

August 2024 • [tnmagazine.org](http://tnmagazine.org)

# THE TENNESSEE MAGAZINE

— Washington Youth Tour —  
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Smokey's Shelbyville Roots • Mighty Mushrooms





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Photograph by Chris Kirk*

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*Delegates sponsored by your electric cooperative pause for a photo during the 2024 Washington Youth Tour in June. See your Co-op News section for more information on the "trip of a lifetime" to our nation's capital.*





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Corporation provides safe, affordable and reliable services the cooperative way by maintaining a dedicated, highly skilled workforce guided by cooperative values and principles and a commitment to excellence.

### The Tennessee Magazine

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## Between the Lines

*News from your community*

# An investment in the next generation

In June, 12 high school seniors from Cumberland Electric Membership Corporation's service area participated in the 2024 Washington Youth Tour. The cover of this month's magazine features delegates sponsored by our co-op visiting the U.S. Capitol building. You can learn more about this incredible program and the experiences of this year's delegates on pages 20-21.

At CEMC, we believe that investing in our youth is crucial for the continued growth and vitality of our community. By offering a range of youth programs and scholarships, we support the educational and leadership development of the young people within our service area.

Our youth programs are designed to provide valuable experiences that foster leadership, cooperation and career readiness. Beyond the Washington Youth Tour, we provide several other programs designed to help students learn through experience. The Youth Leadership Summit is an annual event in Nashville that gives high school students the opportunity to learn about teamwork, leadership and the cooperative business model. CEMC also sponsors 4-H Electric Camp each year on the Knoxville campus of the University of Tennessee. This event gives middle school students the chance to learn about science, technology, engineering and math through hands-on activities.

CEMC also maintains a range of in-classroom programs — from electrical safety to energy efficiency — that are designed to complement state curriculum.

The cost of higher education continues to rise, and that's why CEMC offers several types of scholarships to support the aspirations of our young members. We are proud of our past scholarship recipients who have gone on to achieve great success in their educational and career endeavors.

Investing in local youth has far-reaching benefits. These programs not only help students achieve their educational goals but also strengthen our community by fostering a new generation of skilled and informed citizens. By supporting education and leadership development, CEMC ensures a brighter future for everyone in our service area.

We encourage eligible students and their parents to explore these opportunities. To learn more about our youth programs, visit us online at [cemc.org/community-programs](http://cemc.org/community-programs).

At CEMC, our commitment to supporting the next generation is unwavering. As students and teachers return to the classroom this month, you can be certain that our team is rooting for your success. Together, we can build a stronger, more vibrant community.



**By Chris A. Davis**  
*General Manager,  
Cumberland Electric  
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## TENNESSEE TODAY

### Viewpoint

## Which road will you choose?

As a young boy, I liked to listen to the adults as they spoke with one another. Whether it was at the Sunday dinner table or in front of the television for the big game, conversations that shouldn't have interested a child were a part of my normal life.

You can be sure that current events and politics were almost always a part of the conversations. And World War II. Lots of World War II. I was privileged to learn from both of my grandfathers who proudly served in the Army Air Corps and Navy.

These same family members experienced many more of America's most pivotal moments in the 20th century, both good and bad. They felt the exhilaration of the end of war on V-J Day and remembered where they were when President Kennedy was assassinated. After each event, there was sure to be a spirited conversation at the next family gathering.

But even when the discussions were about much less profound events, I do remember some common threads. I had some very opinionated relatives. Their views of the world were flavored by experiences and confident beliefs of what was right and what was wrong.

But very rarely did I ever hear that those they believed to be wrong were bad people. Nor was it expressed that a political opponent wanted to destroy the country. It was not personal. This was true even when the topic was inherently personal such as voting for a specific candidate. The motivation was always about what was best, not what was worst.

I didn't know it then, but my family was demonstrating the concept of civility. That word is commonly assumed to mean simply being polite, but that is a relatively new connotation. The original Latin word upon which it is based is *civilis*, which means "related to citizens." In its original usage, the term referred to being a citizen of a community and, therefore, exhibiting orderly behavior for the benefit of the

entire community. It was connected to one's place among your fellow neighbors and friends and how we all live together.

In modern usage, civility also means more than just being polite. One definition I read accurately referred to civility as more than just a manner of acting but includes the reason for acting in that manner — "the act of showing regard for others by being polite" (vocabulary.com). For others, not for oneself. Being civil to others is a way to demonstrate that we believe in their inherent human dignity and place it above ourselves in importance.

Showing regard for others seems to be in short supply these days. And it's not just in politics.

When we lack civility, it is not enough to win the argument, the election, the new job or the esteem of our friends and family. We attempt to destroy the "other" person in our victory. Rather than achieving victory by demonstrating a better way forward through competence and humbleness, we take the shortcut and declare our superiority through comparison and derision.

But I challenge you to think for yourself and answer this question: Who are those "other" people? You get to choose. Are they lacking in human dignity and easily thrown away? Or are they fellow Americans who just happen to believe differently than you do?

I know those are strong words, and I will receive many letters and emails suggesting my foolishness for sharing them. However, as I engage in my own duty to be a good citizen of this country that I love so much, I hope I live up to the example of civility that my family taught me. ■



**By Mike Knotts**

Tennessee Electric  
Cooperative Association



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# TENNESSEE ALMANAC

Bite-sized news, notes and knowledge — August 2024

## This month in Tennessee History

**Aug. 9, 1930**

Perryville suffers through a high temperature of 113 degrees, the state's hottest day on record.

**Aug. 16, 1977**

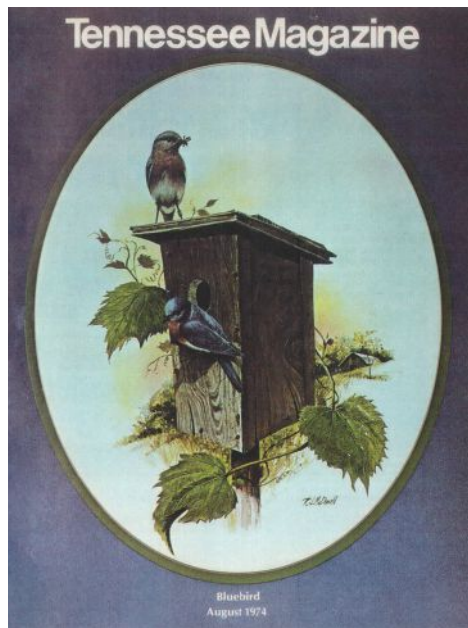
Elvis Presley passed away in Memphis. The "King of Rock and Roll" was 42.

**Aug. 18, 1920**

Tennessee became the 36th state to ratify the 19th Amendment, granting women the right to vote.

## 50 YEARS AGO IN *THE TENNESSEE MAGAZINE*

The August 1974 edition of *The Tennessee Magazine* featured articles on the Smithville Fiddlers' Jamboree, stinging insects and Lynchburg's Frontier Days. View the entire issue at [tnmagazine.org](http://tnmagazine.org).



## BILL LIGON PASSES AWAY

Bill Ligon died on June 11, 2024. He was the second Black player ever on the Vanderbilt basketball team and played for the Detroit Pistons for one year. Ligon was also an attorney in his hometown of Gallatin, specializing in criminal defense. In February 2020, he was featured in a story by Bill Carey in *The Tennessee Magazine* called "African-American High Schools Now Long Gone."

Ligon, above left, was proud he graduated from Union High School in Sumner County and was happy to spend a morning showing Carey around the Union High Museum.

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## From the editor

I don't want to wish the summer away, but I have recently found myself looking ahead. Now is about the time that my excitement for college football really ramps up. When I was growing up, my family didn't vacation at the beach. We'd make the trip to Knoxville several times each fall for near-weekly reunions with orange-clad family up in the higher rows of the University of Tennessee's Neyland Stadium. We'd enjoy Big Orange Touchdown Franks, clap until our hands hurt and usually come away celebrating a win (this was during the 1990s).

Since the 1950s, bluetick coonhound Smokey has been a mainstay on the sidelines of UT sporting events and draws his own large crowds in public. And the last two mascots — Smokey X and Smokey XI — came from Davis Branch Blueticks in Shelbyville. I got to make the trip to the former horse farm to take photos for this month's feature that begins



on page 12. I told everyone that I met celebrities that day, and my own dog, golden retriever mix Tanner, was particularly impressed, thoroughly investigating each new smell on me.

Speaking of iconic, we also explored world-famous Hatch Show Print and its signature Music City style that has signaled for many aspiring musicians, "I've made it." See page 30.

