Nathan Collie Photographs Birds by the Season

Red Boiling Springs Resorts of Yesteryear

Follow in the Footsteps of Civil Rights Trailblazers

State Park Spotlight Henry Horton

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DEPARTMENTS

8 Tennessee Almanac
Stay up-to-date with quick tips and news nuggets.

20 Co-op News
Information from your electric cooperative or electric membership corporation.

26 Home Energy Q&A
Change your behavior and save energy — and money.
by Miranda Boutelle

32 A Taste of Tennessee
This month’s recipes are dedicated to your sweet tooth.

35 Tennessee Events
This listing tells what’s happening across the state.

40 Community Corner
Check out Artist’s Palette, and see our Find the Flag winners.

FEATURES

10 Taking a Stand for Justice
Follow the Tennessee Civil Rights Trail with sites dedicated to teaching visitors about struggles for equality in Memphis, Nashville and Clinton. by Pamela A. Keene

16 Slow Down and Follow the Song
In Nathan Collie’s new book, “Moments with Birds,” we enjoy rich, lush photography accompanied by Collie’s keen birding observations. by Nicole Christensen

26 A Trip to Bygone Tennessee
Visit historic Red Boiling Springs where its famous mineral water can still be enjoyed by visitors who continue to explore three remaining mineral springs resorts that helped put the town on the map. by Bill Carey

32 A River Runs Through It
Named after Tennessee’s governor from 1927 to 1933, Henry Horton State Park has provided hiking, camping and adventure to families for years. Known for recreation on the Duck River, the park is fun for the whole family. by Trish Milburn

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

THIS PAGE
The iconic sign of the Lorraine Motel has meant sorrow and anguish for many as the motel was the site of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.’s death. Visit it or any stop on the Tennessee Civil Rights Trail, and you’ll find touching memorials and fascinating exhibits honoring not only Dr. King but all who fought for civil rights then and thereafter. See page 10. Photograph by Raphael Tenschert

ABOUT THE COVER
Nothing heralds the coming of spring in Tennessee like the bluebird. This vibrant example was captured by author and photographer Nathan Collie, whose new book, “Moments with Birds,” contains his thoughts on birding as well as pictures taken over the past several years. See page 16.
Between the Lines
News from your community

Thank a lineworker on April 10

If you were asked to associate an image or a person with Cumberland Electric Membership Corporation, I bet you would picture a lineworker. Among the most visible employees of the co-op, lineworkers work tirelessly to ensure our community receives uninterrupted power 24/7.

“Lineworker” is listed as one of the 10 most dangerous jobs in the U.S. This is understandable as they perform detailed tasks near high-voltage power lines. Regardless of the time of day, having to brave stormy weather and other challenging conditions, lineworkers must climb 40 feet in the air, often carrying heavy equipment to get the job done.

Being a lineworker is not a glamorous or easy profession. It takes years of specialized training, ongoing education, dedication and, equally important, a sense of service and commitment. How else can you explain the willingness to leave the comfort of your home to tackle a challenging job in difficult conditions when most are sheltering comfortably at home?

This dedication and sense of service to the community are truly what set them apart. That’s why we set aside the second Monday in April to celebrate and recognize the men and women who work around the clock to keep the lights on.

While lineworkers might be the most visible employees at CEMC, it’s important to note that there is a team of highly skilled professionals working behind the scenes. Engineers provide ongoing expertise and guidance on the operations side of the co-op. Customer service representatives are standing by to take your calls and questions. Our information technology (IT) experts are continuously monitoring our system to help safeguard sensitive data. And these are just a few of the folks who work together to ensure we can deliver the service and reliability you expect and deserve. Without them, our lineworkers wouldn’t be able to “bring the light” to our community.

Our dedicated and beloved lineworkers are proud to represent CEMC, and they deserve all the appreciation and accolades that come their way on Lineworker Appreciation Day.

On April 10 and any time you see lineworkers, I hope you’ll join me in thanking them for their exceptional service. I also hope you’ll remember that you have a dedicated team of professionals working behind the scenes at the co-op whose commitment to service runs just as deeply.
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Unsung heroes

If you ask elementary school-aged children to write about their heroes, you might get quite an amusing grouping of subjects — cartoon superheroes, fictional characters, sports stars and other larger-than-life characters. A heartwarming hand-drawn picture of a student’s mom or dad might even make its way onto the page.

Give that same assignment to a young adult, and the subjects will likely become much more real-life. Soldiers. Firefighters. Police. Doctors and nurses. People dedicated to serving others and willing to accept some degree of risk.

This dedication can cost them. Sacrifices like time away from loved ones, physical discomfort, injuries and sometimes even risk of death are everyday life for these special people. And while these heroes rarely ever seek recognition, we hold parades and ceremonies for them on special days.

We do these things because the gratitude is earned. As I have grown older, though, I have recognized that there are heroes among us who don’t receive that kind of appreciation. And most who fit this category don’t seek appreciation for their heroics. And to me, that makes the recognition all the more deserved.

I am thinking of people like Rick Courtner and Cody Bryant. These amazing employees of Mountain Electric Cooperative, along with several of their colleagues, had no idea that their normal day at work in February 2020 would find them at the dramatic scene of a motorist trapped in ferocious floodwaters. Local EMS had no way to make a swift water rescue. All that prevented tragedy that day were the selfless actions of people who cared. But as the news report documenting the event concluded, these heroes “see their actions as so unremarkable, they don’t remember what happened afterward … they just packed up the truck.”

Read the story and see the amazing video for yourself by visiting tnelectric.org, clicking on the search icon in the upper right area of the homepage and typing the word “floodwaters” in the search box. “Unremarkable” is the last thing I believe you will say after you see the video.

“Heroic” is the word that comes to mind. But this was nothing unusual for them. Rick and Cody and thousands of their colleagues across our state are already unsung heroes. They are electric lineworkers. An average day for a lineworker — one of the world’s most dangerous jobs — can include all of the common threads that make us show so much respect for a soldier or a firefighter or other easily recognizable hero. Keeping electricity flowing is done through hard work, long hours and dangerous conditions. And almost everything we do in modern society depends upon their efforts.

I am happy to report that the Tennessee General Assembly has recognized the important roles lineworkers play in daily life. The second Monday in April of each year — April 10 this year — is now designated as Tennessee Lineworker Appreciation Day to honor and recognize lineworkers for their estimable work in providing for the safety and well-being of this state’s citizens. I am grateful to Sen. Paul Bailey of Sparta and Rep. Clark Boyd of Lebanon for sponsoring the legislation and to each and every member of the General Assembly, which unanimously passed it.

While most of the lineworkers I know don’t seek recognition, I hope you will join me in providing it to them anyway. They deserve it.
Like millions of older Americans, I struggle with mobility. For years, I watched my quality of life slip away, as I was forced to stay home while friends and family took part in activities I’d once enjoyed. I thought I’d made some progress when I got a mobility scooter, but then I realized how hard it was to transport. Taking it apart and putting it back together was like doing a jigsaw puzzle. Once I had it disassembled, I had to try to put all of the pieces in the trunk of a car, go to wherever I was going, and repeat the process in reverse. Travel scooters were easier to transport, but they were uncomfortable and scary to drive, I always felt like I was ready to tip over. Then I found the So Lite\textsuperscript{TM} Scooter. Now there’s nothing that can hold me back.

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Great Smoky Mountains National Park is home to the largest population of synchronous fireflies in the Western Hemisphere. Each spring, the forest near Elkmont campground flashes to life as tens of thousands of fireflies gather and strobe their bioluminescent lights in harmony. This reproductive display occurs nightly for a couple of weeks, typically in late May or early June.

Due to the limited time period and the popularity of the event, the National Park Service limits access to the area through a lottery. Only 100 parking passes per day will be issued for the eight-day event. The lottery opens at 10 a.m. on April 28 and closes at 8 p.m. on May 1, with the winners notified on May 11. You can sign up for the lottery at recreation.gov.

**State insects**

In addition to the firefly, Tennessee has three other state insects: the ladybug, honeybee and zebra swallowtail butterfly.

**APRIL 17, 1905**

**Tennessee state flag adopted**

The Tennessee state flag was approved by the General Assembly on April 17, 1905. The flag was designed by LeRoy Reeves, an attorney from Johnson City who was serving in the Tennessee Infantry. The three stars represent East, Middle and West Tennessee.

