

2015 First Issue

June

Palmer News

June, 2015

David Patton, Palmer Town Historian

Hello, once again. We haven't been with you since December, 2014, and it's good to be back.

First of all, I grew up in the 1960's, and like many of you thought the turmoil and divisions in America from that era would never be topped. But, it has been and more. Even in the last six months, since December, the wickedness, hatred, and constant turmoil have grown steadily worse. Some want to talk about the economy and good jobs as though that is a cure-all. Little wonder that two-thirds of Americans think our country is headed in the wrong direction. The moral rot infecting America can't be cured by a "good economy."

The Palmer Elementary School Class of 2015 hit the auditorium stage to receive their diplomas on May 20. The grads are: Lukas Borne, Brittany Cunningham, Hagan Cash, Chandler Doss, Josh Johnson, Gracie Layne, Kirsten Layne, Thomas Lecroy, Creed Meeks, Hailey Nance, Cheyenne Nunley, Dixie Nunley, Hannah Nunley, Summer Payne, Jacob Peoples, Griffyn Rogers, J. P. Sanders, and Jessie Vineyard.

John Ross Jones was the Principal, and Seann Lewis was the 8th grade teacher for the 2014-15 school year. Class Valedictorian was Dixie Nunley who is also a talented singer. She's the granddaughter of Laura Bell Tate and the late James Wayne Tate, and some of you will remember her great-grandparents, the late Frank and Dixie Nunley Layne who had a store in Laager next to the railroad tracks. Hagen Cash, grandson of former Palmer Elementary teacher Nelda Carrick Stiefel of Tracy City, was the class Salutatorian.

Mike and Mary Ruth Shadrick received the 5th annual "Friend of Palmer School" award. Mr. Raymond Hargis was the 2014 recipient. At 87, the school is Grundy County's oldest, and it's the glue that holds our community together.

"See You Dreckly." That's what Mr. Macarthur White McPherson said to me the other day. I hadn't heard that term in years, and it means I'll see you later

in the day or “After while” as people used to say. McArthur has lived on Camp 4 Curve in recent years, but has now moved back to his ancestral home in “Dock White Hollow.”

Palmer United Methodist Church had their annual Memorial Day weekend fish fry. The town’s oldest church just has services on Sunday morning with an average attendance of 18 or so. Among those are Bobby and Doris Nell Geary Wiggins of Tracy City and Bobby and Ima Shrum Geary of Gruetli-Laager. Doris and Bobby Geary grew up in Palmer as the children of the late Marvin Lee and Nellie Merrell Geary.

A three-night revival was held at the church earlier this month, and the preachers were Troy Smith of Pelham along with Tyler McCullough and John Ross Jones. Tyler’s the Grundy County Trustee and son of Danny McCullough, and John Ross is the grandson of the late teacher Kat Roberts Jones. Tony Wooten, son of the late Elzie “Puny” Wooten, was the guest preacher recently at Barker’s Cove Community Church. Former Grundy County Mayor Riley Anderson Jr. preached there for years, and many people called it “Riley’s”.

Jody Summers, son of the late Robert Summers Jr., owns the old Hobert and Bessie Parmley Grooms property. He has torn down the old home and landscaped to where it looks like a state park. On June 13, he hosted an afternoon of feasting, preaching, and singing with shouting and singing going on up into the night. “I’ve never seen as much food,” said James Henry McBee. “They had wild hog meat, cakes, and anything you might want.” Among those in attendance were Benny and Rachel Burnett, Bud and Joan Sanders, Charlie “Steamboat” Layne and others too numerous to mention.

That same afternoon Carl “Teeter” Morrison and Palmer Free Will Baptist Church hosted a big Gospel singing at their church in the old Hooper Funeral Home building. Teeter and Ed O’Neal have been faithful members, and Teeter says they have about 12 in attendance on Sunday morning.

We’ll end our church news with something I’ve never heard of before. On the week of June 15 Grundy County Sheriff Clint Shrum and Warren County Sheriff Jackie Matheny held a revival at the “Way of the Cross” Church on Dogtown Road in Coalmont. Pastor Tony King is a former Palmer resident. Billy Ray and Ruth Bouldin Nunley were in attendance, and he said, “I enjoyed Sheriff Shrum’s message.”

“It’s 96.6 degrees on my thermometer.” That’s what Willene Campbell said at her home about 2:30 in the afternoon of June 16. She lives in the Burroughs Cove section of Peham Valley and is a former Grundy County School Board member. Her mother, the late Molly Coffelt Nunley, was a sister of Dan Coffelt.

Speaking of weather, you’ve probably seen news reports of the horrible weather in Colorado recently with hail accumulations of three feet and people having to shovel it up. Billy Ray Nunley’s son lives out there, and said it blew up against the door which they couldn’t open. His son has a car dealership, and the hail caused major damage to his vehicles on the lot.

Our little backyard garden is looking good. Of course, you always have to fight the insects, and we saw our first Japanese beetle on June 14.

Remembering Mrs. Landon: Mrs. Clara Bone Landon, widow of George Landon Sr., passed away earlier this year. She was Palmer’s first town librarian back in the 1950’s. The current librarian is Greta Carrick who said, “Mrs. Landon taught third grade, and I taught fourth grade at Swiss Memorial Elementary School. I was always glad to get her students because they had learned what they were supposed to learn and were ready for the next grade.”

Dr. Keith Brewer, former Palmer School Principal, Grundy County School Superintendent and Deputy Commissioner of Education for the State of Tennessee, has retired as Director of the Manchester, Tn. City School system. He is making a good recovery after recent brain tumor surgery.

Suzette Nunley Sanders has passed away, and those coming for the visitation included Wanda Meeks of Chattanooga and Lisa Layne of Gruetli-Laager. Wanda is a daughter of the late Francis Hugh Meeks and grew up in Barker’s Cove, I believe. Lisa is a granddaughter of the late Leander Layne, and her mother is Alpha Gay Dishroon Cleek, widow of Bill Cleek.

Ricky “Rock” Layne says he ran into Sheila Fults Layne of Monteagle recently. She works at Grundy County High School and grew up in Palmer as a daughter of the late Hubert and Pearl Payne Fults.

The Rev. Harold Lloyd Vandergriff of the nearby “Pocket” Community passed away this month. His body was brought back to his home and after visitation the funeral was held there with burial on the property. Up through the

1960's, most people here were brought back home, but we hadn't heard of this practice in years. They used to say they were brought back home and "laid a corpse."

The Director of the Gruetli-Laager Senior Citizens Center told me that Alan Hobbs attends now. He has lived in G-L for many years but was raised on top of Palmer Mountain in a house at the Palmer Fire Tower where his father, Isham Hobbs, was the Fire Tower Lookout. Alan has a brother, Frankie Hobbs, and sisters, Linda and Elfa and one more, I believe.

We enjoy visiting with retired R.N. Betty Finch Bush. Betty said she was saved at the age of 12 which would have been around 1943 or 1944 at the old "Stoker Hall" and baptized at the "Blue Hole" near the Scott Cannon home.

Best wishes for a very enjoyable July 4th from all of us here "where the good people live", and hopefully our paths will cross again next month.

Palmer News

July, 2015

David Patton, Palmer Town Historian

We're coming to you on the red hot night of July 16. Last month, we mentioned what a shape our country was in with all the wickedness, violence, and turmoil, and this morning the chickens came home to roost. In nearby Chattanooga, four Marines were reportedly killed by a gunman who was himself shot to death. By the time you read this, all the details should be known concerning this horrible act.

Some of you may have seen the front page story about Carson Camp of Dunlap in the July 4th edition of the **Chattanooga Times Free Press**. He owns land on Fredonia Mountain overlooking Dunlap and plans to build the world's biggest Confederate flag out of painted stones. Carson's grandfather, Columbus "Lum" Camp, worked at the Palmer Big Mine in the 1930's.

"I'll kraut 'em." That's what Bonnie Payne up on Palmer Mountain told me. She said her cabbage didn't do any good, but what few she had would be made into kraut. Yum, yum, I'll have to bum a jar.