While we're reminiscing, Antsy McClain is back with another nostalgic dispatch on summer pastimes. Read his thoughts on lightning bugs beginning on page 10.

There's much to discover in this edition of *The Tennessee Magazine*. Check out our winning poets and artists, and don't forget to fill out your ballot for the Best of Tennessee Readers' Choice Awards, which is due at the end of the month.

Thanks for reading,

Chris Kirk

Editor, *The Tennessee Magazine*

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# My TENNESSEE Notebook

by Antsy McClain

## Lightning bugs, love and flash patterns

I'm under a large cedar tree in my backyard, surrounded by unlit tiki torches. The sky is saying goodnight with a deep, dusky sigh. The warm, yellow glow from my neighbors' windows and porch lights compliment the cool, blue backdrop. I join my little corner of the world in a collective exhale as another day falls behind us.

My tiki torches are unlit because I am enjoying torches of another kind — by the hundreds — as lightning bugs\* rise from the grass and float drunkenly to the trees. Their dances of light pop quietly around me, and I feel almost airborne, weightless.

The creek is babbling, full from recent rainfall. The bullfrogs are warming up, practicing their scales for another nocturnal symphony, and I fall back in time to 1974.

My best friend, Randy, is crouching with an open glass jar in his left hand, lid in his right, prowling with a slow, steady determination. His thin, spindly silhouette moves slowly in the muggy summer twilight. His face is rimmed in gauzy yellow light from the dozen or so lightning bugs flashing in his jar.

I'm a few steps away, gliding along with my own jar, mesmerized by these magical creatures. Our lids are rimmed with aluminum foil and punctured by pencils to let the bugs breathe. We will let them go after curious examination. I wonder how they got here, where they came from and why they emerge every summer to flash their tender, silent Morse code in a clover field alongside my favorite creek.

I am still enchanted some 50 years later. I no longer capture the bugs in a jar but let them dance freely in my yard. Alongside my little creek, with this light show going on all around me, I can pay quiet, reverent homage to a wondrous world that allows such enchanting things as lightning bugs. In this most natural of theaters, I realize how small a part I play, and I am grateful that my little flash of a life gets to be tucked in here

somehow, that I can witness these everyday marvels for as many summers as I am gifted.

They've been here a long time, lightning bugs. Fossil records reveal a 100 million-year-old history. Ancient mythology associated lightning bugs with hope and guidance. Japanese legend says that lightning bugs are the souls of the dead. Early Native American tribes were known to smear them on their faces and chests as decoration.\*\*

They have special organs under their abdomens to take in oxygen. They combine the oxygen with a substance called luciferin to make light. They use this, called bioluminescence, to light up the ends of their abdomen.

Lightning bugs live about 60 days. Their luminous bottoms are bitter and even toxic to predators, so they typically die of natural causes. They are nocturnal and sleep in taller grass during the day.

If you think you are seeing fewer lightning bugs than you did as a child, you're not imagining things. No fewer than 18 species of lightning bugs are in danger of extinction in North America alone. Experts say this is due mostly to pesticides, light pollution and habitat destruction.

Summer nights remind us of new love, lazy and warm, pointing us to a simpler time, free from stress and worry. Summertime is forever linked with flowers, butterflies, cool water and tiny, mystical creatures who light up the night sky with their bottoms.

And these flashes of light are all about love, as it turns out. Lightning bugs use their flashes to find mating partners. During the warm nights of July, our backyards become a virtual nightclub for these illuminating creatures, and the night sky becomes a Tinder app, of sorts, for bugs.\*\*\*

Most of the flashes we see are from male lightning bugs. They flash specific patterns to get the attention of females, who wait in the

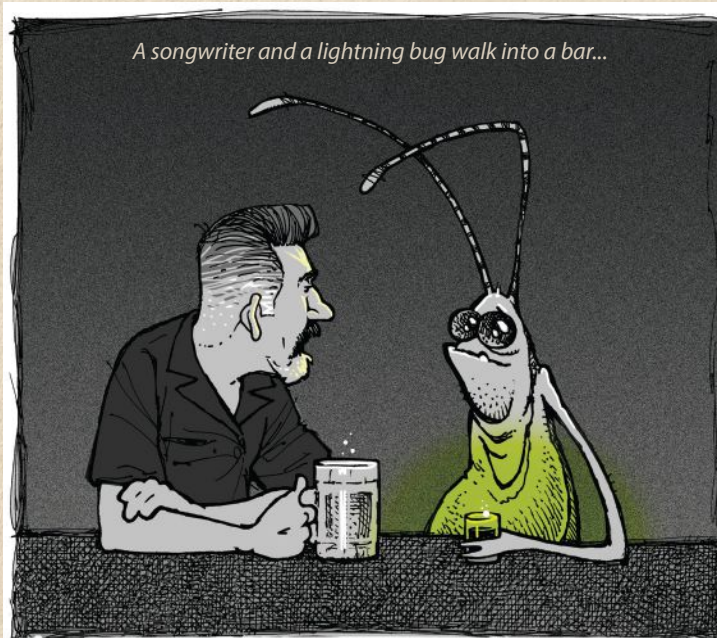


Illustration by the author



grass until they see something they like and then respond with flashes of their own.\*\*\*\*

I imagine the females, just hanging out on a long branch, commenting on “that guy over there with the interesting flash pattern.”

“Ooooh, it’s so complicated,” another female might say, “I’ll bet he’s really interesting. I can tell just by looking at his flash pattern.”

Another female might say, “Who does that guy over there think he is, with that simple one-two, one-two flash pattern, like *that’s* gonna get him anywhere?”

“BOOOOORING,” they all say and giggle menacingly in that way some female lightning bugs do.

Having been that guy with an odd, irregular flash pattern, I feel for the lonely, leftover lightning bug. I saw one of these guys on my window screen as I sipped coffee last week. It was 7:30 in the morning. He had obviously been up all night. He looked tired, defeated, unfulfilled. Yet, here he was, still hopeful. Everyone else was passed out, exhausted, collapsed on leaves everywhere, but he was still awake, still searching.

Granted, he might have to step up his flash pattern game, but come on, ladies, don’t be so hard on the guy. I’m sure he has other traits that are quite beneficial in a relationship, like, maybe he can fix things, or he’s very organized. It’s not always about a flash pattern.

I began to daydream about being this lone lightning bug’s “wingman” (pun most definitely intended) as I helped him find love tonight in the backyard.

Me and Sparky (I’ll call him Sparky, for obvious reasons) are sitting at a lightning bug bar in Antioch called The Long Branch, chatting about the ladies.

“Listen, Sparky,” I say. “You’re a catch. Any gal would be lucky to have you.”

“I dunno,” moans Sparky, dejectedly. “It’s almost like I’m invisible.”

“Dude,” I say. “You are not invisible. You have the brightest butt of any bug I know.”

“Really?” says Sparky as he lights up the whole bar with his bright yellow butt.

“Yeah, man. It’s true. It’s just ...”

I hesitate, not wanting to derail the positive direction of this conversation.

“You just need a better flash pattern,” I say finally.

“I’ve tried,” says Sparky, “but I have no sense of rhythm. Not like Flint over there.”

Flint is in a booth in the back corner, surrounded by beautiful babes. His butt is pulsing like a dance hall strobe light.

I slip from the barstool and make my way to the jukebox. I put in a quarter and pull up the Bee Gees’ “Stayin’ Alive.” Sparky gives me a big smile as I walk back to my stool.

“Just feel the rhythm,” I tell him.

Sparky closes his eyes. He starts to bob his head.

“Focus,” I say. “Let the music speak to you.”

Sparky starts to light up on the two and four, adding a tidy little pick-up note before going back to the one. He’s getting it! It’s working!

Ladies start getting up from their tables to approach him, answering him with their own flickers of yellow neon.

My work here is done. I settle up with the bartender and slip out the door.

I hear the bass and drums from the jukebox and stop at the window to see Sparky surrounded by several lovely females.

“You can tell by the way I use my walk, I’m a woman’s man, no time to talk.”

“You go, Sparky,” I say proudly and disappear into the humid night air.

Not everyone is lucky in love. Some of us need a little help to figure it out. And let’s face it, we all need to adjust our flash patterns every now and then. Even after we find love, we should mix things up a bit, flash on the one and the three once in a while to see where it goes.

Summertime is for revisiting the magic of childhood, for pondering the complexities of what it means to be here, and during our short flash of a life, for exploring the humid, dusky mysteries of love.

Sparky and Flint are out there right now, rising up from the grass in the short time they have, to show us how it’s done.

“Stayin’ alive. Stayin’ alive. Ah, ah, ah, ah, stayin’ aliiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiive.”