There is sometimes confusion about how the flag should be displayed. The United States Postal Service even printed the flag upside down on a run of Bicentennial stamps in 1976.

The three stars should be in approximately the 2:30, 6:30 and 10:30 positions, and the star nearest the top of the flagpole should be highest.
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Retired educator and historian Gloria Haugabook McKissack remembers vividly the day 63 years ago when she was forcibly ejected from the Wilson Quick Pharmacy lunch counter in Nashville. It was a pivotal point in her life, marking her decision to join the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee led by John Lewis.

“The Freedom Riders, expelled from A&I, were restarting the sit-ins, and I wanted to participate, so we got a short intro to nonviolent protests at First Baptist (Church) Capitol Hill by Lewis and other leaders, then made our way downtown,” she says, looking back on her first experience with the civil rights movement. “We sat at the counter, and the next thing I knew, several busboys physically picked me up like a sack of potatoes and threw me out on the street like I was trash. I didn’t fight back, but racial slurs and that violent physical incident triggered me. From then on, I wanted to do everything I could to support and influence the movement.”
The then-student at Tennessee Agricultural & Industrial University (now Tennessee State University) had moved to the South from Detroit to attend college and was soon met with the worst kind of culture shock she had ever encountered: overt segregation and racial discrimination.

More than six decades later, the former educator continues to speak about civil rights, recalling those early days working side-by-side with Lewis (who later became a congressman from Georgia), Bernard Lafayette, C.T. Vivian, James Lawson, Marion Berry and others.

“At that time, the whole city was in an upheaval, and I felt I had no other moral choice but to join the movement knowing full well I could be expelled from college,” McKissack says. “I knew I had the courage and strength in my heart to carry on and stand up for racial equality and justice.”

Her actions and those of other members of the civil rights movement are commemorated in 14 sites on the Tennessee portion of the U.S. Civil Rights Trail, created by Travel South USA starting in 2018.

In Nashville, the sites are the Civil Rights Room at the Nashville Public Library, Clark Memorial United Methodist Church, Davidson County Courthouse/Witness Walls, Woolworth Theatre, Fisk University, Griggs Hall at American Baptist College and the National Museum of African American Music.

“In 2021, the city renamed Fifth Avenue John Lewis Way to memorialize the late congressman and civil rights leader who died that year,” says Marie Sueing, chief diversity officer for the Nashville Convention & Visitors Corp. “A historic marker was placed at Sixth Avenue North and Commerce Street where the old Greyhound bus station was located. That’s where a young Lewis boarded a bus to join the restarted Freedom Rides in Alabama.”

In the same area at the corner of John Lewis Way and Commerce Street, a four-story mural commemorates Lewis and other Freedom Riders C.T. Vivian, Ernest “Rip” Patton, Diane Nash, the Rev. Kelly Miller Smith, the Rev. James Lawson and Kwame Lillard.

Across the South in the 1950s and 1960s, nonviolent protests continued, and Tennessee became a focal point of the movement, particularly in Clinton/Anderson County where 12 students successfully integrated Clinton High School on Aug. 26, 1956.

“Now known as the Clinton 12, these courageous students made it the first desegregated public high school in the South,” says Stephanie Wells, director of the Anderson County Tourism Council. “Their story is told in the Green McAdoo Cultural Center, which opened in 2006 to celebrate the 50th anniversary of their actions.”

The center is located in the former Black school for grades K-8. Outside, 12 life-sized bronze statues greet visitors. Inside, a 1950s-period
The classroom takes visitors back to education in the mid-20th century.

Biographies and photos of the Clinton 12, a comprehensive history of the town’s role in the civil rights movement and interactive screens re-create the faces, names and places in Anderson County that contributed to national change.

The world’s eyes turned to Memphis on Thursday, April 4, 1968, when Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was assassinated while standing on his balcony of the Lorraine Motel.

“He had just delivered his ‘I’ve Been to the Mountaintop’ speech in support of the sanitation workers’ strike in Memphis the day before,” says Connie Dyson, marketing communications manager for the National Civil Rights Museum, located in the former Lorraine Motel.

“In that speech, he said, ‘Like anybody, I would like to live a long life. Longevity has its place. But I’m not concerned about that now. I just want to do God’s will. And He’s allowed me to go up to the mountain. And I’ve looked over. And I’ve seen the promised land. I may not get there with you. But I want you to know tonight, that we, as a people, will get to the promised land!’”

The National Civil Rights Museum at the Lorraine Motel is one of the most visited restored civil rights landmarks in the nation. The Mason Temple Church where King gave his “I’ve Been to the Mountaintop” speech the night before his assassination is frequently visited as well.

In addition to the National Civil Rights Museum at the Lorraine Motel, sites on the U.S. Civil Rights Trail in Memphis are the Beale Street Historic District, Clayborn Temple and I Am A Man Plaza, Mason Temple Church of God in Christ, Stax Museum of American Soul Music and WDIA Radio Station.

About the U.S. Civil Rights Trail

The concept for the U.S. Civil Rights Trail began in Alabama in 2017 when the state tourism department created the Alabama Civil Rights Trail. Later that year, 12 other Southern states, members of the Travel South USA Travel Association, came together to curate the national trail. It was launched in 2018 on Martin Luther King Jr. Day.

Today, the trail is composed of more than 100 sites — from schools to parks, churches to museums, monuments to courthouses — across 15 states. Tennessee currently has 14 sites in three cities.

The U.S. Civil Rights Trail website, civilrightstrail.com, offers descriptions of the sites, including their significance to the civil rights movement, themed itineraries, an interactive map and suggested routes.
After spending the past 63 years immersed in the civil rights movement, including being on the forefront of school desegregation as a history teacher for 47 years in Tennessee, Ms. McKissack is reflective but not complacent about the movement’s legacy.

“People need to continue to teach and learn positive conflict resolution to move forward, and I just want people to be able to get along,” she says. “Racism will not go away; evil is out there. But remember to stay vigilant and never give up. Don’t ever let anyone turn you around from justice.”
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The Crystal Coast
North Carolina’s southern outer banks
Imagine you are walking through the woods, and there’s silence all around except for your shoes trudging along on the dirt path beneath you. You round a corner, and, all of a sudden, there are birds squawking, almost as if they’re alarm bells. It’s an experience many of us have had while walking in the woods, and many of us march on trying to continue our hike or get to a destination. But for nature photographers like Nathan Collie, this is a sign to slow down or even stop in hopes that he might see a bird fly by or resting on a nearby branch.

“You’ll hear them before you see them,” Nathan said. “A lot of times that’s how I will know when to stop.”

Once he slows down, there are times when the birds will pop right out because they don’t perceive him as a threat or are even curious about him (since that is not what humans usually do on the trails). He has to be careful, though, since even a quick movement like crouching down to get a better angle for his photos could make the birds take flight.

Nathan Collie is a nature photographer, filmmaker and author of “Moments with Birds: A Bird Photographer’s Journey Through the Seasons.” He has been taking photos of birds, specifically, for at least 10 years. With over 160 photographs, his book showcases birds he’s documented in Tennessee over the years, throughout all the seasons — whether migratory or resident, along with a couple of rare birds.

A lot of times, people ask Nathan, “Why birds?” They wonder, if someone is going to chase wildlife through the woods to photograph, why chase something so small?

Nathan grew up being outdoors. His grandmother who lived in Memphis was a big birder, and she got his curiosity up about birds as a child. Every time he visited Memphis to see her, they would talk about the birds they had seen, and she would give him some knowledge on what types of birds to look out for during different parts of the year. He found it exciting to discuss something he didn’t know much about despite his extensive experience outdoors as a kid.

Nathan’s mom is also a photographer as well as an artist, so he grew up being in front of her camera a lot and being around creative, like-minded artists. She often photographs landscapes and people, whereas Nathan has a different photography style, mostly focusing on wildlife. His mom helped develop his artistic eye for the “why” behind his photos, or, “What is it about what you’re looking at that has potential or importance?”

“Even if you’re photographing people, you’ve got to loosen them up before you can find their personality, and that’s when you get those shots,” Nathan said. “If you have the opportunity to be around an animal for a long period of time, he’ll give you a window of some of that personality, and I think that’s what everybody’s always hungry for: Can I get that photo where that personality shines before they go back on autopilot?”

