with Charles and Polly Sanders Cleek who were living in California at that time.

Since returning to civilian life, Mr. Sanders has compiled an impressive record of community service, which includes alderman for the town of Palmer, vice-chairman of Exceptional Enterprises, County Commissioner 1982-90, School Board member 1998-2008 and began serving a new term in August, which he thanks the voters of the second district for, Chairman of the Grundy County Democratic Party in 1987 and 1997, member of the Grundy County Planning Commission, Chairman of the Industrial Board when the Toyo Building was erected in Pelham, Chairman of the Building Authority when the current Grundy County High School was built, and member of the Grundy County Chamber of Commerce. In 1990 the Chamber honored him with its "Distinguished Citizen Award".

Employed 12 years by the State of Tennessee, Mr. Sanders retired after more than 22 years with Signal Mountain Cement Company. He and his wife Betty have been married for more than 32 years and attend First Baptist Church of Gruetli-Laager.

LETTERS TO DAVID PATTON

Hi, David;

Hope things are going well for you. Keep up your good work writing for the GCHS. The Bobby Owen story was especially great. His youngest sister, Rosalyn, and I were good friends. We went all through Palmer School together and graduated from Grundy County High School in 1957. I see her at most of our class reunions. I do remember Bobby.

Best wishes for continued happiness and good health.

Jim & Martha Carroll Cox Hensley

Weeki Wachee, FL

David,

We all hope you have a great birthday. Isn't it about time for another trip to the valley to see us?

I've got to get back on the website to find out what's happening in Grundy County.

Love from all

David & Janice McNabb McAnally and Crandel and Ethleen Sitz McNabb

Dunlap, TN

HALLOWEEN TRIBUTE

We want to run this photo in honor of Bobby Owen and Jerry Cannon as a remembrance of Halloween pranks from days of yore.

In June 1989 we snapped this photo of the long abandoned outside toilet at the home of the late Stanley and Marie Worley Nunley in Palmer.

Years ago very few homes in Palmer and Grundy County had bathrooms, and every home had one of these toilets which were favorite targets of Halloween pranksters up into the late 1960's when almost everyone had bathrooms by then.

We remember as a young person hearing the "bang" as they were turned over and hit the ground all over Palmer.

NOVEMBER

POEM FOR BROTHER

Anita Crabtree of Palmer wrote this poem to honor her brother Herschel L. Finch, Jr. who retired from the U S Navy as a chief petty officer (CPO) with 22 years of service. Mr. Finch grew up in Palmer and was the 1996 recipient of the Palmer Veterans Appreciation Award. He and his wife Jeanetta live today in Coalmont, TN.

PALMER SCHOOL TURNS 83

Palmer School opened on November 14, 1927, and has stood as a witness to history and been the pride of the community for 83 years.

In 1927 the big news on teh world stage was Charles Lindberg's solo flight across the Atlantic Ocean from Nes York to Paris, but the big news of 1927 for Palmer, was the opening of a new and modern school with an excellent staff of teachers to educate the town's children.

Hayesel Goforth Hunziker is shown with her 1940-41 class and one of her students is Franklin Slatton (front row right). "Miss Hayesel", one of the most beloved teachers in school history, was a member of the famous Goforth family of teachers.

Another much-loved teacher was Miss Martha Hampton (left) with her former students Wandy Crabtree Worley and her sister Lucille Roberts from left at the 1996 school reunion (pict in a following email).

Mr. Joe Ingram (center) was a popular principal and is shown with former students Charles Bailey Brooks and Malcolm James from left at the 1996 reunion.

Preston Knowlan (left) and Hoyt Rogers were among many former students returning for the 1996 reunion.

On November 14, 1997, the school held a big "70th birthday celebration" that depicted different eras in the school's history. Michael Borne (left) and his classmate T.J. Privett dressed as soldiers for the event. They were second grade students of Mrs. Margie Ramey.

Mr. Y.B. Ashby (left) and school superintendent Joe Nunley enjoy refreshments after the celebration. Both were enthusiastic supporters of the school's mission to educate the children.

YOU CAN GO HOME AGAIN- The Bobby Owen Story, Part II

Entering high school is a milestone in our lives as the carefree days of early youth begin to take on a more serious tone.

"I went to Grundy County High School in my freshman year," Bobby said. "After that, Dad found out that W.L. Cunningham, a former principal at Palmer Elementary School, was the headmaster at Baxter Seminary in Baxter, TN. It was owned and operated by the Methodist Church, and that's where I finished high school."