Have you ever noticed that after July 4th, the summer seems to fly by? We enjoy talking with our friend Ray Winton of Coalmont, and he says, "Sam Creighton used to say that if you were going to get anything done you had better do it before July 4th because soon after that it would be the first of September." According to the calendar the days start getting shorter on July 3 so maybe that's it.

My umbrella and I took a casual stroll on July 4th and visited Jerry Cannon, Joe Turner, and Melvin Smith at his mother Jeanette Smith's firecracker stand in the "Other End" of Palmer. Joe was grilling hamburgers with his little oxygen tank on his side. He says he weighs 263 now, and his son, Leslie, weighs 295. Harold James lives in the old Tom McNabb place. On the way home, we saw him on the porch and stopped for a chat.

Happy July Birthday to: Dwight Tate, Larry Crabtree and John Doug Shrum. Dwight turned 67 on July 4th itself. Larry is probably also 67, and John Doug is 66, I think.

People in rural areas know each other well and like to joke and cut up with one another. All the news coverage about the planet Pluto reminds me of a story.

In the early days of Palmer, Otto and Mattie “Matt” Anderson Smith were a well-known couple. In their old age, they kept a little dog and took it with them sometimes while out driving. One day as they went by in their truck a man said, “There goes Otto, Matto, and Pluto.” I didn’t know until recently that the planet Pluto wasn’t even found until 1930. The great show business legend Walt Disney was quick to pick up on things, and the cartoon dog Pluto was a big hit along with his other cartoon characters like Mickey Mouse. I knew Otto and Matt and thought a lot of them.

What’s For Supper: I don’t really know. I eat like a horse but don’t enjoy it like I used to. Of course, it’s not the food. It’s old age. I remember old people saying years ago, “I think I want it until I get it cooked then I don’t really want it.” I guess as you get older taste buds wear out like everything else.

Faces in the Crowd: We ran into Carl Slatton, Ben Brewer, and Stanley Waldo Myers recently. Carl lives in Gruetli-Laager and is a son of Abby King Slatton Tate. Ben is a son of Gary “Rooster” and Jan Brewer and is a fine boy. Stanley is married to Anita Crabtree’s daughter, Terry, and they have been going to Palmer Church of God for as long as I can remember. He owns G-L Piggly-Wiggly.

Former Gruetli-Laager resident Gary Bouldin of Brentwood, TN and his friend Don Lovell of Birmingham came through visiting last month. While here, they saw Herby and Bonnie Hart, Jack and Louise Hargis, Nathan Sanders, Peggy Payne, Teresa Meeks Layne, Barbara Meeks Cooke and daughter Sandy, and David Patton. Sandy lives in Searcy, Arkansas now. Gary traces his Swiss ancestry through the Schild and Marugg families. He and Don became friends during their days at **David Lipscomb University**.

Michelle Campbell Travis gave us our first garden tomato on June 22. The little yellow tomato was really good, and she said her goal was to have tomatoes before July 4th. She’s the daughter of James Campbell and lives on Big Mine Road in the old Orange Lemon Northcutt place.

Mike Scott, son of Jimmy Scott and Carolyn Scissom Fults, was ordained as a preacher recently at **First Baptist Church** of Palmer. John Henry Coffelt has pastored the church for years.

Jacky Henry, son of the late Hube and Gladys Davis Henry, runs the Palmer Convenience Center (Garbage Dump). Recycling is a big thing now and that’s good. Jacky says that way back in the 1970’s his uncle, the late Earl Davis, collected truckloads of glass, separated it by colors, and took it to Chattanooga to be recycled

where he was paid a penny a pound. We gave Jacky a big cabbage from our garden, and he says the family made nine quarts of kraut from it.

Mike and Mary Ruth Phillips Shadrick enjoyed a “working vacation” in Washington, D.C. recently. They toured Ford’s Theater and the Washington Monument and probably other things as well. He and his grandson, Stephen Rollins, made a similar trip a few years back. Clarence William Palmer, for whom the Town of Palmer is named, was a young boy in Ford’s Theatre when Lincoln was assassinated according to family accounts. Mike says that Washington, D.C. is now covered up with policemen and of course, little wonder.

Mrs. Eddie (Rita) Crabtree has some beautiful flowers this summer at the **Palmer Veterans Memorial Park**. She lives in the old Dave Henninger place next to **Palmer School**, and the park is just across the road. School kids used to walk through it years ago and called it the **Indian Graveyard**. Thanks, Rita

We think of yellow jackets being a problem just in the fall and don’t we wish. They come in as early as June, and James Jacks got several stings while trimming hedges. He lives on Hwy. 108 near **Palmer City Cemetery**. It’s a different house now, but Bobby Stinnett grew up there in an old coal company house in the 1940’s and 1950’s.

Many of you remember where the Albert Nunley family lived years ago on “Dugan Curve.” Christine “Queenie” Sanders Baker was the last to live there before her death. Of course, the old home has been gone for years, but now someone from out of town has a trailer there. Albert Nunley was Mayor of Palmer in the 1950’s, and his wife, Maude, was the sister of Henry Brown of Beersheba Springs, who built **Palmer School**.

Chiggertown News: Mr. and Mrs. Robert Goff have a trailer where the Raymond “Squirt” Layne family lived years ago. Raymond was a brother of A. J. Layne.

Jimmy King, son of the late Bob and Kate Watts King, died earlier this year, and the old coal company house is being occupied by Matt Morrison, grandson of Jerry Cannon.

Next door to the old King place is where Hobart and Myrtle Sissom Garner lived until their deaths. The old coal company house burned a couple years ago, and Charles Britton plans to put up a trailer there when he retires in Cleveland, Ohio. The Garners were the parents of the late Herbert and Floyd “Moe” Garner and also

had several daughters including Juanita and Violet who are the only survivors of this family.

I was saddened to hear that Cecil LaDon “Don” Boyd passed away back in April in Knoxville. He was retired from TVA and served with the U. S. Army in Vietnam. His brothers Wayne and Alton are also deceased, and the only surviving siblings are Danny and their sister Frances. Their dad, Alonzo Boyd, died years ago, but their mother, Nellie Lewis Boyd, is in a Chattanooga area nursing home. Don was my classmate in the **Palmer School** Class of 1961.

It’s time for us to take a bow and close the curtain on this edition of the **Palmer News**. For more musings and ramblings from “where the good people live” keep an eye out for us next month.

Palmer News

August, 2015

David Patton

Palmer Town Historian

We're having a beautiful sunny afternoon on this August 11 in Palmer. I've never owned an air conditioner in my life so I'm sitting in front of a fan staying cool the old fashion way as I write. Since I'm not acclimated to modern cooling I can take the heat and stay outdoors a lot. I've noticed during my lifetime that hillbillies can take cold weather a lot better than hot. It must be something in our genetic makeup.

Seems Like Old Times: Do you remember back in the 1950's and 60's before most cars were air conditioned? People had to drive with the windows down to keep from burning up. When you started up Whitwell Mountain from the hot Sequatchie Valley, the cool air felt like an air conditioner does now. My brother, Joel Patton, and I recently had the windows down as we started up Whitwell Mountain, and you could immediately feel the cool air by the time we got on top going into Griffith's Creek. It felt almost cold.

We recorded 9.2 inches of rain in July with almost all of it falling during the first half of the month. We are so blessed to have abundant rainfall in Grundy County and not have to worry about it constantly like many parts of the U.S.

Happy August Birthday to James McCullough 75, Jerry Harrison 74, Tom Coffelt 72, Mike Shadrick 65, Gail Bryant Coffelt 65, and Sandy Long Dydus, daughter of Raymond Long Trussell, 46. Tom Burnette and his twin brother Dick turned 70 last month.

The Summer of '55: It was August, 1955, when a young man named Raymond Hargis started his three-year tenure as Principal of Palmer Grammar School. He and his wife, Doris, and little daughter, Deborah, moved into the home I now occupy on Dogwood Street near the school.

Dwight D. Eisenhower was in the White House. It was a great time to be an American. The space race with the U S.S.R. was just getting started, and things like television brought the world right into your living room as it seemed that things to improve the lives of people were coming out constantly.

“Tennessee Consolidated Coal Company owned the house and had used it in recent years as a home for the Palmer School Principal,” Mr. Hargis told us recently. “The rent was free, and the electric bill was \$3 a month. The Company had Marvin Lee Geary to do some plumbing and others did some roof work and all that was free.”

