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Morgan County Today

Psalm 100:3
www.mocotoday.com
Volume 12 Number 15
Tuesday, April 28, 2026

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75¢

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25-26



Photo By: Cathy Bird



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COMMUNITY CALENDAR

City of Sunbright to Host RUN FOR THE WALL MEMORIAL SERVICE

2026



A Patriotic Tribute Ride

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TUESDAY

19 MAY 2026

11 : 45 AM

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--Promote healing among ALL veterans, their families, and friends

--Call for an accountg of all POW/MIA

--Honor the memory of those Killed in Action from all wars

--Support our military personnel all over the world



REFRESHMENTS WILL BE PROVIDED

EVERYONE WELCOME



Bailey Stephens winner of
Morgan County Today
Easter coloring page

YOU'RE INVITED!

Annual Alumni Banquet

Sunbright High School

Saturday, May 23rd • 6:00 PM

Sunbright School Cafeteria

205 Burrville Rd

Sunbright, TN 37872

\$20 Per Person

Class of 2026 Graduates

— FREE

Celebrate • Reconnect
Honor Our Tigers



The Deer Lodge Abner Ross Center

meet on the
third Monday of the month
at 6:00 PM.

Coalfield Genealogical and Historical Society

meet on the
second Tuesday of every month
at the
Senior Citizens Building
at 6:00 PM.

Morgan County Republican Party

meet on the
last Thursday of every month
at 7:00 PM
at the
American Legion in Wartburg.

Morgan County Today
Your Community. Your News.

PUBLISHER:
TOMMY LEE FRANCIS
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EDITOR:
HEATHER FRANCIS
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OUT OF COUNTY RATES
\$55; \$50 FOR SENIOR
CITIZENS & VETERANS

**PERIODICAL POSTAGE PAID
AT WARTBURG, TN
USPS PUBLICATION NUMBER
(15400)**

WEEKLY WEATHER



TUE 4/28 **70°** 60°

WED 4/29 **74°** 47°

THU 4/30 **66°** 41°

FRI 5/1 **60°** 38°

SAT 5/2 **58°** 35°

SUN 5/3 **62°** 40°

MON 5/4 **65°** 45°



**Ms. Avery Pearl
Pet Columnist**

Pet Perspective with Ms. Avery Pearl

Happy, Happy Girls!

Ms Ivory ans me are so, so, so HAPPY! We have one of our most favorite people in the whole wide world staying a couple of days in our kingdom and we are so happy we could just bust!

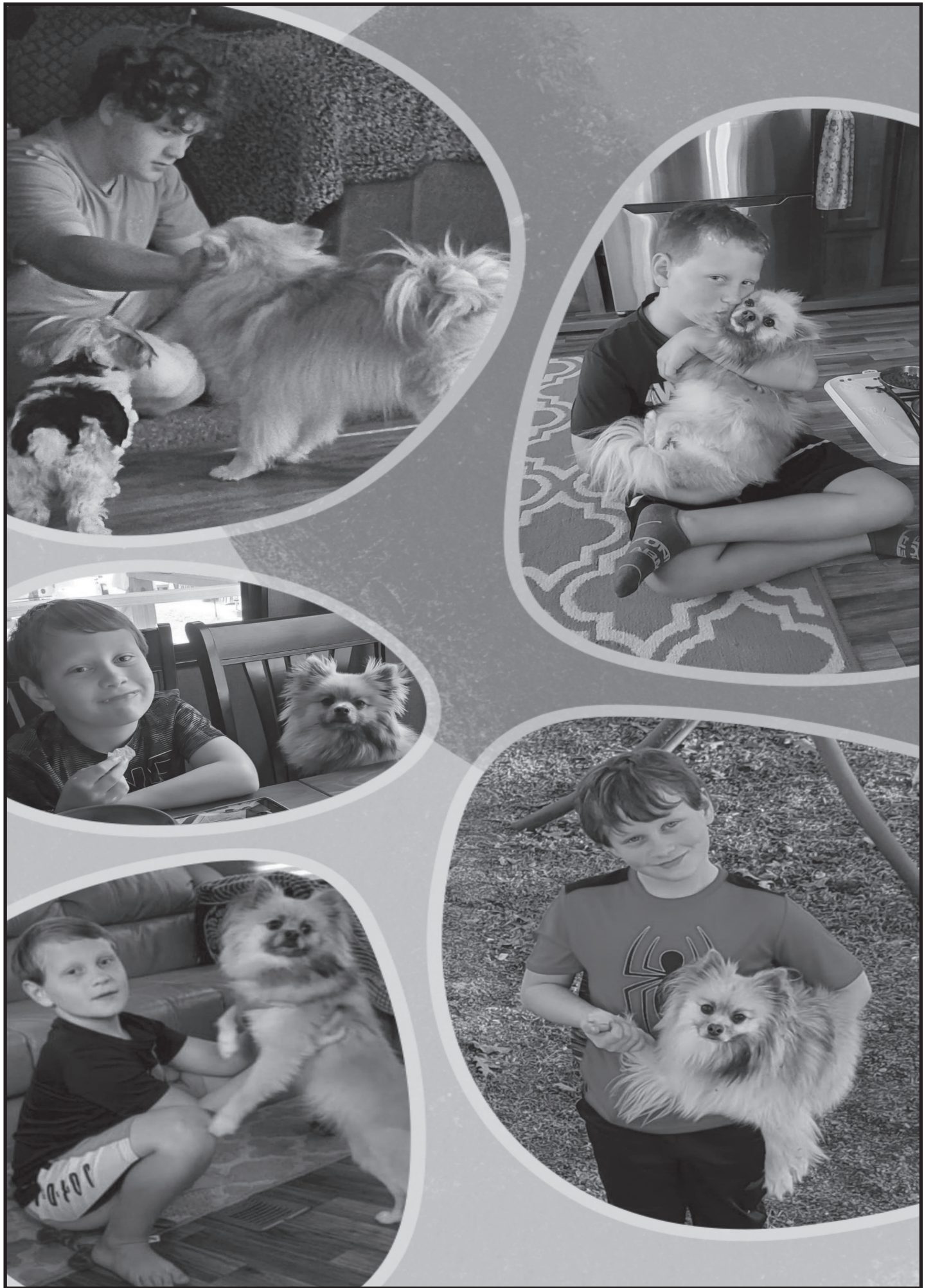
We both wuff Mr Noah and he wuffs us! He plays with us, gives belly scratches, and belly rubs.

He hasn't been here a lot lately and we sure have missed that feller!

He is a big boy now. I can remember when he was literally half the size he is now!

He has grown like a weed. Did I say we wuff him?

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



— In Loving Memory —

Stella Bunch Kelly, 100



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-great-grandchild.

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.

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.

Psalm 86:4-5

4 Rejoice the soul of thy servant: for unto thee, O Lord, do I lift up my soul.

5 For thou, Lord, art good, and ready to forgive; and plenteous in mercy unto all them that call upon thee.



William "Bill" Phillips, 55



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.

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,

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.

David Walker, 69



Also surviving are 18 Grandchildren and 13 Great Grandchildren whom he loved to see come and visit. He will be especially missed by his brother Dale. Dale became his main caregiver when he became sick. He also had a special place in his heart for his dog Fancy.

David Walker, age 69 of Mossy Grove, took his journey to heaven on March 25, 2026. He was born on November 5, 1956, in Sunbright, TN. David was a carpenter by trade. He took pride in building and remodeling houses across Morgan and surrounding counties.

He was preceded in death by his wife Mary, Parents; Georgia (Leroy) Daniels and Jr. (Wanda) Walker and granddaughter Celina Price.

He will be missed terribly by his brothers and sisters, William (Rebecca) of Dayton, TN., Dale of Mossy Grove, Kay of Wartburg and Becky of Milton, FL.

