State Park Spotlight
Radnor Lake

Hitch a Ride
on the Mail Hack

Soups That Come
From Hardy Stock

‘Light and Shadow’
Entries Due

Readers Choose
Best of Tennessee
Find the Flag flub
Many readers wrote to ask whether we forgot to hide the flag in the December issue of The Tennessee Magazine. We had an issue with one of the photos right at press time, and we had to make an unusual, last-minute replacement. Unfortunately, we replaced the image containing the hidden flag, and we didn’t catch our mistake until it was too late.

This is a first for us, and we thank everyone for your grace, understanding and good-natured ribbing. We included all entries — regardless of where readers said the flag was hidden — in the sweepstakes drawing for December.

As we said in a Facebook post, “Thank you for engaging with the magazine. Our small team pours heart and soul into every page, and each time a reader enters a contest, finds the flag or gives us feedback, it is incredibly encouraging.”

Now where did we put that flag this month?
The staff of The Tennessee Magazine

How many actually enter?
I would love to know — and probably am not the only one — out of curiosity … how many entry submissions do you receive monthly for the Find the Flag contest? Not sure if anyone does a count of total postcard entries and total emailed entries, but it would be FUN and interesting to know, even if only on a quarterly basis, how the number of entries compares month by month.

So, just a thought. Thanks for the magazines!
Judie A. Heumann,
Middle Tennessee Electric

Editor’s response:
That would be interesting to share those figures. Unfortunately, we don’t have the manpower to go back too far and log all the submissions, but a quick tabulation returns nearly 1,500 electronic entries (via tnmagazine.org and emailed to flag@tnelectric.org) in the November contest. I would assume another 200 or so postcards are mailed each month as well.

We’ll see if we can come up with a way to keep a running tally.

That’s a lengthy campaign!
Hello! I am recent transplant to Tennessee and I love your magazine. I use it often to visit new places in my newly adopted state. After reading this month’s magazine (October 2022), not only did I finally find the Tennessee flag, but I found a misprint. Page 31 James Jones is pictured with James K. Polk who were candidates for governor. The picture’s caption says they ran in 1941. It should actually be 1841!

Blessings,
Nancy

Editor’s response:
You are correct. Though Jones and Polk would have been well seasoned to campaign in 1841, their deaths nearly a century earlier would’ve certainly tamped down the spectacle of their debates. Thank you for the correction, eagle-eyed readers!

Subscriptions
I receive this magazine and love it! I have a friend who moved here from California and would love to start getting it mailed to him! Could you please help?
Dennis Sheehan,
Holston Electric Cooperative

Editor’s response:
The Tennessee Magazine is distributed through Tennessee’s electric cooperatives. The publication schedule varies by co-op as to whether members receive it monthly, bimonthly or quarterly.

If you are a member of an electric cooperative and are not receiving the magazine, please check with your local cooperative office to get back on the mailing list. If you are not a member of an electric cooperative in Tennessee, you can purchase a one-year or three-year subscription. Please visit our online shop at tnmagazine.org/shop.

James Jones, left, and James K. Polk, candidates for governor in 1841, visited 30 Tennessee communities during the campaign, often traveling together.
FEATURES

10  Best of Tennessee
Magazine readers spotlight their favorites from East, Middle and West Tennessee.

28  Urban Oasis
Radnor Lake State Park offers a respite in nature near the booming state capital. by Trish Milburn

35  Shutterbug Call for Entries
“Light and Shadow” is the topic of our latest photography contest. Submissions are due Monday, Jan. 16!

PERSPECTIVES

4  Between the Lines
Local leadership lets you know what’s happening at the co-op.

6  Tennessee Today
The latest from a statewide perspective. by Mike Knotts

42  Point of View
Peer through the viewfinder with an award-winning photographer. by Robin Conover

ABOUT THE COVER

At Radnor Lake State Park in Nashville, a Canada goose sends ripples across the still surface of the lake. In the distance, more waterfowl can be seen amidst the rising mist. Discover more about this natural gem beginning on page 28. Photograph by Robin Conover

THIS PAGE

A great blue heron in silhouette keeps an eye on the surroundings and the shallows of Radnor Lake. Photograph by Robin Conover
Between the Lines

News from your community

The power of connections

As humans, we are wired to connect. In fact, research finds that our need to connect is as fundamental as our need for food and water. Dozens of studies have shown that people who have social support from family, friends and their community are happier, have fewer health problems and live longer.

Just as social connections make humans healthier and more productive, I propose that the connections made by Cumberland Electric Membership Corporation provide similar benefits for the communities we serve.

Co-ops make connections every day. We connect substations and meters, but those might not be the most important connections that we make.

Our power grid connects communities with energy. We know that your family depends on reliable energy. We also know that factories, schools, hospitals and critical infrastructure cease to function when the power is out.

I’m proud to report that our team at CEMC kept the lights on 99.97% of the time in 2022, and we invested more than $2.8 million this year to improve system reliability.

Broadband infrastructure connects local communities with global knowledge and markets. Increasingly, healthcare, education, commerce and even entertainment require robust, always-on connectivity. CEMC and Cumberland Connect, our broadband subsidiary, are working to close the digital divide that exists in rural and suburban Tennessee by building more than 3,400 miles of fiber to bring high-speed internet access to the communities we serve.

Youth programs connect young people with limitless opportunities. We believe in developing the future leaders of our communities. That’s why each year we invite young people from our communities to participate in leadership development programs provided by the co-op.

Generosity connects compassion with service. Our team cares about the people and places we serve because they live here, too. Whether it is the annual Electric Co-op Day of Service or coaching a Little League team, you will see members of our CEMC team giving back to our communities.

When we make connections, everything changes. That’s why co-ops connect.
This extraordinary adventure along the legendary Mississippi begins the moment you step aboard our fleet of new American Riverboats. With fewer than 200 guests on board, you will explore local treasures and historic ports along the most storied river in America.

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TENNESSEE TODAY

Welcome to Tennessee

Viewpoint

Is Tennessee the most beautiful state? For a native like me, the answer is easy. Yes it is! But to our new neighbors and friends, there are many, many interesting places to see here in your new home. The shifts and changes from one end of the state to the other can sometimes feel like a change in continents — not just a change in counties. We have so much natural beauty to behold here, and the variety of God’s creation is unlike anywhere else.

Did you know that the most-visited National Park is the Great Smoky Mountains in East Tennessee? Millions have come to witness the breathtaking color of fall’s changing foliage. Arrive for the peak of orange and red colors across the mountaintops, and new friends from around the world are sure to await you during a fall weekend in Gatlinburg.

Or perhaps a ride or a drive down the Tail of the Dragon is your preferred way to experience the beauty of the Smokies. Billed as the best motorcycle and sports car road in America because of 318 curves over its 11 miles, the drive follows a dizzying array of rising, falling and curving topography. Eyes on the road, please.

While no extra motivation is necessary to attract tourists to Nashville these days, I believe the splendor of Middle Tennessee goes unnoticed by too many of them. Trading the 24-hour party of Broadway for the calm and serene views along the shores of Tims Ford Lake near Lynchburg would certainly be my preference.

Natural waterfalls scattered across the Cumberland Plateau certainly calm my soul better than the best Nashville ballad. Billed as the greatest show under earth” at the Caverns in Grundy County followed by scenic views on Monteagle Mountain just might be an ideal way to enjoy a weekend.

Even a lazy afternoon on the couch can provide a glimpse of this beauty. I recently noticed a familiar landscape while watching a Titans game. The stately Natchez Trace Bridge and the green rolling hills of Williamson County served as the backdrop of a nationwide car commercial. I assume fans watching the opposing team back in Wisconsin enjoyed that little glimpse of Tennessee more than the final score.

And as the land flattens and reaches west, one of the more interesting places in America sits at the northwest corner of our state. This most unusual impoundment exists because a series of earthquakes in 1811-12 actually caused the Mississippi River to flow backward for a short time, forming Reelfoot Lake. Today, majestic cypress trees above and below the shallow water are home to golden and bald eagles, herons and many other wading birds that are prized for their photogenic qualities.

These are just a few examples. One of our great joys in producing The Tennessee Magazine each month is the opportunity to share some of these wonderful places with you in hopes you will explore and find some of your own. We love this state and are proud to call it home.

We hope you are inspired by the world-class photography in these pages and enjoy reading stories about the people, places and things that make us unique. We take pride in continuing the heritage and traditions of the Volunteer State through culinary features and history columns. We strive to provide opportunities for you to connect with your passions by listing events taking place “from Memphis to Mountain City.” And there might even be a hidden flag for you to find each month.
How can a rechargeable hearing aid that fits inside your ear and costs only $149.99 be every bit as good as one that sells for $2,400 or more?

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You can contact a licensed hearing specialist conveniently online or by phone — even after your purchase at no cost. No other company provides such extensive support.

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— Don W., Sherman, TX

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Proudly designed in America and supported by US audiologists
Union City’s Discovery Park of America will celebrate its 10th anniversary on Nov. 1, 2023, but the celebration will last all year long.

Beginning on Jan. 2, children 17 and younger will receive free admission throughout the month of January 2023, and adult admission will be $10 during the month.