Mr. Hargis added that “we had a great neighborhood with Fred “Humpy” and Bessie Morrison nearby as well as Harvey Brown’s parents. We enjoyed living there and people supported the school one-hundred percent. So many parents that I ran into out in public would say. “If my kid gives you any trouble, just let me know.”

Here we are, in August 2015. Mr. Hargis is 87, the school is 87 and both are still going strong. He now lives in Manchester, TN.

Former Gruetli-Laager resident Gary Bouldin spreads a lot of cheer through his card sending. In 2014, he sent 534 birthday cards and 167 anniversary cards. On the most romantic day of the year, he sent 157 Valentine cards in 2015. Way to go, Gary. It is appreciated.

A Picture Window: When was the last time you heard the term “picture window”? Back in the 1950’s and 60’s you heard it a lot. It’s a big window on the front of the house which makes it easy to see outside. The Buddy Nolan family had one on their old coal company house in the 1960’s and maybe before. Bonnie Payne had new home built a few years ago, and says she had the picture window in the old house put in the new house.

Jon-Luc Roberts, grandson of Junior and Lucille Crabtree Roberts, interned this summer at TVA in Nashville. He’s a brilliant student and will be a sophomore this fall in Electrical Engineering at Tennessee Tech in Cookeville.

It has been a quiet summer at Palmer School with no major projects. An outside basketball court and a pavilion for the playground that the pre-K and K students’ use were built.

What’s For Supper? I’m continuing my quest for something I’d really enjoy eating, and of all things had some souse meat the other day. I like the hot kind, and it’s pretty good with crackers.

Do you remember the old “orange-pineapple” or as I used to call it “pineapple-orange” ice cream from years ago? This wasn’t sherbet, but a rich and delicious ice cream. I never dreamed I’d ever eat it again.

Our friend, Mark Roberts, brought us a three-gallon barrel of it on June 24 from the historic Flury's Store in Tracy City, and I want to thank Mark and Mr. P. C. Flury for taking me back in time. It was as good as I remembered from bygone days. Flury's mixes history with good quality products, and I always enjoy looking at the artifacts and the old fashion foods like baloney and hoop cheese.

I forgot to mention that we had a rare "Blue Moon" in July. That's when you have two Blue Moon cycles in the same month, and the last is called a Blue Moon. The late singer, Mel Torme, had a big hit with the song "Blue Moon" so check out his beautiful rendition on the Internet.

Sympathy is extended to the families of Gail Green Irvin and Kelly "Bubba" Nolan. Gail was my neighbor in the 1950's and early 1960's and also my classmate in the Palmer School Class of 1961. She was a very nice person and came from a good family.

I didn't know "Bubba" Nolan, but he was a son of Tex Nolan of Cleveland, Ohio and the late June Britton Nolan. Tex was a very good football player at Grundy County High School.

Palmer Market on Hwy. 108 stands where the old "Company Store" was. Chad King lives behind it in the old house where R.B. and Hilda Sitz Ivey lived for many years. This summer, he has killed two rattlesnakes on the property. Big Mine Road, which fronts it, has always been bad for copperheads and rattlesnakes.

On Sick Call: The Mike Shadrick family has had a 24-hour virus type of sickness this summer. Dale "Cotton" Scissom, son of the late Tommy Scissom, has reportedly suffered a heart attack. Eddie Crabtree and Wally Nolan have suffered from kidney stones.

Faces in The Crowd: We visited Mary Sanders Cox while out walking. She's a sister of the late Pee Wee Sanders and lives in the old Coal Company house where the John Owens family and later my family lived years ago. She's the widow of Ray Hoyt Cox and says he passed away in 2002.

Dwight Tate enjoyed seeing Beverly Kilgore Daniel in a Chattanooga Restaurant recently. They were classmates in the Palmer School Class of 1962.

Grundy County Historian, William Ray Turner, and his wife, Marie, had a visit from their son, Larry Turner, of Chattanooga. They enjoyed a meal at Cracker Barrel, and Marie says she loves their dumplings. In the 1960's, Larry and I had a Physics class together at Grundy County High School under Mr. Zeddie Walker.

Bobby Wiggins of Tracy City and Dale Layne of Layne Funeral Home enjoyed a visit to Alaska this summer.

We enjoyed meeting Charles Taylor recently. He's the son of the late Everett "Broad" and Edna Caldwell Taylor of Gruetli-Laager, and says he is 77 now.

"You Don't Know Me Do You?" That's what a man with a ball cap and sunglasses said recently, and I didn't. It was Darrell Turner, and I hadn't seen him in a long time. He travels the world as an evangelist and is the son of the late Robert and Ina Lee Turner of Chiggertown.

The Roberts family who run Sheltering Arms Nursing Home have reportedly bought the Lanny Cox place on Hwy. 399 in Barker's Cover. Earl and Edna Barker Patton must have had the home built there in the 1950's. They are both deceased, and Lanny's widow, Mae Taylor Cox, had continued to live there after his death. The Roberts family do wonderful work and have residents from all over at Sheltering Arms. They are a branch of the Rev. James Roberts family.

Summer of '65: Could it be 50 years later now? Doesn't seem so, but a half-century has passed since then. Lyndon B. Johnson was in the White House, and like in 2015, turmoil and discord rocked the nation and world.

That summer, the Ku Klux Klan had a nighttime rally on an empty lot just off Hwy. 108 next to the Freddie Cannon place. Billy Carl and Becky Guffey have a home on the location today.

I remember it still. The Klansmen in their robes and a big cross set on fire as part of the ceremony. The speaker was just as fiery as the cross, and he called President Johnson "Bugle Nose Johnson".

Of course, in a small town everyone was curious and wanted to see the spectacle, but a local drunk got more than he bargained for. He was stumbling around the crowd cursing which was a "no-no" at a public gathering like that. The Ku Klux grabbed him and removed him. Some said they whipped him with a belt, and others said they blacked his eyes. The "Ku Klux", as they were called here, were a vigilante force in all-white areas like Grundy County. Law enforcement was weak, and sometimes, drunks, wife beaters, and men who let their families go hungry were disciplined by them. Many people still alive today can tell you stories about it.

We send out a few written copies by mail of the Palmer News, but spread the word that it can be viewed monthly on grundycountyhistory.org.

Our typist, Donna Landon Lovelace, and our webmaster, Ralph Thompson, had just graduated from Grundy County High School in the summer of 1965, and hopefully, they will tell us what they were doing 50 years ago this summer. We sincerely thank them for helping us and appreciate all the work they have done over the years to preserve Grundy County history.

It's time to take an "exit-stage left" for August 2015. From everyone here "where the good people live", I send the very best to you and yours. Summer will soon be gone so enjoy those garden tomatoes, corn on the cob, okra, watermelon, and all the other good things that make this a special time of year.

My Summer of 1965:

After graduation in 1965, I spent the summer getting ready to attend Baroness Erlanger School of Nursing. I started my training in August, 1965 and finished in August, 1968. Our freshman year, we were required to remain on campus with only one visit home each month. It sure got pretty lonely until you got to go home for a visit until everyone got to know each other and that became our home away from home.

We were given two weeks off in the summer and two weeks at Christmas. The rest of the time, we had classes and worked in the hospital getting our technical training. We were required to have study hours from 8-10 each week night with no one allowed out of their room. We had House Mothers who stayed in the lobby to make sure we students obeyed all the rules. It was a very strict first year of school.

On weekends, we were allowed that one time home or we could shop in downtown Chattanooga or across the street at the local drugstore which had just about anything you might want. One night, I saw the biggest roach I had or since have ever seen in my room. I hit it with a book to no avail. I tried stomping it with no results. Finally, I sprayed it with what seemed like an entire can of hairspray, and still it ran off. At least, I never saw it again.

My first year away from home was an adventure I won't forget. I made new friends whom are still dear to me. We had a reunion last year and enjoyed catching up on all the news of the last 46 years. I cherish my nursing training as I have had the pleasure of meeting so many fascinating people over the years.