Children: Louanda, Greta, Denise and Sondra of Wartburg and Stepdaughter Amy (Spunky) Brown of Mossy Grove.

We want to give a special thanks to the doctors, nurses and staff of the ICU Unit at Methodist Medical Center. They are like a family in there and welcomed us in taking such wonderful care of Davey. Also special thanks to Schubert Funeral Home, their attention to detail and kindness shown to our family over the years can never be matched.

The family will receive friends on Monday, March 30, 2026, from 12-1pm Schubert Funeral Home, Wartburg. Funeral Services will follow at 1pm with Bro. Herb Judkins officiating, internment will follow the funeral services in the Byrd Cemetery, Sunbright, TN.

Schubert Funeral Home is honored to serve the family of David Walker.

— In Loving Memory —

Inez Carroll, 91



She is survived and missed by her children, Gladys Tucker, Wade (Maxine) Carroll, Warren (Sandy) Carroll; grandchildren: Hannah (Glenn) Hembree, Joseph Carroll, Jacob Carroll, Jessie Wayne Carroll, Logan (Camden) Carroll, Claude Carroll, Wendy Carroll, Debra Carroll; special family friend Richard Carroll and a host of great grandbabies, family and friends.

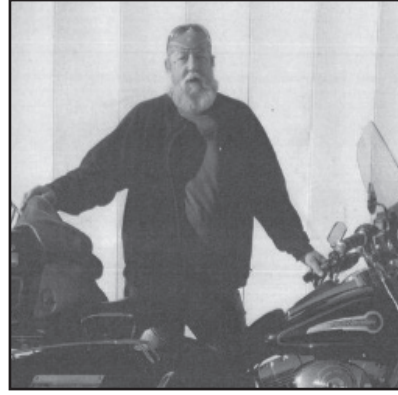
Inez Carroll, born March 2, 1935, passed away peacefully at her home in Devonia, TN surrounded by her family on April 2, 2026.

She was preceded in death by her husband, Wayne Carroll Sr., sons Wayne Carroll Jr., James Carroll; grandson Lee Carroll, sisters: Mindy Patterson, Ada Seiber, Polly Byrge, Ruthie Byrge, Mary Duncan; brothers: Otis Carroll, Eli Carroll

The family will receive friends Monday April 6, 2026 from 10:00 am to 12:00 noon at Schubert Funeral Home in Wartburg, funeral at 12:00 with Bro. Gary Armes officiating. The graveside service will immediately follow at Seiber Cemetery in Devonia, TN.

Schubert Funeral Home is honored to serve the family of Inez Carroll.

David Gordon Henry, 69



ter Joyce Halloway of Knoxville and a host of friends and loved ones.

David enjoyed riding motorcycles, ATV's and going to the races. He collected football and Nascar cards. He was of the Baptist faith.

The family is honoring David's wishes to be cremated. No services will be scheduled at this time.

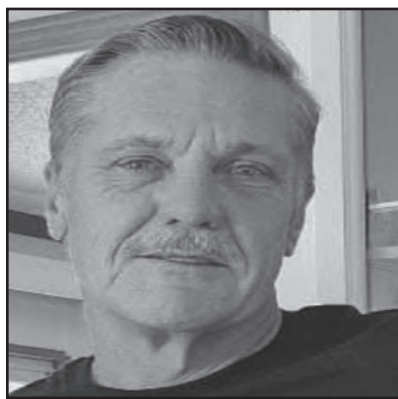
Schubert Funeral Home is honored to serve the family of David Gordon Henry.

David Gordon Henry, age 69 of Oliver Springs passed away April 8, 2026. He was born in Cleveland, Ohio to Elmer and Juanita Henry.

He is survived by his wife, Tammy Henry of Somerset, KY.; daughter Tabatha Berryman of Somerset; 3 grandchildren David (Cora) New, Samantha (Andrew) New and Damien Berryman all of Somerset' sis-

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

Doyle Van Daugherty, 58



wife Keisha Daugherty, Tessa Daugherty and significant other Tristan Mitchell, Robert Hawthorne and wife Heather, Brandon Gould and significant other Sarah Daugherty, Dallas Cooper, Ethan Reynolds, Ashton Reynolds, and Cameron Daugherty; brother Chad Daugherty and wife Dawn; sisters Hazel Carroll and husband Rick, Storm Hammons and Raven Hammons; 25 grandchildren; special cousins Ricky and Mike Rich and a host of nieces, nephews, friends and family.

Doyle Van Daugherty, age 58, of Wartburg went to be with the lord on April 9, 2026.

He was a loving husband, father, grandfather, son and brother. Van enjoyed camping, fishing, and spending time with his family.

Van is preceded in death by his mother Betty Hammons; father Isaac Daugherty; sons Tyler Daugherty and Dustin Cooper; grandson Dalton Daugherty.

He is survived by the love of his life Deborah Lester Daugherty; children Amanda Davis and husband Mitch, Dustin and

The family will receive friends Sunday, April 12, 2026 at Schubert Funeral Home from 12:00-2:00 p.m. with the funeral to follow at 2:00 p.m. Interment will follow in the Armes Chapel Cemetery.

Schubert Funeral Home is honored to serve the family of Doyle Van Daugherty.

Elizabeth Faye (Daniel) Robbins, 86



Daniel; mother, Edith (Walker) Daniel Hamby; brother, Harvey Leroy Daniel; and sisters, Velva England, Lola Hamby, Bonnie Bates, and Ruth Scarborough.

She is survived by her son, Michael Wayne Robbins and sister, Sue Human. She is also survived by a host of nieces and nephews.

Mrs. Elizabeth Faye (Daniel) Robbins, age 86 of Kingston, TN, formerly of Morgan County, passed away on Saturday, April 18, 2026.

She was preceded in death by her husband, Bobbie Gene Robbins; father, Jesse Roy

Schubert Funeral Home is honored to serve the family of Elizabeth Robbins.

Psalm 123:1

**Unto thee lift I up mine eyes,
O thou that dwellest in the heavens.**



— In Loving Memory —

Caroline Pauline (Huckelby) Miller, 76



Special thank you to her nurses from Quality Hospice that have provided excellent care over the past several months, Billie Bilbry and Renae Gaddes.

In lieu of flowers contributions can be made to Schubert Funeral Home, P.O. Box 326, Wartburg, TN 37887.

The family will receive friends Wednesday, April 15, 2026 at Schubert Funeral Home from 5:00-7:00 p.m. with the funeral to follow at 7:00 p.m. with Bro. Mike Smithers officiating. Graveside services will be Thursday at 11:00 a.m. in the family cemetery.

Pall Bearers:
Randy Huckelby
Joe Miller
Tim Loggins
Randy Henry
Dwayne Russell
Jackie Norris

Schubert Funeral Home is honored to serve the family of Caroline Pauline (Hucelby) Miller.

Caroline Pauline (Huckelby) Miller, age 76 departed this life on April 12, 2026 at her home in Glenmary. She was born June 28, 1949.

She is preceded in death by her parents; infant sister; son Jimmy; grandson Sean; as well as many others.

She is survived by her husband and verbal sparing partner of over 60 years Jim Miller; daughters Karen Webb of Sunbright, Debbie Miller of Glenmary; son Chris Miller and wife Lisa of Sunbright; special grandson William Miller of Glenmary; grandchildren Greg (Quinette), Liz Marie, Abbigail, Lindsay, Addison, and Gabriel; great grandchildren Brycen, Rowen, Alyssa, Lincoln, and Amelia; brothers Ronnie, Charles, and Jackie and a host of nieces, nephews and extended family and friends.

Allen Redmon, 90



Nicholas Shannon, Patrick Shannon, and Michael Chapeskie. He was also blessed with great-grandchildren Tegan Smith, Ryder Smith, Liam Shannon, Danielle Shannon, and Raylan Shannon. In addition, he is survived by his nephew, Charles Bullen.