Bobby and his family attended Palmer Methodist Church where his father taught Sunday school for many years. "My mother wanted me to be a Methodist preacher. At that time if you planned to go into the ministry, you had to declare it your senior year."

Baxter is a small town just outside Cookeville, and like most of Tennessee, had plenty of churches. "one of the requirements after you declared for the ministry was going to one of the rural churches and preaching a sermon. I got there at 1:00 with church to start at 2:00. They always said to start on time, no matter what. After going over my sermon in the pastor's study, I cracked the door and peeped out about five minutes before 2:00. There was just one person in the church."

How do you preach to one person? Should the service be cancelled? "I went out, introduced myself, and said, "Sir, since you're the only one here, do you think we should wait a few minutes to see if anyone else comes?" The old man replied. "I wouldn't know about that. I'm just an old farmer, but if I took hay to the field and there was one cow, I'd feed it."

After the sermon Bobby approached the old man and asked what he thought of his preaching. "I'm just an old farmer, but if I fed just one cow, I wouldn't gorge it," came the reply. I looked at my watch, and he was right. I had preached an hour and five minutes. He had a lot of common sense, and over the years, I've wished I had gone back and looked him up."

Bobby dropped his plans for the ministry and after high school joined the U.S. Navy on Memorial Day 1947.

One of the greatest thrills for any man in uniform is looking up and seeing someone from home when you're on the other side of the world. "One time we stopped in Okinawa and had a two-hour shore leave. An enlisted man's club was on top of a cliff. Someone told us about a shortcut to get there, and as we started a group of sailors were having a softball game. The ball was knocked over the outfielder's head, and as we passed, I tossed it back to him. It was Jimmy Flynn from Palmer. Another time we were in harbor in the Philippines. They sent a garbage scow around because you couldn't dump in there like you could in the open sea. Someone looked up, and it was Johnnie Hill."

Today, China is an economic super power and soon to be a military one as well. Bobby was witness to history being made there in 1949.

"China was in a civil war as the communist forces of Mao Tse Tung were trying to overthrow the nationalist government of Chiang Kai Shek. The communists were closing in on the coastal city, and we were there to evacuate the American Consul. Our captain told him to hurry because he didn't want to put his ship's crew in danger. We could hear the fighting and see the flashes of artillery. The Consul said he'd evacuate when they got in the city limits. Finally, at 3:00 in the morning, general quarters sounded, and we thought we were being attacked, but it was the Consul evacuating. We left and dropped him off in Formosa (now called Taiwan), where Chiang Kai Shek set up a new nation."

Now, all these years later, China is still communist, and Taiwan still has its freedom although constant tension remains as China claims it as its own territory. The town of Palmer has a connection as our Dr. Vin-Paul Hua was born in China and came to the United States from Taiwan.

After the exciting days of his boyhood and seeing the world in the U.S. Navy, Bobby got his college degree from Tennessee Tech in 1955 and enjoyed a 40-year career with the FAA (Federal Aviation Administration) as an air traffic controller and in management as the assistant manager of air traffic controllers at the Atlanta airport. "I never had a boss I didn't like or remember working with anyone I didn't like," he said. A positive attitude is always a plus, and Bobby had a good example to follow. "Dad never considered anyone his enemy." What a great way to look at life!

Since Halloween is one of my favorite times of the year, let's close with a couple of stories. This proves pranks have probably always been a part of it.

In the Grundy County of the 1930's and '40's, horse or mule drawn wagons were still a common sight. "One Halloween, we put a wagon on the roof of the old TCC Garage" (now Palmer Community Center), Bobby said. "We took it apart piece-by-piece, got it up on the roof, and put it back together. The city fathers were quite upset, and it must have stayed up there a week before they realized that it would have to be taken apart to get it down from there."

Jerry Cannon, 74, also has memories of those long ago days. "Bailey 'Preacher' Brooks got tired of his toilet being turned over every Halloween and said he was staying in it that year with a shotgun. Some of us sneaked over there and turned it over with him in it. He pretty well knew who it was and the next day said, 'Boys, I want you to come and put my toilet back up,' and we did." Preacher Brooks was a blacksmith at the Palmer Big Mine and Pastor of the Palmer Church of Christ. He lived to be in his 90's and was one of the most well-known ministers in the area.