Donna L. Lovelace

September 2015
Palmer News
David Patton
Palmer Town Historian

If you've read the **Palmer News** over the years, I've mentioned several times that September with its combination of summer and fall weather is my favorite month. We're writing on September 10 in the wee small hours of the morning after midnight which is a perfect time to gather your thoughts in the peace and quiet.

Remembering Pete: Our friend A. C. "Pete" Cannon passed away in March 1985 and think how the world has changed in the 30 years since. Pete was a Navy veteran of World War II and said that one of his shipmates in the Pacific was the actor Henry Fonda. Pete's brothers, the twins Howard and Horace, also served in the Navy in the Pacific. Today, the only survivor of the large family of Freddie "Jew-Babe" Cannon is Venova Cannon Cleek, widow of Charles Cleek.

"What's the world coming to?" I was shocked to learn that students at Palmer School now have breakfast in the classroom instead of the school lunchroom. Of course, a lot of you reading this never dreamed that breakfast would be served at school to begin with, much less in the classroom! Looks like I was born about 50 years too soon to get in on goodies like that.

I was at the school recently and saw a big container of water on the counter in the office with bright yellow lemons in it. Plastic cups were by the container so I couldn't wait to enjoy some lemonade. Talk about being disappointed. The cold water wasn't good lemonade. "They want to encourage the students to drink more water," said Pam Meeks. The delicious looking lemons didn't have any sugar at all, and the beverage was called "Lemon Water" according to Pam. I've lived to long!

Rev. Howard Fults from the Altamont area preached for Sunday services September 6 at Palmer Free Will Baptist Church. He's married to the former Judy Hackworth of Gruetli-Laager. David Scissom has also been preaching at the church.

"Are your shoes eating your socks?" I'd never heard this before, but that's what Harold James said when I reached down to pull up my socks. That happens sometimes when you're walking. "My Dad used to say that was caused by

shoes being too big,” said Bobby Lloyd Greene. That sounds logical, and I’ll bet that’s why socks sometimes droop and almost disappear down into your shoes.

We hadn’t heard anything about Harold Grooms in several years, and a person told us that he was in a nursing home in the McMinnville or Woodbury area. I remember Harold well.

Palmer Remembers World War II: It was September 2, 1995 when citizens gathered on a sunny Saturday to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the end of World War II. The gathering was held at Palmer Veterans Memorial Park, and a tombstone honoring Edward F. “Plib” Geary, who was lost at sea during the war, was unveiled.

World War II veterans such as Wet Duck Dishroon, Malcolm Geary, Joe Willard Fults, Earl Creighton, Gene Brooks, James Grimes and others were in attendance as well as Berton Cagle who worked in the shipyards at Pearl Harbor during the war. It was a special day, and I’m glad I got to be a part of it as the Federal Government designated Palmer as an official World War II Commemorative Community. Today, in 2015, I don’t know of any World War II veterans still living in Palmer, Batesville or Barker’s Cove. J. D. O’Neal was the last one to our knowledge.

Last month we told you about Mr. Raymond Hargis being principal of Palmer School from 1955 – 1958. Mr. Hargis said he believes his salary was less than 500 dollars a month. Years later, he was Grundy County School Superintendent for 13 years and said the most he ever made was \$42,000 a year. It’s in the \$70,000 plus range now, I believe.

Kenneth Brewer, Johnny Dishroon, and Gerald Smith are driving SETHRA buses in their retirement years. These are public transportation buses that take people in our rural area just about anywhere they want to go locally and to Chattanooga and Nashville.

Steve Garner, Chris Grooms, Baloney Crabtree, and Darwin and Carolyn Grimes Shipley were among those in the World’s Longest Yard Sale as it came through Dunlap.

Our rainfall in August was 6.0 inches so we continue to be blessed.

Clark's Polar Bear Munchies opened in the old Margie Sanders Ramey store building on December 6, 2014 and closed about the last week of June or so. Louis and Wanda Vandergriff Clark came to the area from Valdez, Alaska and live in Mount Olive atop Whitwell Mountain.

“He was mort-lly flying.” That's what a person told me about a young man riding his motorcycle down Hwy. 399. That used to be heard a lot in describing fast drivers. Don't you guess it was originally pronounced as “mortally” flying? Anyway, I hadn't heard “mortally flying” in years.

Matthew Meeks of Tracy City is the new Pastor at Laager Methodist Church (Cotton's) replacing Jesse Lockhart.

The late Margaret Brown Coppinger of Beersheba Springs was a teacher at Palmer Elementary in the 1940's and 1950's. She was a stern teacher and all business. I was in her 5th grade class during her last year at Palmer which was the 1957-58 term.

I don't remember this, but a classmate said Mrs. Coppinger asked the class to memorize a poem about birds. Preston Knowlan's poem was, “Jay-bird, Jay-bird, sitting on a fence. Trying to make a dollar out of 15 cents.” Needless to say Mrs. Coppinger wasn't amused. I think that's very creative for a 5th grader, but she must have thought that he didn't take the assignment seriously. She did a lot of wonderful history work and at one time was the official Grundy County Historian.

What's for supper? Years ago, fried egg sandwiches were popular, and I've been enjoying some lately. I like them with some mustard and sausage on good fresh “light bread”. Try one soon. You might still like them.

Kat Hart King, widow of Franklin King, is working part-time at the Palmer Public Library.

“Are you David Patton?” “Indeed I am”, and as the tall fellow with the cap in front of the Library got closer I could see it was my old Palmer School classmate Roger Dale Sissom followed by his brothers Richie and Carl Wayne.

Roger has lived in the Chattanooga area for years, and his brothers live in the Atlanta area. They are the sons of the late Clyde and Lorene Tate Sissom, and it was a great pleasure to visit with them. I remember in Palmer School that Roger

was always interested in cars and could tell you the year they were built and the engine size or whatever.

On Sick Call: Those under a doctor's care recently include Mike Shadrick, Joel Patton, Melvin (Buck's son) Brewer, Mrs. David (Kay Partin) Scissom and Rev. Robert Johnson. I'm sure they would all appreciate your prayers. I remember that some of the kids at Palmer School called Robert "Seahorse" back in the 1950's. I believe there was a famous motor build by the Johnson Company for motorboats, and it was called the Johnson "Seahorse." Mr. Raymond Hargis might know.

Remembering Sam: Mrs. Linda Shrum Tate grew up in the Flat Branch Community near Tracy City as the daughter of the late Lawrence and Bessie Sanders Shrum.

"I had always heard of Sam Creighton who had a store in Coalmont but had never met him," Linda said. "Not long before his death, I stopped in the store and met him and took a photo of him. He bought me a Moon Pie, and Robert "Pop" Short bought me an RC Cola. It was the first RC and Moon Pie that I'd had since I was a kid. Pop Short was older than me but was in the Flat Branch School when I was." The old store is open now as a restaurant and is called "S.A.M.S. Corner" so stop by sometime. Linda is the wife of Dwight Tate.

Happy September Birthday to Mrs. Calvin (Charlotte) Finch out in Riverside, California who turns 91, also to Jerry Cannon 79, Bobby Stinnett 78 or 79, Charles D. "Steamboat" Layne 78, Hershel (Junior) Harrison 78, W. R. "Billy" Patton 64, and Keith McBee 57. Johnny Harrison turned 76 in August, and his brother Jerry was 74.

Rev. John (Junior) and Sue Pocus Creighton celebrate their 49th anniversary this month followed closely by Rev. Robert and Ruby Hart Johnson who celebrate their 48th anniversary.

Faces in the Crowd: The Monteagle Flea Market draws a big crowd on the weekend and among those attending this summer were Ricky "Rock" Layne and son Lebron, Tommy Layman, Louis Braden and Jack Summers who re-married recently after the death of his wife Helen Cordell Summers several years ago.

Mike Maxon retired this year as Principal of Sewanee Elementary. He was the 8th grade teacher at Palmer Elementary in the 1973-74 terms and led the famous 8th grade class trip to Disneyworld in the spring of 1974.

The Theron Gross of Tracy City and Leon Christian of Gruetli-Laager work for the Grundy County Highway Dept., and we enjoyed taking with them recently.