Nathan said he was talking to a friend recently about how birds make great subjects, whether in photography or even in artwork.

At left, nature photographer Nathan Collie has photographed birds in Tennessee over many years and across all seasons. Photograph by Robin Conover. Opposite page, his book boasts more than 160 photographs showcasing an array of bird species.
“Photography-wise, they are one of the few animals that I’ve found where they give you so many different poses in such a very short period of time,” Nathan said. “It’s kind of hard to convince a deer to do a handstand or a bunch of different poses. It might take him 10 minutes to give you a different angle. A bird could come in and within 30 seconds do five different poses and fly away, which is one extra pose if you’re actually paying attention.”

Nathan also noted that observing a bird long enough will reveal specific spots to which it returns. Then photographers can go to that area to get comfortable and wait for the right moment rather than trying to chase birds through the woods to capture their photos.

“Animals are almost creatures of habit like people,” Nathan said. “Everybody’s got their favorite bench or spot that they go to hang out. But sometimes, the best way to get wildlife is just to go light (with little equipment) because sometimes it’s really, very spontaneous. I think that’s where the excitement is because you don’t know. It’s kind of like a scavenger hunt, and if you get lucky, you’ll have a story to tell.”

Nathan often uses a Canon 7D Mark II with a Sigma 150 mm to 600 mm lens when photographing birds. He said that if someone is just getting into photographing birds, a great way to practice is by taking photos of the bird feeder in their yard. He also recommended getting a tripod or brace to minimize camera movement and taking the camera off autofocus.

“It’s great that cameras nowadays are very sophisticated, but when there are very fast-moving subjects, (cameras try) to outsmart them and almost do the opposite of what you want them to,” Nathan added.

Nathan manually focuses his camera on a branch or on part of a feeder where the birds land. Then, he doesn’t have to look through the viewfinder because everything is set up for him, and he can watch the branch from far away and hit the shutter right when the bird starts to fly. He said that technique is a great way to get more bird photos in focus.
Nathan said, for birds, the most important part of the body to have in focus is probably the head. “I’ve had a couple of shots in low-light conditions where the head and part of the neck are in focus and the rest of the body out of focus, and the wings with the motion blur can almost really look artistic. Even if you wanted to try and get that shot, it just wouldn’t work,” Nathan said.

“When you’re out there having fun shooting and not like, ‘Everything has to be tick-tack sharp,’ you’re just kind of like, ‘If he’s here, I just want evidence to tell somebody,’ that’s usually when you get some of the fun shots because you’re just loose, and you’re not tense,” Nathan said.

As Nathan took many photos of birds over the years and as he met people and exchanged bird knowledge with them along the way, he has realized that there are a couple of bird species that come through Tennessee that are in serious decline. That knowledge gave him more of a mission to take photos of as many bird species that come through Tennessee as he can since there might come a time when some are not around anymore.

Nathan’s book also gives educational tidbits on some of the defining features of specific bird species and insight into their migratory patterns. The book also addresses whether a species is in decline; Nathan said birds can show the first signals that an ecosystem is doing well or hurting. “If the birds come through an area that is struggling, that’s kind of like the tip of the iceberg before that ecosystem collapses,” Nathan said. “Naturally, when people notice that something’s wrong, it’s already because the deer or the bigger animals are struggling, but at that point, it’s almost at the point of no return.”

Nathan said that when he started photography, he always wanted to focus on wildlife because he grew up wanting to be a conservationist. But he thought his unique skill set and background would be better suited to documenting wildlife, in particular birds, through his photos and videos and utilizing his work to help conservation efforts when he can. Some of his videos of birds play in the visitor center at Radnor Lake State Natural Area in Nashville, where he often visits for photo shoots.

In his book, Nathan also included some actions that individuals can take to help bird populations, in another sort of conservation effort on a more individual scale. Nashville’s Warner Parks told Nathan that the two main killers of birds are cats and window strikes. Nathan said that ways to prevent window strikes include putting anticollision sticker decals on windows to help birds see the panes and installing special non-bird-strike glass.

Nathan’s book is laid out by season, starting with spring and ending with winter. The book includes photos, informative and anecdotal captions and photo locations to give readers an idea of what kinds of birds they might be able to identify during certain parts of the year in specific environments in Tennessee. “With some of the species, I’ve documented them a couple of times (in the book),” Nathan said. “In the spring, a lot of times the birds will have their breeding plumage or breeding colors where they’re really vibrant and their patterns and are just very in your face, but the same bird in the fall could have almost no color.”

April is a peak month for seeing migratory bird species in Tennessee, Nathan said. Spring is also his favorite season when it comes to birds. “One of the reasons why I like spring is because it’s when they’re probably the most vocal,” Nathan said. In the summer, they are pretty talkative here and there. In the fall, unless it’s about food, they’re not very chattery. In the winter, they’re pretty quiet.”

“But in the springtime, you can hear them from a distance,” Nathan said. “And if I want to see birds, I should go follow the song.”

For more information on Nathan Collie or to order his book, “Moments with Birds: A Bird Photographer’s Journey Through the Seasons,” visit his website, nathancollie.com. You can also find him on social media at @nathan.collie2 on Instagram and @nathan.collie.5 on Facebook.
Tennessee Voices for Cooperative Power gives you the power to speak about energy policies that impact your community and your electric co-op.

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Cumberland Electric Membership Corporation is continuing its partnership with the Tennessee Valley Authority in addressing hardships created by the COVID-19 pandemic by participating in the Community Care Fund grant program in 2023. CEMC will be matching funds offered by TVA to selected nonprofit agencies throughout its five-county service area. CEMC and TVA will award a total of $93,500 to 15 different agencies this year.

These organizations received Community Care Fund grants from CEMC and TVA in February:

- **$1,000 — Robertson County Family Resource Center.** Funds will provide resources for students in Robertson County who have been identified as homeless. Resources include food for the food pantry, new clothing, shoes, school supplies and medical expenses.

- **$1,500 — Camp Rainbow Clarksville.** Funds will be used to help pay camp fees and purchase supplies for children with serious illnesses who are unable to attend traditional summer camps.

- **$4,000 — Cooperative Outreach for Personal Emergencies Inc. (C.O.P.E.)** Funds will be used to assist members who are struggling to pay for rent, mortgages, utility bills, medication, childcare and food.

- **$11,000 — United Way of the Greater Clarksville Region.** Funds donated will be used to assist members who are struggling to pay for rent, mortgages, utility bills, medication, childcare and food.

Since the program began in April 2020, the Community Care Fund has helped numerous local charitable organizations across the Tennessee Valley region provide assistance to those most impacted by the ongoing pandemic.
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Looking for a simple way to manage your monthly electric bill while cutting down the amount of paper cluttering your countertops? Try paperless billing!

Paperless billing from Cumberland Electric Membership Corporation is an easy way to receive your monthly bill without the hassle of sifting through piles of mail, keeping up with paper bills, writing and mailing checks and missing payment dates due to delivery delays.

To sign up, visit cemc.org, log in to your SmartHub account and choose “Yes” when prompted to turn off paper bills. You can also turn off paper bills through the SmartHub mobile app. Once you’ve signed up, you’ll receive an email notification when your bill is ready each month, allowing you to take care of business without having to wait until a paper bill arrives in the mail.

In honor of Earth Day, CEMC is offering an incentive for members who participate in paperless billing. All CEMC members enrolled in paperless billing prior to April 22 (Earth Day), will be entered in a drawing for $100 electric bill credits! A total of five lucky members will win! Members who are already enrolled in paperless billing will be automatically entered into the contest.

Good luck, and thank you for going green with paperless billing!

Save the date: CEMC Member Appreciation Day is May 11

Join us at your local CEMC office on Thursday, May 11, for Member Appreciation Day! We’ll be serving a FREE picnic lunch consisting of grilled hot dogs, chips, cookies and soft drinks from 10:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. at the CEMC offices in Dover, Clarksville, Ashland City, Springfield, White House and Portland.

Members who attend can also register for a chance to win electric grills, one of which will be given away at each location. (Only one entry per household, please. Only members in attendance can register.)