I love the Bee Gees. ■

### Listen to the song, “Full Moon Nights,” here:

Antsy McClain is a Nashville-adjacent singer songwriter, author and graphic artist who loves his creek. Go to [unhitched.com](http://unhitched.com) for his books, music and events. Use this QR code to download his summer love song, “Full Moon Nights in Pine View Heights,” **FREE** to readers of *The Tennessee Magazine*.



### Footnotes to make you a more interesting person.

\* Do you call them fireflies? You probably do if you were raised in the Western U.S. or parts of New England. But if you were raised here in the Southeast or in the Midwest, you probably call them lightning bugs. I admit, the name “firefly” is much more poetic. I wish that’s what I called them. You might say, “Just call ‘em whatever you want, man,” but see, I can’t. I have to call them what I called them when I was a child because of the magic associated with their name. My memories of them are too precious, and I can’t change anything. “Flies that make fire” is way cooler, I get it, but I have to stick with my childhood on this.

\*\* I knew kids who mutilated lightning bugs and smeared their cheeks as if it was glow-in-the-dark makeup or put the remains on their fingernails and pranced around like they just came from a nail salon for psychopaths. I always saw those children as barbarians. They were the same kids who burned ants with magnifying glasses and tied june bugs to sewing thread and made them fly in circles. I can only assume they grew up to be serial killers, Fortune 500 CEOs or reality TV stars.

\*\*\* I like to imagine the male lightning bug’s flash to be like, “How you doin?” giving him

a swagger akin to Joey from the TV sitcom, “Friends.” Next time you’re sitting on your back porch, watching the lightning bugs pop off, add your own audio commentary: “How you doin?” “How you doin?” “How you doin?” Sure, you’ll find yourself all alone on the back porch in mere minutes, but science is hard sometimes. And lonely.

\*\*\*\* This is nothing like human rituals, where teenage boys stand along the wall while the girls dance with each other. Flash patterns notwithstanding, most humans only get together after the female takes the initiative.



ALL  
FOR  
THE  
LOVE  
OF A

# TENNESSEE BLUETICK

Story by  
Amber Weaver  
Photographs by  
Chris Kirk





**I**t's football time in Tennessee, and that means Smokey XI will soon be leading the Vols through the iconic T. Fans will dress in their Tennessee orange, sing "Rocky Top" at the tops of their lungs and even take a few pictures of the new mascot, but they might not know much about this new pup or the new Tennessee-born and -bred bloodline.

"It just started with the love of a bluetick and has developed into teaching others and an incredible opportunity with the University of Tennessee," said Wendy Davis, the owner of Davis Branch Blueticks.

#### **Where it all began**

Just 60 miles south of Nashville in Shelbyville, home of the Tennessee Walking Horse National Celebration, you'll find an old 33-acre horse farm turned into a bluetick coonhound breeding facility. For more than two decades now, Davis, a member of Duck River Electric Membership Corporation, has been pouring her heart into providing the best bluetick coonhounds. Breeding and raising blueticks, let alone Smokey X and XI, were never the goals.

"To get where we are now was never the plan," Davis said. "As a schoolteacher, I had the summers off, and I thought that would be a good time to have puppies and stay out of trouble."

Davis, now retired from teaching, spent years researching and networking before having any puppies. She wanted to make sure she found exactly what she was looking for.

"I didn't just want a dog for a pet," Davis said. "I wanted a good dog with a good pedigree, and there was so much to learn. I am still learning today."

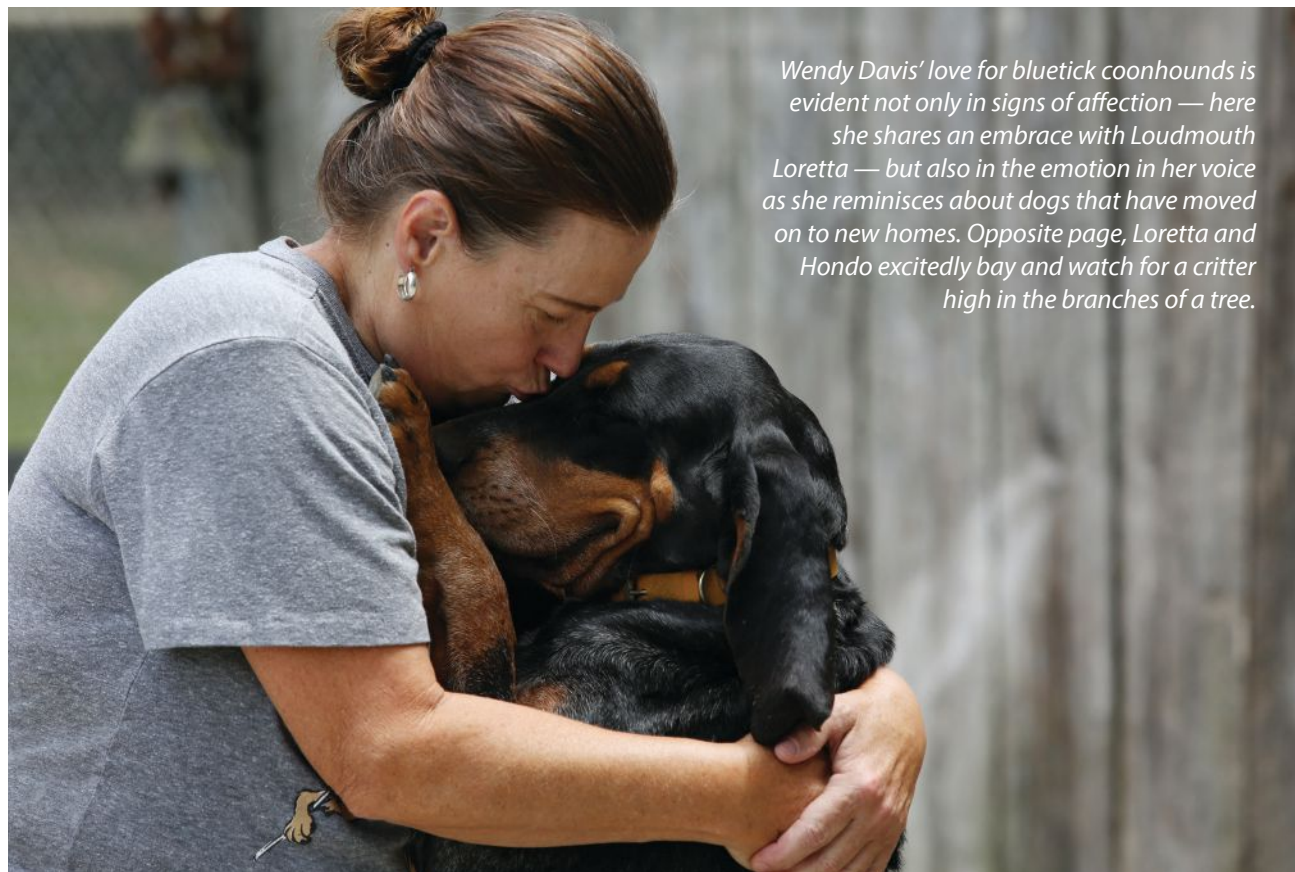
Davis started with her first bluetick coonhound named Pokey Joe, and as they say, the rest is history.

Pokey Joe isn't just your average dog, though. He is 13 years old, has had over 300 puppies and happens to be the father of Smokey X and the grandfather of Smokey XI.

#### **A 24/7 operation**

The summer bluetick venture has now turned into a constant operation. Davis Branch Blueticks welcomes two to three litters of puppies each year at the six-stall

## **How an old horse farm turned into a puppy breeding operation and led not one but two pups to the University of Tennessee**



*Wendy Davis' love for bluetick coonhounds is evident not only in signs of affection — here she shares an embrace with Loudmouth Loretta — but also in the emotion in her voice as she reminisces about dogs that have moved on to new homes. Opposite page, Loretta and Hondo excitedly bay and watch for a critter high in the branches of a tree.*





*Left, Hondo is full of personality, eagerly welcoming a visitor to Davis Branch Blueticks. Opposite page, top, Tennessee Sweet T sits with the puppies of her latest litter. She is also the mom of Smokey XI, current mascot of the University of Tennessee. Opposite page, bottom, Hondo scans the area for his next pursuit. Tennessee-orange doghouses add appropriate spots of color throughout the farm.*

horse barn. The barn has been completely converted into a dog kennel, with floors like a mud room, accompanied with air conditioning, heat, lights and video cameras.

“When it is around three days from a due date for puppies, I don’t leave that female except for when Robert comes to give me a break,” Davis said. “It’s a 24/7 operation from right before the puppies are born until the puppies leave here at between 8 and 10 weeks old.”