In 2023, there will be many opportunities for guests and members to celebrate Discovery Park’s 10th birthday. For a complete list of events in 2023, visit DiscoveryParkofAmerica.com/2023.

**January 3**

**Fruit Cake Toss Day**

Have fun disposing of that holiday dessert you never got around to eating.

**8.4 Million Magazines**

*The Tennessee Magazine* is the state’s most widely circulated monthly periodical. In 2022, nearly 8.4 million magazines were mailed across Tennessee.
Prepare your winter storm kit

Winter weather can be unpredictable. If a winter storm watch or warning is issued, take a moment to prepare your family by filling up your vehicle with gas and preparing an emergency kit. According to the American Red Cross, your emergency preparedness kit should include:

1. Water and food
2. Flashlight, radio and extra batteries
3. First-aid kit
4. Medications
5. Multipurpose tool
6. Cellphone with chargers
7. Extra cash
8. Blankets
9. Map of the area

Green ribbon glory

Emma and Jenna Rhinehart, whose treat-engineering talents were featured in the December 2022 issue of The Tennessee Magazine, won first place for their “Fairy Tea House” in the teen division of the 30th Annual National Gingerbread House Competition! Also, their grandmother, Merry Spafford, was recognized as the “longest-standing competitor” — participating for 19 consecutive years — with a Specialty Chef Nicholas Lodge Award.
EATS

Bakery
West
Woodstock Bakery & Co,
80 Innsdale Cove, Jackson;
731-554-1969; woodstockbakeshop.com

Middle
Five Daughters Bakery,
230 Franklin Road, Suite 11J, Franklin;
fivedaughtersbakery.com

East
Alessandro’s Italian Artisan Bakery,
231 S. Cedar Ave., South Pittsburg;
423-818-1444;facebook.com/alessandrositalianartbakery

Barbecue
West
Charlie Vergos’ Rendezvous,
52 S. Second St., Memphis;
901-523-2746;hogsfly.com

Middle
Five Daughters Bakery,
230 Franklin Road, Suite 11J, Franklin;
fivedaughtersbakery.com

East
Slick Pig BBQ, 1920 E. Main St., Murfreesboro;
615-890-3583;slickpigbbq.com

Middle
Top Hog BBQ, 642 Blythe St., Gallatin;
615-478-9330;gallatinshopper.com/top-hog.htm

East
Alessandro’s Italian Artisan Bakery,
231 S. Cedar Ave., South Pittsburg;
423-818-1444;facebook.com/alessandrositalianartbakery

Barbecue
West
Charlie Vergos’ Rendezvous,
52 S. Second St., Memphis;
901-523-2746;hogsfly.com

Middle
Top Hog BBQ, 642 Blythe St., Gallatin;
615-478-9330; gallahinshopper.com/top-hog.htm

East
Huck Finn’s Catfish, 3330 Parkway, Pigeon Forge;
865-429-3353; huckfinnscatfish.com

Craft Beer
Middle (Tie)
Mayday Brewery,
521 Old Salem Road, Murfreesboro;
615-603-7699; maydaybrewery.com

Middle (Tie)
Hub City Brewing,
250 W. Main St., Jackson;
731-240-1168; drinkhubcity.com

East
Alessandro’s Italian Artisan Bakery,
231 S. Cedar Ave., South Pittsburg;
423-818-1444;facebook.com/alessandrositalianartbakery

Barbecue
West
Charlie Vergos’ Rendezvous,
52 S. Second St., Memphis;
901-523-2746;hogsfly.com

Middle
Five Daughters Bakery,
230 Franklin Road, Suite 11J, Franklin;
fivedaughtersbakery.com

East
Slick Pig BBQ, 1920 E. Main St., Murfreesboro;
615-890-3583;slickpigbbq.com

Middle
Top Hog BBQ, 642 Blythe St., Gallatin;
615-478-9330;gallatinshopper.com/top-hog.htm

East
Huck Finn’s Catfish, 3330 Parkway, Pigeon Forge;
865-429-3353; huckfinnscatfish.com

Craft Beer
Middle (Tie)
Mayday Brewery,
521 Old Salem Road, Murfreesboro;
615-603-7699; maydaybrewery.com
Yazoo Brewing Company, 900 River Bluff Drive, Madison; 615-891-4649; yazoobrew.com

East (Tie)
Johnson City Brewing Company, 257 E. Main St., Johnson City; 423-930-4186; johnsoncitybrewing.com

Monkey Town Brewing Company, 287 First Ave., Dayton; 423-775-1800; monkeytownbrewing.com

Hamburger
West (Tie)
Bell’s Drive-In, 204 S. Church Ave., Henderson; 731-989-2816

Huey’s Burger, 1927 Madison Ave., Memphis; 901-726-4372; hueyburger.com

The Grind Mac and Cheese Burger Bar, 112 Lovelace Ave., Martin; 731-587-6912; thegrindburgerbar.com

Milkshake
West
The Grind Mac and Cheese Burger Bar, 112 Lovelace Ave., Martin; 731-587-6912; thegrindburgerbar.com

East
Merridee’s, 110 Fourth Ave. S., Franklin; 615-790-3755; merridees.com

Alessandro’s, South Pittsburg

East (Tie)
Frostee Freeze Drive-In, 1617 N. Broad St., Tazewell; 423-626-3522; facebook.com/frosteezeedrivein

Pal’s Sudden Service, 327 Revere St., Kingsport; 423-246-9761; palsweb.com

Place for Dessert
West
The Grind Mac and Cheese Burger Bar, 112 Lovelace Ave., Martin; 731-587-6912; thegrindburgerbar.com

Middle (Tie)
Golly G’s Coffee, Ice Cream and Sweets, 6308 Highway 41A, Pleasant View; 615-746-5849; gollygs.com

Nash Family Creamery, 4019 Highway 41A N., Chapel Hill; 931-820-0464; nashfamilycreamery.com

East
Alessandro’s Italian Artisan Bakery, 231 S. Cedar Ave., South Pittsburg; 423-818-1444; facebook.com/alessandrositalianartbakery

Winery
West
White Squirrel Winery, 4385 Highway 45 W., Kenton; 731-796-1713; whitesquirrelwinery.com
**Middle**

**Arrington Vineyards, Arrington**
6211 Patton Road, Arrington; 615-395-0102; arringtonvineyards.com

**East (Tie)**

**Stonehaus Winery, Crossville**
2444 Genesis Road #103, Crossville; 931-484-9463; stonehauswinery.com

**Watauga Lake Winery, Butler**
6952 Big Dry Run Road, Butler; 423-768-0345; watauga.com/watauga-lake-winery

**TRAVEL & FUN**

**Agritourism/ Pick-Your-Own Farm**

**West**

**Falcon Ridge Farm, Toone**
22630 Highway 18 N., Toone; 731-658-5200; falconridge.farm

**Middle (Tie)**

**Batey Farms, Murfreesboro**
5331 Baker Road, Murfreesboro; 615-410-1070; bateyfarms.com

**Middle**

**Fall Creek Falls State Park, Spencer**
2009 Village Camp Road, Spencer; 423-881-5298; tnstateparks.com/parks/fall-creek-falls

**East (Tie)**

**Cades Cove, Great Smoky Mountains National Park, Gatlinburg**
877-444-6777; nps.gov/grsm/planyourvisit/cadescove.htm

**Indian Boundary, Tellico Plains**
250 Ranger Station Road, Tellico Plains; 423-397-8455; fs.usda.gov/cherokee/

**Warriors’ Path State Park, Kingsport**
490 Hemlock Road, Kingsport; 423-239-8531; tnstateparks.com/parks/warriors-path

**Fishing Spot**

**West**

**Pickwick Lake, Counce**
116 State Park Lane, Counce; 731-689-3129; tnstateparks.com/parks/pickwick-landing

**Middle (Tie)**

**Norris Lake, Anderson, Campbell, Claiborne, Grainger and Union Counties**
norrislakemarinas.org

**East (Tie)**

**Cherokee Lake, Bean Station, Morristown, Jefferson City**
cherokee-lake.org

**Golf Course**

**West**

**Chickasaw Golf Course, Henderson**
9555 State Route 100, Henderson; 731-989-3111; golfatchickasaw.com

**Middle**

**Indian Hills Golf Course, Murfreesboro**
405 Calumet Trace, Murfreesboro; 615-895-3642; indianhillsgc.com
East
Woodlake Lodge, Golf and Country Club, 330 Woodlake Blvd., Tazewell; 423-626-6010; woodlakegolf.com

Historic Site
West
Shiloh National Military Park, 1055 Pittsburg Landing Road, Shiloh; 731-689-5696; nps.gov/shil

Middle
Andrew Jackson’s Hermitage, 4580 Rachel’s Lane, Nashville; 615-889-2941; thehermitage.com

East
Sycamore Shoals State Historic Park, 1651 W. Elk Ave., Elizabethton; 423-543-5808; tnstateparks.com/parks/sycamore-shoals

Sporting Event
West
Memphis Grizzlies, 191 Beale St., Memphis; 901-888-HOOP; grizzlies.com

