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# Morgan County Today

More Than A Newspaper.

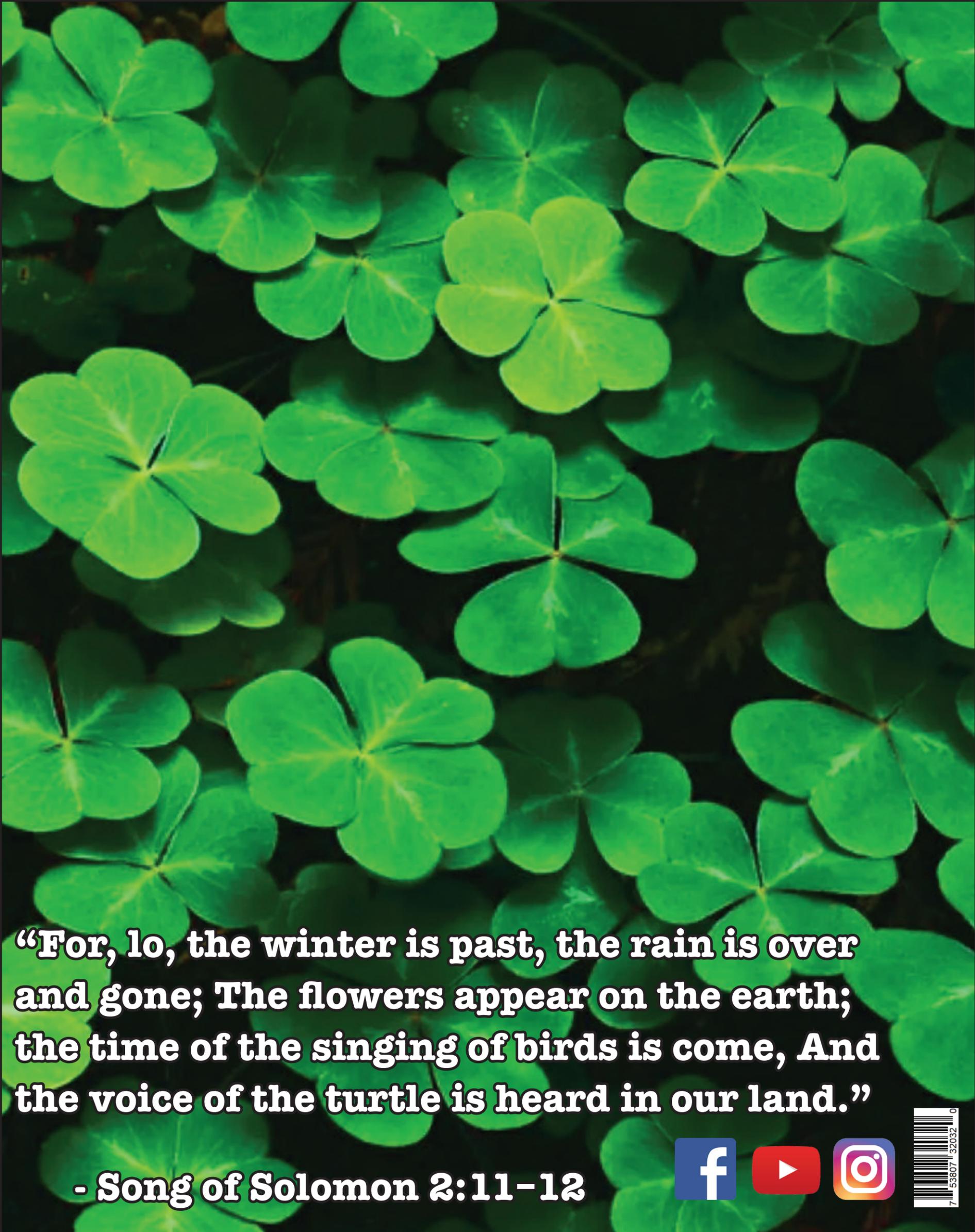
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Psalm 100:3

[www.mocotoday.com](http://www.mocotoday.com)

Volume 12 Number 10

Tuesday, March 17, 2026



**“For, lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone; The flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing of birds is come, And the voice of the turtle is heard in our land.”**

**- Song of Solomon 2:11-12**



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**Ms. Avery Pearl  
Pet Columnist**

# Pet Perspective with Ms. Avery Pearl

## Bi-Polar Weather

Weather, the last few weeks has been like a see-saw. Warm, cold, warm, cold. Lord, have mercy. It just can not make up it's mind!