We hope you will make plans to join us!
Efficiency upgrades to help you save this summer

Spring and summer are opportune times for home upgrades and DIY projects. If you’re planning to make improvements to your home, consider upgrades that promote better efficiency.

Here are a few projects that can help you save energy and money — and increase the comfort of your home.

Installing a smart thermostat is one of the simplest ways to manage home energy use and keep summer bills in check. Smart thermostats are easy to install and allow you to control your heating and cooling system from your phone. You can purchase an Energy Star-certified smart thermostat for as little as $100 — which can save you 8%, about $50 per year, on annual heating and cooling costs. This upgrade will quickly pay for itself, and you’ll gain insight into better ways to heat and cool your home.

Speaking of smart, additional devices like smart LED bulbs also offer convenient control and help boost energy savings at home. With smart lighting, you can set a schedule for when your lights should be turned on or off. And the next time you head out to run errands and realize you left the lights on, all you have to do is turn them off through your phone. Smart lights come in a variety of shapes, colors and brightness levels — and you can purchase bulbs for indoor or outdoor use. Schedule outdoor smart lights to illuminate your home at night and when you’re out of town for better security.

Though not as trendy as incorporating smart technologies, sealing air leaks around your home is a simple, effective way to save energy and lower your bills. Applying new (or replacing old) weather stripping around doors and windows can instantly make your home more comfortable and reduce energy waste. Applying caulk to fill gaps can also improve the seal of your home. Caulk can be applied to a variety of areas, including windows, doors, bathtubs and sinks.

If your home feels too warm during summer (and too chilly during winter) even after you’ve sealed with weather stripping and caulk, your home might need additional insulation. Considered a more expensive efficiency upgrade, additional insulation can make a big impact on reducing energy use and costs. The

Sealing air leaks around your home is a simple, effective way to save energy and lower your electric bills.
cost of new insulation depends on a variety of factors like materials, size of the home and whether you use a contractor. Typically, the project costs can be recouped in a few years, and your home will immediately feel more comfortable.

Of course, additional efficiency upgrades like upgrading old appliances with Energy Star-rated models or replacing old, leaky windows with new, energy-efficient windows can make a big impact on energy use. But these upgrades can be a bit pricey.

If you’re wanting to make your home more energy-efficient but you’re not sure where to start, the experts at Cumberland Electric Membership Corporation are here to help. Visit us online at cemc.org/program/energy-solutions for a wealth of information and resources, including our online energy advisor, which can help identify areas to boost efficiency and help you determine the projects you want to tackle first based on your budget and needs.

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**Young leaders learn about co-ops, agriculture at conference**

Justin and Cassie Brooksher of Adams joined hundreds of other young adults from across Tennessee in Franklin on Feb. 17 and 18 for the 2023 Young Leaders Conference. The Brookshers were sponsored by Cumberland Electric Membership Corporation to attend the annual conference that brings rural Tennesseans together to learn about cooperatives and discuss issues facing the agricultural industry.

The Tennessee Council of Cooperatives co-sponsors the annual conference with Tennessee Farm Bureau Federation’s Young Farmers and Ranchers organization.

This year’s event, themed “Cooperatively Building a Better Tennessee,” featured keynote speakers and presentations covering a variety of subjects aimed at educating leaders about the benefits of cooperatives, building leadership skills and exploring topics important to rural Tennesseans. Attendees were exposed to ideas and information that will enable them to add value to their own businesses, form new niche cooperatives with others in their communities and meet the challenges of the future with cooperative marketing innovations.

Justin is a full-time farmer on his family farm in Adams. His wife, Cassie, is a teacher at Sango Elementary School in Montgomery County. The Brookshers have two children: Garrett, 5, and Sadie, 1.
Don’t miss the 82nd Annual Middle Tennessee Strawberry Festival, coming to Portland May 12-13. The Portland Chamber of Commerce has planned another exciting festival with a host of activities and entertainment throughout the week leading up to the main festival day.

This year’s festival, themed “Berry Special Friends, Going for the Gold,” will include a free concert featuring Rubiks Groove — an ’80s, ’90s and 2000s tribute band — on Friday, May 12, at 6:30 p.m., followed by a fireworks show at 8:30 p.m.

Check out the following lineup of events, and bring the family to enjoy the fun!

May 5-6: Third Annual Strawberry Quilt show at Richland Park Gym.
May 6: Middle Tennessee Strawberry Festival Pageants at Portland High School.
May 6: Strawberry Slam Wrestling event at 7 p.m. at Portland High School.
May 9: Annual Four-Person Golf Scramble at Kenny Perry’s Country Creek Golf Course. Entry fee is $600 per team and includes breakfast, lunch, mulligans and games package.
May 9-13: Come join the carnival fun all week long at Richland Park.
May 11: Portland Farmers Market grand opening for 2023 from 3:30 to 7 p.m.
May 11: Second Annual Strawberry Festival Art Showcase at Richland Park gym from 4 to 7 p.m.
May 12: Strawberry Jam Concert featuring Rubiks Groove at 6:30 p.m. on the Old Hickory Credit Union Stage. Live music and food vendors begin at 5 p.m. (Bring a chair or rent one for $5 while supplies last.) Fireworks begin at 8:30 p.m. (Free parking and shuttle at Portland High School from 4:30 to 9:30 p.m.)
May 13: Main Festival Day!
- Rotary Club pancake breakfast — 7 a.m. at First Baptist Portland.
- Strawberry Stride 5K Walk/Run sponsored by Portland Athletics — 8 a.m. at Portland High School.
- Kid Town USA. Play all day for $5.
- Strawberry Jam live entertainment from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Market Street and Section C stage.
- Strawberry Lane: Strawberries for sale — while supplies last — beginning at 10 a.m.
- Mechanical guitar rides — $50 per ride, cash only.
- Magic shows on the N. Russell stage at 11 a.m., 1 p.m. and 3 p.m.
- Meet and greet with Robocars from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.
- Bingo beginning at 1 p.m.
- Visit more than 200 vendors in six locations.
- Parade begins at 4 p.m. Applications for entry are available online.
- FREE parking and shuttle at Portland High School and Generation Church beginning at 10 a.m.

For more information and a complete schedule of events, visit MiddleTNStrawberryFestival.com or call the chamber at 615-325-9032.
Prevention is your best defense: Being mindful of online scams

As exciting, practical and helpful as the internet can be, it is important to stay vigilant and make sure you are protecting your sensitive information and personal data. Online scammers are constantly hunting for your private data — and with our reliance on technology increasing every day, they have more opportunities to steal your information than ever before. According to data from the FTC, U.S. consumers lost a record $3.56 billion in just the first half of 2022. While online scam attempts might be more common than ever, prevention is the best form of defense. Read on to learn how you can identify some of the most common types of online scams to help keep you safe while using the internet.

Phishing
Phishing is the most common type of online scam out there today — largely because it has a relatively high success rate. A phishing scam is a cybercriminal’s attempt to get you to give out information, sometimes through a convincing email or text message that looks like it came from a source that you trust. Scams like these can potentially give cybercriminals access to sensitive information such as your address, bank accounts, Social Security number and more.

Real-life example: Amber received a phone call from someone claiming to work for her insurance company, asking her to update her address and phone number. Amber wanted to ensure that her personal information was protected. She told the representative that she would hang up and call the insurance company back directly through the number listed on her insurance card to make sure the request was authentic. The company’s representative understood and encouraged her to do so.

What to watch for: Be suspicious of hyperlinks. Also, most companies like banks, government agencies or insurance companies will not call you and ask you to provide personal information out of the blue.

Spoofing
Spoofing is the act of a cybercriminal impersonating another person or organization in order to conduct a scam. Spoofing can occur through phone calls, text messages, emails, websites and even social media. Criminals might spoof a person or business to phish information from those who trust that source, spread malware or gain access to secured systems and devices.

Real-life example: In this image above, you can see a spoofing attempt that a Cumberland Connect subscriber received regarding a giveaway. In this case, the cybercriminal created a fake profile using the same photos and general information as the Cumberland Connect Facebook page. However, upon closer inspection, you can see that something is off. For example, the name of the profile is “Cumberland Connèct” with an accent over the “e.” Also, notice the poor grammar and how the hyperlinks are very ambiguous. This is an example of how easy it can be to fall for a scam if you aren’t paying close attention.