Allen will be remembered for his kindness, strength, and the love he shared with those around him. His legacy lives on through his family, who will cherish his memory always.

The family will receive friends Saturday, April 18, 2026 at Schubert Funeral Home from 11:00-12:00 p.m.

Schubert Funeral Home is honored to serve the family of Allen Redmon.

Allen Redmon, age 90, passed away peacefully on April 12, 2026. Born on August 11, 1935, he lived a full and meaningful life surrounded by family and friends.

He is survived by his son, Robert Redmon; his daughters, Allison Cooper and her husband Bill Cooper, and Deborah Chapeskie and her husband Leo Chapeskie. He was a proud grandfather to Angie Chapeskie, Ashleigh Cooper,

John Thomas Hall (Little Bear)



He loved making Indian dream catchers and Indian jewelry. Anyone that knew him was well aware of his love for CB-ing and junking. He loved to strip for copper and hang out at the dumpsters with his friends.

He was preceded in death by his father, Fay Hall, and aunts Bernice Ritchey and Lucille Branim.

Mr. John Thomas Hall (Little Bear) passed away on April 9, 2026 at his home. He always had a smile and a kind word for everyone he came in contact with. His friends meant everything to him and he would do anything he could to help you.

Little Bear was devoted to his church and was a longtime member of the Lancing Presbyterian Church, which he attended weekly. He also helped deliver meals for the church's food ministry.

Little Bear was a member of the "Over the Hill Nation" Cherokee Tribe (Long Hair Clan).

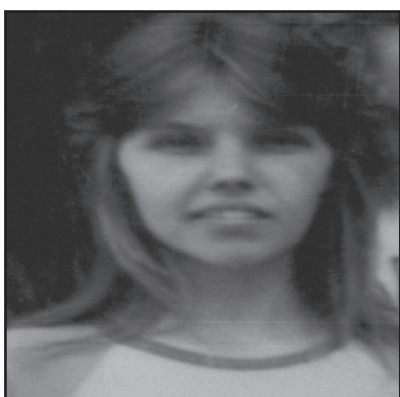
He will be missed by his church family. Best friends Mike Byrd, Debra and Casey Gorsuch, Matilda and Grace, Monica and Shelly, all the guys at the dump sites, best CB buddy "Witch Doctor" Richard Marcum, and lifelong friend, Mary Martha Pemberton.

As John would say to everyone he met when he left was, "God Bless".

There will be a graveside service on Monday, April 13, 2026 at 3pm at the Forrestner Cemetery, Lancing.

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

Linda Sue Capps, 67



nephews, aunts and uncles.

Linda was a kind and thoughtful person with a big heart. She loved her children and family and was always willing to lend a hand to help the less fortunate. She will be sadly missed by family and friends.

The family will receive friends Wednesday, April 22, 2026 at Chestnut Ridge Community Church from 12:00-1:00 p.m. with the funeral service to follow at 1:00 p.m. with Bro. Wayne Matthews officiating.

Interment will follow in the Adams Hill Cemetery in Deer Lodge.

Schubert Funeral Home is honored to serve the family of Linda Sue Capps.

She is preceded in death by husband Fred Capps; children Michael and Jacob Capps; father Reed Aytes; mother Rena Carpenter; sister Rita Aytes; and brothers Randy and Larry Stephens.

She is survived by daughter Angie Capps and son Randall Capps; grandchildren Fancy, Starla, T. Tee, Francheska, Blake and Ben Capps; sisters Nancy Houston and Brenda Diebil and a host of nieces,



— In Loving Memory —

Kingston Eugene Hawkins, 7

“Let the children come to me, and do not hinder the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these” - **Mathew 19:14**



Kingston Eugene Hawkins age 7, went to Heaven to be one of the lords angels on April 2, 2026. He passed away at his home in Harriman, TN., as a result of a tragic accident. He would have been 8 years old on April 25, 2026.

He is survived by his loving parents Chris and Christina; siblings Ezra Hawkins and Olivia Smith; grandparents Clyde and Lisa Hawkins, Cheri Vincent, and Joann and Paul Lloyd; aunts and uncles Tonya and Bryan Hawkins, Kim Wallace, Ashley Ritter, Julie Rolfe, Susie West, Debbie and David Adam's, Rosa and Scott Byrd, Sonya Newport, and Tiffany Lloyd; and a host of many cousins and friends who loved him dearly.

He is preceded in death by his grandpa Alan Jeffery Wallace; great grandparents Don and Orana Wallace, and Roy and Bobbi Jo West; great uncles David and Jerry West and great uncles Ron Roles.

Though his time on earth was far too brief, Kingston's life carried a presence far greater than his years. He was a child of remarkable strength, determination and a heart-full of personality, full of thought and full of life.

Kingston's possessed a spirit that couldn't be overlooked. He was deeply observant, fiercely loving and naturally protective of those closest to him. Even at such a young age, he often made sure his mamaw (who he nicknamed sweet pea) did not overwork herself, showing a tenderness and concern that reflected the depth of who he was.

Kingston had a sense of humor that could fill a room without effort. His off-the-wall questions quick remarks and unexpected observations, often stopped people in their tracks, leaving laughter and amazement behind.

Kingston was intelligent beyond his years, gifted with a mind that noticed detail others missed and way of speaking that made every conversation memorable.

A true country boy at heart, Kingston found joy in the simple meaningful moments of life. He loved wrestling with his papaw, working on cars with his uncle, riding through the woods with his dad and sharing quiet snuggles with his mamaw and his momma. He treasured the time spent learning - whether changing brakes and oil with uncle, fixing things and learning how to work beside his papaw or simply being near those he loved.

He often spoke of how much he loved his aunt Debbie's cooking. Proudly declaring many time that she was the best cook in the world. He shared a special bond with his aunt Kimmy, who knew him as her little best friend. Kingston loved deeply and that love was felt by everyone blessed enough to know him.

Above all Kingston loved Jesus. He was always asking questions about the bible always wanting to understand more

always reaching toward something greater with a childlike faith that was pure and sincere.

Kingston's smile, his unmistakable humor and the strength of his personality brought character and light wherever he went. Though his family grieves the unimaginable loss of his presence, they also carry deep gratitude for the love, laughter and unforgettable moments he gave freely.

His life, though short, leaves a lasting imprint. His legacy will continue through the stories told, the lessons remembered and loved that remains. He will be deeply missed, forever cherished and always remembered.

The family will receive friends Wednesday, April 8, 2026 at Schubert Funeral Home from 1:00-2:30 p.m. Graveside services will follow in the Hawkins Memorial Gardens on the family property.

*Schubert Funeral Home
is honored to serve the family
of Kingston Eugene Hawkins.*

Josphe Eugene Poole, 65



Joseph Eugene Poole, age 65 of Wartburg, passed away on April 19, 2026. He was born on June 9, 1960, to William and Carol Davey Poole in Youngstown, Ohio. He was a member of Union Baptist Church in Joyner. He retired from TN Associated Electric after 26 years and was an IBEW member through the local 270.

He was a HAM radio operator for over 30 years (KD4TVO). He was a 1978 graduate of Ursuline High School and a 1980 graduate from Kilgore Community College with an Associate Degree in Mechanical Engineering. He was a loving husband, father and grandfather. One of the things he loved most was helping coach high school football when his sons were on the team. He enjoyed fishing, golfing and all sports. He will be missed by all who knew him.