Well, the weather done went haywire again:

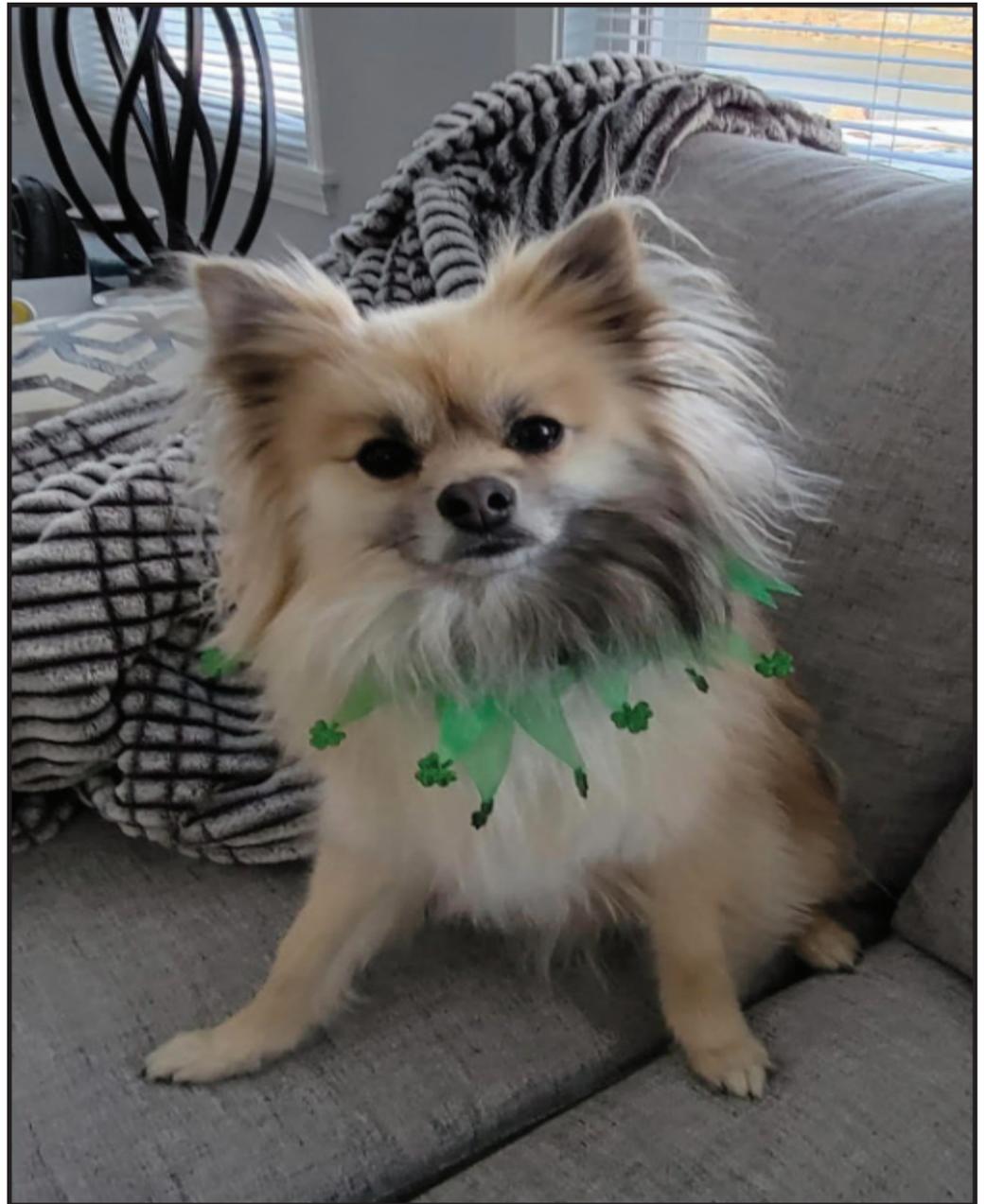
75° breezy today.  
Storms this evening.  
25° with SNOW by morning!

Gotta wuff, East Tennessee Bi-Polar weather.

Any-woof, hope everyone stays safe during the storms and stays warm, I mean cool, I mean warm...Oh, well what ever it needs to be on any given day.

By the way, Happy St Patrick's Day!

For more of my Pet Perspective like and follow me on Facebook at Ms Avery Pearl.