Middle (Tie)
Nashville Predators, 501 Broadway, Nashville; 615-770-2355; nashvillepredators.com
Tennessee Titans, 1 Titans Way, Nashville; 615-565-4200; tennesseetitans.com

East
University of Tennessee Volunteers football, 1600 Phillip Fulmer Way, Suite 201, Knoxville; 800-332-VOLS; utsports.com

State Park
West
Chickasaw State Park, 20 Cabin Lane, Henderson; 731-989-5141; tnstateparks.com/parks/chickasaw

Middle
Fall Creek Falls State Park, 2009 Village Camp Road, Spencer; 423-881-5298; tnstateparks.com/parks/fall-creek-falls

East
Roan Mountain State Park, 1015 Highway 143, Roan Mountain; 423-547-3900; tnstateparks.com/parks/info/roan-mountain

THE ARTS
Art Gallery
West
Dixon Gallery & Gardens, 4339 Park Ave., Memphis; 901-761-5250; dixon.org

Middle
Frist Art Museum, 919 Broadway, Nashville; 615-244-3340; fristartmuseum.org

East
Hunter Museum of American Art, 10 Bluff View, Chattanooga; 423-267-0968; huntermuseum.org

Museum
West
Discovery Park of America, 830 Everett Blvd., Union City; 731-885-5455; discoveryparkofamerica.com

Middle
Tennessee State Museum, 1000 Rosa L. Parks Blvd., Nashville; 615-741-2692; tnmuseum.org

East
Knoxville Museum of Art, 1050 World’s Fair Park Drive, Knoxville; 865-525-6101; knoxart.org

Performing Arts
West
The Ned R. McWherter West Tennessee Cultural Arts Center, 314 E. Main St., Jackson; 731-425-8397; thened.jacksontn.gov

Middle
Tennessee Performing Arts Center, 505 Deaderick St., Nashville; 615-782-4040; tpac.org

East
Tennessee Theatre, 604 S. Gay St., Knoxville; 865-684-1200; tennesseetheatre.com

January 2023
GETAWAYS

Place to Take the Kids

West
Memphis Zoo, 2000 Prentiss Place, Memphis; 901-333-6500; memphiszoo.org

Middle
Nashville Zoo, 3777 Nolensville Pike, Nashville; 615-833-1534; nashvillezoo.org

East
Dollywood, 2700 Dollywood Parks Blvd., Pigeon Forge; 800-DOLLYWOOD; dollywood.com

Scenic Drive

West
Highway 100 in West Tennessee

Middle
Natchez Trace Parkway, 2680 Natchez Trace Parkway, Tupelo, Mississippi, to Nashville; 800-305-7417; nps.gov/natr/index.htm

Weekend Getaway

West
Memphis, Memphis Convention & Visitors Bureau, 47 Union Ave., Memphis; 901-543-5300; memphistravel.com

Middle
Nashville, Nashville Convention & Visitors Corp., 500 11th Ave. N., Suite 650, Nashville; 615-657-6910; visitmusiccity.com

East
Cades Cove, Great Smoky Mountains National Park, 107 Park Headquarters Road, Gatlinburg; 865-436-1200; nps.gov/grsm/planyourvisit/cadescove.htm

East
Gatlinburg, Gatlinburg Convention and Visitors Bureau, 811 E. Parkway, Gatlinburg; 865-436-4178; gatlinburg.com

SHOPPING

Antiques Store

West
Carriage House Antique Market and Cafe, 195 Carriage House Drive, Jackson; 731-664-6678; carriagehouseantique.net

Middle
Franklin Antique Mall, 251 2nd Ave. S., Suite 100, Franklin; 615-800-2001; nashvillefarmersmarket.org

East
Nickel Row, 3129 Main St., Pikeville; 813-690-6888; facebook.com/nickelrow
East
Chattanooga Market, 1801 Reggie White Blvd., Chattanooga; 423-648-2496; chattanoogamarket.com

Flea Market
West
Hilltop Flea Market, 3465 US Highway 64, Crump; 731-315-8611; facebook.com/williamrbridges

Middle
The Nashville Flea Market, 401 Wingrove St., Nashville; 615-862-5016; nashvilleflea.com

East
Sweetwater Flea Market, 121 Country Road, Sweetwater; 423-337-3532; facebook.com/people/Sweetwater-Flea-Market/100066301644550

EVENTS

Arts and Crafts Show
West
Reelfoot Arts and Crafts Festival, 2595 Highway 21 E., Tiptonville (mailing address: P.O. Box 146, Tiptonville); 731-694-9283; reelfootartsandcrafts.com

Middle
Webb School Art and Craft Festival, 4 Railroad Square, Bell Buckle; bellbucklechamber.com/webb-school-art-craft-show

East
Dogwood Arts Festival, 963 World’s Fair Park Drive, Knoxville (Dogwood Arts address: 123 W. Jackson Ave., Knoxville); 865-637-4561; dogwoodarts.com

County/Regional Fair
West
West Tennessee State Fair, 800 S. Highland Ave., Jackson; 731-424-0151; wtsfair.com

Middle
Wilson County Fair—Tennessee State Fair, 945 E. Baddour Parkway, Lebanon; 615-443-2626; wilsoncountyfair.net

East
Tennessee Valley Fair, 3301 E. Magnolia Ave., Knoxville; 865-215-1471; tnvalleyfair.org

Festival
West
Chester County BBQ Festival, 111 E. Main St., P.O. Box 1976, Henderson; 731-989-5222; chestercountybbqfestival.com

Middle
Tennessee Renaissance Festival, 2135 New Castle Road, Arrington; info@tnrenfest.com; tnrenfest.com

East
Dogwood Arts Festival, 963 World’s Fair Park Drive, Knoxville (Dogwood Arts address: 123 W. Jackson Ave., Knoxville); 865-637-4561; dogwoodarts.com

Congratulations to our grand-prize winners

Each winner, drawn from all qualifying entries, will receive certificates from Tennessee State Parks for up to a four-night stay at any state resort park inn, $250 to spend while enjoying his or her visit and a basket of farm-direct, locally made artisan foods from Pick Tennessee Products.

Chay Miller, Southwest Tennessee EMC
Leslie Camacho, Cumberland EMC
Reda Sellers, Mountain EC
The Mail Hack

Once part of Tennessee culture, these mail carriers linked our communities together the old-fashioned way.

If you Google the words “mail hack,” you’ll be bombarded with information about how people can sabotage your email service. But the two words used to refer to an important part of American culture that ceased to exist about a century ago.

Before the automobile, mail was delivered by horse or mule-led conveyances known as hacks. The “mail hack” might have been an enclosed carriage, a buggy or a vehicle specifically made for the purpose of carrying letters and packages. These vehicles moved along the countryside at 5 or 6 miles per hour, stopping about every two hours to change horses.

After railroads came to Tennessee, towns that had rail service would get their mail by train. If your village was not on a rail line, the mail would be unloaded at the nearest train station and delivered by hack to your local post office.

For instance: Lynchburg’s mail would be unloaded from the train in Shelbyville and delivered by hack from there. Mail bound for Benton (seat of Polk County) would be brought by hack from Cleveland. A hack brought mail from Waverly to the Humphreys County town of Hurricane Mills. Maury County had half a dozen mail hacks that left the Columbia post office every afternoon at 1 p.m. bound for villages such as Hampshire and Mount Pleasant.
Passengers could ride mail hacks for a fee. In 1858, it cost two dollars to ride the mail hack from Fayetteville to Shelbyville. In 1888, it cost $1 to ride the mail hack from Bolivar to Whiteville in Hardeman County. About that time, it took 50 cents to ride the mail hack from Clarksville to Mount Carmel in Montgomery County.

Places off the beaten path — resort hotels, for instance — could be reached by mail hack, but it was best to bring a book to read along the way. In 1905, there was a resort hotel in Sevier County called Henderson Springs, located in what is now Pigeon Forge. Mail addressed to Henderson Springs would be unloaded from the train in Knoxville, then lugged by mail hack to Sevierville — a 28-mile trip taking three and a half hours. In Sevierville, the mail would be transferred to a different hack and taken on a four-hour journey passing Boyd’s Creek (where the horses were changed) and Baker Springs (where the horses were changed again). If all went well, hack, mail and worn-out passengers would arrive at Henderson Springs Resort at 9:30 p.m.

Like the interstate truck of today, the mail hack of yesterday didn’t make the news unless something bad happened. In March 1873, the mail hack got stuck in the mud between Dyersburg and Rutherford, which made the paper. In 1885, a mail hack capsized on the Buffalo River near Linden, drowning the horses. In 1901, a hack ran into a streetcar in Knoxville, and “mail sacks, tin cans of milk and butter and various boxes and baskets” were strewn all over the road.

In 1903, a driver tossed a sack of mail from the hack as he passed the station at Mascot (in Knox County), not wanting to climb down because of the pouring rain. The sack was swept away into a creek and lost, meriting an embarrassing entry in the Knoxville newspaper the next day.

In 1906, horses leading a mail hack in Stewart County became frightened and started running. The driver fell out of the hack seat, leaving two female passengers to fend for themselves in the speeding vehicle. The horses didn’t slow down for a mile or two, and “the ladies were fortunately uninjured.”