Robert is Davis’ husband, and he plays a huge role in what the dogs eat.

“Robert is a dog chef, basically,” Davis said. “He prepares all the dogs’ meals twice a day, right at feeding time.”

### **Fun facts about Smokey XI**

His birthday is Aug. 8, 2021.

•

Smokey X is his father.

•

Tennessee Sweet T is his mother.

•

Smokey XI lives in Knoxville with the Hudson family, along with one of his brothers.

•

Smokey XI’s nickname is Bernie, and his brother’s is Ernie. Their names are in reference to the famous 1970s Vols basketball duo Bernard King and Ernie Grunfeld.

•

Three of Smokey XI’s siblings found homes with former Smokey handlers.

The dogs receive different meals based on their ages and what they need. Robert even makes his own dog food from the venison population on the farm as well as peas, sweet potatoes and blueberries mixed in with the kibble.

On top of feeding the dogs the best food, the folks at Davis Branch Blueticks also pride themselves on making sure each dog gets the proper medical care. From the veterinarian being on call during birth to DNA and health testing to regular checkups, each dog receives exceptional care.

“It is a devastating thought to me that I didn’t do everything I could to provide a healthy puppy,” Davis said. “It’s a success to me that



we are producing dogs that are living to be 12 years or older.”

### The UT call

With breeding bluetick coonhounds as an operation never being the ultimate plan, you can imagine Davis’ reaction when Cindy Hudson called. The Hudson family are the owners and caretakers of the Smokey mascots at the University of Tennessee.

Many don’t know that the original Smokey bloodline did not begin in the Volunteer State, and the Hudson family was ready to make that change. Cindy called Davis after Smokey IX tore his ACL, looking for the next mascot.

Davis remembers the call like it was yesterday. One of her clients was on the University of Tennessee cheer squad and walked his dog, Scout, around campus. Charles Hudson saw him and relayed the message. Davis was at school when Cindy called, asking if she was interested.

“All my students had just left my room,” Davis said. “I was using as controlled language as possible on the phone, but in reality, I was jumping up and down and waving my arms in the air.”

Davis happened to be welcoming new puppies shortly after that phone call. It was a litter of eight bluetick coonhounds, and at first, she wasn’t sure which one, if any, was going to be the next Smokey.

There were two male dogs in the litter that had similar characteristics as the traditional mascot, so she watched them closely. One day, though, she just knew.

“I went out there, and one of the male puppies was standing in the doorway by himself, and he was looking at me, not jumping up and down or excited at all,” Davis said. “In my heart, I knew, that’s got to be him.”

Davis and her husband will now turn on Tennessee football games just to see Smokey X and Smokey XI. Davis never had children of her own, but this experience comes close in her heart.

“One night, I sat straight up in bed, and I started crying because my baby was going to college!” Davis said. “To say I am proud is a true understatement. I can’t think of anything else in my life that I’m halfway as proud of.”

### Blueticks around the U.S.

Now, people from across the state and even the country contact Davis Branch Blueticks about getting their own



Smokey. Davis now has puppies in 32 states. A client of hers, Adele Jones, shared that every puppy gets the same treatment, regardless of whether they are heading off to college or not.

“When it was the day to pick Stringbean up, Wendy had a gift bag of toys he had played with, a blanket his mom had slept on, puppy food and all of his paperwork,” Jones said. “It was so sweet. I have never had a breeder take such care.”

Davis just welcomed a new litter of puppies this summer, and they happen to be siblings of Smokey XI. As for the future of supplying the Smokey bloodline, Davis said it’s always in the back of her mind, but she knows Smokey XI, who is just 3 years old, has big paw prints to fill following his dad, who is one the longest running Smokeys in Volunteers history. ■



### How to contact Wendy Davis at Davis Branch Blueticks

**Facebook:** Davis Branch Blueticks

**Website:** [davisbranchblueticks.com](http://davisbranchblueticks.com)

**Email:** [harleysandhounds@yahoo.com](mailto:harleysandhounds@yahoo.com)

**Phone:** 931-703-2101

**Mail:** 338 Naron Road, Shelbyville, TN 37160



# POET'S PLAYGROUND



## Inspiring words from your neighbors

**A** note: Please keep your entries to **100 words or fewer**. Submissions exceeding the limit will be disqualified. Thank you to everyone who entered their poems for Poet's Playground, and we encourage you all to keep writing poetry.

### Age 8 and younger

#### **I Love Tennessee**

Tennessee, oh, Tennessee,  
I love you, and you love me.  
Your beauty is there for all to see.  
There are so many reasons to love  
Tennessee.

From the Great Smoky Mountains  
To the Cumberland Plateau,  
Where the iris grows,  
And the redbuds bloom.  
Where the whip-poor-will sings  
sweetly  
Under the Tennessee moon.

What I love about Tennessee  
Makes me wish the whole world  
could see:  
The true beauty of Tennessee is  
passed on like a legacy.

— *Gideon Snider, Sequachee Valley EC*

### Age 9-13

#### **Echoes of Tennessee:**

##### **A Tribute in Verse**

In Tennessee's embrace, echoes of  
yore,  
Music's heart beats on, forevermore.  
From Nashville's honky-tonks, to  
Memphis' blues,  
Rhythm and soul, in every muse.

Smoky Mountains stand, in  
morning's glow,

Nature's grandeur, a timeless show.  
Rivers meander, through valleys  
green,  
Tennessee's beauty, a tranquil scene.

History whispers, in each ancient  
stone,  
Civil War tales, in fields overgrown.  
Graceland remembers, a king's sweet  
song,  
Tennessee's spirit, forever strong.

The Volunteer State, with pride  
unfurled,  
A tapestry of stories, in every world.  
Tennessee, where dreams take flight,  
In mountains and rivers, in day and  
night.

— *McKaylee Crowe, Gibson EMC*

### Age 14-18

#### **a saddening reality of a problematic emotion**

I weave you in my stories,  
I paint you in my sunsets,  
I read you in the novels  
Stacked high on my desk.  
I breathe you in the air,  
I glimpse you in a stranger.  
You dance through all my fantasies,  
You're the loveliest kind of danger.  
I hear you in a laugh,  
See you twinkle in his eyes.  
I feel you in my blood,  
I'll sense you when I die.

You're laced through the borderline  
Of all things good and evil.  
Oh Love, how do you do it:  
Both fix and ruin people?

— *Shay Simpson, Meriwether Lewis EC*

### Age 19-22

#### **Childlike Intuition**

When young  
I used to think this was the only place  
that had stars

The only place they felt safe enough  
to shine their light in the night's sky

It felt magical  
To watch them, thinking I may see  
one shooting across to be wished  
upon

Now older  
Knowing the stars are more places  
than just here  
I never did wish on a shooting one

But the magic I felt, feels more real  
now

When young  
I used to think this was the only place  
that had stars like these

Realizing, how right little me used  
to be

— *Dejana Matthews, Middle  
Tennessee Electric*

## Age 23-64

### Azaleas

Hair disheveled, bleary-eyed,  
Spring shuffles knee deep through  
leaves

in her verdant pajamas  
looking for the coffee pot.  
Winter has left it unwashed  
'neath sorrow pie plates  
heaping the sink.

"Winter!" Spring yells —  
all leaves in the kitchen  
swirl to the door —  
"you are SUCH a slob!"  
The door bursts outward  
The leaves leave speedily.  
Sunlight pours in.

Spring cranks the spigot  
and marches to the door,  
Silhouetted hands on hips  
watching debris skitter.  
Flame azaleas explode the mountainside  
She stands transfixed.

"The sink!" Spring spins:  
"It's a waterfall!"  
Dwarf Irises are popping  
through floorboards.  
Spring begins giggling.

— Michael Vedder, Holston EC

## Age 65 and older

### Tennessee

Beautiful bright sunrise,  
Dark starlit sky,  
Peaceful low valleys,  
Mountains so high.

Animals in the meadows,  
Farmers looking to tend,  
Lush green fields,  
Hay blowing in the wind.

The fragrance of wild honeysuckle,  
Lingers in the air,  
Gardens of flowers and vegetables,  
Are growing everywhere.

Gleaming creeks and rivers,  
Flowing gently through the hills,

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Birds of all colors,  
The call of the whip-poor-will.

The smell of fried chicken,  
A drink of sweet tea,  
Food that's so delicious,  
Everyone will agree.

A most beautiful place,  
We would love for you to see,  
Is our lovely home,  
The state of Tennessee.