WEEKLY WEATHER

**CITIZENS  
GAS  
UTILITY DISTRICT**  
of Scott and Morgan Counties

TUE 3/17 41° 27°

WED 3/18 47° 32°

THU 3/19 63° 38°

FRI 3/20 71° 48°

SAT 3/21 75° 50°

SUN 3/22 74° 42°

MON 3/23 57° 32°

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# COMMUNITY CALENDAR

## CITY OF SUNBRIGHT MEETING AGENDA FOR MARCH 17, 2026 6PM

**CALL TO ORDER:  
PRAYER:  
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MINUTES:  
FINANCIALS:**

1. UPDATE ON RECREATIONAL TRAIL PROGRAM GRANT
2. CDBG GRANT FOR FIRE HALL (EQUIPMENT)
3. DISCUSSED DAMAGED TRASH CANS.
4. EXPENSES RELATED TO UTILITIES
5. BEAUTIFICATION COMMITTEE TO MEET FOLLOWING THIS MEETING

### ADJOURNMENT OF MEETING

The Deer Lodge Abner Ross Center meet on the third Monday of the month at 6:00 PM.

Coalfield Genealogical and Historical Society meets the second Tuesday of every month at the Senior Citizens Building at 6:00 PM.

Morgan County Republican Party meets the last Thursday of every month at 7:00 PM at the American Legion in Wartburg.

— In Loving Memory —

**Arthur Willis Brown, 90  
United States Army Veteran**



Arthur Willis Brown, age 90, passed away March 10, 2026 at Life Care of Morgan County.

He is preceded in death by parents Floyd and Martha; first wife (Dixie); son John; step daugh-

ter Malissa and sisters (Merta, Edith, Marie and Rosie).

Arthur is survived by wife Marjorie; sons Wendell Brown of New Market, TN and Jeremiah (Lynn) Brown of Oak Ridge, TN.; 8 grandchildren and many great grandchildren.

Arthur married Dixie Baker in 1965 and was married to her until her death in 1996. They had 3 sons, Wendell, John and Jeremiah. He married Marjorie in 1997.

Arthur was a member of the US Army from the ages of 22-24. He

was a heavy equipment operator with Conner Brothers Excavating for 30 years and had a hand in building many subdivisions in the west Knoxville area. He lived in many different places, including Port Comfort and Yokum Texas as well as Harriman and Knoxville Tennessee. He eventually settled in Deer Lodge, TN.

In his later years, he enjoyed spending time with family and friends. He loved to cook, spend time in his garden and to sing. He treasured his time as part of the congregation of Pilot Mountain Baptist Church. He had a knack for telling great stories

and was always ready with a "dad joke."

The family will have a graveside service Friday, March 13, 2026 at 1:00 p.m. with Bro. Josh Baldwin officiating in the Island Ford Cemetery in Lancing.

*Schubert Funeral Home is honored to serve the family of Arthur Willis Brown.*

**James Bauer, 79  
United States Army Veteran**



James Bauer  
October 2, 1947 —  
February 19, 2026  
Sunbright

James Robert Bauer, age 79, gained his wings February 19, 2026 at Methodist Medical Center with his family by his side. James was born October 2, 1947 in Erie Pennsylvania to the late Walter and Margaret (Pistner) Bauer of Erie, PA. James proudly served his country in the US Army. He was a hard working man with a great work ethic and a long work history at Bell South and

had a huge passion for hunting and woodworking.

He was preceded in death by his loving parents, Walter and Margaret (Pistner) Bauer; and in-laws, Aramadao and Elizabeth Argentina.

James is survived by his loving wife of 44 years, Jean Bauer "His Honey"; children: Scott (Erica) Bauer of AZ, Mark Murray of GA, Sheri Harris of Munford, AL, and Stephen (Misty) Bauer of TN; sisters, Ann Glasspell of PA and Linda Bauman of PA; 7 grandchildren and his longtime friend and chosen brother, Bill Podewils of Sunbright, TN.

A memorial service will be held in James's honor on March 1, 2026 at 2:00 p.m. at American Legion Post 149, 202 S Kingston St. Wartburg, TN, 37887.

*Schubert Funeral Home is honored to serve the family of James Robert Bauer.*

Obituaries must come from a funeral home to be in the newspaper.

**James Bauer, 79**



Liam, Oaklynn, Hunter; brother Barry (Diana) Phillips; step brothers Steven Aytes (Holly), Ken Aytes; step sister Crystale Aytes; special friend Donna Gunter and a host of nieces, nephews, aunts, and uncles.

The family will receive friends Sunday, February 22, 2026 at Schubert Funeral Home from 1:00-3:00 p.m. with the funeral to follow at 3:00 p.m. with Bro. Robert Freels and Bro. Tyler Trout officiating. Graveside services will be Monday at 11:00 a.m. in the Frankfort Cemetery in Lancing.