Sometimes, on slow news days, even an ornery mule made the news. “Everett Frogg, who was driving the Jamestown mail hack, was severely kicked in the head by one of the mules in front of the post office,” the Morgan County Press reported on April 30, 1920.

Cars started replacing mail hacks in Tennessee in 1910 when an automobile started running a route from Nashville all the way to the Marshall County community of Chapel Hill via Nolensville, Triune and other stops. Over the next few years, the postal service phased in other auto routes, and sometimes this made the news. The automobile replaced the hacks from Murfreesboro to Woodbury in 1912, from Sparta to Cookeville in 1913 and from Pulaski to Cornersville in 1917. Newspapers were universally delighted by the improved service. “He (the mail carrier) now makes his run in two and a half hours, whereas his former time was six hours,” the Knoxville Sentinel reported when Loudon County shifted to automobiles in 1915.
The mail hack was gone in most parts of Tennessee by 1923. However, the Fentress County seat was still served by mail hack as late as 1930, according to a first-person account of visitors to that area. “A mail hack with four seats took thirteen of us across the mountains to Jamestown,” reported the July 31 Tennessee Baptist newspaper.

After the mail hacks were gone, there were passing references to their existence in obituaries and retirement articles. When 79-year-old J.W. Elmore died in 1932, the Rutherford Courier described him as “the last of the old mail hack drivers to pass away. For nearly 50 years he drove a mail hack between Murfreesboro and Eagleville and Shelbyville.”

In 1958, Stewart County postman Elmer Morris of Dover retired, and the Stewart County Times did a long article about it. Morris said he’d driven a mail hack in the early part of his career. “The route was 24 miles and a full day’s work by horse and buggy, beginning at 7 a.m. and ending at 6 p.m.,” reported the Times. “They (the mail hacks) were drawn by horses, and Mr. Morris said that in winter, he used two, though one could do the job in the summer when the ground was free of mud and snow.”
CO-OPS CONNECT

ENERGY + COMMUNITY

Our robust power grid connects your community with a safe and reliable supply of affordable energy. Co-ops connect.
High school juniors from Cumberland Electric Membership Corporation’s service area have a unique opportunity to earn spots on a once-in-a-lifetime tour of our nation’s capital by participating in the Electric Cooperative Creative Writing and Scholarship Competition.

CEMC will select 12 students who write winning short stories describing the benefits of cooperative power to attend the Washington Youth Tour, an unforgettable trip to Washington, D.C., this summer. Sponsored by CEMC and the Tennessee Electric Cooperative Association, the Washington Youth Tour provides young leaders an opportunity to explore our nation’s capital, learn more about government and cooperatives, develop leadership skills and network with other young leaders from across the nation.

To enter, students must write short stories titled “Electric Cooperatives Connect” explaining how co-ops connect Tennessee communities with energy, education, broadband, economic development and more.

Stories must not exceed 900 words, including articles (“a,” “an” and “the”), and the exact word count must be included on the cover page. Entries, which must be typewritten and double-spaced, will be judged on appropriate treatment of theme, knowledge of the subject, originality, creativity, grammar and composition.

The contest deadline is Tuesday, Feb. 28, and winners will be announced this spring. Writers of the top 12 entries in CEMC’s service area will join nearly 2,000 other delegates from across the country for the 2023 Washington Youth Tour in June.

Food, travel and lodging expenses are paid by Tennessee’s electric cooperatives, but the benefits of the Youth Tour go far beyond an expense-paid trip. Youth Tour attendees will
qualify for additional trips and thousands of dollars in scholarships. TECA will award $3,000, $2,000 and $1,000 scholarships for the state’s top three short stories. Additional scholarships on the national level will be awarded by the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association as well.

 Winners can also choose to participate in the Cooperative Youth Ambassador program. Delegates who remain active and engaged with CEMC for 12 months following the contest will qualify for a drawing for a $10,000 scholarship to the school of the winner’s choice.

The Washington Youth Tour Creative Writing and Scholarship Competition is open to high school juniors living in CEMC’s five-county service area. Resource materials and additional information can be found online at cemc.org and youthtour.tnelectric.org or by contacting Susie Yonkers, CEMC community relations coordinator, at 1-800-987-2362, ext. 1143, or by email at syonkers@cemc.org.

CEMC Senior Scholarship Program

Each year, Cumberland Electric Membership Corporation invests in future leaders by awarding scholarships to deserving high school seniors through the Senior Scholarship Program.

Twelve students will be chosen this year to receive one-time awards of $1,000 that can be used toward their freshman year expenses such as tuition, textbooks, lab fees or to purchase other required classroom materials. The program is coordinated through each school’s senior guidance counselor.

To be eligible, applicants must meet these requirements:

• Must be a graduating high school senior whose parents or guardians are members of CEMC and receive electric service from CEMC at his or her primary residence.
• Must have attained a minimum 3.0 cumulative grade-point average.
• Must enroll or plan to enroll as a full-time student at an accredited Tennessee college, university or trade school by fall 2023 (Murray State and Western Kentucky Universities are included).

• Must submit a completed application, including two letters of reference: one from a teacher or other school official and one from a community leader.
• Must write an original essay of at least 300 words explaining what the student most looks forward to about attending college and how a scholarship, in terms of financial assistance, will help in completing his or her education. Each essay will be judged on the basis of content, composition, grammar and neatness.

Applications are available through the senior guidance counselors at each school and can be found on CEMC’s website: cemc.org. Deadline for scholarship entry is Tuesday, Feb. 28. Children of CEMC, Tennessee Electric Cooperative Association or Tennessee Valley Authority employees, directors or attorneys are not eligible to apply.

For additional information, contact CEMC Community Relations Coordinator Susie Yonkers at 800-987-2362, ext. 1143, or via email at syonkers@cemc.org.
2024 CEMC Calendar Art Contest

Cumberland Electric Membership Corporation is seeking entries from local student-artists for its 2024 Calendar Art Contest. Winners will receive cash prizes and have their artwork published in CEMC’s 2024 calendar, which will be displayed in homes, businesses and schools throughout the co-op’s service area. Calendars are free and will be available at CEMC’s offices beginning in November each year. (Get your 2023 calendar at any CEMC office while supplies last!)

The contest is open to all students — grades kindergarten through 12 — who reside within CEMC’s service area. Entries will be accepted through participating schools and are due by Tuesday, Feb. 28. Each grade (for which the student is currently enrolled) has been assigned a calendar month to illustrate as follows: January, sixth; February, seventh; March, eighth; April, ninth; May, 10th; June, 11th; July, kindergarten; August, first; September, second; October, third; November, fourth; and December, fifth.

Seniors will illustrate the cover. There is no specific theme for the cover; however, rural scenes, barns, wildlife and items that illustrate CEMC’s service (line trucks, utility poles, etc.) are a few suggestions.

Artwork will be judged on artistic merit, creativity and how well the assigned month is depicted. All elements of the artwork must be the work of the student submitting the entry. Artwork must be on white or light-colored, unruled paper no larger than 11 by 14 inches and no smaller than 8.5 by 11 inches. Original artwork must be submitted (no photocopies), and art must be in the horizontal or landscape position.

First-place winners will receive cash prizes as follows: kindergarten-fifth, $25; sixth-eighth, $50; and ninth-12th $75. The Overall Winner will receive $100.

Complete contest details and instructions can be obtained by contacting CEMC Community Relations Coordinator Susie Yonkers at 800-987-2362, ext. 1143, or by emailing syonkers@cemc.org.

Below, the artwork of White House Heritage High School student Brynna Hinshaw was one of the winners of CEMC’s 2023 Calendar Art Contest.
Should I change my charging habits?
Four things to know about extending rechargeable battery life

By Paul Wesslund, National Rural Electric Cooperative Association

Many of us are so connected to our phones, tablets and laptops that we panic when their battery nears the dreaded 0% mark.

We want our device batteries to perform well for as long as possible. But taking care of them can conflict with why we have our electronics in the first place. The point isn’t to fret about battery life; rather, it’s to read and send emails, scroll on social media, take photos and countless other pursuits.

If you ever find yourself fretting over your device’s power levels, here are a few tips on striking the right balance between battery health and how you work and play:

1. Keep your battery about 40% to 80% charged.

There’s a lot of reasonable advice around the internet to keep your phone charged between 20% and 80% or between 40% and 80%. To understand those recommendations — and why you might want to either follow them or ignore them — it helps to understand how rechargeable batteries work.

Up until about 20 years ago, batteries benefited from occasional “deep discharges” — running the battery down until the device shuts off. But because of different materials used in batteries today, that’s no longer true.

Rechargeable batteries work by containing two different materials that produce electricity when particles flow from one to the other. Particles flow the other direction when being recharged. That process will degrade any battery over time. Keeping both sides of the battery in balance, the device charged at about 50%, will put the least amount of stress on the battery and make it last longer.