He is preceded in death by his parents William (Bill) and Carol Poole and father-in-law, Morris Young

He is survived by his loving wife of nearly 36 years Bernadine

Young Poole, three sons and eight grandchildren. His sons are J. Eugene Poole, II and Melissa of Erlanger, KY, Benjamin and Tara Poole of Wartburg, and Ryan and Kendall Poole of Cookeville, TN. His grandchildren are Levi, Isaiah, Hudson, Clara, Charlotte, Miles, Georgia and Caroline. Mother-in-law Patricia Summers Young of Joyner,

He is survived by his four wonderful siblings: Julie and Greg Cullifer of Sanford, NC, Tom and Peggy Poole of Youngstown, OH, Connie and Steve Zuiss of Wichita, KS, and Jo Ann and Paul Root of Grandview, TX. He is also survived by his brothers and sisters-in-law Paul and Lin-

da Young of Rockwood, Kesler and Jennifer Young of Joyner, and Darlene and Leon Akin of Summerville, SC.

The family will receive friends on Tuesday, April 21, 2026 from 5-7pm at Schubert Funeral Home.

Funeral services will follow at 7pm with Bro. Jason Lowe officiating. Graveside will be Wednesday 11am Union Cemetery, Wartburg.

*Schubert Funeral Home is
honored to serve the family
of Joseph Poole.*



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 Was: \$9,777 BEST PRICE: \$5,777 95 TOYOTA 4RUNNER SR5 3.0L V6, 192K, #D7312C	 Was: \$14,755 BEST PRICE: \$7,755 20 NISSAN ROGUE S AWD, BLUETOOTH, #R7617A	 Was: \$13,277 BEST PRICE: \$9,277 16 TOYOTA COROLLA LE PLUS BLUETOOTH, ALLOYS, ##NA03793C	 Was: \$13,774 BEST PRICE: \$9,774 17 HYUNDAI SANTA FE XL 3RD ROW, 4WD, #N272730B	 Was: \$14,555 BEST PRICE: \$10,555 18 KIA FORTE S SUNROF, CARPLAY, #L350267B
 Was: \$15,774 BEST PRICE: \$11,774 18 NISSAN ATIMA 2.5 SR BACKUP CAMERA, CRUISE, #R7731A	 Was: \$16,188 BEST PRICE: \$12,188 14 JEEP CHEROKEE LIMITED NAV, HEATED LEATHER, #R7942A	 Was: \$16,994 BEST PRICE: \$12,994 17 FORD ESCAPE TITANIUM AWD, ENTERTAINMENT, #N307800B	 Was: \$18,887 BEST PRICE: \$14,887 19 JEEP CHEROKEE LATITUDE PLUS 4WD, 84K, #R7698B	 Was: \$19,557 BEST PRICE: \$15,557 20 CHEVY EQUINOX LT WIFI, ENTERTAINMENT, #N833473B
 Was: \$20,277 BEST PRICE: \$16,277 18 JEEP WRANGLER JK SAHARA 4WD, SUNROOF #R7130B	 Was: \$24,577 BEST PRICE: \$17,577 19 MAZDA CX-3 TOURING AWD, LEATHER SEATS, #R8051B	 Was: \$24,773 BEST PRICE: \$17,773 21 NISSAN KICKS SR CARPLAY, BLUETOOTH, #R7856B	 Was: \$22,557 BEST PRICE: \$18,557 22 NISSAN SENTRA SV BLIND SPT, HEATED SEATS, #R7917B	 Was: \$22,993 BEST PRICE: \$18,993 23 NISSAN ROGUE SV WIFI HOTSPOT, TURBO, #N419010A
 Was: \$23,555 BEST PRICE: \$19,555 24 NISSAN KICKS SV LOW MILES, ADAPT CC, #R7524A	 Was: \$24,993 BEST PRICE: \$20,993 19 BMW X4 XDRIVE 30I AWD, LOADED, NAV., #R7858A	 Was: \$26,277 BEST PRICE: \$22,277 21 VW ATLAS SE W/TECH PKG 3RD ROW SEATING, #N053420B	 Was: \$26,555 BEST PRICE: \$22,555 23 NISSAN ROGUE S AWD, WIFI HOTSPOT, #R7437A	 Was: \$27,388 BEST PRICE: \$23,388 21 GMC ACADIA SLE WIFI, ENTERTAINMENT, #D7465B
 Was: \$27,558 BEST PRICE: \$23,558 24 HYUNDAI SANTA CRUZ SEL SUNROOF, NAVIGATION, #R7585A	 Was: \$27,774 BEST PRICE: \$23,774 23 NISSAN ROGUE SV 37K MILES, AWD, WIFI, #N549721C	 Was: \$27,997 BEST PRICE: \$23,997 23 HONDA CR-V HYBRID SPORT SUNROOF, BLIND SP MON., #R7657A	 Was: \$28,558 BEST PRICE: \$24,558 20 ACURA MDX W/TECH PKG AWD, 3RD ROW, #N010351A	 Was: \$28,882 BEST PRICE: \$24,882 23 KIA SPORTAGE SX NAV, LEATHER SEATS, #R8029A

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**Tom Redmon
Columnist**

Halsey's Typhoon and the Aftermath

The title of the book is "Halsey's Typhoon" by Bob Drury and Tom Clavin. Admiral William Frederick Halsey Jr had been in WWII and had been educated in part at the Naval Academy in Maryland. Halsey was well liked by his men and other high-ranking officers.

Navy Secretary Knox often repeated a story that symbolized Halsey's rapport with his enlisted men. One day two sailors walking across the deck of the repair ship USS Vestal were discussing Halsey.

"I'd go through hell for that old son of a bitch" said one. The admiral was standing nearby and turned to face him. "Young man" said Halsey "I'm not that old."

Ordinary sailors and Marines were not the only men who carried a special fondness for the fighting admiral. The war correspondent loved Halsey and he loved them back.

Admiral Halsey and General Patton are one good reason I am writing this article. I loved both leaders because of their leadership qualities. Their men loved them and from what I have read about them, and I had been old enough to serve in WWII I would have given anything to serve under Admiral Halsey.

Another reason why I am writing this article is because of my oldest brother William J. (James) Redmon. Willie couldn't wait to get into the Navy and when he did enlist he was assigned to the ship USS Intrepid which was involved in some of the fiercest fighting of the war and the Intrepid was in Typhoon Cobra in December 1944 that hit Halsey's flotilla.

I can remember Willie talking to my oldest sister Rosella, when he said fighting the Japanese was bad enough but the worst enemy we faced was the Typhoon Cobra in December 1944. He said he was aboard the Intrepid, a large aircraft carrier that could stand the high waves of the deadly typhoon. He said, "I saw some ships like the destroyer USS Hull and USS Spense go down. First I saw them riding atop the 70-90 foot waves then went down but never came up again."