*Schubert Funeral Home is honored to serve the family of William "Bill" Phillips.*

William "Bill" Phillips, age 55 of Deer Lodge passed away Friday, February 20, 2026 at Parkwest Medical Center in Knoxville.

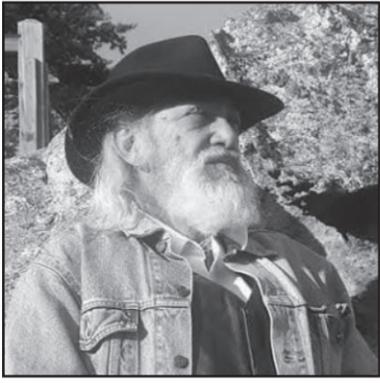
He is preceded in death by his father Robert Alton Phillips; special friend Steve Gunter.

He is survived by his parents Peggy and Butch Aytes; children Kailyn (Logan) Simmons, Kelsey Phillips and fiancé Adam Pass; step sons Dylan Hughett, Shade Underwood; fiancé Amie Underwood; grandchildren Sophia,



## — In Loving Memory —

### Phillip Ray Detrick, 64



Mr. Phillip Ray Detrick, age 64, of Sunbright passed away Tuesday, February 24, 2026 at his home in Sunbright.

He is preceded in death by his father, Larry Stolzenburg Sr.,

his mother, Betty McDaniel, his brother, Larry (Duck) Detrick, his nephew Jason Detrick, and his brother-in-law Cody Marmon.

He is survived by his wife, Jennifer Detrick; children Jay (Kaleigh Brock) Hawn, Cameron (Mickie) Robbins, and Phillip Detrick Jr.; his special granddaughter Jayde Robbins, and eagerly anticipated grandson Kolton Hawn. Also surviving are his step-father Paul Ed McDaniel, his step-mother Roberta Stolzenburg, his sister Pat (Keith) Wilcox, his loving family of in-laws; Robin and Linda Marmon, Greg and Robyn Bunch, Sean and Tori Marmon,

and a host of nieces and nephews and close friends that will greatly miss him!

Extra thanks to special family friend Marcie Brookman for all the help she gave to make Phil's final days comfortable. The family cannot begin to name all of Phil's friends that have been there for him at the end, but we would like to thank you from the bottom of our hearts.

Phil was an avid sportsman! He loved to collect guns and knives, go fishing, and hunt when he was able. He had a gruff exterior but was a very loving family

man who never took those that cared for him for granted. He was quick to joke with anyone that would stop to talk.

The family will receive friends Friday, February 27, 2026 at Schubert Funeral Home from 12:00-2:00 p.m. with the funeral to follow at 2:00 p.m. with Military Honors.

*Schubert Funeral Home is honored to serve the family of Mr. Phillip Ray Detrick.*

### Phyllis Seiber, 79



Phyllis Seiber, age 79, passed away on February 23, 2026 surrounded by her family.

She is proceeded in death by her parents, Noble and Aliene Stringer; brother, Paul Stringer and sister, Sandra Faye Ledford.

She is survived by her daughter, Lisa (Jimmy) West of Mossy Grove; Son, Doyle (Vicky) Seiber of Clinton.

Devoted partner of 25 years, CL Patterson.

Grandkids, Ryan (Brooke) Jackson of Oliver Springs; Taylen Jackson of Mossy Grove; Alison (Cameron) Seiber of Oak Ridge.

Great-Grandchildren, Lily, Savannah, Tommy "Boy", Bailey and Beckham.

As well as a host of special cousins, nieces and nephews.

Phyllis was a member of Petros Baptist Church.

She worked at Red Kap for several years then on to Methodist Medical Center.

Phyllis loved The Lord, her family, to travel, laugh, and have a good time.

She never met a stranger. If you were friends with Phyllis, you had a true friend. She will be so missed by all that knew and loved her.

The family will receive friends Thursday, February 26, 2026 at Schubert Funeral Home from 5:00-7:00 p.m. with the funeral to follow at 7:00 p.m. with Bro. David Seiber officiating. Graveside services will be Friday at 11:00 a.m. in the New Petros Cemetery in Petros.