— Judy Beckham, Tennessee Valley EC

# Do you have a way with words?

**W**e're searching for Tennessee's most talented and gifted poets. Enter our next Poet's Playground contest!

**Subject:** Poems do not have to include the word "Tennessee" explicitly, but their themes should celebrate our state and what makes it beautiful — whether highlighting something unique to Tennessee, memories of the state or the beautiful nature it has to offer.

**Age categories:** The competition has six age divisions — 8 and younger, 9-13, 14-18, 19-22, 23-64 and 65 and older. Each group will have first-, second- and third-place winners. First place wins \$50 and will be printed in the magazine, second place wins \$30 and third place wins \$20. Poems capturing first-, second- and third-place honors will be published online at [tnmagazine.org](http://tnmagazine.org).

**What to enter:** A poem of **100 words or fewer, including articles**, pertaining to the theme. One entry per person, and please

give your entry a title.

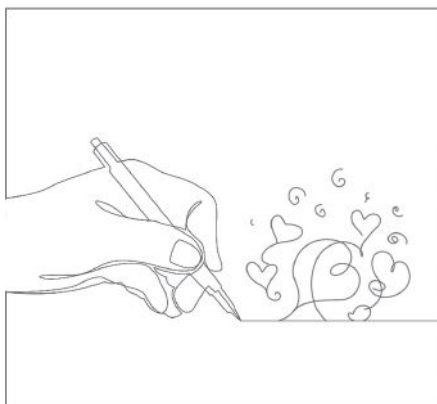
**Deadline:** Entry must be submitted online or postmarked by Tuesday, Oct. 1. First-place poems will be published in the December issue.

**Please note:** By entering, you give *The Tennessee Magazine* permission to publish your work via print, online and social media.

**Please enter online at [tnmagazine.org](http://tnmagazine.org) or mail**

**handwritten entries to:** Poetry Contest, *The Tennessee Magazine*, P.O. Box 100912, Nashville, TN 37224. Make sure to print your poem legibly, and be sure to keep a copy of your poem as submissions received via mail will not be returned.

All entries must include the following information, or they will be disqualified: your name, age, mailing address, phone number, email address and the name of your local electric cooperative.





# TENNESSEE EVENTS

*Festivals, celebrations and other happenings around the state*

## West Tennessee

**Aug. 2-3 • 2024 Antique Tractor Show**, Discovery Park of America, Union City. 731-885-5455 or [discoveryparkofamerica.com](http://discoveryparkofamerica.com)

**Aug. 3 • “Live at the Lorraine” Music Series**, National Civil Rights Museum at the Lorraine Motel, Memphis. 901-521-9699 or [civilrightsmuseum.org/](http://civilrightsmuseum.org/)

**Aug. 3 • Pulling for Prevention Truck and Tractor Pull**, Cobb Parr Park, Covington. 901-476-1515 or [carlperkinscenter.org](http://carlperkinscenter.org)

**Aug. 9-17 • Elvis Week 2024**, Graceland, Memphis. 901-332-3322 or [graceland.com/elvis-week](http://graceland.com/elvis-week)

**Aug. 16-Sept. 8 • “Grease,”** Theatre Memphis. 901-682-8323 or [theatrememphis.org/shows/grease](http://theatrememphis.org/shows/grease)

**Aug. 17 • David Crockett Birthday Celebration**, Discovery Park of America, Union City. 731-885-5455 or [discoveryparkofamerica.com](http://discoveryparkofamerica.com)

**Sept. 2 • Annual Arts and Crafts Festival**, de Terra Vineyard, Somerville. 901-606-3390 or [deterrawinery.com/event-calendar](http://deterrawinery.com/event-calendar)

**Sept. 14 • 25th Annual Cotton Festival**, Somerville Square. 901-465-8690 or [fayettecountychamber.com](http://fayettecountychamber.com)

## Middle Tennessee

**Aug. 2-10 • Williamson County Fair**, Williamson County Ag Expo Park, Franklin. 615-794-4386 or [williamsoncountyfair.org](http://williamsoncountyfair.org)

**Aug. 3 • Annual Clay County Museum Festival and Duck Race**, Clay County Courthouse, Celina. 931-243-4220 or [claycotnmuseum.com/homecoming-days](http://claycotnmuseum.com/homecoming-days)

**Aug. 8 • The Downtown Sound**, historic downtown Hartsville. 615-542-2957 or [facebook.com/HartsvilleRotaryClub](https://facebook.com/HartsvilleRotaryClub)

**Aug. 10 • Third Annual Peach Cobbler Festival and Craft Fair**, Lane-Agri Park, Murfreesboro. 931-952-0472 or [brianna-victory-events.com/events](http://brianna-victory-events.com/events)



The poster for the Wilson County Tennessee State Fair 2024 features a blue background with golden wheat stalks on the sides. At the top center is the Wilson County Fair logo, which includes three stars and the text "WILSON COUNTY FAIR". To the right of the logo is the text "TENNESSEE STATE FAIR" in large, bold, white letters with a red outline. Below this, it says "Presented by your Ford Mid-South Ford Dealers". The main dates "AUGUST 15 - 24, 2024" are prominently displayed in large, bold, white letters with a red outline. Below the dates is the tagline "Sow the Fun ~ Harvest the Memories" in a white script font. A red outline of the state of Tennessee is positioned below the tagline, containing five small images: a blue tractor, a young girl holding a goat, a band performing on stage, a person leading a brown cow, and a woman in a sun hat holding a basket of food. To the right of the state outline, the text "Year of Wheat and Small Grains" is written in a white script font. At the bottom, the website "WILSONCOUNTYTNSTATEFAIR.COM" is displayed in large, bold, white letters with a red outline. In the bottom right corner, there are social media icons for Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok, with the text "Follow us on Social Media" above them.

**WILSONCOUNTYTNSTATEFAIR.COM**

Follow us on Social Media



**Aug. 14-17 • Sequatchie County Fair,** Sequatchie County Fairgrounds, Dunlap. 423-949-9608 or sequatchiecofair.com

**Aug. 15-24 • Wilson County-Tennessee State Fair,** James E. Ward Agricultural Center, Lebanon. 615-443-2626 or wilsoncountytntatefair.com

**Aug. 23-24 • Yard Sale,** historic downtown Wartrace. 615-971-9365 or facebook.com/WartraceTennessee

**Aug. 23-25 • Sweet Tea and Southern Arts Exhibit,** Houston County Fairgrounds Building, Erin. 931-289-2787 or houstoncountyartscouncil.com

**Sept. 6-7 • Eagleville Pioneer Power Show,** Tennessee Valley Pioneer Power Association, Eagleville. 615-556-2344 or tvppa.org

**Sept. 7 • Middle Tennessee Fried Pickle Festival,** Lane Agri-Park Community Center, Murfreesboro. 931-259-3413 or centerhillevents.com

## East Tennessee

**Aug. 1-4 • 127 Yard Sale,** various locations along U.S. Route 127. 127yardsale.com

**Aug. 3 • Second Annual RC Airshow,** Summit Airfield, Ooltewah. 404-437-6320 or info@vonzarainc.com

**Aug. 16-18 • Crockett Days,** David Crockett Birthplace State Park, Limestone. 423-257-4500 or tnstateparks.com/parks/david-crockett-birthplace

**Aug. 17 • David Crockett's 238th Birthday Celebration,** Crockett Tavern Museum, Morristown. 423-587-9900 or crockettavernmuseum.org

**Aug. 23-24 • Living Legacy Fall Trade Fair 2024,** McMinn County Living Heritage Museum, Athens. 423-745-0329 or livingheritagemuseum.org

**Aug. 24 • “Songs of the South’ — A Tribute to Alabama,”** Heritage Hall Theatre, Mountain City. 423-727-7444 or heritagehalltheatre.org

**Aug. 30-31 • Surgoinsville Riverfront and Dr. Lyons Festival,** Surgoinsville River Front Park. 423-327-8026 or moorevendorevents0421@gmail.com

**Aug. 30-31 • Second Annual Cumberland Mountain Songwriters Festival,** Palace Theatre, Crossville. 931-484-6133 or palacetheatre-crossville.com

**Sept. 7-8 • Fall Market,** Greenway Park and Pavilion, Cleveland. 423-650-1388 or touchtheskyevents.com

## Submit your events

Complete the form at [tnmagazine.org](http://tnmagazine.org) or email [events@tnelectric.org](mailto:events@tnelectric.org). Information must be received at least two months ahead of the event date, and we accept submissions up to a year in advance. Due to the great demand for space in each month's issue, we cannot guarantee publication. Find a complete listing of submissions we've received at [tnmagazine.org/events](http://tnmagazine.org/events).