What to watch for: Pay attention to details such as spelling mistakes and grammar errors. Double-check hyperlinks and their destinations. When in doubt, contact the person or organization through another method to verify that the message is authentic.

The Cumberland Connect team wants you to have a great experience online — and that means spreading awareness on how you can stay safe on the internet. To view more articles and resources on ways you can help keep your personal information protected when you’re online, visit our website at CumberlandConnect.org/Stay-Safe-Online.
Q: I want to lower my energy use, but I don’t know where to start. How can I find out how much energy I use? What are some ways I can save energy without spending a lot of money?

A: You can change your energy use by changing your behavior.

When looking at electric bills, many people focus on the total dollar amount of the bill. When trying to manage your energy costs, I suggest changing your focus to energy use.

While you don’t have control over the cost of the energy, you can control how much energy you use.

Set goals

Instead of thinking about your bills in terms of dollars, think about them in terms of kilowatt-hours. A kilowatt-hour is the unit of energy used for most electric bills. Review your monthly kWh use to get an idea of how much you use every month.

Once you’ve reviewed your energy use, set goals for the next month. Try to use less energy than the month before, and check your results on your next bill.

Know when to use less energy

Some electric utilities offer time-of-use rates, which means electricity costs are dependent on the time of day. This pricing structure more closely reflects the cost to electric utilities and helps consumers understand that energy costs more when the demand for it is higher.

Even if your electric bill does not include time-of-use rates, it can be beneficial to delay energy-intensive chores or tasks to when demand is lower. Peak hours are typically in the morning as we prepare for work and in the evening when we get home and start preparing food and turning on entertainment devices. Doing laundry and running the dishwasher are easy activities to delay until after peak hours.

Above, if you want to use less energy, start by setting goals. Review your monthly kilowatt-hour use to get an idea of how much energy you use every month, then set goals for the next month. Left, ensuring the filters in your heating and cooling system are clean is an easy way to keep it maintained and operating efficiently. Photos by Mark Gilliland, Pioneer Utility Resources
Power off for energy savings

When looking for energy savings, remember that “off” is the most efficient setting. Turning off lights is a classic strategy, especially if your lighting is incandescent. Consider switching to energy-saving LED lightbulbs.

Computers and gaming systems can waste energy even when in sleep mode. The higher the wattage and the more hours the device is on, the more energy used. Laptops use the least energy, followed by personal computers at about 200 watts. Gaming consoles typically use less energy than gaming PCs. Don’t forget to turn off the monitor as well.

You can lower your energy use even more with smart power strips, which cut power to devices that are not in use. Many electronics continue to draw power even when they are turned off. This could add 5% to 10% to your monthly bill, according to the Department of Energy. Installing smart power strips is an easy way to ensure devices are completely turned off and not drawing power.

Adjust the temp

When it comes to lowering your energy use, the settings on your thermostat are another great place to check. Keep in mind that the weather affects your electric bill for heating and air conditioning.

The closer you can keep the indoor temperature to the outdoor temperature, the more you will save. You want to protect your home from damage in extreme heat and cold, but if you can turn the temperature up a few degrees in summer and down in winter, you will save on energy costs.

Ensuring the filters in your heating and cooling system are clean is an easy way to keep your system maintained and operating efficiently. Adding annual servicing by a professional maximizes the efficiency and can lengthen the life of your system.

Understanding your energy use and making small adjustments to your routine will help you reach your energy use goals.

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.
Before our ancestors had cars to go where they pleased, Tennessee’s most popular vacation destinations were mineral springs resorts. Starting around 1810 and declining about a century later, these resort hotels could be found in Grainger County at the nationally famous Tate Springs and lesser-known Lea’s Springs. About half a dozen of them dotted the Highland Rim west of Nashville in places such as Kingston Springs and Bon Air Springs. You could find one in southwest Tennessee at Shelby County’s Raleigh Springs and in the southeast corner of the state at Monroe County’s White Cliff Springs.

Nearly all of these mineral springs hotels, though, are gone. They don’t exist anymore because people got cars and started going to other places. They are gone because, compared to our ancestors, today’s vacationers are hyperactive and can’t even imagine what it was like to vacation when the main activities were reading, playing board games and dancing to orchestra music in the evening. They are gone because most people no longer believe in the healing power of mineral waters.

When people get sick these days, they go to a doctor who prescribes a well-tested drug, not “a month in the country, drinking mineral water,” as some once did.

I’ve been researching Tennessee’s resort hotels of yesteryear — defined as rural, remote places where people used to vacation for weeks or months at a time. I’ve got 95 hotels on my list so far, and 92 of those have burned down, fallen down, been torn down or become private residences.

However, three of those hotels still exist — all in the small Macon County town of Red Boiling Springs.

As recently as 1920, Red Boiling Springs had about a dozen places in which visitors could stay. The largest was the Palace Hotel, which had 180 rooms. Over the next several generations, business declined because of the reasons I just named and because a 1969 flood destroyed large parts of the town. However, three of the Red Boiling Springs resort hotels are still open. They were in (nearly) continuous operation throughout the 20th century and still reflect more of the lifestyle of the early late 19th century than they do the 21st.
These three Red Boiling Springs hotels will have you stepping back in time

**Donoho Hotel**  Red Boiling Springs’ most striking hotel by appearance, the Donoho was built shortly before World War I. The 37-room hotel is completely made of wood and has a long balconyed porch, just like the vast majority of resort hotels had in the old days. “We have hundreds of feet of wood porch and, I think, 64 rocking chairs,” says John Cook, one of the Donoho’s owners who grew up in Macon County.

Over the years, Cook and his business partner, Jack Stites, have gone to great lengths to fill the hotel. “We bring in a lot of live music,” he says. “We have weddings, corporate retreats, family reunions and other types of events.

“And to make sure the local folks know about us, we open the dining room every second and fourth Sunday from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. for people to come have lunch after church. It’s kind of a Macon County tradition.”

**Thomas House**  Opened in 1890, the Thomas House once had mineral bathhouses, a nine-hole golf course, an open-air bowling alley and a swimming pool. Today, it doesn’t offer any of those things, but the 15-room hotel does have something far more interesting to the postmodern visitor — spooks. “There are people from all over the world who come here time and time again to ghost hunt,” says owner David Cole, who bought the hotel in 1993.

In fact, a list published by CNN recently cited the Thomas House as the second-most-haunted location in the U.S. — No. 5 on the list being the entire town of Gettysburg, Pennsylvania. Because of the hotel’s ranking, there are “ghost hunters” all over the country who organize and stage outings at the Thomas House.

Cole says most of the ghosts he’s been told about are connected to the history of his hotel. “I’m not a ghost hunter,” he says, “but we have been told about the ghost of a daughter of the Cloyd family who used to own the hotel. There’s a ghost of one of the former cooks. We’ve been told that there is a ghost of a boy who drowned in the pool a long time ago. This sort of thing.”

**Armour’s Hotel and Spa**  This 22-room hotel was built in 1924 and has for most of its existence been known as the Counts Hotel. It was purchased in 2021 by Mark and Kally Efros, a married couple with roots in Memphis but who most recently lived in Arizona.

“I have a lot of experience running hotels, and Kally is a wonderful cook, having raised a family of seven children and helped with two restaurants that we once owned,” Mark Efros says.

The Armour’s Hotel and Spa still offers mineral baths, which might make it the last place in Tennessee that does. It also has monthly Fourth Saturday Jams featuring local bands.

The creativity these three hotels have employed over the years amplifies the fact that Red Boiling Springs does not have a national park, putt-putt golf courses and vendors...
who sell candied apples. Granted, the lovely Salt Lick Creek winds through the town, and it is crossed by three covered bridges — which is saying a lot in a state with very few covered bridges. But instead of a row of gift shops and restaurants, the main drag in Red Boiling Springs has a row of empty lots with signs indicating where the Arlington Hotel, the Palace Hotel and the Bush’s Ax Handle Mill used to be.

“We do not have the hustle and bustle of Gatlinburg,” says Rita Watson, executive director of Vision 2020, a nonprofit organization that promotes Red Boiling Springs. “We do have the hustle and bustle of Gatlinburg,” says Rita Watson, executive director of Vision 2020, a nonprofit organization that promotes Red Boiling Springs. “This is more of a genuine, laid-back vacation destination. However, we do have ghost hunting at the Thomas House, mineral baths at Armour’s and live music shows.”