*Schubert Funeral Home is honored to serve the family of Phyllis Seiber.*

### James Bauer, 79



Stella Bunch Kelly age 100 passed away peacefully on Saturday, February 28, 2026. Stella grew up in Coalfield and was a true Coalminer's daughter. She was born on January 15, 1926 to the late Walter and Lillie Bunch. She served her country during WWII as a Calutron Girl at the Y-12 plant. Her husband, 2 brothers and 4 brothers-in-laws all served overseas during WWII. She was a very dedicated Christian always working in her Church and teaching many Sunday School Classes. She took pride in her ability to raise her 3 children by working off the land to provide for them. Between milking a cow and making butter and cheese, to raising a garden and canning vegetables, fruit and meat, she provided most of the food for her family. As her children grew, she started working. She worked many years as a Head Start teacher and was very proud and honored to volunteer at the Methodist Medical Center's Coronary Rehabilitation Facility.

She was preceded in death by her parents Walter and Lillie Bunch; husband Clyde; special son-in-law Mark Shelton; sisters Aletha Bunch Spainhour and Florence Bunch Worthington; and brothers, Harvey, Isaac, Paul and James Bunch. She is survived by brother Earl Bunch; daughter Brenda Shelton; sons C.A. (Marcia) and Gary (Kathy); grandsons Stephen, Darren (Jess), Joe (Amanda), Patrick (Heather), and John (Jessi); 13 great-grandchildren and one great-grandchild.

The family will receive friends Monday, March 2, 2026, from 12:00 until 2:00 pm Schubert Funeral Home, Wartburg. Funeral services will follow at 2:00 pm with Ronny Jones officiating. Internment will follow in the Union Cemetery, Wartburg, TN.

In lieu of flowers, please consider a donation to St. Jude Children's Hospital, 501 St. Jude Place Memphis, TN 38105. 501 St. Jude Place Memphis, TN 38105

*Schubert Funeral Home is honored to serve the family of Stella Bunch Kelly.*

**Obituaries must come from a funeral home to be in the newspaper.**



## Historically Speaking Lunch for Literacy speaker recruited by the city manager

By Ray Smith - Oak Ridge City Historian

Volunteer journalist Carolyn Krause has been asked to write about the history behind the selection of bestselling novelist Kristy Woodson Harvey as the keynote speaker for the 34th annual Lunch for Literacy event on Tuesday, March 24, from 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. in the food court of Oak Ridge High School. The caterer is the Oak Ridge restaurant Fire and Salt.

The purpose of the Lunch for Literacy is to raise funds for grants that are given to nonprofits or other organizations that promote literacy in the Oak Ridge area.

Tickets cost \$60 each. They may be purchased from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday in the lobby of TNBank in Oak Ridge, 401 S. Illinois Ave. This year's goal is to raise \$50,000 for grants for organizations promoting literacy. The sponsors of the annual event are Altrusa International of Oak Ridge, the Oak Ridge Breakfast Rotary Club and TNBank.

Enjoy Carolyn's insights gained from our City Manager.

\*\*\*

As city manager for Oak Ridge, Randy Hemann is asked many questions. One unusual one came last year from Beth Hickman, city clerk for Oak Ridge, who reports to him.

"Since I worked as city manager for five North Carolina cities, Beth asked me if I knew of any North Carolina novelists or other authors," Hemann said. It turns out he knew of one bestselling author that he had first seen and heard about when she was growing up in Salisbury, N.C., where he was downtown development director for 16 years. Her name is bestselling novelist Kristy Woodson Harvey.

For three years, Hickman has been a member of a committee of the Literacy Board of Altrusa International of Oak Ridge. The committee has a challenging task: select a bestselling novelist who can speak well and engage an audience and then recruit that person to be the keynote speaker for the next annual Lunch for Literacy in Oak Ridge.

The committee's choice for this year is Kristy Woodson Harvey. She is the New York Times, USA Today and Publishers Weekly bestselling author of 13 novels, including "Beach House Rules" and "The Peachtree Bluff Series." "A Happier Life" is in development for film with MGM/Amazon, and "The Summer of Songbirds" is in development for television with Hulu, according to her website.

The Altrusa committee and a committee of the Oak Ridge Breakfast Rotary Club alternate each year in meeting the challenge of selecting an author-speaker.

Hemann, Hickman, Jan Melcher (Lunch for Literacy publicity chair), and Carolyn Krause recently gathered in the Municipal Building to talk about the Lunch for Literacy and the upcoming speaker.

In answer to Hickman's question, Hemann recalled that "I told Beth that when I worked in downtown development in Salisbury for 16 years, one of the downtown businesses I knew about was the dry cleaners' business run by Paul and Beth Woodson. I remember their daughter.

"I remember seeing her in the dry cleaners when she was young. I remember hearing that she was leaving to study at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and that she wanted to be an author."