We'll end this month with a scary story, and I mean a scary story. Back on a Sunday afternoon in August, Linda Caldwell Mainord of Gruetli-Laager, widow of Corky Mainord reached into the cabinet under her kitchen sink and was bitten twice on her fingers by a copperhead. At first, she thought a rat had bitten her, and the snake apparently got in through a crack in the wood around the drain pipe. She was taken to the hospital for an overnight stay but got to come home the next afternoon.

Kat King summed up the feelings of most of us this way, "If you ever come by here and see a "For Sale" sign in the yard, you'll know what happened. I don't think I could stay in my house after something like that."

Friends and Neighbors, I'll ease out of here for now. All of us "where the good people live" think often of old friends and classmates scattered across the U.S. and cordially invite you to visit us when you're in this neck of the woods.

October, 2015
Palmer News
David Patton
Palmer Town Historian

We call this little get together the “Palmer News”: I don’t like to be restricted so don’t be surprised to see anybody’s name pop up. History is not just the wars and disasters that we all know about. It also includes the events of everyday life which will be a great source of information for future generations as they try to understand the times in which we lived.

The annual Labor Day celebration is Palmer’s big day of the year, and the weather was dry and sunny which is ideal for an outdoors event. Former residents Don Tate and Allie Jean “Shorty” Sanders were among the crowd. They both live in Coalmont now.

Nathan Travis, the teenage grandson of James Campbell, suffered severe cuts from a chainsaw while cutting firewood. You can cut an amazing amount of wood in a short time with these things as compared to the old crosscut saws, but great caution must be used.

The annual Parent-Teacher conference was held at Palmer School on September 24. I graduated from the school in 1961, and according to my records the following class members are now deceased: Lois Ann Braden, Don Boyd, June Britton, Jimmy Carpenter, Annetta Coffelt, David Creighton, Judy Gholston, Gail Green, Jerry Kilgore, Wanda Partin, Wanda Patton, and Bobby Turner.

I ran across an annual from Grundy County High School in the late 1950’s and saw a photo of teachers Clarence Kilgore, Jr. of Tracy City and Fred “Sonny Morrison of Palmer. I knew Mr. Kilgore taught at the school in the 1950’s and 1960’s and maybe beyond, but I had no idea that Sonny taught at G.C.H.S. Mr. Kilgore died earlier this year and was the uncle of P. C. Flury of Tracy City. Sonny passed away many years ago.

One of the things that has changed in Grundy County in our lifetime is how so many husbands are now outliving their wives. Years ago, it was taken for granted that wives would outlive their husbands, but that pattern has been broken now.

Back in the summer, we were walking by Greg Ross’ house in Gruetli-Laager when he caught up with us on his riding mower and handed us a bottle of water.

He seems to be in good health and kept the Palmer City Cemetery mowed this year. Several years ago, he lost his wife, Rose Partin Ross, to cancer.

Undertaker Dale Layne now has a funeral home in Spencer, TN. in addition to those in Palmer and Altamont. Johnny Dickerson works at the Altamont one, and Carl Ed Nunley works at the one in Palmer.

We continue to hear scary stories about snakes. Bull and Wanda Mainord Hart found one in their Gruetli-Laager home, and Mike Shadrick says a copperhead was killed at Gruetli Church of God where children were playing. Rev. Joe Sanders killed a rattlesnake in his driveway over in Tatesville at the foot of Daus Mountain. Gives me the “creeps”!

“He’s wacky.” I hadn’t heard that term in a long time until the other day, but it once was used a lot to describe someone with mental problems.

Earl and Nancy Roberts Rigsby of Gruetli-Laager are both in their 90’s and have moved into an assisted living facility in McMinnville. Nancy’s first husband, Woodrow Cleek, was a World War II veteran as was her second husband, John Lesser. Her third husband, Earl Rigsby is also a World War II veteran. She grew up in Palmer as a daughter of Henry Roberts. Nancy and her sister, Mary Lou Creighton, are the only survivors of that large family.

Whole Lotta Chicken: Linda Caldwell Mainord says that back in the spring her son, Attorney Russell Mainord, got some Cornish Rock chickens. She says these chickens get so fat they can barely walk and that the breast of one of them weighed 5 pounds.

Happy October Birthday: to Herschel (Junior) Finch 86, Mrs. Hugh Gerald (Gwen Flynn) Hill 76, Darlene Brooks 73, David Patton and George Houston Rogers both 68 and both were born October 12, 1947 and are first cousins, Jacky Henry 61, Rexie (son of Rex) Magouirk 61, twin sisters Dana Cannon Scissom and Denise Cannon Morrison 44, and the youngster of the group, Coy Douglas Hargis turns 30. He’s the grandson of the late Clayton Hargis.

Happy 27th anniversary to Dewayne and Marsha Anderson Privett. They were married on October 15, 1988 at Laager Congregational Methodist Church by Pastor Cotton Ross.

Church News: Mark Roberts attended services recently at Palmer United Methodist Church. Doyle Doss attends Laager Independent Methodist Church

where he sings and plays the guitar. Many of our older readers will remember his late grandfather Ambrose Magouirk.

We saw an article in the September 27th edition of the “Chattanooga Times Free Press” that said school children across America are refusing to eat the “healthy” school lunches mandated by the federal government. First Lady Michelle Obama got this passed to reduce obesity in our youth. Who doesn’t like an old-fashion “sausage and biscuit”? An adult got one at the Palmer School lunchroom, but it turned out to be turkey sausage on a whole wheat biscuit. “I couldn’t eat it,” they told me. The typical breakfast from school days of 50 years ago was fried eggs, fried sausage or bacon, biscuits, gravy, jelly and orange juice or oatmeal, and it was eaten at home. We also might have had cocoa. Ora glass of milk or oats that came in a box. No one ever dreamed breakfast would be served at school.

September Weather Report: We recorded 3.9 inches of rainfall for the month. A refreshing blast of cool air came in with a low of 47 on the 13th and a low of 43 degrees on the 14th. An enjoyable two week dry spell came in the middle of the month, and the last few days of September said goodbye with mild temps and light drizzly rain.

What’s for Supper? Over the years, I’ve heard of “hot water cornbread” but have never eaten it, have you? Mrs. William Ray Turner of Tracy City says she remembers her grandmother making it. Instead of mixing milk with the ingredients, you used boiling water. Marie says she saw her grandmother turn a lard can lid upside down and bake the hot water cornbread on it for her large family. Years ago, there were no food banks or Food Stamps so people had to be creative to survive.

Speaking of Food: Deer, coons, rabbits, squirrels and groundhogs were once hunted so much for food that they seldom bothered crops, but boy, oh boy, how that has changed. Willene Nunley Campbell of Pelham says her brother, Wesley Nunley, had nine long rows of corn, but only got one mess because of wild animals. Many people have given up on corn because of deer and coons. Several years ago, Earl Grimes grew a bunch of Halloween pumpkins, but lost almost all of them to deer which kicked them so that they burst then ate them.

Class of 65: The Grundy County High School class of 1965 held their 50th reunion September 12 at the Father Adamz Parish House in Tracy City. Those present from Palmer School were Donna Landon Lovelace, Phyllis Tate Brown, and Roger Dale Sissom.

Officials at the Courthouse gave a “House Warming Party” recently for Nathan Sanders, grandson of Charlie and Evelyn Taylor Brewer. Nathan is the Administrative Assistant to Grundy County Mayor Michael Brady. He’s a fine young man and has purchased the home of his late great-grandfather Corbett Taylor in Gruetli-Laager.

The descendants of Buddie and Lucy Green Payne gathered this summer for their annual reunion at the Gruetli-Laager Community Center. They are gone now, but all six children are still living including Charles, Herschel, Jeweldean, Rachel, Kenny and Carl Bailey “Carly” Payne. They were all present except the oldest, Charles, who lives in Arizona. Also there, were Janelle Layne Taylor and daughter Megan of Pelham. Janelle is the daughter of the late Ebb and Elsie Payne Layne of Pelham, and Elsie was the sister of Buddie Payne.

Cindy Walker, daughter of Joanne Lockhart Walker and the late Rev. Cecil Walker, is working at the Gruetli-Laager Senior Citizens Center. Rev. Walker held church services at the Center for years.