But that’s unrealistic — no one’s going to keep their phone half-charged all the time. So, the experts try to make it easier by recommending 40% to 80% or 20% to 80%. Apple devices offer even more flexibility, pointing out that modern rechargeable batteries are designed to last for years under a variety of ways you use them. Apple recommends rather than worrying about the battery, just focus on using and enjoying your device.

2. Overnight charging can add stress to some batteries.

Charging your device up to 100% or letting it drain to 0% until it shuts down does put extra stress on the battery and can shorten its life. That’s why it can make sense to charge your devices occasionally throughout the day rather than keeping them plugged in while you sleep. Newer electronics will actually stop charging at 100%. But then each time the charge drops to 99%, charging will resume.

3. Keep it cool, but not cold.

One absolute in battery care is don’t let your device get warmer than 95 degrees. Keep it out of the sun, and never leave it in a hot vehicle. If the device does get hot, don’t go to the other extreme and put it in the freezer. Just place it in the shade or take the cover off for a while.

4. Use less power.

It sounds simple, but one of the easiest ways to put less stress on the battery is to use less power. You can close energy-draining apps and functions when you’re not using them, and you can activate energy-saving settings like putting the device to sleep sooner. Another easy way to reduce battery use is to activate the “airplane mode” button every now and then. You may be inconvenienced by a temporary pause on receiving emails or phone calls, but it might help you focus on that movie you’re watching, the trail you’re hiking or the conversation with your dinner companions.

If you’re the kind of person who likes to turn in their electronics every couple years for the latest versions, these recommendations likely won’t apply. But if you’re someone who wants your devices to last longer, these suggestions can help prolong battery life.
Young members show ‘Concern for Community’ through fall food drive

Students from Clyde Riggs Elementary, above left, and Pleasant View Elementary, above right, show off the food they collected during CEMC’s 2022 community food drive. With the help of students, parents and teachers from participating schools throughout our service area, thousands of nonperishable food items were collected and donated to local food banks for distribution again this year. “Thank you to all who helped support our community food drive,” says CEMC Community Relations Coordinator Susie Yonkers. “We truly appreciate your generous donations that helped provide meals for those in need this holiday season.”

New Year’s resolution: Clean electrical hazards out of your home

What’s your New Year’s resolution? Will you quit smoking, start exercising, lose weight, volunteer your time?

How about something even easier: Remove risk factors for electrical shocks, tripping and house fires from your home. Here are 10 simple ways to keep that resolution and protect your family from harm:

1. Secure plugs. When loose-fitting plugs hang halfway out of an outlet, they put you at risk of an electrical shock and can even start a fire. Replace older outlets and insert plastic safety caps into unused outlets if your family includes young children.

2. Use three-prong plugs, especially outdoors and in bathrooms, basements and kitchens. The third prong is a grounding prong. If you only have two-prong outlets, ask an electrician to update your home. Never remove the grounding pin to fit a three-prong plug into a two-prong outlet.

3. Replace cords. They’re not designed to last forever. Toss frayed or cracked cords, and move them out from under carpets or rugs.

4. Avoid extension cords. They’re fine for connecting strands of holiday lights together and for helping decorations reach plugs during December. But come Jan. 1, pack them up and store them. Extension cords are designed for temporary use.

5. Pay attention to wattages. The lightbulbs in your lamps and overhead fixtures should match the specifications on those fixtures. A bulb whose wattage is too high can overheat.

6. Add GFCIs. Ground-fault circuit interrupters, or GFCIs, are a must in every outlet in the kitchen, bathrooms, laundry, basement, garage and outdoors — anywhere water and electricity might mix.

7. Resize your fuses. If you don’t know whether your fuses are the right size for the circuit they’re protecting, call an electrician.

8. Update appliances. If a circuit trips every time you plug in your hair dryer, or if your coffee maker has ever shocked you when you plugged it in, you either have faulty appliances or an overloaded circuit. An electrician can identify and solve your problem.

9. Check your wiring. Faulty electrical wires start many house fires. If you hear popping or sizzling sounds behind the walls or if light switches feel hot, do not use those fixtures or switches until a licensed electrician has replaced them.

10. Get more power. Unless you live in a brand-new house, you are probably using more electricity than the builder ever dreamed you would. Call an electrician to determine whether your home needs more electrical capacity.
BRINGING FIBER INTERNET WHERE NOBODY ELSE WILL.

Our Fiber Status Map as of December 2022. View the current Status Map online at CumberlandConnect.org/Status-Map.

Our Mission Continues in 2023

Throughout 2022, CEMC and Cumberland Connect continued our mission to provide access to high-speed, reliable internet and Phone services to all eligible CEMC members. Incredible advancements in technology have provided opportunities to be more connected than ever -- whether working or learning from home, living a healthier life with the help of telemedicine, enjoying the conveniences of online shopping, or connecting with loved ones around the globe. This is our world today, and we believe that no one should be limited by the lack of reliable Internet access due to where they choose to live.

A reliable Internet connection is a vital utility, like electricity, and our members’ great need for this necessity continues fueling our efforts to complete our fiber network construction. As 2022 comes to a close, our crews have constructed over 3,400 miles of fiber, providing access to CCFiber services to over 58,100 locations in Cheatham, Montgomery, Robertson, Stewart and Sumner counties. Cumberland Connect also officially announced all remaining construction phases (Phases 4 & 5) to give CEMC members a projected timeline for the remainder of our fiber network buildout.

Our crews are working to open all remaining Phase 3 zones by the end of January 2023, and we will move straight into Phase 4 zone openings soon after. Preparations and mainline construction are already underway for Phase 4, which will pass an additional 20,800-plus locations in eastern Montgomery County, northern Cheatham County, central and eastern Robertson County, and a portion of Sumner County. Fiber services are projected to be made available to these additional homes and businesses by the end of 2023.

This year, we look forward to celebrating yet another exciting milestone for our communities as we approach 20,000 Cumberland Connect subscribers! Our team is grateful to serve every one of our subscribers, and we are continually encouraged by the stories we hear about the impact that reliable internet services have had on their lives. Cumberland Connect is committed to investing in our local communities and making a positive difference in the lives of our members.

Our mission and purpose are connecting you to your best life -- and to our team, this means delivering reliable fiber services at a reasonable price and providing our subscribers with the resources and guidance to ensure that they have the best possible experience. “Our members deserve the very best, and as a locally owned service provider, we exist to be different in a good way,” says Mark T. Cook, Cumberland Connect broadband manager. “We want to provide a first-rate experience that will make our subscribers brag about our Internet to their friends.”

We greatly appreciate your patience and ongoing support while we continue working on expanding CCFiber service access to all our members, and we are so grateful for this opportunity to serve our very own friends, neighbors and communities. We wish you a very Happy New Year full of happiness and limitless opportunities!

— From all of us at Cumberland Connect

Check Availability to Register for Email Updates at www.CumberlandConnect.org

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.
Q: Are smart home technologies energy efficient? Will making these technology upgrades save me money?

A: You’ve probably heard the term “smart home” a lot in recent years. If you’re curious about what makes a home smart and how it can boost energy efficiency and help you save money, you have come to the right place.

“Smart” was originally an acronym for “self-monitoring analysis and reporting technology.” This refers to technology that can be programmed for automation or controlled remotely using Bluetooth or Wi-Fi from a smartphone app or online. A smart home is one with automated control of appliances and systems such as lighting fixtures and heating and cooling systems.

There are multiple reasons people choose to automate their homes, including convenience, energy efficiency and security. Just because a product is smart, don’t assume it’s energy efficient. Added connectivity, lights and touchscreens can actually increase your energy use. When shopping, always look for the Energy Star logo, which certifies the products meet standards for energy efficiency.

Energy savings typically come from automating the systems, devices and appliances in your home to use less energy or use energy when it costs less. Here are a few ways you can start implementing smart technology at home:

Smart upgrades for the entire home

Because heating and cooling account for the most energy use in a home, these systems are the best place to look for energy savings.

Smart thermostats offer features and functionality that can help you save energy and money without thinking about it, including learning preferences and automatically setting temperatures. Geofencing is a feature that uses your phone’s location to gauge your distance from home and adjusts home temperature accordingly.

Smart thermostats also let you control the thermostat from anywhere with an internet connection, and automatic software updates use new algorithms to maximize energy savings. Features vary by product, so be sure to choose the one that’s right for you.

Smart window coverings are increasing in popularity and availability. They can help save energy both in the winter and summer by operating based on the temperature of the room or preset schedules.
Smart lighting can help you remotely control lights in your home based on occupancy or schedules. Lighting also can be paired with home security systems.

You can use smart outlets and power strips to control devices from outside the home or manage use based on load. For example, you can plug your computer and devices into a load-sensing power strip that turns off peripheral devices such as monitors and printers when your computer is not in use.

**Smart streaming for the living room**

Many people use Wi-Fi to stream TV shows and movies. Smart TVs with built-in streaming functionality offer the most efficient way to stream content. If your TV cannot connect to the internet for streaming, opt for a streaming media player such as Roku or Apple TV. They use 15 times less energy than a gaming console to stream the same shows and movies.

**Save on suds in the laundry room**

Smart washing machines can be scheduled for off-peak energy times (when people in your community use less energy). Smart clothes dryers can shut off automatically when your clothes are dry.