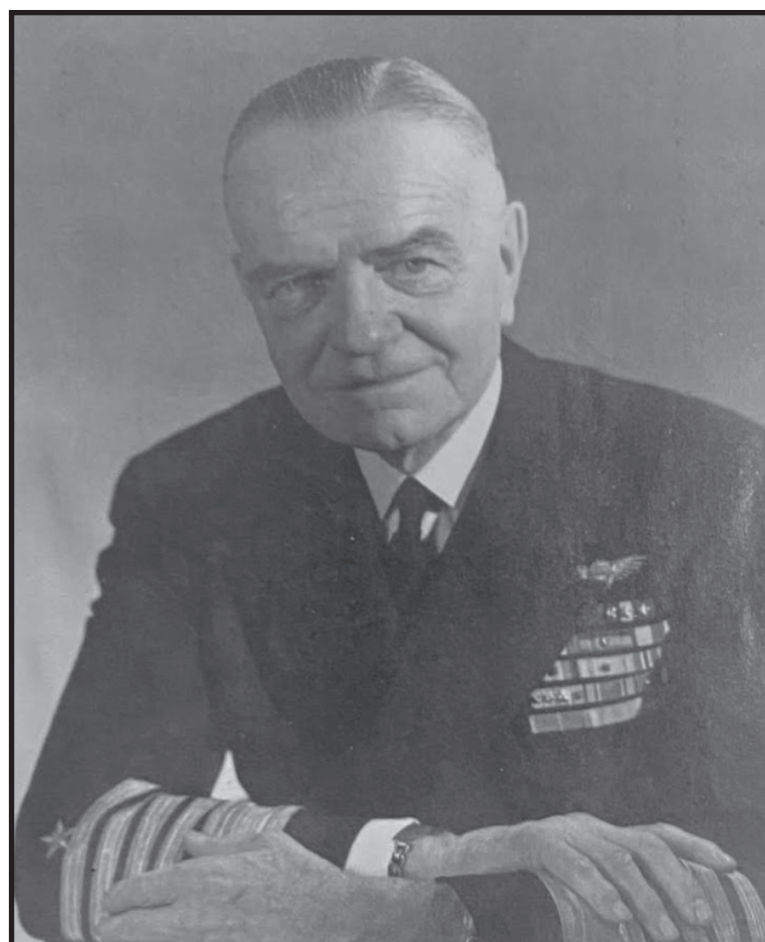
Altogether we lost almost 800 sailors, many of the sailors from many of the smaller ships were rescued. Believe it or not the destroyers and the DD escorts like the USS Tabberer were the ones who rescued most of the sailors. By 6:45 PM on December 18th, Admiral Halsey got word that the USS Hull, USS Spense and USS Monaghan (all DD's) had sunk. The Tabberer had lost all means of communication so was unaccounted for. It became one of the main ships to rescue the sailors from the three ships that had sunk.

"No one who has not been through a typhoon can conceive its fury" Halsey wrote. "The 70-foot seas smashing you from all sides. The rain and the spray are blinding, they drive at you, until you can't tell the ocean from the air."

At noon, I couldn't see the bow of my ship. 350 feet from the bridge, the USS New Jersey was once hit by a 5-inch shell without me feeling the impact. The USS Missouri, her sister, had a kamikaze crash on her deck and repaired the only damage with a paint brush. Yet this typhoon tossed our enormous ship as if it was a canoe; our chairs, tables and all loose gear had to be doubled-lashed. We ourselves were buffeted from one bulkhead to another; we could not hear our own voices above the uproar."

He concluded his entry on a forlorn note. "What it was like on a destroyer one-twentieth the USS New Jersey's size." he wrote, "I can only imagine."

The Admiral sent out a TBS message alerting all ships to post look-outs for floating survivors. There was nothing else to do but smoke cigarettes, drink coffee, water and wait. As damage assessments dribbled into the flag plot Halsey paced between the port side of the flag mess and his seat at the conference table. Occasionally he would peer over the shoulder of his Chief of Staff Admiral Mick Carney who kept a running tally sheet of the fleet's vessels on the table before him. Carney's damage assessment continued to grow.



An official portrait of Admiral William Frederick Halsey Jr.
(National Archives photo)

Halsey began hearing from his larger vessels, particularly his escort carriers. Fighter planes were being swept off decks into the sea. Aircraft stowed in hangar decks were breaking loose from their moorings, bouncing off bulkheads and exploding. Aboard the USS Monterey the Admiral learned one such configuration was close to sinking the vulnerable aircraft carrier.

To Lieutenant (J.R.) Gerald Ford (yes a future president), and officer of the deck on the USS Monterey each descent down the face of a wave was like the down beat of an axe. From his station on the bridge Ford contemplated the implausible scene before him. Lashing rains in 70 knot winds had whipped the sea into a liquid palisade and few if any of Third Fleet's vessels were visible through Ford's binoculars. As the presiding officer from midnight to 4:00 AM midwatch it was Ford's responsibility to ensure that the little Jeep carrier station was protected. He was tasked with scouring her heading and avoiding collision at all costs. Yet now, as he scanned the shifting and undulating horizon, not a single ship came into view. Lt. Ford had never seen waves so big. They battered Monterey's hull and washed over her flight deck, 57 feet above the water line. To Ford their vibrations resonated like a brass organ cord in some vast European cathedral.

Before the war Ford had been an all-American football player at the University of Michigan and had passed up a professional contract to attend law school but he remained in good shape and aside from his duties as a gunnery officer he was also Monterey's athletic director. Crewmates agreed that Ford was an exercise nut. If he caught them goofing off even off duty, Ford would order them to break into sets of jumping jacks. Ford would jump right alongside them. Ford thought he had seen the worst of war as a gunnery division officer Ford had directed fire during the Great Marianas Turkey shoot only six months earlier. When Japanese fighters had fallen like autumn leaves. He also witnessed four months later the Leyte Campaign when waves of enemy aircraft had hit Monterey's task force group with everything they had for two solid days. Ford thought he had seen the worst of it until he saw the 70-foot waves hit the ships. He could see the small vessels go up high on the waves then go down never to be seen again. Captain Ingersoll had gotten a directive from Admiral Halsey to abandon ship but as he looked into the sailor's faces, he decided to stay with Monterey. It could be saved.

- Continued on Pages 14 & 15



USS Tabberer (DE-418) underway near Houston, Texas (USA), circa in May 1944. She is painted in Camouflage Measure 31, Design 22D.



A reunion of the men of the USS Tabberer in 1984, forty years after Typhoon Cobra. Henry Lee Plage is in his usual spot at such reunions - in the center, surrounded by his loyal crew. (Courtesy of Russ Plage)

Ford had come close to going overboard but around the deck of every aircraft carrier is a tiny steel lip about two inches high called the deck combing, designed to keep the flight crews' tools from slipping overboard. When Ford's feet collided like an acrobat, Ford grabbed the ridge with his fingertips and flung himself down into the ship's catwalk. He landed flat on his back. When he started climbing back up again he said "I was really careful. I was scared as hell."

To show you how duty was carried out on the ships even the destroyer USS Taussig had lost its power. Doctor John Blankenship tied himself to a makeshift operating table and performed an emergency appendectomy, his scalpel sparkling in the vessel's guttering oil lamps.

Many other ships beside the three who sank came near going down, having serious problems. Many of the men in the destroyers were just out of high school and had been trained at a number of training stations set up because they were needed to replace the ones who had been killed or injured. New ships were being built and every day they were waiting for a new crew. Navy men were being trained in stations set up all over the United States. The two main stations were at the Great Lakes and San Diego, but they couldn't take care of the thousands of men needed for the growing U.S. Navy.

By the morning of December 20th there were 10 miserable souls remaining on float rings. Ayers began to wonder how he would die but some of his float mates assumed they were sure to be picked up, by Ayers realized he had been in the water over 50 hours and he wondered if the search would be called off soon. A little later he saw an outline of a ship on the horizon. From the distance the superstructure looked stripped bare with no mast, no radar gear, a giant tear in the roof of its pilot house, Ayers took it for a giant submarine. He laughed out loud. He realized he could be captured by the enemy. He did not care.

What Ayers was watching was the American much battered destroyer escort the USS Tabberer.

As they approached the Tabberer a rope with a monkey fist was tossed out to them. It landed short of the ring. Ayers decided to swim for it. He took around half a dozen strokes before the Tabberer's deck crew opened fire. Bullets whizzed into the water above him and he instantly knew what they were shooting at. It was the sharks and they disappeared and Ayers and his crew mates were hauled aboard the Tabberer.

Nearly 800 men had died and over 80 were injured, 3 destroyers had capsized and another dozen ships had been rendered inoperable. 146 aircraft were lost or damaged beyond repair and America's Big Blue fleet was literally decimated.

In a few days Halsey's fleet hoped to join General MacArthur's invasion of Mindoro, one of the Philippine islands. But instead of this Halsey and his crew were slated for a court inquiry about Typhoon Cobra. Historian Samuel Eliot Morison personally defended Halsey vigorously. In my opinion, after rereading the testimony 14 years later and examining the meteorological data then available to Admiral Halsey the court was not fair to commander Third Fleet.