Like many of the people who are devoted to the Red Boiling Springs cause, Watson has roots in the area. “My parents grew up here, but then they moved away to northern Illinois where they raised my four siblings and myself,” she says. “We knew all about Red Boiling Springs and visited here, and the family continued to own

You can still drink and bathe in mineral water at Red Boiling Springs

There was a time when mineral water was a huge part of Tennessee’s tourism scene. Between 1810 and 1920, most newspapers contained an ad for at least one mineral spring with a claim that the water could cure all sorts of ailments.

“I attended Mr. Saunders’ mineral spring in the summer of 1812 for about two weeks, for a complaint in the bowels which had lasted in upwards of twelve months and reduced me very low,” Thomas A. Oden proclaimed in the April 20, 1813, Clarion and Tennessee Gazette. “I was relieved in that time solely by the use of the water.”

The majority of these mineral springs dried up long ago. In fact, a Vanderbilt professor named George Mayfield wrote a story in the Nov. 5, 1948, Nashville Banner bemoaning the fact that so many of Tennessee’s mineral springs had vanished. “In most cases the waters are now but a trickle as compared with 50 years ago,” Mayfield wrote.

However, Red Boiling Springs still has several active mineral springs. For liability reasons, the pumps that used to dispense water on public property have been sealed off. But guests at the Donoho and Armour’s hotels are welcome to sample the mineral water there.

Be advised that mineral water is different than the “sweet” but tasteless water that most current Americans associate with natural springs. There are numerous types of mineral water — each with different amounts of iron, magnesium, sulfate and other minerals. “We don’t get a lot of guests who want to drink the water anymore,” says Donoho Hotel owner John Cook. “But we have a spring that dispenses black water on our front lawn and a different one that puts out red sulfur water on the side.”

Despite the name of the town, mineral water comes out of the ground cold in Red Boiling Springs. That’s why they mix black mineral water with hot tap water at the mineral baths at Armour’s Hotel.

I took a long, hot bath at Armour’s and can vouch for its comfort and the wonderful night’s sleep I had afterward. A few pointers: Black water is clear like normal water. But before you bathe in it, remove all jewelry because it will turn jewelry black.

I can also tell you that a lot more steam rises from your hands and arms when you take a bath in mineral water than it does when you bathe in normal water. At one point, I pulled my arm out of the hot water, and steam rose from it for more than a full minute!

Also, in case you are wondering, I did consume some black mineral water and learned that it’s an acquired taste. I didn’t like it at first, but when I left I asked hotel owner Mark Efros whether he’s thought about bottling it.

“Not yet,” Efros said. “We let guests take it with them, but we haven’t started bottling it.”

You can still drink and bathe in mineral water at Red Boiling Springs
The most famous tenants at the Thomas House Hotel are the ghosts that apparently haunt the place.

the farm. The farm is what eventually got us back here.”

Vision 2020 hopes to convert an old bank building in town into a local history museum — an effort that has struggled in recent years because of the pandemic. As it stands, the cultural center of Red Boiling Springs is a shop called Step Back in Time, which is open Thursday through Saturday from 10 a.m. until 2 p.m. Vision 2020’s main accomplishment to date is the organization of numerous special events such as the Folk Music Festival in June, an annual 5K run in November and a songwriters’ conference in February.

For now, Red Boiling Springs has three wonderful old hotels — all of which serve meals, one of which has mineral baths, two of which have somewhat regular live entertainment and one of which (reportedly) is haunted. “We aren’t going anywhere,” says Thomas House owner David Cole. “Neither, apparently, are the ghosts.”
The aroma from freshly baked brownies will make these treats hard to pass up once they are cooling on the kitchen counter.
We are this close to that time of year when the focus on comfort foods and sweet treats switches to fresh fruits, produce and a big increase in outdoor activity. To help ease your transition, may we present these sweet nothings of spring? You might find that rich confections cut into tiny, elegant pieces and presented like the special treats they are can satisfy with just a bite. Dig into that fresh springtime salad, then soothe your sweet tooth!

**Frosted Pecan Brownies**  
**Yield:** 36 brownies  
4 ounces unsweetened baking chocolate  
1½ cups unsalted butter, divided  
2 cups granulated sugar  
4 eggs  
1 cup all-purpose flour  
1½ cups coarsely chopped toasted pecans, divided  
½ cup milk  
6 tablespoons unsweetened cocoa powder  
1 (16-ounce) package powdered sugar  
1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees. Grease a 9-by-13-inch baking pan and set aside.

Place the unsweetened chocolate and ¾ cup of the butter in a large glass bowl and microwave on high for 1 minute. Stir and repeat at 30-second intervals until completely melted and smooth.

Whisk in the sugar and eggs until well blended. Stir in the flour and 1 cup of the pecans. Spread the batter into the prepared pan. Bake 25-27 minutes or until a tester inserted in the center comes out with just a few moist crumbs.

Meanwhile, place the remaining butter and the chocolate chips in a glass bowl. Place the bowl in a saucepan over medium heat. Cook, stirring constantly, for 4 minutes or until the butter melts. Remove from the heat, and with a hand mixer on medium-low speed, beat in powdered sugar and extract until smooth.

Pour over the warm brownies, spreading evenly. Sprinkle with the remaining pecans. Cool for 1 hour in the pan on a wire rack before cutting into squares.

**White and Dark Chocolate Brownies**  
**Yield:** 24 brownies  
3 ounces unsweetened baking chocolate, roughly chopped  
¾ cup unsalted butter, softened  
½ cup granulated sugar  
½ cup firmly packed light brown sugar  
3 eggs  
¼ cup all-purpose flour  
6 ounces white chocolate pieces or squares, cut into pieces  
1 cup pecans  
Powdered sugar for dusting

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees. Line the bottom of a 9-by-13-inch baking pan with parchment paper. Grease and flour the parchment as well as the sides of the pan. Set aside.

Place the unsweetened chocolate in a glass bowl and microwave on high power for 1 minute. Stir and if not completely melted, microwave in 15-second intervals until completely smooth. Set aside.

In the bowl of an electric mixer, cream the butter until light and fluffy. Gradually add the granulated and brown sugars, beating well. Add the melted chocolate and blend. Then add the eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition. With the mixer speed on medium-low, add the flour, then fold in the white chocolate and pecans.

Evenly spread the batter in the prepared pan and bake for 20 minutes or until a tester inserted in the center comes out nearly clean. Place on a wire rack and cool in the pan.

When ready to serve, run a kitchen knife around the sides of the pan, then invert onto a cutting board. Peel off the parchment and discard. Cut into squares, place on a serving platter and cool completely.

When ready to serve, dip a kitchen knife in hot water, then dry before cutting each piece to prevent the creme de menthe portion from smearing. Refrigerate any leftovers.

**Creme de Menthe Brownies — These are perfect for any special occasion and well worth the time required.**  
**Yield:** 24-28 brownies  
2 cups granulated sugar  
1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract  
½ teaspoon salt  
1 cup all-purpose flour  
4 cups powdered sugar  
¼ cup whipped cream  
¼ cup creme de menthe liqueur  
6 ounces semisweet chocolate chips

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees. Grease a 9-by-13-inch baking pan and set aside.

Place the unsweetened chocolate and 1 cup of butter in a glass bowl and microwave the mixture for 1 minute on high power. Stir and continue to microwave at 15-second intervals until completely melted and smooth. Set aside to cool slightly.

In the bowl of an electric mixer, beat the eggs until light and fluffy. Gradually add the granulated sugar. Fold in the vanilla and salt. Add the flour, then the melted chocolate. Beat for 1 minute. Transfer the batter to the prepared pan and bake 32 minutes. Cool completely on a wire rack.

In a mixing bowl, cream ½ cup of butter until light and fluffy. Reduce the mixer speed and add the powdered sugar. Gradually add the whipped cream and creme de menthe. Spread evenly over the cooled brownies, cover and refrigerate 1½ hours.

Place the remaining butter and the chocolate chips in a glass bowl. Microwave on high power for 30 seconds. Stir and repeat until the mixture is completely melted and smooth. Spread on top of the creme de menthe layer, cover and refrigerate at least 30 minutes.