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THE **TENNESSEE**  
MAGAZINE



# CEMC takes local students to Washington, D.C.

**T**welve students from Cumberland Electric Membership Corporation's service area got the opportunity of a lifetime to spend a week in our nation's capital as delegates of the 2024 Washington Youth Tour. **Abigail Chambers**, Montgomery Central High School; **Alexis Creekmore**, Portland High School; **Rebecca Fowler**, Montgomery Central High School; **Katie French**, Montgomery Central High School; **Lydia Frye**, Portland High School; **Sam Hardin**, Portland High School; **Ella Honeycutt**, Greenbrier High School; **Samuel Knight**, White House High School; **Raegan Reynolds**, Montgomery Central High School; **Ryan Semore**, Greenbrier High School; **Addesyn Underwood**, Rossview High School; and **Andelyn Underwood**, Rossview High School, were among 139 students from across Tennessee on the weeklong trip that began on Friday, June 14. White House High School teacher Lucas Hilliard also attended the trip.

This annual event is sponsored by CEMC and the Tennessee Electric Cooperative Association. The

students were selected for the trip by writing short stories titled "Co-ops Connect" that explain how co-ops connect Tennessee communities with energy, education, broadband, economic development and more.

"Chaperoning the best and brightest students on a trip of a lifetime to Washington, D.C., each year is a highlight of my job here at CEMC," said Susie Yonkers, community relations coordinator and chaperone on the 2024 Washington Youth Tour. "This year's delegates represented CEMC well at our nation's capital and are coming back home with the knowledge and leadership skills to become future leaders in their communities."

The Washington Youth Tour's nonstop, seven-day itinerary is jam-packed with places to visit and experiences to give the Youth Tour delegates a trip that they will never forget. Highlights include a guided memorials tour around the city, visiting museums at the Smithsonian Institution, touring George Washington's Mount Vernon and Thomas Jefferson's Monticello and taking a trip to Arlington National Cemetery. Delegates also got to see Washington,



CEMC's 2024 Washington Youth Tour delegates and chaperones visit the Jefferson Memorial. From left are, back row, Ryan Semore, Chad Corlew, Sam Hardin and Samuel Knight; second row, Rebecca Fowler, Addesyn Underwood, Alexis Creekmore and Andelyn Underwood; and front row, Ella Honeycutt, Raegan Reynolds, Katie French, Abigail Chambers, Susie Yonkers and Lydia Frye.





Sens. Bill Hagerty and Marsha Blackburn (not pictured) welcome Tennessee's Washington Youth Tour delegates to the U.S. Capitol.

D.C., staples like the White House, U.S. Capitol and Washington National Cathedral.

"The Washington Youth Tour is more than a trip," said Todd Blocker, vice president of member services for the Tennessee Electric Cooperative Association and tour director. "Transformative. Unforgettable. Life-changing. Whether the trip cultivates a love for history, leadership or active citizenship, we are empowering young minds to shape the future. Seeing the impact the trip has had on many over the years is awe-inspiring."

While in D.C., winners were announced in the statewide competition for the Robert McCarty Memorial Scholarships. Charlise Strech from Meriwether Lewis Electric Cooperative, Elijah Jones from Appalachian Electric Cooperative and Ayden Anderson from Gibson Electric Membership Corporation were awarded \$3,000, \$2,000 and \$1,000 Robert McCarty Memorial Scholarships for having the first-, second- and third-place papers of the thousands submitted across the state for this year's contest. The scholarships are named in memory of Robert McCarty, an employee of Volunteer Energy Cooperative and longtime chaperone on the annual Youth Tour.

Yuridia Garcia, a senior from Appalachian Electric Cooperative, was awarded a \$10,000 Cooperative Youth Ambassador Scholarship. Garcia was a 2023 delegate on the Washington Youth Tour. Delegates who remain

engaged with their sponsoring cooperatives during their senior year and complete certain community service requirements are eligible for the scholarship. Garcia's name was randomly selected among the delegates from across the state who completed the requirements.

"An investment in the Washington Youth Tour delegates today is also an investment in the future of co-op communities across Tennessee," said Mike Knotts, CEO of the Tennessee Electric Cooperative Association. "The future is bright for this group of Youth Tour delegates. We are honored to be a part of supporting their academic journeys and look forward to seeing what the future has in store for them and the impact they will have on their communities."

The Washington Youth Tour was inspired by President Lyndon B. Johnson when as a senator in 1957 he encouraged electric cooperatives to send young people to the nation's capital. Since then, more than 6,000 young Tennesseans have participated in the Washington Youth Tour as delegates.

**On the cover:** In front of the U.S. Capitol are, from left, Chad Corlew, Andelyn Underwood, Abigail Chambers, Ella Honeycutt, Samuel Knight, Raegan Reynolds, Ryan Semore, Katie French, Rebecca Fowler, Lydia Frye, Lucas Hilliard, Addesyn Underwood, Sam Hardin, Alexis Creekmore and Susie Yonkers.



# Coming next month: CEMC's 86th annual meeting

Be sure to look for next month's issue of *The Tennessee Magazine*, which will contain detailed information about Cumberland Electric Membership Corporation's 86th annual membership meeting.

Save the date and make plans to join us **Saturday, Sept. 28**, at White House Heritage High School in Robertson County for our cooperative's biggest event. CEMC's business meeting and director elections will be held, a complimentary breakfast will be served, musical

entertainment will be provided and some valuable prizes — including various electric bill credits and youth prizes — will be given away. Early voting will be held at each district office on Friday, Sept. 27, for members who are unable to attend the meeting.

We hope you will join us as we celebrate 86 years of serving our members! Please visit our website, [cemc.org](http://cemc.org), and follow our social media pages for additional information and reminders.

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## Lineworkers show skills at 2024 Lineman Rodeo

Ten expertly trained lineworkers from Cumberland Electric Membership Corporation traveled to Chattanooga to participate in the 27th Annual Tennessee Valley Lineman Rodeo June 7-8. Lineworkers from cooperatives and municipal utility systems across the Tennessee Valley participated in this two-day event.

The rodeo, which was started in 1998 by and for the employees of Tennessee Valley Authority's power distributors, includes competitive events for apprentices, individual lineworkers, teams and senior individuals. The competition recognizes and rewards excellence in safety, skill and knowledge in the field.

Representing CEMC in the apprentice events were Peyton Martin and Austin White from the Gallatin District and Micah Hagan from the Portland District.

Competing in the individual events for CEMC was Gallatin District Lineman Jake Perry.

Two teams from CEMC participated in the rodeo's team events. Jared Hesson, Gallatin District working foreman; Trevor Brown, Gallatin District working foreman; and Matt Hunter, Portland District working foreman, made up one team. Barron Ladd, Portland District working foreman; Joe Gomez, Portland District lineman; and Justin Bradley, Portland District working foreman, formed the other.

CEMC's competitors ended up with top 10 finishes in nine events. The team consisting of Hesson,



CEMC Apprentice Lineman Peyton Martin competes in the Hurtman Rescue event during the 2024 Tennessee Valley Lineman Rodeo.

Brown and Hunter placed sixth overall in the team division, and Martin finished 16th overall out of 111 competitors in the apprentice division. Full results are available online at [tnrodeo.com](http://tnrodeo.com) in the archives section.

# Watch the clock to lock in energy savings

By Anne Prince, National Rural Electric Cooperative Association

As temperatures rise and summer activities heat up, a reliable flow of electricity is essential to ensure Cumberland Electric Membership Corporation members stay cool and connected.

August brings some of the most extreme summer temps, which means people will be spending more time indoors to avoid the heat, and air conditioners will be working overtime. This increased use of electricity will cause spikes in demand, also known as energy peaks. During peak times, CEMC must work closely with our wholesale power provider to ensure a balanced supply of electricity is always available to meet our community's energy needs.

The electric grid is essentially a giant network that connects power plants, utility poles and power lines to homes and businesses across the country, throughout our state and to our local communities. All parts of the network must work together to ensure the flow of electricity stays balanced 24/7.

When the demand for electricity is higher than usual, power providers must ramp up electricity production — whether from coal, natural gas, wind, solar or other energy sources — and utilities will pay more for electricity produced during the peak. These higher prices, along with the general increase in electricity use, are why you typically see higher bills during the hottest months. In extreme cases, demand can overpower the available supply, causing electricity shortages. During these times, utilities are required to implement rolling power outages to reduce the demand for electricity and rebalance the grid.

When our area experiences extreme summer heat and higher demand for electricity, you can help by conserving energy. It's easy — just check the clock and save your energy-intensive activities and chores for the early morning and late evening hours as much as possible.