So, Hemann was able to obtain her con-



City Manager Randy Hemann is being interviewed by Jan Melcher, with Carolyn Krause (not pictured) recording the interview, and Beth Hickman, who arranged the interview (Courtesy of Lauren Gray)

tact information from the Woodson family. He reached out to Woodson Harvey through Hickman when she attended a Literary Conference in Salisbury to hear Woodson Harvey speak and gave the author a handwritten note from Hemann asking her whether she might be interested in giving a talk for Lunch for Literacy in Oak Ridge after explaining its purpose. "We found out she is going to be here and that's awesome," he said.

Hemann also found it remarkable that when he was a young city manager of Kinston, N.C., he had met the parents of the man Kristy Woodson eventually married.

"It's really interesting because I was living 16 years in Salisbury, where she grew up, and obviously knew her mom and dad really well," Hemann said. "But prior to that, I spent 10 years serving as downtown development director in Kinston, which is where her husband's family came from. So, when I saw that her married name is Harvey, I honestly really had never put all that together until I started looking into asking her if she would speak in Oak Ridge."

Kristy Woodson Harvey often credits her family for her storytelling roots. Both her father, Paul Woodson, and her late father-in-law, C. Felix Harvey, left significant legacies in North Carolina through public service, business, and philanthropy.

Paul Woodson was elected mayor of Salisbury shortly after Hemann left for another position as city manager. He served as a member of the Salisbury City Council for 14 years. A chemist, he owned and operated Vogue Cleaners in Salisbury for over 25 years.

He was a leader of the Salisbury-Rowan Economic Development Commission and the Woodson Foundation, which provides charitable grants for arts, childcare and education in the areas of Rowan and Davie counties.

In essays, Kristy has described her father as a master storyteller. Despite his busy career, she said he often traveled with her during her early book tours to provide support.

Kristy's father-in-law, the late C. Felix Harvey (1920-2014), was considered a titan of industry, economic development, and philanthropy in Kinston. He was the chairman of Harvey Enterprises & Affiliates, a family-owned conglomerate founded in 1871. Under his leadership, the company expanded into sales of fertilizers, John Deere equipment, and insurance. He also

founded a bank in Kinston.

He was the driving force behind the North Carolina Global TransPark, an industrial and air-cargo hub in eastern North Carolina. In recognition of his impact, the C.F. Harvey Parkway (NC 148) in Lenoir County was named in his honor.

A dedicated alumnus of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, from which Kristy Woodson graduated, he and his family endowed the C. Felix Harvey Award to Advance Institutional Priorities, a significant grant awarded to faculty for projects that address real-world challenges.

Hemann recalls meeting Felix Harvey after he got his job as a young city manager of Kinston. "I remember first meeting the patriarch of the Harvey family," he said. "He scared me to death because he was a highly successful businessman, and I was just out of college."

Now, Hemann is looking forward to getting to know Kristy Woodson Harvey even better when she arrives in Oak Ridge. He will introduce her at the Lunch for Literacy event on Mar. 24. After the event, she will sign the novels she sells to the attendees.

"Her 14th novel, 'Summer State of Mind,' is coming out May 5, so we're taking pre-orders for that," Hickman said. "The first 100 people to pre-order the book will be among the first 100 that will get that book when it comes out and arrives in a shipment to our library."

"We will also host a tour of the Oak Ridge Public Library that City Manager Hemann will facilitate so Kristy Woodson Harvey can see our award-winning library and what it does to promote literacy."

From reading two of Harvey's books, Hemann said he recognizes familiar features of North Carolina living such as house tours, dinner parties, social graces and people he has known.

Kristy Woodson Harvey's work has received numerous accolades, including Good Morning America's Buzz Pick, Southern Living's Most Anticipated Reads, Katie Couric's Featured Books and Joanna Garcia Swisher's The Happy Place Reads. She is the winner of the Lucy Bramlette Patterson Award for Excellence in Creative Writing and a finalist for the Southern Book Prize.

- Continued on Page 6

## Historically Speaking Lunch for Literacy speaker recruited by the city manager

By Ray Smith - Oak Ridge City Historian

A Phi Beta Kappa and summa cum laude graduate with honors from the school of journalism of UNC at Chapel Hill, her writing has appeared in numerous publications, including Southern Living, Parade, Traditional Home and USA Today (the owner of which owns The Oak Ridger) She also holds a master's degree in English from East Carolina University, with a concentration in multicultural and transnational literature.

Kristy is the co-creator and co-host of the hit weekly web show and podcast Friends & Fiction with fellow New York Times Bestselling authors Mary Kay Andrews, Kristin Harmel, and Patti Callahan Henry. It boasts more than 300,000 members. She is also the co-founder of the award-winning interiors site Design Chic, with her mom, Beth Woodson.