A bridal shower was held September 26th at the Palmer Community Center for Gabrielle LeCroy who is the daughter of Cindy McCullough LeCroy and the late Tim LeCroy. She will be marrying Matthew Hampton on October 10th, and his parents are Randy and Renee Tate Hampton. Gabrielle will be escorted down the aisle by her grandfathers, James McCullough and Don LeCroy. Scooter McCullough and Duke LeCroy were her great-grandfathers. Melvin Hampton was Matthew’s grandfather as was Harley Tate.

Faces in the Crowd: “David, do you need a ride back to Palmer?” I was standing in the check-out line at the Dollar General in Gruetli-Laager, and when I turned around it was Joy Britton Shrum who is the sister of my Palmer School classmate, June Britton. Joy is married to Mike Shrum, son of the late James Shrum.

We always enjoy talking to Carl “Tubby” Tate, and when we saw him recently he said he was 75 now. We talked about what a shape the world was in, and he said, “When my daughter was little I would say that the world would come to an end before she got grown. But of course, it didn’t, and I quit saying that. It may last another thousand years.” Tubby used to be a talented guitar player, but says he can’t play anymore because of a stroke that affected his right hand. When I told him about seeing the Sissom brothers this summer, he said he went to school with Richie Sissom.

I remember Roy Lee Birdwell from Grundy County High School in the early 1960's. He was a nice fellow, and I enjoyed talking with him this summer. When I told Roy that I didn't like high school and dropped out, he said, "I didn't either, but Daddy (Mose) made me go. It took me 5 years to graduate." Roy says he just has one eye now but seemed to be getting around good. The old Mose Birdwell house still stands on Hwy. 108 in Gruetli-Laager near Fall Creek Cemetery.

Mike Nance is a local plumber, and we always enjoy talking to him. His daughter, Julie Nance, is now a freshman at Chattanooga State Community College. She graduated from G.C.H.S. back in May, and during her high school days was the only female runner on the cross-country team. A few years ago, his father, Lonnie B. Nance, bought the old Episcopal Church property in Gruetli-Laager and has Gospel singings on Friday night and regular church at other times.

I noticed in the "Chattanooga Times Free Press" that former Gruetli-Laager residents Vickie Henderson and her brother, Mike Givens are still in the real estate business in the Chattanooga area. Vickie's dad, the late Clifford Henderson, was at one time Grundy County Property Assessor.

I started seeing Halloween decorations popping up in yards and windows way back in early September. These days that includes lights and the whole works, and I think I enjoy them as much as the kids.

"Glorious October" as I call it defines autumn, not September or even November. This Emily Dickinson poem sums it up for me.

Autumn

The morns are meeker than they were,

The nuts are getting brown.

The berry's cheek is plumper,

The rose is out of town.

The maple wears a gayer scarf,

The field a scarlet gown.

Lest I should be old-fashioned,

I'll put a trinket on.

To me, there is something mysterious and comforting in the changing of the seasons as late summer eases into fall. Mother Nature gets out her easel and paints a beautiful landscape for all to enjoy with colors that shimmer as far as the eye can see.

So “Happy Fall, Ya’ll”, from all of us here “where the good people live” and we’ll make plans to get together again real soon.

November 2015
Palmer News
David Patton
Palmer Town Historian

Here it is already November which means Turkey Day is almost on us. Have you noticed at festivals and events that smoked turkey legs are a big item? Years ago, you couldn't have given away turkey legs much less sold them. I'm still old-fashioned so I'll stick with the turkey breast as I'm sure most of you will on November 26th.

I celebrated my 68th birthday on October 12th and received cards from Mr. Raymond Hargis, Randal Nolan, Gary Bouldin, Donna Gayle Gifford Basham, and Mary Ruth Mayes Rogers. I also received a colorful Halloween card from Gary Bouldin. A sincere "thank you" to everyone. I'm still a person who enjoys being physically active. That's ok until that night when the soreness settles in and I ache and throb. That reminds me of the immortal words of Dr. Byron Harbolt who once told a person, "If you don't want to have aches and pains, don't get old." Truer words were never spoken. At last report Dr. Harbolt was in his 90's and living with his son in West Tennessee.

Getting Close: Do you remember when you would see a young boy and girl going down the road in a car, and they would be sitting so close it looked like they were welded together? The seats in modern cars are designed differently, and I hadn't seen that in years. I was walking up Palmer Mountain recently when an older model pick-up came down the highway with a man and woman sitting like that. I thought I was in a time tunnel and had been transported back to the 1950's or 60's.

Last month, I mentioned twelve members of my Palmer School class of 1961 who are deceased. Another one that I had forgotten was Linda Layne, daughter of Clell and Lizzie Sanders Layne who had a very large family. Mr. A. J. Layne was principal at that time, and I'm sure he remembers Linda.

The 68 acre coal mining property below Palmer First Baptist Church was put up for sale this summer. Old timers will remember this as the Ball Diamond Mines located behind the old Palmer Baseball Field. Elmer Norris was killed in a mining accident there in the 1950's. The last coal dug in Palmer came from a mine operated there briefly in 2005, and I have some of that coal.

U.T. Memories: The never ending football injuries made headlines this fall when the Marion County High School quarterback suffered a concussion and was unconscious for seven minutes. This happened on Friday night, and it was the following Wednesday

before he could remember his own birthday and sleep through the night without vomiting repeatedly.

Mr. Raymond Hargis graduated from Grundy County High School in 1946 and enrolled in the University of Tennessee that fall. “That was the first year General Neyland came back to coach the Vols after serving in World War II,” he said. “They just had one player who weighed over 200 pounds, and he was right tackle, Dick Huffman, who was 230 pounds, and later an all-pro player for the San Francisco 49’ers. Now, you have 300 pounders who can run people down. They’re so big and strong and fast today, and if I had a kid I would discourage them from playing football because of the injuries.” Mr. Hargis says that student tickets that year to the UT-Alabama game were a dollar and that many years later season tickets for the general public were only 35 dollars.

Although his family had plenty of meat, Mr. Hargis said that growing up he mostly ate beans and potatoes and didn’t like any kind of meat. “It was at UT that I started to eat things like roast beef and scrambled eggs,” he said.

Mr. Hargis worked in the lunchroom and says that you got a free meal for an hour of work and got one of everything they had on the menu. He was a freshman, and a fellow worker was a senior named Tom Clark and also Julia Read Clark who was a cashier in the lunchroom. Tom told Mr. Hargis that upon graduation he had secured a job at Grundy County High School in Tracy City and asked if he knew where that was?

As they say, “The rest is history.” Tom Clark was the Vocational Agriculture teacher at GCHS for 18 years, and his wife Julia was the Vocational Home Economics teacher at GCHS for 18 years. The couple was legends at GCHS in the 1950’s and 1960’s. Mrs. Joe (Mary Anderson) Turner is said to bake the best cinnamon rolls you’ve ever eaten. She learned to make them in Mrs. Clark’s Home Economics class in the 1950’s. Mr. Clark died in February 1992, and Mrs. Clark followed just six months later in August 1992. They are buried at Plainview Cemetery in Tracy City.

In the mid-1980’s and early 1990’s the 212th Engineer Company of the Tennessee National Guard was a household name in Grundy and Sequatchie Counties. They gathered this fall to commemorate 25 years since they were deployed for Desert Storm in the fall of 1990. Attending from Grundy County were: Carl “Teeter” Morrison, Ralph Casey, David Griswold, and Richard Griswold. The reunion was held in Dunlap, and Gary Patton, son of the late Earl Patton, lives there and was among the Sequatchie County attendees.

The mowing season of 2015 is the first time in years that I remember not having to kill out yellow jacket nests in my yard. If you run over them with a push mower they'll swarm out of the ground and really get you. Homer Hunziker of Tracy City had one in his yard, but said he left them alone because we had so few bees this year. I know honey bees were very scarce at my place.

"If you touch them, you won't dream about them." I'd never heard that old saying about dead people until a woman told me she helped the undertaker put her mother's body in the casket. Have you ever heard that saying?