When Halsey took the stand on the day after Christmas Judge Advo



Lt. (J.G.) Gerald Ford (left, center) leaping for the ball.

cate Gates boarded in on the Admiral's contradictory testimony. He said that nearly all of the Third Fleet's officers had noted they saw the storm

coming. He went on to say that everyone in the fleet knew what was coming. It seemed that the Admiral was the last one to see that the typhoon posed a danger to his ships.

The fleet's aerologist Commander George F. Costco was admonished for relying too greatly on far off weather reports like from Pearl and other outlying stations. Vice Admiral John Slew McCain was held responsible for briefly turning the fleet into the heart of the storm on the morning of December 18th, but Nimitz didn't recommend any further action. Nimitz was of the firm opinion that no question of negligence is involved. He softened the language of the court by removing the word faults and wrote that Halsey's mistakes were errors of judgment committed under stress of war operations. In a classified document not released until 1955 an angered CINCPAC called the disaster the greatest loss that we have taken in the Pacific without compensatory return since the first battle of Savo. Admiral Halsey called off the search for survivors at sundown on December 22nd. The final survivor was Seaman Second Class William Keith of the Spence.

Upon being hoisted to the deck of the USS Gatlin the dazed and hollowed eyed sailor was in such a deranged state he fought his rescuers, broke free and tried to leap back into the sea. Keith ranted that he had been riding a torpedo, which he intended to convoy all the way to Japan to blow up the city of Tokyo.

In all only 93 officers and enlisted men were rescued. The Tabberer had rescued 55 of them.

Lieutenant Commander Henry L. Plage, Captain of the Tabberer received citations from Admiral Halsey and James Forrestal the Secretary of the Navy. In June 1945, Halsey would go through another typhoon named Viper but this time only 6 sailors were killed.

1st Citation

In the name of the President of the United States, the Commander, Third Fleet, United States Pacific Fleet, takes pleasure in awarding the Legion of Merit to

LIEUTENANT COMMANDER HENRY L. PLAGE
UNITED STATES NAVAL RESERVE

for service as set forth in the following

CITATION

For exceptionally meritorious conduct in the performance of outstanding service to the Government as Commanding Officer of the U.S.S. Tabberer operating in the Western Pacific war area from December 18, 1944, to December 20, 1944. During this period, while his ship was combating a storm of hurricane intensity and mountainous seas causing severe damage, Lieutenant Commander PLAGE directed the rescue of fifty-five survivors from two destroyers which foundered as a result of the same storm. In spite of seemingly insurmountable hardships and adverse conditions, he persisted in the search for survivors for fifty-one hours. Lieutenant Commander PLAGE's courageous leadership and excellent seamanship through treacherous and storm-swept seas and his timely reports aided materially in the rescue of additional survivors by other ships which later arrived at the scene. His outstanding conduct was in keeping with the highest tradition of the United States Naval Service.

W. F. Halsey
Admiral, U.S. Navy



**Henry Lee Plage, USNR
Commanding Officer of the USS Tabberer**

2nd Citation

THE SECRETARY OF THE NAVY
WASHINGTON

The Secretary of the Navy takes pleasure in commending the

UNITED STATES SHIP TABBERER

For service as follows:

For extremely meritorious service in the rescue of survivors following the foundering of two [sic] United States Destroyers in the Western Pacific Typhoon of December 18, 1944. Unmaneuverable in the wind-lashed seas, fighting to maintain her course while repeatedly falling back into the trough, with her mast lost and all communications gone, the U.S.S. TABBERER rode out the tropical typhoon and, with no opportunity to repair the damage, gallantly started her search for survivors, steaming at ten knots, she stopped at short intervals and darkened her decks where the entire crew topside, without sleep or rest for 36 hours, stood watch to listen for the whistles and shouts of survivors and to scan the turbulent waters for small lights attached to kapok jackets which appeared and then became obscured in troughs blocked off by heavy seas.

Locating one survivor or a group, the TABBERER stoutly maneuvered to windward, drifting down to her objective and effecting rescues in safety despite the terrific rolling which plunged her main deck under water. Again and again, she conducted an expanding box search, persevering in her hazardous mission for another day and night until she had rescued fifty-five storm tossed and exhausted survivors and had brought them aboard to be examined, treated and clothed.

Brave and seaworthy in her ready service, the TABBERER, in this heroic achievement, has implemented the daring seamanship and courage of her officers and men.

All personnel attached to and serving on board the TABBERER during the above-mentioned operation, are hereby authorized to wear the NAVY UNIT COMMENDATION RIBBON.

James Forrestal
Secretary of the Navy



Typhoon Cobra (Halsey's Typhoon), December 17, 1944. Survivors of USS Spence (DD 512) and USS Hull (DD 350) were rescued by USS Tabberer (DE 418) after the typhoon had capsized the U.S. destroyers on December 17, 1944.

Shown: Officers and men of USS Hull (DD 350) recuperating from their ordeal onboard USS Tabberer (DE 418). Note, the other destroyer lost was the USS Monaghan (DD 354).

Photograph released on January 21, 1945. U.S. Navy photograph, now in the collections of the National Archives. 80-G-299182



Historically Speaking

Local views of artificial intelligence: Past, present and future (part one)

By Ray Smith - Oak Ridge City Historian

Carolyn Krause provides a review of a unique Oak Ridge program discussing Artificial Intelligence. It may well be that Oak Ridge is one of the very few places where this discussion could be held and where four experts with credentials such as these could be found. I feel we often undersell ourselves and tend to overlook the very special aspects of being a Science City, a Secret City, an Atomic City, and do not give ourselves credit for being one of the only places in the world where scientific discoveries and dialog about special things take place routinely

A panel discussion involving scientists and public policy experts who considered the potential benefits and harms of artificial intelligence (AI) was presented Feb. 10, 2026, at the Pollard Technology Conference Center of Oak Ridge Associated Universities. The AI panel kicked off the fourth season of "Our American Roots," which is produced by the Oak Ridge Breakfast Rotary Club and the Oak Ridge Institute for Continued Learning to help build bridges between cultures and communities.

The program, entitled "Railroads, Radio and Artificial Intelligence," initially tried to address two questions: "How do the challenges and opportunities of AI compare with those of the railroads and radio? What lessons can we learn from our knowledge about past disruptive technologies to help us prepare for the uses of AI and their consequences?"

Members of the panel were Stephen Streiffer, director of Oak Ridge National Laboratory; Lynne Parker, associate vice chancellor emerita at the University of Tennessee, former principal deputy director of the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy and former founder of the AI Tennessee Initiative; William Lyons, professor emeritus at UT and associate director at the Institute of American Civics at the Howard Baker School of Public Policy and Public Affairs at UT, and Ashley Stowe, chief research and university partnerships officer at Oak Ridge Associated Universities.

The panel moderator was Alan Lowe, executive director of the American Museum of Science and Energy and the Atomic History Campus at K-25. He provided information about the history of American railroads and radio and asked the panel his questions and later questions from the audience.

Enjoy what Carolyn has captured in this first of a three-part series on the AI Panel.

According to the New York Times, trillions of dollars have been invested in building and operating American data centers for improving artificial intelligence, accounting for almost 40% of U.S. economic growth in 2025.

Many construction workers and engineers are employed on AI data center projects, and investors believe that the spread of AI could increase productivity and wages, the newspaper has stated. Another article expressed concerns that AI would disrupt the software industry by allowing non-experts to use AI to do the coding.

In Oak Ridge on Feb. 10, a panel in Oak Ridge discussed the promises and perils of AI in response to questions by the moderator Alan Lowe. He also provided information on two past disruptive technologies, railroads and radio, which grew immensely in the 19th and 20th

century, respectively, thanks partly to a lot of engineering and construction.