As Bobby stood to leave and drive back to his Georgia home he said, "I feel like I've had a real visit. " Isn't it wonderful to know you can go back to your roots and recall memories of friends and loved ones from days of yore? We urge everyone to join the Grundy County Historical Society and visit our website often at www.gchs.homestead.com and visit their research site kept by webmaster Ralph Thompson at grundycountyhistory.org as well.

A sincere thanks to Janelle Taylor, President of the Grundy County Historical Society, for her assistance on this story.

PHOTO OF THE MONTH

The late Graham and Sara Cannon Nunley raised their family in Palmer during the Great Depression and WWII years. Mr. Nunley was a coal mine operator and is shown in this 1950 photo with his son, Billy Ray Nunley, who now lives in Monument, Colorado.

25 YEARS OF MEMORIES PALMERS VETERANS APPRECIATION AWARD, PART 1

For the past quarter century it has been my privilege to personally present a plaque of appreciation to a special breed of Palmer citizen, those who deserve to be honored and recognized above all others, our military veterans.

It all began in 1986. Ronald Reagan was president and patriotism was in style again after the turmoil of the Vietnam War and the release of Americans held in the Iranian Hostage Crisis. A song called “God Bless the USA” hadn’t been out long and became so popular then and later that it threatened to replace the “Star Spangled Banner”.

James “Burr” Rogers was interested in military history and found a shoulder patch of the U.S. Army unit Mr. Malcolm Rankin served with in World War I and had it mounted on a plaque. Since I was the town historian, he wanted me to present it to Mr. Rankin on Veterans Day.

Mr. Rankin was a faithful member of the Gruetli-Laager Senior Citizens Center and after the invocation by Rev. Cecil Walker, a veteran himself, we made the presentation before a room full of seniors who knew what was and hard times were all about. I remember the late Leon Cannon being there that day.

Just a few years before, Joe Gillespie, ace reporter for the Grundy County Herald, had written an award winning story about Mr. Rankin and Henry Roberts who served in the Navy during the war. Mr. Rankin was a messenger traveling by foot among the muddy trenches of Europe and had received a medal for his heroics from the king of Italy.

The presentation was such an enjoyable affair for me that I was determined to do it every year and coined the name we all now recognize, “Palmer Veterans Appreciation Award”.

Our 1987 recipient Obid Marion “Soap” McMabb saw all of World War II, being sent to U.S. Army Basic Training just a few weeks before Japan bombed Pearl Harbor on Dec. 7, 1941, and coming home in December 1945, three months after the war ended.

“When we heard about Pearl Harbor, I saw grown men sit on their bunks and cry”, Soap said. “After that, basic training speeded up, and they had to cram everything quickly because the war had started. As our train pulled out after basic, some of the men opened the windows and cursed the drill sergeants who were standing along the tracks watching us leave.”

As the war raged on, Soap spent time in Hawaii where he saw the famous baseball player Joe DiMaggio and got a visit from Berton Cagle of Palmer. Then it was on to a little-known volcanic island not far from Japan. They called Iwo Jima the “sizzling pork chop”, Soap remembered. “Our army radar unit later followed the Marines and the sand was so warm a blanket on it felt like an electric blanket and you could dig a hole in it and heat your canned rations.”

Soap stayed on Iwo Jima until Japan surrendered six months later and remembered climbing up the side of the ship on a rope ladder as they left the island. “When Hiroshima was bombed the Jap radio announcers went crazy. They thought it was a poison gas attack,” he said. “Then we heard on the radio it was an atomic bomb and someone said, ‘What the h--- is an atomic bomb?’ That’s how secret America’s secret weapon of World War II was.”

“They Chose the Navy”: The article in the Chattanooga newspaper said as it continued with a photo of the new recruits and “The first five men to be accepted for enlistment” in the Navy since war came to the United States were told about their favorite branch of service this morning by recruiter W.M. Ramsey, Jr.

They were Rufus Kilgroe, Jr, 18, and Douglas Ray Brown 17, of Palmer; William Lawrence McBee 17, of Sewanee; Charles Stanfield 17, of Apison, TN; and ex-Navy man Thomas Kelly Goodier 23, of Jasper, TN.

When Junior and Doug heard Pearl Harbor had been bombed, they joined the next day, December 8, 1941. Junior and Doug (nephew of Harvey Brown) are both deceased.

Look for Part II of this story in an upcoming edition of the Grundy County Herald.