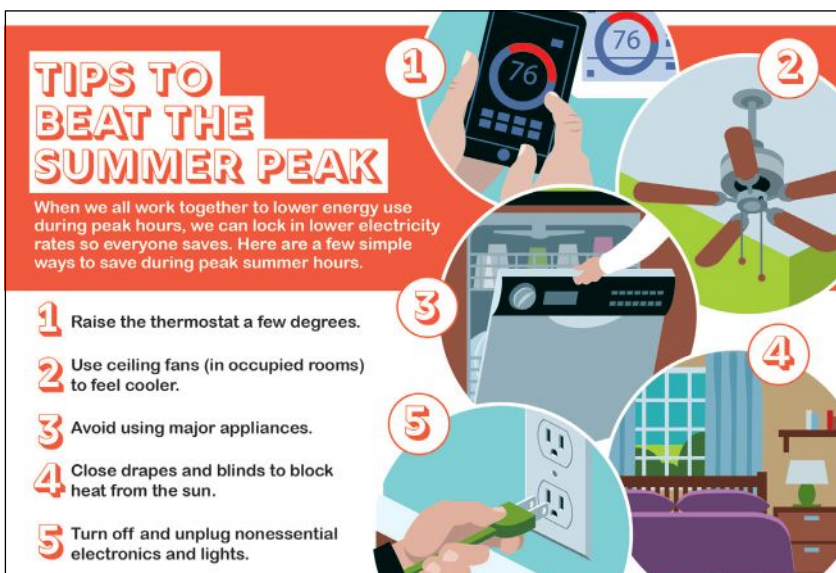
When we all work together to reduce energy use during peak times, CEMC can lock in lower electricity rates so everyone in our community saves. Conserving

during peak times also eases pressure on the grid and helps balance the supply and demand of electricity.

There are many ways to lower your home energy use. Here are a few recommendations to help you save energy (and money) during the summer peak:

- Set your thermostat a few degrees higher. If you have a smart or programmable thermostat, adjust the settings so your cooling system syncs with the off-peak hours.
- Speaking of raising the thermostat, did you know ceiling fans can make you feel 4 degrees cooler? Operate ceiling or oscillating fans in occupied rooms to supplement your air conditioning. Be sure to raise the thermostat while fans are running for maximum energy savings. Remember: Fans cool people (not homes), so turn them off when you leave the room.
- Plan energy-intensive activities like laundry and running the dishwasher for off-peak hours. Use automatic timers to run hot tubs, pool pumps, water heaters and other appliances in the same way.
- Unplug electronics when they're not in use or use power strips to manage devices.
- Close drapes and blinds during the afternoon to block unnecessary heat from sunlight.

When we all work together to beat the summer peak, our entire community benefits. Saving energy during peak times reduces your bills, keeps electric rates lower for all and relieves pressure on the grid.





# CEMC supports 4-H Electric Camp

Cumberland Electric Membership Corporation sent a group of middle school students to the University of Tennessee, Knoxville's campus to attend 4-H Electric Camp June 25-28. CEMC's attendees joined more than 150 students from across the state in exploring the world of energy, electricity, energy conservation, electrical safety and other basic sciences in fun-filled, "hands-on" learning activities.

During the event, students rotated through science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) learning centers, including:

**Wiring an extension cord** — This learning center taught students basic wiring skills used by electricians every day. Students wired extension cords with USB charging capabilities that they were able to take home.

**Powering VOLT City** — The electric power grid delivers electricity from power plants to homes and businesses across Tennessee and the nation. In this learning center, students learned some basic electrical engineering principles needed to design a power grid for a small town.

**Robotics** — Robots were once only seen in science fiction movies; however, today robots are used to complete many tasks. This learning center allowed students to



Campers check out Cumberland Connect's electric car, a Tesla Model 3, while attending the electric vehicle learning center.

see the latest robot technology and then gave them the opportunity to program robots to perform specific tasks.

**Flying a drone** — Drones have various purposes such as inspecting power lines, capturing aerial shots of crops or landscapes or taking stunning photos and videos. In this learning center, students learned about the different types of drones and current regulations for flying drones safely and allowed students to take the controls and pilot a microdrone.

**Electrical safety** — Electric power does a tremendous amount of work for us, but because it is such a powerful force, we must be careful around it. This learning center taught campers how to play it safe around high-voltage power lines.

**Electric vehicles** — Many car makers today are producing electric vehicles (EVs). Some EVs have batteries instead of gasoline tanks and electric motors instead of internal combustion engines. Others use a combination of gasoline and an electric motor to power the vehicle. In this learning center, students learned about the latest technology in EVs.

Electric camp is a partnership among 4-H, Tennessee's cooperative and municipal electric utilities, the University of Tennessee, Tennessee State University, Tennessee Valley Robotics and the Tennessee Valley Authority.

"Empowering young minds with STEM education opens doors to innovation, fuels curiosity and builds the foundation for a future driven by knowledge and creativity," says CEMC General Manager Chris Davis. "CEMC is fortunate to provide opportunities like this to young people from our service area."



Campers learned basic wiring techniques and were then able to demonstrate what they learned by wiring their own extension cords in the wiring learning center.



# Smart Classrooms: The Future of Education

The education industry has always been an early adopter when it comes to the latest technology. The digital age has only accelerated this trend, especially in the wake of the pandemic, when most classrooms had no choice but to transition into a virtual format. Now that smart technology is so commonplace in education, the concept of the “smart classroom” is beginning to emerge. Here’s a closer look at how smart technology is revolutionizing the world of education.

## **The backbone: Fiber internet**

Fiber internet provides unparalleled speed and reliability compared to traditional broadband connections. With gigabit speeds, students and educators can seamlessly stream high-definition video, participate in real-time video conferences and access cloud-based educational resources — inside or outside the classroom.

High-speed internet also facilitates real-time collaboration among students and teachers. Platforms like Google Classroom, Microsoft Teams and Zoom enable virtual classrooms, allowing students to work together on projects, attend lectures and participate in discussions as if they were in the same room. Furthermore, students can access digital libraries, virtual laboratories and interactive learning platforms from anywhere in the world. This accessibility provides opportunities for students in remote areas to benefit from high-quality educational materials.

## **The integration: Smart technology**

So much new technology is being used in the classroom that simply wasn’t around when many of us were in school. For example, interactive whiteboards (a.k.a. smartboards) replace traditional chalkboards and whiteboards, providing an interactive surface where

teachers can display multimedia content, annotate directly on the screen and engage students with interactive lessons. These boards can even connect to the internet, allowing online resources to be displayed right on the screen.

In some schools, each student gets access to a laptop or tablet, which is a great tool for providing students with access to their educational materials at any time. However, smart classrooms can take it a step further by utilizing adaptive learning software. Software such as EdApp or Adaptemy tailors educational content to the individual needs of each student. These programs use data analytics and machine learning algorithms to identify students’ strengths and weaknesses, providing personalized learning paths and real-time feedback to help them succeed.

Augmented reality (AR) and virtual reality (VR) technologies are also making an appearance in the educational landscape, especially in higher education. These technologies make learning more accessible by providing immersive learning experiences that would typically only be available through on-site experience. AR and VR allow students to gain hands-on experience and interact with simulations that bring complex concepts to life.

In conclusion, the convergence of fiber internet and smart technology is transforming the world of education by creating smart classrooms that enhance learning experiences and outcomes. High-speed internet and smart technology work hand-in-hand to break down barriers that made resources inaccessible for some while also fostering an environment where students and educators can collaborate and connect. The smart classroom is no longer just a vision of the future — it is rapidly becoming the new standard in education.



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## Types of heat pumps



If it is time to replace your heating system, switch to a heat pump to conserve energy and potentially save on your electric bills. Ductless heat pumps have increased in popularity significantly over the past 10 years. They are a great solution for homes that do not have existing ductwork. Photo credit: Bonneville Power Administration

**Q.** My heating system is 10-plus years old, and I want to switch to a heat pump. Can you help me choose the best option for my home?

**A.** Heat pumps have been around for decades, and in that time, the technology has come a long way. In my opinion, they could use a rebrand.

The name heat pump does not highlight the benefit of air conditioning that comes with the technology. Heat pumps are highly efficient because they don't use energy to create heat. Instead, they use energy to move heat — into the home in the winter and out of it in the summer. They typically produce about three times more energy than they use.

The most common types of heat pumps are air-source and ground-source. Air-source heat pumps transfer heat from the outside air, even if it isn't particularly warm outside. Ground-source, or geothermal heat pumps, transfer heat between your home and the ground. With a lower

upfront price tag, air-source heat pumps are more common.