According to AI chatbots Lowe said he consulted, because of railroads many industrialists and wholesalers were the winners as transportation costs dropped, and ways of doing business changed. The losers from an economic standpoint were operators of steamboats and canals.

In the case of radio, advertising and live entertainment were affected adversely although adaptations were made. The economic casualties included local print news monopolies.

AI is proclaimed to have valuable uses such as disease detection. It can detect initial signs of cancer on mammograms that radiologists have missed. But AI may have its downside, as Lowe pointed out when he read this passage.

"In May 2025, Dario Amodei, the CEO of the AI company Anthropic, said that AI could drive unemployment up 10 to 20% in the next one to five years and 'wipe out half of all entry-level white-collar jobs.' Lowe said. "Jim Farley, the CEO of Ford, estimated that it would eliminate 'literally half of all white-collar workers' in a decade."

Lowe made the point that advances in AI, which perform tasks that traditionally require human intelligence, can be astonishing. In his household, the new AI-powered voice on Amazon's smart speaker was a topic of discussion. Lowe's wife said, "I really like Alexa's new voice although it sounds kind of snooty to me." Surprisingly, Alexa replied, "Well, I guess I'll have to adjust my attitude." Lowe said, "It kind of freaked us out."

Lynne Parker was asked by Lowe to explain what AI is. "Any time you use your smartphones, you are using a lot of AI," she said. "Just to open the phone with your face, that's AI. You may have an Apple Watch that detects when you have a hard fall and calls 911. That's AI at work."

Parker noted that AI is touching nearly every sector of our society, "from education and healthcare to manufacturing and agriculture. There are a lot of different kinds of uses of AI.

"Instead of writing rules used in computer programming, the relatively simple idea behind AI is to enable a computer system to learn patterns from lots of data. Most AI systems are neural networks, loosely modeled after the ways the human brain works."

On a slide in Pollard Auditorium, she showed a sketch of a neural net represented by columns of circles that she called computer nodes that perform mathematics; the sketch included a mass of arrows that feed data to and connect the circles. After thousands of photos of different animals labeled either "this is a cat" or "this is not a cat" are introduced to the neural net, eventually the AI model is trained to distinguish among patterns. Then it will be able to recognize with high confidence many different photos of cats as a "cat."

She explained that "large language models, such as ChatGPT and Google Gemini, are trained on text instead of cat pictures. They know that statistically speaking, when you say peanut butter, you're quite likely to say jelly next.

"When you hear of new commercial products that are better, it's usually because the product has more data, bigger neural networks, faster computers that run more calculations. As a result, you're able to get better feedback."

Noting the positive growth in the railroad and radio industries, Lowe asked, "Do you anticipate similar rates of AI growth and similar impacts on the economy such as growth in job creation?"



Alan Lowe, the moderator (Courtesy of Alan Lowe)



Stephen Streiffer, Director of Oak Ridge National Laboratory (Courtesy of ORNL)

Stephen Streiffer noted that AI has grown considerably in its uses since 1993 when U.S. research, including research at ORNL, began on neural nets. "It was a slow burn and then roughly in the mid-2010s, there were revolutions in what are called deep convolutional neural networks," he said.

In 2017, he added, the transformer model was introduced. It enabled a large language model like ChatGPT to process an entire paragraph simultaneously as it figures out which words in each sentence relate to each other even if far apart.

"Most businesses in America are already using AI," Streiffer said. "Penetration there is about 90% in roughly about three years." He gave the example of the Silicon Valley company Nvidia. He said the video gaming hardware company that makes chips for testing AI models at data centers is really a software company that grew by 120% between 2024 and 2025.

In February 2026 Nvidia became the most highly valued company in the world. "That AI company has already had a huge economic impact in the United States," Streiffer said.

Ashley Stowe noted correctly that AI started in the mid-1950s in the United States. (The term artificial intelligence was coined by John McCarthy in 1956 at the Dartmouth Workshop.)

"There was this really slow burn, and part of it was waiting for the electricity infrastructure to catch up and the computing power

Historically Speaking

Local views of artificial intelligence: Past, present and future (part one)

By Ray Smith - Oak Ridge City Historian

to catch up to the algorithms to be able to really take advantage of AI technologies,” Stowe said.

“It used to be in business you would hire programmers or computer scientists to write code for you. You don’t have to do that anymore. You can ask one of the AI models to write code for you.

“What I get excited about is that my mother-in-law, who is in her 70s, uses AI every day and it helps her.”

Noting that railroads “went through periods of boom and bust,” Lowe asked, “if we will see that up and down in terms of AI’s use by our society?”

Parker suggested that while the number of AI data centers being built in the U.S. is growing and using 4% of the nation’s electricity and considerable water, “there may be a bit of a bust as it relates to the buildout of data centers. One of the possibilities down the road is that the research for AI gets better and we figure out ways to make AI capabilities that do not require as much data and as much training. Then we won’t need additional big power-hungry data centers.”

Referring to how the growth of railroads spurred the growth of other industries such as steel, oil, coal and tools to build and repair trains, Lowe asked, “What opportunities or challenges might AI pose for technological or business growth?”

“To use AI well in many application domains across all sectors, you must change the way you’re doing your business,” Parker said. “You must invest in redesigning your workflow based on how your business operates, collect data and change the underlying infrastructure to be able to take advantage of AI enough to see productivity increases.”

She suggested that a good analogy was the advent of electricity. To electrify parts of an industrial operation, considerable redesign and rework were required “to leverage that new capability,” she said.

“The companies that will be successful



Lynne Parker, former principal deputy director of the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy and former founder of the AI Tennessee Initiative (Courtesy of Lynne Parker)

down the road will be those that adapt to these new capabilities rather than somehow try to tack on AI to their existing approaches.”

Bill Lyons referred to “a series of exponential curves” and Alvin Toffler’s 1970 book “Future Shock” on the psychological and social impacts of rapid technological change. He had questions about “the ability of humans to function within this kind of growth” and asked in his own way Toffler’s question: “How can we accept this exponential growth with so little time to process it?”

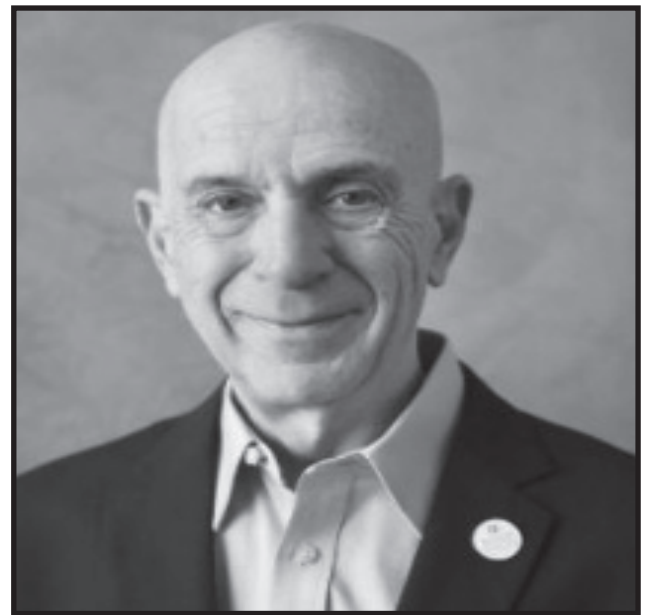
The challenges we have as people, Lyons said, “is to interact with each other and function effectively, to make public decisions, to govern ourselves, to communicate with each other. During the time of all this phenomenal technological growth, we’ve had a decline in our ability to interact and function with each other as human beings. The social sciences need to catch up with the hard sciences, the scientists and engineers.

“I use Google Gemini and ChatGPT. It’s absolutely frightening to me how much better it’s gotten in the last couple of months, let alone a couple of years.”