She lives on the North Carolina coast with her husband, son, and dog Salt, where she says she is always working on her next novel.

When people see how young and attractive Kristy is in photos and videos, they are amazed that she has written 13 novels that have all become bestsellers. Even her parents had doubts initially that she could make a good living as an author.

When Hickman and a friend traveled to hear Kristy talk at Catawba College in Salisbury to assess whether she was an engaging speaker, they heard her talk about "how she told her dad she was going to write books, and he asked her, 'Are you going to make a career out of it? What are you going to do in your real life?'"

Hickman said that Kristy's parents were present at her talk, which Hickman liked. "I think her parents were apprehensive about whether she could make a living as a novelist. And obviously she has. After working for a newspaper, she followed her dream, and she's become a successful, bestselling novelist."

When Hemann gladly allowed Hickman to take a day off from work and travel to hear Kristy deliver her talk in Salisbury, he asked her to take a sealed handwritten note to Kristy that officially invited her to speak in Oak Ridge. As she signed books after the talk, Hickman said, Kristy read the note, smiled, and showed it to her parents. Hickman heard Paul Woodson say that he "definitely remembered Randy Hemann from his days as downtown development director in Salisbury."

Noting that Hemann has worked as a downtown development director or city manager in six cities, Melcher asked him, "How important is it for a community to create a culture towards literacy?" Hemann said that reading allows people to grow, to learn about places they will never have time to travel to, and to be reminded of places, experiences, and people they have known.

"I feel fortunate to have lived in two places where some experiences I had match up with experiences described in the two books by Kristy that I read," he said.

Hemann was interested to hear about the origins of the Lunch for Literacy, which Melcher described for him. Krause added some details here.

It all began in 1986 when Alex Haley, author of the famous novel "Roots: The Saga of an American Family" that became the basis of a popular TV miniseries, moved to Anderson County. His move was influenced by a friendship with John Rice Irwin, the founder of the Muse-

um of Appalachia. After visiting the museum and the surrounding area, Haley purchased a 157-acre farm, now known as the Alex Haley Farm. It is located between Clinton and Andersonville.

In 1992, the Oak Ridge Breakfast Rotary Club wished to choose and launch its first major community service project. Frank Jamison, then the club's community services director, was aware that local literacy councils were struggling to receive funding.

One day, Jamison (who later became chairman of TNBank until he retired and established a TNBank scholarship in his name for an ORHS senior) spotted Haley at Regas Restaurant in Knoxville and asked if he would speak at a fundraiser for literacy. Haley graciously agreed to serve as the inaugural speaker for what became the first Lunch for Literacy 34 years ago. His participation established the tradition of hosting acclaimed authors as keynote speakers to raise funds for adult literacy programs.

Famous authors who have been keynote speakers at the Lunch for Literacy have included the second speaker, Wilma Dykeman, the Tennessee state historian, and Denise Kiernan, author of the 2014 New York Times bestseller "The Girls of Atomic City."

The conversation in the Municipal Building closed amicably with a pun by Hemann: "So, those are the Lunch for Literacy's roots!"

\*\*\*

Thanks, Carolyn, for your usual excellent capture of a most interesting conversation. Our City Manager has brought us an exceptional speaker for the Lunch for Literacy luncheon this year. Much appreciated! And you conveyed that well.



# Romans 10



Melvin Howard

Romans 1-4 Israel's rejection of God's plan: as with the previous chapter, this section begins with another outpouring of love for Paul's Hebrew brothers. He wanted so much to see them saved, and prayed for the opening of their hearts to gospel truth. They had a zeal for God, but it was not grounded in knowledge. They were unaware of the Lord's plan for righteousness (being credited as righteous

because of Christ's sacrifice), hence sought to establish their own system, namely dedication to Moses' law (v. 3). They did not yield themselves to the gospel to submit to the truth (obey). Christ is the "end" of the law. "End" can signify reaching the goal, or the termination point. The two ideas complement one another. It is through Christ that the righteous status is attained---to everyone who practices believing as a way of life. The belief is active; it surrenders to the Lord's will (v. 4).