**Smart savings in the kitchen**

There are many options for smart appliances in the “heart of the home.” Smart refrigerators offer energy-saving features such as notifications when the door is left open. Digital screens that show the contents keep you from having to open the door to look for the food you need.

Smart ovens let you check if you forgot to turn off the oven when you are away. Toasters, range hoods, microwaves and countertop ice makers are among the growing list of additional smart kitchen gadgets available.

More smart home technologies are on the horizon, bringing more ways to operate the various systems, devices and appliances in your home.

As you think about ways to make your home smarter, remember to look for products that use the same smart home apps, which will make these new technologies even easier to manage.

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**Miranda Boutelle** is vice president of operations and customer engagement at Efficiency Services Group in Oregon, a cooperatively owned energy efficiency company. She also writes on energy efficiency topics for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, the national trade association representing more than 900 local electric cooperatives.
Urban Oasis

Radnor Lake State Park delivers on mission to protect and share natural world.

Story by Trish Milburn • Photographs by Robin Conover
“I have the best office in the world.”

That’s how Steve Ward describes his workplace, the approximately 1,400 acres of stunning natural area that make up Radnor Lake State Park in Nashville. Ward, the park’s manager, has been an enthusiastic advocate for the park during his more than two decades there. Whether it’s working on trails, long-range planning, communicating with visitors or even directing traffic, he gives it his all because he loves this spot of natural beauty that is surrounded by the urban life of a growing city.

Other than its more urban setting, what sets Radnor Lake apart?

“We are also a state wildlife observation area and a state natural area with a primary mission of providing safe hiking and unique wildlife observation opportunities,” Ward says.

Ward is particularly proud that in 2021 the park saw its first bald eagle nest — the fourth documented in Davidson County and the closest ever to the State Capitol.

“It’s a lifetime highlight,” he says. “It shows we’re on the right path.”

That right path also includes impressive results from efforts by the park to restore historic grasslands, one of the fastest vanishing ecosystems in the country and one that is important to butterflies and ground-nesting birds. Ward says that in 2017, in one area of the park he saw only two monarch butterflies the entire summer. In 2021, that number exploded to 21 in a single hour.

All about nature

While other state parks across Tennessee offer an array of activities from hiking and fishing to golf and horseback riding, Radnor Lake is all about appreciating nature.

Whether visitors meander along the trails by themselves or take part in any of the wealth of ranger-led programs, they might see owls, geese, herons, ducks, various amphibians and reptiles — even minks and otters — and other wildlife. The park is also rich with fungi and flora such as wildflowers, mosses and trees of many species. The more than seven miles of trail are used strictly for hiking, photography and wildlife observation. In other words, if you want to jog, bike or bring your pet, you are only going to be able to do those things on the Otter Creek Road trail.

Ranger-led programs include night hikes, canoe floats, wildflower walks, talks about the wildlife that call the park home and more.

Birders will love visiting the park anytime to see year-round residents and migrating birds alike. Now is the perfect time to visit to glimpse wintering waterfowl.
Speaking of birds

Seven birds of prey that are no longer able to be released into the wild due to permanent injuries now reside at the Barbara J. Mapp Aviary Education Center inside the park. The 550-foot boardwalk and associated aviary complex, which Ward calls a “hidden gem,” is accessible by wheelchair and foot only and allows for up-close observation and interpretive programs by park staff covering species such as golden and bald eagles, a black vulture, a great horned owl and a red-tailed hawk.

Created through a public-private partnership and opened in 2015, the center is funded by the Friends of Radnor Lake and the Barbara J. Mapp Foundation. Its hours are limited: Wednesdays and Saturdays, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Above, now is a great time to view visiting waterfowl at Radnor Lake. Below, raptors like the barred owl are year-round residents at the urban oasis.

Pros and cons of being an urban park

Because it’s located in a growing city, Radnor Lake is busy year-round. Ward says that most weekends you’ll find the park staff directing traffic. Like other parks in the system, visitation increased dramatically in 2020, up by 400,000 visitors — a challenge to deal with but one the staff handled well.

“The staff is hard to beat,” he says. “They are the very best of public service. We also have a phenomenal friends group, great state leadership and support from private partners and citizens.”

He says it was good the park could be open and there for people in a time of need, same as after the Nashville flood in 2010. Even as things have progressed toward a semblance of prepandemic normalcy, Radnor Lake has held on to some of those higher visitation numbers. Around 2.2 million people visited the park last year.

The park’s location and the amount of interest in it also mean the park staff work in a fishbowl, something Ward actually sees as a positive.

“We’re under a microscope every single day, but that makes us more focused on professionalism, more engaging, more transparent. We only get better,” he says.
Focus on accessibility
Making sure all visitors can enjoy what Radnor Lake has to offer is a point of pride and emphasis for Ward and his staff. It’s also personal. Ward’s parents are deaf, so his first language is American Sign Language. Among other accessibility efforts, there are programming opportunities for the deaf. Ward says he loves greeting deaf visitors, surprising them that someone on staff can sign.
Four of the park’s nine trails are also ADA accessible, so those with mobility limitations also can enjoy various wildlife observation points and views of the lake.

State Park of the Year
The hard work of the park staff was honored in the fall when Radnor Lake was named State Park of the Year and earned an award for its performance in sustainability. Garnering praise were the park’s bird-related offerings that provide a spotting scope to highlight the bald eagle nest and interpretive programming for visitors with special needs. Also highlighted were the Junior Ranger Intern Program, Trails to Trees Christmas tree recycling initiative, thousands of volunteer hours generously spent on park improvements, electric vehicle charger, wheelchair-accessible color viewfinder and immeasurable support from the Friends of Radnor Lake.

“Radnor Lake State Park is a perfect example of why we are so proud of our parks,” says Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation Commissioner David Salyers. “The park has initiated outstanding programs, and it consistently earns great support from the community. Its performance in sustainability is just part of the park’s overall achievements. We are excited to recognize Radnor Lake with these awards.”

Planning your visit
The park is open from 6 a.m. until 20 minutes after sunset year-round, including holidays. The Walter Criley Visitor Center — where you can view interpretive exhibits, wildlife displays and artifacts as well as a closed-captioned film on birding species at Radnor Lake — is open daily. The park office is open Thursday through Monday from 9:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. (closed for lunch from 1 to 2 p.m.). It is closed on Tuesday and Wednesday.

Radnor Lake State Park
Visit the park’s website at tnsateparks.com/parks/radnor-lake or call 615-373-3467.
Taking STOCK in CHICKEN SOUPS

Slow Cooker
Chicken Noodle Soup
Recipes by Tammy Algood
Photograph by Robin Conover
You just spent the last two months pulling out all the dishes, all the spices, plus every pot and pan. It’s time to put all that away and simplify! Use these delicious all-in-one-pot recipes to reset your life for nutrition, comfort and ease of preparation. These recipes will practically make themselves while you return your holiday decor to storage. Don’t you wish you had that kind of help back in November?

**Chicken and Double Stock**  
*Use this as the basis for soup recipes.*  
Yield: 3 cups chicken and 6 cups stock

Place the chicken in a large stockpot over medium heat and cover with the stock. Bring to a simmer and cook 15-17 minutes or just until the chicken is cooked. Remove the chicken from the stock and place in a single layer on a baking pan to cool. Skim and discard the fat from the surface of the stock. When the chicken is cool enough to handle, remove the meat from the bones and coarsely chop. Proceed as directed for the recipe you select or cool completely and refrigerate or freeze for later use.

**Mother’s Chicken Noodle Soup**  
*No frills! Just the basics!*

Yield: 6 servings

6 cups Double Stock (see first recipe)  
1 small sweet onion, peeled and diced  
3 garlic cloves, peeled and minced  
3 celery stalks, chopped  
2 carrots, peeled and diced  
1 cup dry red wine  
6 cups Double Stock (see first recipe)  
2 bay leaves  
2 red bell peppers, roasted, peeled, seeded and chopped  
1 tablespoon chopped fresh basil  
2 teaspoons chopped fresh thyme  
3 cups cooked chicken (see first recipe)  
8 ounces egg noodles  
½ to 1 teaspoon salt, according to taste  
¼ to ½ teaspoon black pepper, according to taste

Place the oil in a large stockpot over medium-high heat. When the mixture comes to a simmer, add the chicken and cook 10 minutes. Add the noodles and cook 8 minutes or until the noodles are done. Remove and discard the bay leaf. Ladle into warm soup bowls and serve.