I've been gathering black walnuts this fall for the first time in years. I like the taste, and they're supposed to be good for you. Mary Ruth Rogers, 82, said that she and her brothers would gather walnuts at the home of Viola or Veola Kelly, an unmarried woman, hull them and give her half of them. Mary Ruth said the woman worked at the Tennessee Consolidated Coal Company (Company Store) in Tracy City in the dry goods dept. I wonder if Mr. Hargis or Mr. Ray Winton remembers her.

Donna Basham, Grundy County Administrator of Elections since 1884, was a judge this fall in the **Fairest of the Fair Pageant** at the Marion County Fair in Jasper. The winner was the granddaughter of former Grundy County School Board Chairman, Ron Givens. Donna's daughter, Dusty Geary Adkins, won the **Fairest of the Fair** at the 1994 Grundy County Fair. After an absence of many years, the Grundy County Fair is scheduled to begin once more next year in Gruetli-Laager.

They had the St. Vitus Dance. I hadn't heard anyone say St. Vitus Dance in years. It probably has a new name now, but a long time ago that was what an involuntary jerking of the arms or legs was called because the afflicted person looked like they were trying to dance.

We have received word that Andrea Mae Layne passed away recently in West Virginia where she had lived for many years. She was a daughter of Willie Mae Brown Layne and the late Rev. Andrew Layne.

Angel of Mercy: That's what Dr. Oscar Howell Clements, Palmer's town doctor of the 1930's and 1940's, was. This was during the hard times of the Great Depression and World War II when the modern medical care that we take for granted today was undreamed of.

"I was a 7th grader at Coalmont Grammar School and so sick with infected tonsils that my whole system was run down, and I spent ten days in Erlanger Hospital," says Mr.

Ray Winton. “We lived very close to the school, and they would bring the lessons to my house so I could keep up my school work. Dr. Clements sat me down in a chair at his Palmer Clinic and took the tonsils out. I didn’t have any more trouble. I got back in school for my 8th grade year and was the Valedictorian of the Class of 1945 at Coalmont Grammar (now called elementary) School.

Mr. Winton went on to add that, “Dr. Clements was a wonderful man who treated people all over Grundy County, not just Palmer.” It was said that back then if you saw a cloud of dust on the old dirt or gravel roads and a car flying by as fast as it would go it was probably Dr. Clements rushing to see a patient. Mr. Winton is a retired teacher and still active church of Christ preacher. He came back to live in Coalmont several years ago.

Happy November Birthday: to Palmer School 88, Betty Finch Hill Bush Green 84, Hugh Gerald Hill 80, Ida Pearl Brown turns 80 on Thanksgiving Day, Martha Carrol Cox Hensley 76, Bruce Creighton 70, Joel Patton 66, David Scissom 62, Danny Crabtree 61, and David Adam Curtis, Great-grandson of the late Arthur Roy Curtis, turns 20. Wouldn’t it be great to be 20 again?

Happy November Anniversary: to Calvin and Charlotte Finch out in Riverside, California who celebrate 73 years, Larry and Joan Crabtree Lamz 52 years, and Preston and Willene Bivens Knowlan 51 years. Continuing on, Ray and Nelda Carol Savage Gomer celebrate 50 years of matrimony. She’s the daughter of the late Nelmon Savage; they were married at First Church of the Nazarene in Palmer by former Pastor Lynn Casseday. Bob Say was the pastor at the time. Joan and Preston were students when Mr. Raymond Hargis and Mr. A. J. Layne were principals at Palmer School.

On Sick Call: Just a week or so after the death of his wife, Becky Coffelt Guffey, Billy Carl Guffey suffered a broken hip but is making a good recovery. Grundy County Trustee Tyler McCullough is recovering from back surgery.

Church News: Wayne “Hog” Norris and George Bryant were among the preachers holding a tent revival at the Palmer Ball Field this fall. They’re originally from the “Pocket” community. On October 4, Gruetli Church of God had their 60th birthday with a homecoming service. Eddie Birdwell pastors Gruetli church of Christ, and among those attending are Billy Wade Taylor and his sister Mae Cox, Kat King and her son Frankie. Years ago some called it the “Bouldin church” because so many of that family attended.

October was a wet one here in rainy Palmer as we recorded 6 inches of H₂O in our gauge, but we had a beautiful sunny dry spell of almost two weeks. Halloween 2014 had blowing snow, and Halloween 2015 had a third of an inch of light rain so hopefully next

year will be a dry one. For the 21st consecutive year I night watched at Palmer School, thoroughly enjoyed it, and let the memories flow. Oh, by the way, I had my first killing frost October 17. Big Creek Utility District keeps weather records for the National Weather Service at the Dam in Coalmont. They had a low of 29 degrees on October 17th and 18th, and I'm sure it was even colder here along Mill Creek where I live. In contrast, Bonnie Payne, way up on Rocky Top (Palmer Mountain) was still getting pepper from her garden on October 27 when I visited.

November Night

Listen.....

With faint dry sound,
Like steps of passing ghosts.
The leaves, frost crisp'd
Break from the trees
And fall.
Adelaide Crapsey

We'll put an "!" Point on the **Palmer News** for November 2015 and get busy counting our blessings. This time of year, I always think of the words from an old Bing Crosby song. "If you get worried, and you can't sleep, count your blessings instead of sheep, then you'll fall asleep counting your blessings."

So, from here "where the good people live", may this be an extra special Thanksgiving for you and your family. We'll be thinking of all of you and do consider you among our blessings.

December 2015
Palmer News
David Patton
Palmer Town Historian

Christmas Past

It seems that a lot of people wish for a “white Christmas” to make the holiday just perfect. Our last “white Christmas” was on Christmas Day 2010.

Mike Shadrick and others of us remember the white Christmas of 1969. It’s a rare occurrence in Grundy County, but keep your fingers crossed.

They say that time is fleeting, and I sure believe it. Christmas is upon us as 2015 fades into the mists of history.

On behalf of Ralph Thompson, Donna Landon Lovelace, Mike Shadrick, and myself, we want to wish all of you the best Christmas ever and much success in 2016.

Let me express my thanks to Ralph, Donna, and Mike for without their help we couldn’t have this little monthly get together. Ralph is the founder of grundycountyhistory.org, and how nice of him to allow us to be a part of this first class website.

Are you a sports fan?

James Jacks’ granddaughter took him to the Tennessee and Vanderbilt football game on November 29 at Neyland Stadium. The Vols won 53-28, and he says he enjoyed his first college game immensely. They were seated behind one of the goal posts about 13 rows back with a great view that made them feel like they were right in the action on the field.

Remembering Preacher Brooks:

The late Mr. Bailey “Preacher” Brooks was a well-known citizen of Palmer from the town’s earlier days until his death which was probably in the early 1980’s. He was a blacksmith at the Palmer Big Mine and a church of Christ preacher.

The Brooks’ came to Palmer in the 1920’s from Tracy City, and Mr. Ray Winton of Coalmont, a church of Christ preacher himself, passed on this story to us.

This happened in Tracy City around 100 years ago we’d guess, and the characters are Bailey Brooks, Johnathan D. Northcutt, a church of Christ preacher and teacher at Shook Grammar School, and the town undertaker, E. C. Norvell. An old man on Hobbs Hill had the flu and was visited by Bailey and Dee. Probably fearful that the end was near, he asked to be baptized. The church of Christ strictly adheres to the Biblical account which is immersion. There was very little indoor plumbing back then so they heated water on the old wood burning cook stove or coal burning heating stove. Even today,

many people still remember the long metal tubs used for bathing. They filled that with water, baptized the old man, then dried him off and put him to bed with a secured soul.

The next day, Bailey ran into Mr. Norvell who said, "You two fellows ought to be run out of Tracy City. You could have killed that old man by getting him wet when sprinkling him would have been as good." Bailey's reply was, "If we had killed him and you buried him, would you just sprinkle a little dirt on him?"

Mr. Winton described Bailey Brooks as "a wise old man" and that's a good example. He was known far and wide for his eloquence in preaching funerals and married many couples as well.

Bailey and Ethel Cannon Brooks had three sons: James "Flop", Paul Edward "Doyle", and Charles Eugene "Gene". The entire family is deceased now, and the old Brooks home is occupied by a great-grandson, Tim Brooks.