Streiffer noted that AI is an application that runs on computing hardware. “The hardware that we run the AI on right now is resource intensive unlike AI. The expensive computers that we have at Oak Ridge are still some of the best in the world for running AI, doing model training and other operations.”



Ashley Stowe, chief research and university partnerships officer at Oak Ridge Associated Universities (Courtesy of ORAU)



William Lyons, professor emeritus at UT and associate director at the Institute of American Civics at the Howard Baker School of Public Policy and Public Affairs at UT (Courtesy of William Lyons)

He said that the ORNL supercomputer Frontier runs on roughly 20 megawatts. In contrast, the human brain needs only 20 watts, or a million times less energy, to process information. That’s why ORNL needs its 7200 employees! ***

Thank you, Carolyn, the AI Panel has amazing breadth of knowledge on AI and you have captured it well. The second of the three-part series will continue the discussion by the panel and share even more AI insights.



Romans 16



Melvin Howard

(Romans 16:1-2) Phoebe: Phoebe was a Christian woman from the city of Cenchrea (the eastern port of Corinth). She was probably a Gentile convert since her name appears to have been borrowed from a pagan goddess. She was known as a “sister” (in Christ) and a “servant” in that congregation, the term being generic for service of and character. Some have suggested she had a formal appointment as a “deaconess,” but there is

no hard evidence for that conclusion. However, there would be nothing intrinsically wrong with elders appointing women to carry out certain tasks consistent with their gender roles (1 Tim. 2:12).

This note of commendation appears to suggest that Phoebe is about to embark on a trip to Rome, and Paul will solicit her help in conveying this letter to those saints. They are to “receive her in the Lord.” She is a worthy woman and Paul asks the Christians in Rome to assist her (perhaps with lodging---a lone woman in a crowded pagan city could be exposed to danger). In helping her they would be repaying a debt owed by others whom she had helped, including Paul (who had been in Cenchrea (Acts 18:18). The term “helper” does not suggest she was a church ruler, as some feminists argue; in that case, she would have ruled over Paul as well (“and me” v. 2).

(Romans 16:3-16) greetings to friends in Rome: in this section Paul sends greetings to a number of people in Rome. There are twenty-four specifically named individuals, two other unnamed (v.13, 15), and several groups. Prisca (Priscilla) and Aquila were fellow workers with the apostle in Corinth (Acts 18:1), and at some point had risked their lives for the apostle. A congregation met in their home (v.3-5). Mary was a diligent church worker. Andronicus and Junias were Paul’s “kinsmen”---either relatives (Mk. 6:4) or fellow Jews (Rom. 9:3). They were converted before Paul, had been fellow prisoners with him, and were well known by the apostles. Others are greeted generically, with qualifiers such as, “in the Lord,” “fellow workers,” “beloved,” “chosen,” “brothers,” “saints,” etc. Rufus (v. 13) was possible one of the sons of Simon of Cyrene (Mk. 15:21). The expression, “my mother,” is likely a reference to some godly matron who assisted him when needed.

Kissing was a common mode of greeting in the Middle East, and men greeted men while women greeted women. Perhaps this was a subtle caution against crossing the line and letting greetings degenerate into something more personal. The emphasis appears to be on the quality of the act, not the commanding of it per se. “Churches of Christ” were a collection of local congregations in the vicinity of Corinth, each of which constituted a “church of Christ,” a scriptural designation for the Lord’s people, though not designed to be exclusive (1 Cor. 1:2). There are other Biblical names for the church.

(Romans 16:17-20) warning to Roman Christians: some charge that Paul throws a literary tantrum in this section, out of character with the flow of his usual tone. The accusation is baseless and is reflective of those who minimize false teaching. The term “mark” means to “watch out for” those who “cause division.” Such divisiveness may be generated by the introduction of false teachings or the pressing of opinions regarding nonessentials within the realm of gospel truth. “Occasions of stumbling” are scandalous actions which precipitate apostasy from the truth resulting in eternal condemnation. These attitudes and actions are contrary to Christians principles and are worthy of discipline.

The advocates of such dogma were not serving Christ, no matter what their claims. Rather, they are self-serving egotists who satisfied only their gluttonous carnal appetites. Care should be exercised, however, for they are “smooth talkers.” Have you not heard the oft-spoken rationalization: “But he’s such a good speaker”? The silver-tongued orator deceives the hearts of the simple-minded (those who cannot discern the truth from error). After a call for caution, there is a note of commendation. “Your obedience is widely known.” Obedience is a persistent theme in this document. It cheers the apostle’s heart to think about these people. He wants them to continue being wise concerning matters that are “good” and remain “innocent” in things pertaining to evil.

There is now a promise of victory over man’s archenemy. “And

the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly” (v. 20). The passage clearly takes its rise from Genesis 3:15 where the Lord God Promises Satan that the woman’s “seed” (Christ) ultimately will “bruise” his (the devil’s) head. The term “shortly” is better rendered “swiftly, quickly” (Lk. 18:8), suggesting manner, not time. While some interpret this as an imminent victory of the Roman saints over satanic opponents, it probably is best to view it as the ultimate conquest of Christ and his people over the devil on the final day of earth’s history (Mt. 25:41; Rev. 20:10). Peace is a general characteristic of God; this expression has no reference to a supposed millennial reign. Nor does the “peace” phrase conflict with God’s crushing of Satan. Being the “God of peace” does not include a friendship with the prince of this world (the Devil)! Paul hopes that the grace of Jesus will abide with these beloved saints.

Romans 16:21-23) greetings from companions: Paul now conveys salutations from some of those with him in Corinth who might be known to the brethren in Rome. Timothy (Acts 20:4), of course, is a convert of Paul’s and a frequent traveler with him---to whom the apostle will later pen two letters. The young man had been with his teacher for possible eight years. Lucius, Jason, and Sosipater are “kinsmen” of Paul’s, which may signify fellow Jews. Jason could be the same brother who was persecuted in Thessalonica (Acts 17:6-9). Sosipater might be the brother mentioned in Acts 20:4, but that is far from certain.

Tertius was Paul’s amanuensis,” or scribe, to whom he dictated this epistle---a practice not uncommon in those days and especially with Paul (1 Cor. 16:21; Gal. 6:11; Col. 4:18; 2 Thes. 3:17). Tertius adds his own greeting, doubtless with the approval of Paul. Gaius likely was one of the few whom Paul had personally immersed at Corinth (1 Cor. 1:14) and was the apostle’s host while in that city. Gaius seems to have accommodated the whole church in some way. Erastus is designated at the “city treasurer.” An inscription from the first century was discovered at Corinth in 1929. It reads “Erastus, commissioner for public works, laid this pavement at his own expense.” The office is different; it is not certain if the same person is intended. Quartus, “the brother,” is not otherwise identified.

(Romans 16:25-27) closing exclamation of praise: though this paragraph is questioned by some, it most likely is genuine. Words of praise go up to God for the gospel, called Paul’s gospel---the one entrusted to him and which he proclaimed (1 Cor. 15:1-4). By this gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ (about him) men may be “established” (made stable). The gospel is not only instrumental in converting people, it helps them stay converted (1:15). This great plan was “kept in silence” (was obscurely revealed in prophecy and “types” in former ages) but now has been revealed by means of the gospel. If one thus studies these “scriptures of the prophets” (the sacred writings of the Old “Testament”) he can see the validity of the Christian system. The message of redemption has now been made known, according to the command of the eternal God, to “all nations” (the Gentiles). The ultimate purpose is that all may become Christians by expressing their faith through obedience.

The terms “obedience” and “obey” (in noun and verb forms) are found eleven times in this epistle. No one can reasonably argue that this document advocates the notion of salvation by faith alone---as so many misguided souls contend. This magnificent plan of human redemption, implemented through Jesus Christ, is a reflection of the unique wisdom of God. May he be glorified forever! Amen.

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