**Spiked Chicken Noodle Soup**

Yield: 6 servings

1 tablespoon vegetable oil  
1 sweet onion, peeled and diced  
3 garlic cloves, peeled and minced  
3 celery stalks, chopped  
2 carrots, peeled and sliced  
3 garlic cloves, peeled and minced  
4 cups chicken stock  
½ cup Thai or standard basil leaves  
4 garlic cloves, peeled and cut in half  
1 stalk lemongrass, cut in large pieces  
3 boneless, skinless chicken breasts, cut in dice  
½ small Chinese (Napa) cabbage, coarsely chopped  
¼ pound thin Chinese noodles or 1 (3-ounce) package ramen noodles (save the seasoning packet for another use)  
3 green onions (green parts only), minced  
1 tablespoon sweet chili sauce  
2 teaspoons soy sauce  
1 tablespoon toasted sesame seeds

Place the chicken, onions, celery, carrots, garlic, stock, bay leaf, butter, turmeric, onion powder, salt, pepper, sugar, thyme and celery seeds in a large slow cooker. Cover and cook on low for 8 hours or on high for 4 hours. Remove and discard bay leaf. Add the noodles 10 minutes before serving, stirring well. Meanwhile, create a slurry by whisking together the cornstarch and water in a glass measuring cup. Add to the soup 5 minutes before serving, stirring well. Ladle into warm soup bowls and serve.
Place the stock, water, ginger, basil, garlic and lemongrass in a stockpot over medium-high heat. Allow to simmer 1 hour. Strain and discard the solids. Add the chicken and cabbage. Cook 7 minutes. Add the noodles, green onions, chili sauce and soy sauce. Cook another 5 minutes or until the noodles and chicken are done. Ladle into warm serving bowls and garnish with sesame seeds.

Frozen Veggie Chicken Noodle Soup
Yield: 4 servings
1 tablespoon vegetable oil
2 cups frozen cubed hash brown potatoes
½ cup frozen chopped onion
½ cup frozen chopped red bell peppers
½ cup frozen chopped celery
4 cups chicken stock
½ teaspoon garlic salt
¼ teaspoon white pepper
⅛ teaspoon dried thyme
2 cups cooked chopped chicken
2 ounces egg noodles
1 cup evaporated milk
Fresh chopped parsley for garnish

Coat a large saucepan with cooking spray and add the oil. Place over medium-high heat. When hot, add the frozen potatoes, onions, bell peppers and celery. Cook, stirring occasionally, for 4 minutes.

Stir in the stock, salt, pepper and thyme. Bring to a boil and reduce the heat to simmer. Add the chicken, cover and cook 5 minutes. Stir in the noodles and evaporated milk and cook 5 more minutes or until the noodles are done. Ladle into warm soup bowls and garnish with the parsley.

Tammy Algood develops recipes for The Tennessee Magazine that feature farm-fresh Tennessee food. Those fresh, local ingredients will always add cleaner, more flavorful foods to your table. We recommend visiting local farms and farmers markets to find the freshest seasonal produce.

Rosalind writes: I was given some veal from a friend that has been in my freezer, and I need to use it. I have never prepared veal before. Can you guide me on how to do it? I have a roast, but I am not sure how much it weighs. I appreciate this greatly!

Rosalind, veal, which is young beef, is usually very lean, meaning it has little natural fat. For that reason, it can become tough and dry if it is overcooked or broiled. Roasts are perfect for the slow cooker since that allows the cut to cook at a low temperature and will keep it moist throughout the process. Roasts are typically 3 to 4 pounds and should cook to an internal temperature of 160 degrees. Follow any recipe you have for a slow cooked beef roast.

Jeremy asks: My wife loves soft cooked eggs, but neither of us has been able to cook them correctly. Every time, they are either too soft or too hard. Would you please give us some tips on how long to properly cook soft eggs? Our egg cups will thank you, and so will we!

Jeremy, here’s how I cook them, and my egg cups love me! Place the number of eggs you wish to prepare in a saucepan and add enough water to cover them by an inch. Bring to below a boil over medium-high heat. Just as the water starts to boil, reduce the heat to medium-low, cover and set your timer for 7 minutes. Immediately drain and run cold water over the eggs until they are cool enough to handle. This will take no more than a couple of minutes. Place in your egg cups with the small end down and slice off the large end with a cutter or knife. Enjoy!
Quality light is an essential ingredient in successful photography. Harsh and directly overhead, it can lead to overexposed images or fine details lost in the shadows. But skillful use of light and patience behind the shutter yield compelling images. A slight change to light’s direction or intensity can alter a photograph’s mood, draw the eye’s focus or create captivating first-glance illusions.

Our next Shutterbug Photography Contest tasks entrants show their grasp of “Light and Shadow.”

In addition to striking use of light, composition and subject matter will be considered in choosing the winners. Images can include people or not, and they can be selfies. They do not have to be taken in Tennessee. As you accept this challenge, please stay safe. We don’t want anyone to take a tumble in the name of the Shutterbug contest.

Contest rules
1. The contest is open to amateur and professional photographers. For the purposes of this competition, you are considered a professional if you regularly sell your images or garner more than 50 percent of your income from photography.

2. Photographs must have been taken by you.

3. A photographer can enter no more than three photographs. There is no cost to enter.

4. All entries must be made online. We won’t accept prints for this contest. Sign on to tmagazine.org to complete the form and upload your photograph(s).

5. Employees of Tennessee’s electric cooperatives and their immediate families are not eligible to win.

6. Please include the name of each recognizable person, if any other than yourself, in your photograph. It is the photographer’s responsibility to have the subject’s permission to enter his or her image in the contest. You must include the subject’s name and contact information with your submission. Omitting any of this information can result in disqualification.

7. By entering the contest, photographers automatically give The Tennessee Magazine permission to publish the winning images in print and digital publications, to social media and on websites.

Shutterbug assignment “Light and Shadow”

Submissions — online entries only
Visit our website to enter at tmagazine.org.

Deadline
Entries must be entered online by midnight (Central Standard Time) on Monday, Jan. 16. Winners will be published in the March issue.

Prize packages:
Judges will select a first-, second- and third-place winner in each division and age group. These prizes will be awarded: First place wins $150, second place $100 and third place $50.
Find the Tennessee flag

We have hidden somewhere in this magazine the icon from the Tennessee flag like the one pictured here. It could be larger or smaller than this, and it could be in black and white or any color. If you find it, send us a postcard or email us with the page number where it’s located. Include your name, address, phone number and electric cooperative. One entry per person. Three winners will be chosen from a random drawing, and each will receive $20.

Note that the icon we hide will not be on an actual flag or historical marker, will not appear on pages 20-26 and will not be placed in any ads. This month’s flag will not appear on this page (that would just be too easy). Good luck!

Send postcards only (no phone calls, please) to: The Tennessee Magazine, Find the Flag, P.O. Box 100912, Nashville, TN 37224. Or you can fill out the form at tnmagazine.org or email flag@tnelectric.org. Entries must be postmarked or received via email by Wednesday, Feb. 1. Winners will be published in the March issue of The Tennessee Magazine.

November Flag Spotters

Thanks for the postcards and emails again this month identifying the correct location of the flag, which was found on the person’s shirt on page 14.

Winners are drawn randomly from each month’s entries. November’s lucky flag spotters are:

Alice Moore, Humboldt, Gibson EMC
William Alan Vernich, Greenbrier, Cumberland EMC
Adam Williams, Trade, Mountain EC

Artist’s Palette

Assignment for January

Three age categories: 1 to 9, 10 to 14 and 15 to 18 years old. Each group will have first-, second- and third-place winners.

Media: Drawing or painting on 8½-by-11-inch unlined paper, canvas or board. We encourage the use of color.

Entry: Send your original art to: The Tennessee Magazine, Artist’s Palette — January, P.O. Box 100912, Nashville, TN 37224. (Please make sure you include the month on the outside of the envelope!) Only one entry per artist, please.

Deadline: Art must be postmarked by Wednesday, Feb. 1.

Include: Your name, age, address, phone number, email address and electric cooperative. Leaving anything out will result in disqualification.

Artwork will not be returned unless you include a self-addressed, stamped envelope with your submission. For best reproduction results, do not fold artwork.

Each entry needs its own SASE, please. Siblings must enter separately with their own envelopes.

Attention, teachers: You may send multiple entries in one envelope along with one SASE with sufficient postage.

Winners will be published in the March issue of The Tennessee Magazine. First place wins $50, second place wins $30 and third place wins $20. Winners are eligible to enter again after three months. Winners will receive their checks, artwork and certificates of placement within six to eight weeks of publication.
WINNERS, 15-18 AGE GROUP: First place: Hannah Pendergrass, age 15, Meriwether Lewis EC; Second place: Claire Lemmons, age 15, Duck River EMC; Third place: Noah Drey, age 15, Mountain EC

WINNERS, 10-14 AGE GROUP: First place: Alexandra Chetyrkina, age 12, Middle Tennessee Electric; Second place: Jane Rogers, age 13, Middle Tennessee Electric; Third place: Kiyah Bowles, age 11, Cumberland EMC

WINNERS, 1-9 AGE GROUP: First place: Jessica Thompson, age 7, Middle Tennessee Electric; Second place: Owen Zollner, age 7, Middle Tennessee Electric; Third place: Natalee Pope, age 9, Duck River EMC
**Reelfoot Lake Eagle Festival**

**Feb. 3-5 • Reelfoot Lake State Park**

Flying alone or in pairs, they soar on magnificent wings south from the Great Lakes and isolated regions of Canada to spend the winter in northwest Tennessee. The American bald eagle has made this annual winter pilgrimage to Reelfoot Lake for generations.