Dee Northcutt was the father of the late Mrs. Horace (Evelyn) Moore, Sr. of Palmer and Gruetli-Laager. Today, her home in Gruetli-Laager is occupied by a grandson, Tom Moore, Jr.

In an ironic twist, Dee Northcutt died in the Great Flu Epidemic of 1918 which killed millions around the world including Nancy Nunley James of Coalmont who had a houseful of kids. After that, her husband, William Eli (Uncle Jesse) James, brought the family to Palmer where he was a coalminer and Justice of the Peace. "Little Red" James was one of his sons.

Thanksgiving Day 2015:

We hit the weather jackpot this year with a beautiful sunny day and an official high of 59 and a low of 42 from the National Weather Service Station at Big Creek Utility District's dam in Coalmont. I mowed the yard and even saw some yellow jackets on an aluminum can in the warm sunshine. Mark Roberts and Dr. David and Karen Dickerson brought me Thanksgiving dinners to complete a great day. Thanks, dear Friends.

Thanksgiving Day 1950:

Where were you on the great holiday 65 years ago? "I went into the U. S. Army on November 16, 1950 and was sent to Fort Jackson, S. C. for Basic Training," Mr. Raymond Hargis told me. "On Thanksgiving, it snowed which was a shock since they hadn't even had any snow for several years, much less on Thanksgiving." Mr. Hargis was a math teacher at Grundy County High School before being drafted to serve in the Korean War. He got lucky and spent his Army days at Fort Jackson instead of overseas in Korea.

“Anything goes” now in America and probably the main reason is parents who fail to discipline their children and consider them their “Best Friend” instead of children who need guidance from a mother or father.

“I’ll whip you if you’re late for school, and I’ll whip you if you disobey the teacher or fight other kids.” Betty Finch Bush says her Mother, the late Ruby Gifford Finch, would go over a list of things she would punish them for before they left for school in the morning. They lived in Chiggertown and would cross a foot log over Mill Creek that was located behind where Ralph Gholston lived for years. Betty is 84 now and said that those whippings with a switch hurt, but that Mrs. Finch’s six children grew up to be good citizens.

Church News:

Undertaker Dale Layne of Layne’s Funeral Home attended a service at Altamont church of Christ on November 8th which marked the 150th anniversary of the church’s founding. Also on November 8th, Palmer United Methodist honored their pastor, John Kennedy of Pelham, with Pastor Appreciation Day.

Preston Knowlan has attended Bivens Chapel Congregational Methodist Church for several years. He always sits on the front row and told John Doug Shrum that was where the Lord told him to sit.

John Doug and his brother Tim Shrum both attend the church. Tim retired back in February and says he has been cancer free for 23 years now. They’re the sons of the late John and Tootsie Cannon Shrum Smith.

Johnny Woodlee, son of the late Eck Woodlee, is the attendant at the Gruetli-Laager Convenience Center (garbage dump), and we saw him hitch hiking back on Nov. 18. That used to be a common sight in Grundy County, but I hadn’t seen anyone doing so in years.

John Doug Shrum and Tom Burnette went to Western Sizzling on Veterans Day for a free meal. Tom served in the Army in Vietnam during the Vietnam War while John Doug was a soldier in Germany during that era.

Happy December Birthday to:

Mrs. William Ray (Marie) Turner 88, Kat Hart King turns 81 on Christmas Eve, William Grimes turns 65 this month and Cindy McCullough Lecroy hits “double-5”

Happy December Anniversary to: Howard and Oma Lee Boyd Lewis who have been hitched for an incredible 74 years. Danny Lee and Janie Harrison Roberts, who run Sheltering Arms Nursing Home over in Tatesville, have kept the knot tied 48 years. Jerry Don and Jenny Scruggs Thomas out in Monteagle have been through sickness and health for 37 years while James “Duke” and Zenia Anderson Cox have endured the storms of life for an even 30 years. Our young couple, undertaker Dale and Emily Carol Pittman Layne, married 20 years ago this month at the First United Methodist Church in Stevenson, Alabama.

D. V. and Ruth Winton Northcutt were married on December 30, 1945. They would have celebrated their 70th anniversary this month. The late Clayton and Joyce Roberts Hargis would have been married 60 years this month. Ruth was the sister of Mr. Ray Winton, and Clayton was a cousin of Mr. Raymond Hargis.

“That’s how we get paid” when I complained to my rural route mail carrier Linda Cook about getting so much junk mail that’s what she said. She explained that since the Postal Service has lost the business of so much first class mail that the cable and satellite TV companies and things like that really help. Linda lives in Tracy City, and her husband, Walter Cooke, was once a teacher at Palmer School.

What’s the world coming to?

Pat King Sanders, widow of Amos Sanders, says she sees two white squirrels and a white skunk around her place on Laager Circle across from where Gid and Hallie James Knight lived for years.

He has good days and bad days.

I don’t remember people saying that years ago, but now when you ask about someone who is seriously ill you’ll likely hear this.

Memories of Christmas Past:

The Totherow family of Gruetli-Laager came here from Alabama I’d guess in the 1930’s. Today, kids have Christmas every day it seems, and they don’t look forward to it as they once did. The late Hugh Totherow told me that for Christmas 1936 he got an apple, an orange, and 15 cents.

November Weather Report:

We recorded 6.7 inches of rain in our gauge for November. We had a good dry stretch mixed in, and the temps were mild so that’s good news on the heating bills.

On Sick Call:

Nobody likes to go to the E.R., but it's really distressing on a holiday. Willene Campbell of Pelham fell on Thanksgiving and took a blow to the head and leg but apparently came out of it with nothing broken.

Kat King had a guardian angel on November 9th. She was coming up Northcutt's Cove Road with four passengers in her big black Lincoln Signature when a truck slid into them on the wet road totaling the car. The air bags came out, and nobody had to go to the E.R.

Cecil White turned 67 in August, and says he's been off his job for a while because of blood pressure problems. He lost 30 pounds and that caused his B/P to fall so much that the medicine was too strong. Now, he's back on track, and says, "I feel better than I have in 20 years. I need to lose another 30 pounds." He still lives in Dock White Hollow.

Jerry Cannon, 79 has been sick lately, and we hope he's doing better by Christmas.

Mr. Buford Newsome of Monteagle is a retired teacher and has been sick this fall. He's a former Principal at Grundy County High School and began his career at Palmer Elementary for the 1966-67 term. He was only here for one year but has fond memories of his students and adults like Alyene McBee and Anita Crabtree. He thought a lot of the Clell Layne family and says he sometimes took some of the kids home after basketball practice, I believe. He said the Layne's would say, "You might as well eat supper with us," and he would.

Tom Jarrett of Sewanee is the nephew of the late Everett "Broad" Taylor of Gruetli-Laager. He's a U. S. Navy retiree, and back in the summer was in the check-out line at Wal-Mart. He was wearing a Navy cap which a woman also in the line noticed. When he started to pay she thanked him for his service and paid for his items. How nice to be appreciated!

Faces In The Crowd:

We recently met a nice young man from Coalmont by the name of Jonathan Claar who was cleaning the Palmer Bank after closing time. His father, Ray Claar, has operated a janitorial service in Grundy County for years. The family worships at the Jehovah's Witnesses Kingdom Hall in Coalmont.

We also ran into Stanley Partin and Carmelia McCullough Gamble the other day. She's a cashier at Piggly-Wiggly. Stanley is a son of the late Alvie and Agnes Morrison Partin Shadrick. Carmelia is the sister of James and Danny McCullough.

Old Times

Never a Christmas
Morning
Never the old year ends –
But someone thinks
Of someone,
Old days, old times, old friends.
Anonymous

Christmas

The gladness of Christmas is Hope
The spirit of Christmas is Peace
The heart of Christmas is Love.
Anonymous

No other holiday pulls at our heart strings like Christmas. Whether we remember a Christmas spent as a soldier in a foreign land on the other side of the world or of getting a favorite toy on Christmas morning as a child, those memories are etched in our mind forever.

And, amid all the joy and celebration, we remember those who have passed on but played such a big part in our memories of Christmas past.

We hope that you enjoy this Christmas edition of the Palmer News. From everyone here “where the good people live”, may you and yours enjoy peace, happiness, and love during this holy season. MERRY CHRISTMAS.