(Romans 10:5-11) God's plan for righteousness: Paul cites Moses (Lev. 10:5) to the effect that the one who obeys the righteousness of the law shall live as a result thereof. He will supplement this with the more exhaustive "all things" written in the law (Gal. 3:10). If one could keep the Mosaic law perfectly, he would be just, thus not in need of justification in Christ. But none could do that; thus, the law was impotent to justify (v. 5). In contrast, the "of faith" righteousness is perfectly adequate for human salvation. The reason being is that it is grounded in the perfect righteousness of Christ as a sacrifice for sin. This involved the Savior's descent from heaven, his death, and his resurrection (6-7). The apostle borrows language from Deuteronomy 30:11-14 to the effect that the word of salvation they needed was not far away, but quite near them; indeed, it was the "word of faith, which we preach" (v. 8).

The apostle then stresses (to a prospective Jewish audience) that if they would believe in Christ as Lord, including his resurrection from the dead, and confess that truth unashamedly, salvation could be theirs (v. 9-10). This does not reflect the totality of the plan of salvation, of course, for there is no mention of the requirement to repent of sins. Faith and confession are inclusive expressions, embracing the totality of what is required to become a Christian (including baptism, so beautifully emphasized in 6:3). This is illustrated by the immediate context when Paul mentions only believing (omitting confession) to avoid the "shame" of condemnation (v. 11). More on this presently.

(Romans 10:12-21) Israel's rejection of the Gentiles: many Jews labored under the illusion that the Gentiles had no part in God's plan for righteousness, or, at the very least, circumcision must be received to access salvation (Acts 15:1). But Paul assures his readers that the Lord makes "no distinction" between these major segments of the human family (Acts 11:12; 15:9; Romans 3:22); the same Lord is Lord of all, and rich to all who "call" upon him. The term "call" reveals that salvation is not unconditional. A comparison of Acts 2:21 with 2:38 indicates that "calling" is a generic expression embracing specific conditions of obedience (repentance and immersion). The apostle continues by asserting that one cannot call on whom he has not believed; thus, the calling is an addition to believing, which excludes the notion of salvation by faith alone. There is more. One cannot believe unless he is willing to hear, which adds yet another condition---a disposition willing to listen to and critically examine the gospel message. There is a "chain of custody" in the plan of salvation---God the author, Christ the sacrifice, those willing to send teachers, the teachers who convey the message, and those who believe and obey (v. 13-15).

Tragically, the response was not ideal. They "have not all obeyed the gospel" (v. 16). Note the terms that are interchangeable em-

ployed: "believe," "call," and "obey" (v. 11, 13, 16) are complementary requirements. All of this is confirmed by the testimony of Isaiah 53:1, which predicted that not all would believe. (Here is another example of Paul attributing material to Isaiah beyond chapter forty, contrary to the claims of radical critics.) "So then faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of Christ." Observe that belief (or faith) is mentioned again. "Believing" (v. 11) and "belief" (v. 17) are like two bookends, between which are sandwiched "call" and "obey" (v. 13, 16). Could it be clearer that belief is more than mere mental assent or even trusting? It involves submission in response to specific commands. All of these expressions are then summarized under the term "hear" (v. 18). "Did they not hear? Yes indeed."

Paul then makes two subsequent points by appealing to Old Testament prophecy: (a) The success of the gospel has been extensive throughout the Roman Empire (v. 18; Psa. 19:4). (b) Gospel success among the Gentiles would have some effect in provoking greater Jewish interest in the message of Christ (v. 19; Dt. 32:21 written by Moses). Isaiah adds his testimony to the influx of the Gentiles: "I was found of them that sought me not" (v. 20; Isa. 65:1). Again, national Israel is portrayed in a sad light. "All day long did I spread out my hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying people" (v. 21; Isa. 65:2). Again, in summary, note Paul's arrangement of terms: "believe," "call," "obey" (v. 11, 13, 16) against "disobedient" (v. 21). The book of Romans stands as an imperishable monument in defining the type of faith necessary for salvation.

The Roman Christians were struggling to understand: why did the Jews fail to believe and obey the gospel of their own Messiah (Rom. 9:6). Had God's word failed them? Certainly not! Neither has God's word failed the denominational world today. They must obey the gospel like the Romans did in Romans 6:3-7 and like the apostle Paul did (Acts 22:16 "And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord.") Friends, this is the way that one calls on the name of the Lord. Same as they did on Pentecost day. Acts 2:21 is completed when Acts 2:38 is obeyed. Friend, please don't believe the lie that water baptism was only for the Jews. Give me 5 minutes in the scriptures and I will expose that to be from the devil. 1 Timothy 4:1 "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils;"

We meet every evening at 6:30 pm for Bible study, or I will meet you at your convince, simply call 423-319-7377.

Acts 10:47-48 "Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we? And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord. Then prayed they him to tarry certain days."

John 3:5 "Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God."

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