Reelfoot Lake boasts one of the largest wintering populations of Bald Eagles outside of Alaska, and the return of eagles has become a major event. To honor the great raptors’ arrival, the 19th Annual Reelfoot Lake Eagle Festival will be held Feb. 3-5. Events include eagle and waterfowl tours, art and photography contests, birds of prey programs and more.

Eagle tours and interpretive programs also run at the state park throughout January and February. Visit tnstateparks.com/parks/reelfoot-lake for more on the Reelfoot Lake Eagle Festival, including a schedule and information on event fees and reservations, and other programming. Contact the park visitor center at 731-253-9652, make cabin reservations by calling 731-253-9652 and secure a spot in the South Campground at 731-538-3356.

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**West Tennessee**

**Now-Jan. 8 • Discover Steampunk: A Fantastical Hands-On Adventure, Discovery Park of America, Union City. 731-885-5455 or discoveryparkofamerica.com**

**Jan. 1-31 • Free Admission for Children in January, Discovery Park of America, Union City. 731-885-5455 or discoveryparkofamerica.com**

**Jan. 5-8 • 2023 Elvis Birthday Celebration, Elvis Presley’s Graceland, Memphis. 901-332-3322 or graceland.com**

**Jan. 13-29 • Sondheim Tribute, Lohrey Theatre, Theatre Memphis. 901-682-8323 or theatrememphis.org/shows/sondheim-tribute**

**Jan. 22-May 6 • Artificial Intelligence: Your Mind and the Machine, Museum of Science and History, Memphis. 901-636-2362 or moshmemphis.com**

**Jan. 26-28 • “Peter Pan Jr.,” The Ned, Jackson. 731-425-8397 or thened.jacksontn.gov**

**Jan. 30 • The World Famous Glenn Miller Orchestra, Orpheum Theatre, Memphis. 901-525-3000 or orpheum-memphis.com/events-tickets**

**Feb. 3-5 • 19th Annual Reelfoot Lake Eagle Festival, Reelfoot Lake State Park, Tiptonville. 731-253-9652 or tnstateparks.com/parks/reelfoot-lake**

**Feb. 11 • The Jackson Symphony — February Pops, Carl Perkins Civic Center, Jackson. 731-427-6440 or thejacksonsymphony.org/concerts-events**

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**Middle Tennessee**

**Now-Jan. 8 • Holiday LIGHTS, Cheekwood Estate and Gardens, Nashville. 615-356-8000 or cheekwood.org/calendar/holiday-lights-2022**
Jan. 28-Feb. 23 • Winter Concert Series, Cheekwood Estate and Gardens, Nashville. 615-356-8000 or cheekwood.org/calendar/winter-concert-series

Feb. 3-4 • 17th Annual Southern Motorsports Invitational Tractor and Truck Pull, Tennessee Miller Coliseum, Murfreesboro. 615-809-6154 or southernmotorsports.net

Feb. 11 • Valenshines Moonshine Sippin’ Excursion Train, Tennessee Central Railway Museum, Nashville. 615-241-0436 or tcry.org

Jan. 27-28 • Pirates of the Caribbean Concert, Schermerhorn Symphony Center, Nashville. 615-687-6400 or nashvillesymphony.org

Jan. 28 • BrickUniverse LEGO Fan Expo, Chattanooga Convention Center. brickuniverseusa.com

Feb. 7-19 • “Hamilton,” Tennessee Theatre, Knoxville. 865-684-1200 or tennesseetheatre.com/events
Dear Connie Sue,

I love, love, love your column in The Tennessee Magazine and have wanted to send this for some time. I inherited this from my grandfather, who was the super for a building on Park Avenue in New York City and was given this as a gift. I’ve always wondered if it’s of any value and would love your opinion.

Donna

Dear Donna,

This is an Ignacio Gallo art deco lamp with ball-shaped multiflora shade. The pixie, not to be confused with elves who appear at Christmas, is bronze patinated on spelter. It has a striated white on black marble plinth. Made circa 1925, it sells for around $850. Please replace the cloth cord.

Dear Donna,

This is called a swing stand butter churn. It might have come with a wooden paddle that was used to scrape the cream as it turned to butter. Sloshing the cream back and forth caused the butter to “make.” Such churns were available through the Sears Roebuck catalog in the early 1900s for less than $5.

Churns like this had a stenciled mark on the side to identify the maker. Similar churns with scraper and stencil are hopefully offered for $200. As our memories of life on the farm age out, values tend to fall.

Dear Phil

Your people’s table was production-made circa 1895. It is faintly made in the Eastlake Victorian style but clearly made to be affordable to the masses. The tables were often situated in center of the front window with a lamp.

In the 1970s, these tables sold for around $165. Now they sell for far less and often sport a new look with paint highlighting the sweet features of the scalloped sides and fancy base.

Dear Phil

Connie Sue Davenport has decided to discontinue her monthly column in The Tennessee Magazine. We thank her for her entertaining, informative contributions that for years provided further background on our readers’ prized family heirlooms and interesting secondhand treasures. Connie Sue will continue appraising houses full of antiques for private clients and at appraisal events hosted by businesses and organizations. Her website, ConnieSue.com, describes these services.
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Two of my favorite subjects are abstract reflections on water and great blue herons. On a recent hike, I was able to capture both in one photograph.

When shooting any kind of image, the background is one of my first considerations—no matter what the subject is. In nature photography, you can’t ask your subjects to “take one step to the left” to place them in the best spots to avoid distracting backgrounds.

This heron was positioned against a distracting background with many limbs reflecting in the water. As herons do, he was standing motionless on the edge of the water, surveying Radnor Lake for his next opportunity to snag a fish just beneath the surface.

He was positioned just below Otter Creek Road, and numerous people had already walked past him, many not ever seeing him. I would have preferred to be a bit farther away as I didn’t want to disturb his hunt. But I was walking on the same road when I spotted him, and my presence didn’t seem to bother him at all. I stopped in my tracks and didn’t move any closer as I moved my camera into position and composed the image from about 15 feet away. This particular heron is somewhat “used” to the presence of people as Radnor Lake is one of Tennessee’s most visited parks.

After watching him extend his long neck and jab at several small fish, he hunkered down into this position, remaining very still. That’s when I decided to use a slow shutter speed in hopes that movement in the water would blur the background, making it less distracting.

With my all but motionless subject and the undulating motion of the lake’s surface, I was pleased with the resulting abstract background and the sharpness of the heron, which remained still during my half-second exposure.

I stayed with this bird about 10 minutes until I started to gather a crowd of onlookers who wanted to see what I was seeing. I thanked him for his patience and cooperation and moved on.
Eye Doctor Helps Tennessee Legally Blind To See

High Technology For Low Vision Patients Allows Many To Drive Again

For many patients with macular degeneration and other vision-related conditions, the loss of central visual detail also signals the end to one of the last bastions of independence: driving. A Lebanon optometrist, Dr. John Pino, is using miniaturized telescopes that are mounted in glasses to help people who have lost vision from macular degeneration and other eye conditions.

“Some of my patients consider me the last stop for people who have vision loss,” said Dr. Pino, one of only a few doctors in the world who specialize in fitting biotic telescopes to help those who have lost vision due to macular degeneration, diabetic retinopathy, and other debilitating eye diseases.

Imagine a pair of glasses that can improve your vision enough to change your life. If you’re a low vision patient, you’ve probably not only imagined them, but have been searching for them. Biotic telescopes may be the breakthrough in optical technology that will give you the independence you’ve been looking for. Patients with vision in the 20/200 range can many times be improved to 20/50 or better.

Macular degeneration is the leading cause of blindness and vision loss in people over 50. Despite this, most adults are not familiar with the condition. As many as 25% of those over the age of 50 have some degree of macular degeneration. The macula is only one small part of the retina; however, it is the most sensitive and gives us sharp central vision. When it degenerates, macular degeneration leaves a blind spot right in the center of vision, making it difficult or impossible to recognize faces, read a book, or pass the driver’s vision test.

Nine out of 10 people who have macular degeneration have the dry form. New research suggests vitamins can help. The British medical journal BMC Ophthalmology recently reported that functioning, especially driving,” says Dr. Pino.

When Elaine, 57, of Kingsport, TN, came to see Dr. Pino she wanted to keep her Tennessee driver’s license and was prescribed biotic telescopic glasses to read signs and see traffic lights farther away. Dr. Pino also prescribed microscopec glasses for reading newspapers and menus in restaurants.

As Elaine puts it, “My regular glasses didn’t help too much – it was like looking through a fog. These new telescopic glasses not only allow me to read signs from a farther distance, but make driving much easier. I’ve also used them to watch television so I don’t have to sit so close. I don’t know why I waited to do this; I should have come sooner.”

“Biotic telescopes can cost over $2,000,” said Dr. Pino, “especially if we build them with an automatic sunglass.”

“The major benefit of the biotic telescope is that the lens automatically focuses on whatever you’re looking at,” said Dr. Pino. “It’s like a self-focusing camera, but much more precise.”

To learn more about biotic telescopes or to schedule a consultation with Dr. Pino, give us a call at 1-855-405-8800. You can also visit our website at:

www.lowvisiontn.com

For more information and a FREE telephone consultation, call us today:
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