When ready to serve, dip a kitchen knife in hot water, then dry before cutting each piece to prevent the creme de menthe portion from smearing. Refrigerate any leftovers.

**Bittersweet Brownies — These are rich, so cut into small squares.**  
**Yield:** 24-32 brownies, depending on the size cut  
1 cup sugar  
½ cup plus 1 scant tablespoon unsalted butter, divided  
4 squares bittersweet chocolate, divided
3 eggs
1½ teaspoons pure vanilla extract, divided
⅓ cup all-purpose flour
1 cup chopped pecans, walnuts or almonds
1 cup powdered sugar
1-2 tablespoons room temperature milk

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees. Grease an 8- or 9-inch square baking pan and set aside.

Place sugar, ½ cup of butter and 3 squares of the chocolate in a glass bowl. Microwave on high power for 1 minute. Stir and continue at 15-second intervals until completely melted and smooth. Set aside.

In the bowl of an electric mixer, beat the eggs for 1 minute. Add 1 teaspoon of the vanilla and then the flour, mixing well. Fold in the nuts and the melted chocolate mixture. Transfer to the prepared pan and bake 30 minutes. Cool completely in the pan on a wire rack.

Place the remaining butter and chocolate square in a large glass bowl. Microwave on high power for 30 seconds. Stir and repeat until mixture is completely melted and smooth. Stir in the sugar, mixing well. Add the remaining vanilla and 1 tablespoon of the milk. If the frosting is too thick, add the remaining milk, mixing well. Spread evenly over the cooled brownies.

**Peanut Lover Brownies**

Yield: 16 brownies
½ cup unsalted butter
⅔ cup packed light brown sugar
1 egg
1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract
1 cup plus 2 tablespoons all-purpose flour
1 teaspoon baking powder
½ cup chopped unsalted peanuts, divided
½ cup peanut butter chips, divided

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees. Line an 8-inch square baking pan with aluminum foil, allowing the ends to extend on two sides. Grease the foil with cooking spray and set aside.

Place the butter in a medium saucepan over medium heat. When melted, stir in the sugar and stir constantly for 1 minute. Remove from heat and allow to cool for 20 minutes.

Stir the egg and extract into the butter mixture. Add the flour and baking powder, stirring until blended. Fold in half of the peanuts and half of the peanut butter chips. Spread evenly in the prepared baking pan. Sprinkle the remaining peanuts and chips on top of the batter, pressing in gently.

Bake 23-25 minutes or until a tester inserted in the center comes out clean. Cool in the pan on a wire rack. Lift the foil by the extended ends and place the brownies right-side-up on a cutting board. Cut into squares and serve.

**Brownie tips**

Always use the size pan called for in the recipe. Otherwise, the texture and baking time can vary greatly.

Lining the baking pan with an overhang of aluminum foil (regular rather than heavy-duty foil) will make removal and cutting of the brownies much easier. Press it into the pan as snugly as possible with an overhang of an inch or two so you have enough to grab. Lightly grease the foil after you have pressed it into the baking pan.

Completely cool the brownies in the pan on a wire rack before frosting or even slicing. Don’t rush the process, or the result will be crumbled and messy. They should be cooled a minimum of 30 minutes.

The name comes from the fact that the majority are chocolate flavored. Blonde brownies are flavored with brown sugar and/or butterscotch rather than chocolate.

**Ask Chef Tammy**

Mary Jane asks: I have been making pound cakes for years, but suddenly, the outsides of them are gooey and kind of wet even though the inside is cooked. What is happening?

Mary Jane, I would promptly invest in an oven thermometer to make sure your oven is baking at the proper temperature. It sounds like the oven isn’t hot enough if you are using tried-and-true recipes with which you’ve had success before.

Jonathan writes: My parents live on the coast and regularly send us large frozen shrimp. They are easily peeled, but how can I quickly remove the vein? Is this done before or after cooking?

Jonathan, lucky you! Devein before cooking; all you need is a good paring knife even though gadgets are made for the task. Make a small slit all the way down the length of the back. Then use the tip of the knife to pull the vein out.

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.
TENNESSEE EVENTS
Festivals, celebrations and other happenings around the state

West Tennessee

Now-April 30 (Weekends) • Deep Swamp Canoe Float, Reelfoot Lake State Park, Tiptonville. tnstateparks.com/parks/reelfoot-lake

April 8 • Easter Tea, Magnolia Manor and Chapel, Humboldt. 731-337-5367 or magnoliamanorandchapel.com

April 15 • Fayette Cares Plant Sale, Oakland Elementary School. 901-465-3802, ext. 223, or fayettecares.org/plants

April 29 • Gene Watson, Williams Auditorium, Henderson. 731-435-3150 or williamsauditorium.com

Middle Tennessee

April 8 • Regional Postcard and Paper Memorabilia Show, The Fly Arts Center, Shelbyville. 931-684-9063 or flyartscenter.com

April 16 • Buttercup Festival, Nolensville Historic District. 615-283-8590 or facebook.com/historicnolensvillebuttercupfestival

April 22 • WCMGA Garden Festival and Plant Sale, Williamson County Ag Expo Park, Franklin. 615-790-5721 or wcmga.net

April 22 • Cruisin’ For a Cure For Huntington’s Disease, Rock Family Worship Center, Fayetteville. 931-993-6718 or tennessee.hdsa.org/cruisin2023

April 22 • Pioneer Days, Cannonsburgh Pioneer Village, Murfreesboro. 615-890-5333 or murfreesborotn.gov/calendar.aspx

East Tennessee

April 15 • 10th Annual Chattanooga Autism Celebration Walk, Coolidge Park, Chattanooga. 423-531-6961 or ds-stride.org/chattanoogautismwalk

April 21 and May 5 and 12 • Sheep Shearing Days 2023, Museum of Appalachia, Clinton. 865-494-7680 or museumofappalachia.org

April 22 • Sweet Tea and Sunshine Festival and Craft Fair, Greenway Park and Pavilion, Cleveland. 423-650-1388 or touchtheskyevents.com

April 29 • 31st Annual Ralph Stanton Memorial Bass Tournament, Quarryville Boat Ramp, Mooresburg. 423-272-2695 or hawkinscrescuesquad.org

April 29-30 • National Cornbread Festival, downtown South Pittsburg. nationalcornbread.com

April 29-30 • Spring Garden Fair, Exchange Place Living History Farm, Kingsport. 423-288-6071 or exchangeplace.info

Send us your events
Complete the form at tnmagazine.org/events/submit-event/add or email events@tnelectric.org. Information must be received at least two months ahead of the event date, and we accept submissions up to a year in advance. Due to the great demand for space in each month’s Tennessee Events, we cannot guarantee publication. Find a complete listing of submissions we’ve received at tnmagazine.org/events.

MAKE IT YOUR NATURE
The outdoors is really a reflection of you. It’s up to all of us to do our part to help preserve the natural beauty of our state. Join us in following the 7 Outdoor NC Leave No Trace Principles, so our spaces can remain beautiful and enjoyable for years to come.

PLAN AHEAD AND PREPARE
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TRASH YOUR TRASH
LEAVE IT AS YOU FIND IT
BE CAREFUL WITH FIRE
KEEP WILDLIFE WILD
SHARE OUR TRAILS
A River Runs Through It

Henry Horton State Park is a champion of the Duck River and outdoor recreation

Story by Trish Milburn • Photographs courtesy of Henry Horton State Park

While the staff of Henry Horton State Park in Chapel Hill is only responsible for protecting 2 of the beautiful Duck River’s 284-miles, they nevertheless work to protect the entirety of this extremely important river. Not only is the waterway a kayaker’s paradise, “The Duck River is the most biodiverse river in North America and is significant on a global scale for its diversity of plant and animal species,” says Park Manager Ryan Jenkins.

According to The Nature Conservancy, the Duck River is home to more fish species than all of the rivers of Europe combined — plus an amazing 60 species of freshwater mussels and more than 20 species of aquatic snails.

With an ecological gem running through it, managing such a park is tailor-made for someone with a profound love of nature and parks. And it doesn’t take long while talking to Jenkins to discover he’s such a person. Beginning his career with Tennessee State Parks at Radnor Lake in 2007, he’s been at Henry Horton State Park — named for Tennessee’s governor from 1927 to 1933 — since 2013.

“I started as a ranger because I wanted to share the love and knowledge I had of the outdoors that I had been taught growing up,” he says. “I noticed that people were missing out on some of that experience throughout the years, and I wanted a career where I could help attract more people to nature. As I became more involved in parks, I learned more about the intricacies and responsibilities of park management. As we say in parks, our job is to protect the park from the people, the people from the park and the people from the people.”

Being a park manager necessarily goes beyond any innate love of the outdoors.
“Managing a park is like managing a small city with people, visitors, infrastructure, budgets, projects, etc.,” Jenkins says. “I have a business degree and experience in the private business world, so my skill set prior to coming into parks helped prepare me for the challenge of managing a park the size of Henry Horton State Park.”

Jenkins says there are two things amongst all of the challenges that give him the most fulfillment.

“The first is the people I work with. I care for each of them, and making sure that they are fulfilled within their work is very important to me. The second is the ability to at any point during my busy day step outside and get out into nature. The old saying is that park rangers are paid in sunrises and sunsets, and I still believe that to be a benefit of the job.”

Recreation paradise

While the Duck River — and the recreational opportunities it offers — is a centerpiece of the Henry Horton park experience, it’s far from the only one. In addition to the fishing, swimming and kayaking, you can enjoy a game of golf on the 18-hole course, play disc golf, test your shooting skills on the trap and skeet range, picnic along the river or take to the 12 miles of trails winding through the park.

With so much fun to be had, visitors might want to stay overnight. Accommodations include a large RV campground, a hammock campground, backcountry campsites, a 74-room lodge and eight cabins. The park also has a new restaurant for visitors to enjoy.

“We also just opened a brand new visitor center with a large exhibit area showcasing the Duck River and a gift shop to take home souvenirs from your visit with us,” Jenkins says. “We are currently adding 10-plus miles of mountain bike trails, 1.5 miles of paved greenway and additional river access points to give our community and park visitors even more opportunities to get outside and be active.”

Recognition for good work

Last year, the park was recognized by the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation with the Excellence in Interpretation Award.

“The Excellence in Interpretation Award is a special recognition for the intense level of work the park staff has done over the year to help share the story of the park, the Duck River and nature with our park visitors,” Jenkins says. “I believe the staff at Henry Horton State Park is one of the best park teams in the entire state, and they work very hard to make sure the park is making improvements and creating great experiences for our guests all year long. Much of the work done by park rangers and the other staff members is gone unnoticed. Being recognized with this award is meaningful as confirmation that we are on the right track and making a true impact.”

“Henry Horton State Park does a great job of capitalizing on the natural assets of the Duck River,” TDEC Commissioner David Salyers said at the time the award was presented. “The park enhances the visitor experience with content involving all ages, and we are proud to announce this award for the park.”

Wearing two hats

Being a park ranger is like having two jobs in one — one part nature champion and one part law enforcement officer. It makes for an interesting day-to-day experience.

“I could probably fill a few books with memorable stories at the park,” Jenkins says. “We like to say that we could make a great TV show full of drama, comedy and interesting storylines — if only we could get a camera to follow us around. As park rangers, we get to see both the good side of people and the negative sides. Law enforcement, medical calls, rescues and other emergency response are...
all within a day’s work and can truly cause a great deal of stress on us as responders.

“The great thing about our job, though, is that we get to temper that stressful side of the job with positive and enjoyable interactions with park visitors. Working with kids is a great way to see the best in our visitors and to immerse ourselves in the wonders of nature again. It never fails that when a child finds out you are a park ranger, a switch happens, and they want to talk to you about animals and trees and their experiences in the outdoors.

“We wear the uniform of a law enforcement officer, and that uniform has a tendency to carry a certain assumption with it among the public. But when it becomes apparent you are a park ranger, that assumption tends to disappear, and, especially with kids, people are drawn to you to ask questions and talk. It’s a great experience each time and provides plenty of memorable stories that are positive to offset the more difficult parts of the job.”

Stop and explore
Because Highway 31 runs through the park, Jenkins says most people tend to drive through at 40 mph (or faster) and only get to see things from the highway. They can see the golf course and get a glance of the lodge or the visitor center, but they are missing most of what makes the park special besides those facilities.

“I sometimes say that people drive over the bridge every day and never even notice the gorgeous river below. The magic of Henry Horton State Park is getting off the paved road and out onto the miles of trails beneath the trees; into our wetland to hear the frogs sing or explore a sinkhole with its unique ecosystem; or onto the river to listen to the water rush over rocks and through grasses.”

Jenkins says that while the park might not have towering mountains or picturesque waterfalls, every person who takes a moment to explore the park will find the beauty of nature everywhere they look.

Henry Horton State Park
For more information, visit tnstateparks.com/parks/henry-horton or call 931-364-2222.
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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 Monday, May 1. Winners will be published in the June issue of The Tennessee Magazine.

February Flag Spotters

Thanks for the postcards and emails again this month identifying the correct location of the flag, which was found in the healthcare emblem on page 28. (We also accepted entries identifying the app on page 9.)

Winners are drawn randomly from each month’s entries. February’s lucky flag spotters are:
Cathey Baucom, Kenton, Gibson EMC
Mack Parks, Fayetteville, Fayetteville Public Utilities
Susan Laesch, Pioneer, Plateau EC

Artist’s Palette
Assignment for April

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. Please follow these size guidelines. Oversized canvas paintings are especially difficult to handle and cannot be returned.

Entry: Send your original art to: The Tennessee Magazine, Artist’s Palette — April, 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 Monday, May 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 June 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: Lillian May, age 17, Middle Tennessee Electric; Second place: Maritsa Castillo Gonzalez, age 17, Middle Tennessee Electric; Third place: Rachel Keith, age 15, Middle Tennessee Electric

WINNERS, 10-14 AGE GROUP: First place: Keilah Easton, age 12, Appalachian EC; Second place: Eva Worsham, age 13, Volunteer EC; Third place: Benjamin Tate, age 14, Duck River EMC

WINNERS, 1-9 AGE GROUP: First place: Shrita Shyraj, age 9, Middle Tennessee Electric; Second place: Sierra Mae Allen, age 6, Volunteer EC; Third place: Avery Rodes, age 7, Powell Valley EC
As a photographer I love to share my images and the stories behind them. The downside of being a photographer is that it’s almost impossible to stop looking for photographs to shoot, especially when I travel to new places. On my first trip to the Cape Cod area last year, I had one early morning that the weather cooperated enough for a sunrise shoot.

I had the beach to myself as a northeasterly chill in the air kept everyone else away. Arriving about 30 minutes before sunrise during the blue hour, I could see a thin strip of clouds just above the ocean where the sun was beginning to cast an arc of warm, yellow light above the Atlantic.

Sunrises and sunsets are mesmerizing to me. It appears that the sun rises and sets so fast when our perspective includes the horizon. Obviously, the Earth rotates at the same speed all the time, but only as the sun nears the horizon do we see how quickly it appears to move. The perfect light for a sunrise or sunset can last just a couple of minutes before the light is just too bright in the morning or completely gone in the evening.

In this image, the clouds helped shield some of the sunlight that was pouring into my lens. Clouds can add elements that enhance the sky.

Wishing there had been something to frame in the foreground to make the shot more interesting, I was about to leave. The sun was getting higher in the sky, and the wind was picking up. Just then I heard something to my left. At first I thought I had missed a dolphin surface to blow out air as it exhaled. But as I watched, I realized it was a pod of seals.

Cape Cod has two types of seals — harbor and gray — that can regularly be seen along its coastline and in marinas. Due to the distance away and the apparent size of these, they were most likely harbor seals.

They were moving quickly, so I took the camera off the tripod and jogged down the beach as they dove and resurfaced. I was able to keep up with them for about 30 yards. I watched them resurface twice in the reflection of the sunrise. The encounter lasted less than two minutes, but it was my favorite two minutes of the day.
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 biopic 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. Biopic 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 biopic telescopic glasses to read signs and see traffic lights farther away. Dr. Pino also prescribed microscope 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.”

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

“The major benefit of the biopic 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 biopic 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

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