According to the U.S. Department of Energy, air-source heat pumps can reduce heating use by about 65% compared to an electric furnace. They come in a variety of styles and configurations to fit different homes. Air-source heat pump technology has been popular in warmer climates for decades. There are now cold climate versions available, too.

Here's an explanation of how each type operates:

Ducted air-source heat pumps are ideal for homes with existing ductwork or homes where ductwork can be feasibly added. Replacing an aging central air conditioning system with a heat pump can significantly reduce heating costs.

Air-source heat pumps can reduce heating use by about 65% compared to an electric furnace, according to the U.S. Department of Energy. Photo credit: Bonneville Power Administration



Ductless heat pumps, or mini-split heat pumps, also draw heat from the outside air. They are a great solution for homes that do not have existing ductwork.

There are many configurations to suit different home layouts. New options on the market allow for coupling with gas or propane backup heat, which might be a good fit for your home. Ductless heat pumps can be a great option for homes with wood stoves. This can help home air quality, heat the home without gathering wood and provide air conditioning in warmer months.

Geothermal heat pumps transfer heat from the ground to your home. They are even more efficient than air-source heat pumps, reducing energy use by 70% to 80%, according to the U.S. Department of Energy. They can also heat water for use in the home, which saves on water heating costs.

From a user experience perspective, heat pumps are a little different because the heat from the register doesn't feel quite as warm as oil, electric, natural gas or propane heat. That can take a little getting used to, but the efficiency gains and energy savings make the investment worthwhile.

Before buying a heat pump, compare equipment ratings. The higher the rating, the more efficient the equipment. If it is time to replace your heating system, I recommend making the



Geothermal heat pumps transfer heat from the ground to your home and can reduce home energy use by 70% to 80%. Photo credit: WaterFurnace International

switch to a heat pump to conserve energy and potentially save on your electric bills. ■

## Understanding the backup heat feature

Most heat pump systems are installed with a backup or auxiliary heat for cold weather. This auxiliary heat can be electric coils, gas, propane or oil, which is usually more expensive to operate. This helps keep your home warm on cold days, but you don't want to use it if you don't need it.

For some heat pumps, turning up the thermostat too quickly or too high can trigger the backup heat. Typically, your thermostat will display emergency or auxiliary heat when using this feature. Speak to your HVAC technician to ensure your thermostat is set to maximize efficiency.

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



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FOOD • TRAVEL • ARTS • SHOPPING

# BEST of TENNESSEE

READERS' CHOICE AWARDS

## We're searching for the Best of Tennessee

VOTING NOW OPEN FOR ANNUAL READERS' CHOICE AWARDS

Our readers are the foremost experts on all things Tennessee, and that's why we need your help naming the Best of Tennessee for our 2024 Readers' Choice Awards. This year, we have revamped our categories to make voting easier. The program highlights readers' favorites in 14 individual categories from travel and art to food and shopping.

There are two ways to enter. Simply visit [tnmagazine.org/BOT24](https://tnmagazine.org/BOT24), or use the form in this magazine. (Online entries will be entered in a drawing for an additional \$250 prize!) Fill out the nomination form with your choices for each category. You can nominate as many businesses and attractions as you like.

"Tennessee is an incredible and unique place, and no one knows that better than our readers," says Chris Kirk, editor of *The Tennessee Magazine*.

"Cast your vote, and help us honor Tennessee's most unique eats and destinations."

Don't wait — submit your nominations today, and be entered in the sweepstakes for a chance to win some fantastic prizes.

Help us honor your community's local businesses that serve you and your neighbors each day. Join us in recognizing Tennessee's best.

"Cast your vote, and help us honor Tennessee's most unique eats and destinations."



**NOMINATE YOUR FAVORITES.**  
ENTER ONLINE AT [TNMAGAZINE.ORG/BOT24](https://tnmagazine.org/BOT24).

**Official rules:** No purchase necessary. One entry per person. Ballot must be postmarked or submitted online no later than Friday, Aug. 30. • To be eligible for the prize drawings, ballots must have a "Best of Tennessee" vote in at least five categories. You can cast votes in any or all of the regions. • Drawing to be held on Friday, Sept. 13. Must be at least 18 years old to win. Grand-prize winners will be notified by mail. • Best of Tennessee results will be published in the December edition of *The Tennessee Magazine*. • Electric cooperative employees and their immediate families are not eligible for the prize giveaways.

# BEST TENNESSEE

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: (H) \_\_\_\_\_ (W) \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Electric cooperative: \_\_\_\_\_

The division of the state in which you live: West \_\_\_\_\_ Middle \_\_\_\_\_ or East \_\_\_\_\_

**All entries must be postmarked by Friday, Aug. 30. Return the completed forms to:**

**Best of Tennessee**  
*The Tennessee Magazine*  
P.O. Box 100912, Nashville, TN 37224

**Complete your ballot online  
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\$250 to spend while you're  
enjoying your state park  
visit.

## EATS

### Bakery

West: \_\_\_\_\_

Middle: \_\_\_\_\_

East: \_\_\_\_\_

### Barbecue

West: \_\_\_\_\_

Middle: \_\_\_\_\_

East: \_\_\_\_\_

### Brewery/Craft Beer/Winery

West: \_\_\_\_\_

Middle: \_\_\_\_\_

East: \_\_\_\_\_

### Catfish

West: \_\_\_\_\_

Middle: \_\_\_\_\_

East: \_\_\_\_\_

### Hamburger

West: \_\_\_\_\_

Middle: \_\_\_\_\_

East: \_\_\_\_\_

### Home/Country Cooking

West: \_\_\_\_\_

Middle: \_\_\_\_\_

East: \_\_\_\_\_

### Place for Dessert

West: \_\_\_\_\_

Middle: \_\_\_\_\_

East: \_\_\_\_\_

## DESTINATION AND RECREATION

### Farmers Market

West: \_\_\_\_\_

Middle: \_\_\_\_\_

East: \_\_\_\_\_

### Festival

West: \_\_\_\_\_

Middle: \_\_\_\_\_

East: \_\_\_\_\_

### Historic Site

West: \_\_\_\_\_

Middle: \_\_\_\_\_

East: \_\_\_\_\_

### Museum/Art Gallery

West: \_\_\_\_\_

Middle: \_\_\_\_\_

East: \_\_\_\_\_

### Place to Take the Kids

West: \_\_\_\_\_

Middle: \_\_\_\_\_

East: \_\_\_\_\_

### Outdoor Adventure

West: \_\_\_\_\_

Middle: \_\_\_\_\_

East: \_\_\_\_\_

### State Park

West: \_\_\_\_\_

Middle: \_\_\_\_\_

East: \_\_\_\_\_



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# THEIR MARK

## THE ART OF HATCH **SHOW** PRINT

How a Little Print Shop Shaped the Look of Country Music & More

Story and Design  
by Ron Bell



Photographs by  
Robin Conover







Intern Shanlee Cox puts the finishing touches on an upcoming show poster for the Ryman Auditorium. These days, everyone — not just country music artists — gets the old school treatment. Comedian Brian Regan, a Ryman favorite, could easily be displayed alongside Roy Acuff or Johnny Cash in the Hatch gift shop.

developing their own unique styles, eventually becoming associated with the graphic art that was made there. Berlin's Bauhaus, Paris' Art Nouveau, Moscow's Soviet Union propaganda posters, to name but a few, all had distinct looks that link them — even centuries later — to their moments in time and their particular spots on the globe.

And now, some 500 years after the invention of the printing press, Nashville might currently stand alone in all the world as a city with its own poster style, a movement of sorts that identifies Music City “at a glance.” Like Berlin or Paris in bygone eras, Hatch Show Print has created a style all its own, attaching itself to a city on the map — and now on the move — in many ways.

**W**hen you see a Hatch Show Print poster, you think “old school.” But many — especially those familiar with the entertainment industry — think “Nashville.”

When the printing press was invented by Johannes Gutenberg in the 1450s, it revolutionized the world. Before that time, “books” were painstakingly hand-printed on tablets, scrolls and parchment — one at a time. They were most often biblical texts inked by monks and gifted among the rich who could most easily fund such time-intensive projects.

A printing press, on the other hand, could print countless images from one master image, mass producing entire manuscripts to a wider demographic of people at a fraction of the cost.

The first “posters” were crude, text-only announcements, handbills and declarations solely designed to alert a town about important events and announcements.

By the late 1700s, however, print media was becoming more sophisticated. With the help of designers, typographers and illustrators, cities and regions were

**500 YEARS AFTER  
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ALL THE WORLD  
AS A CITY  
WITH ITS OWN  
POSTER STYLE.**

### Origins of Hatch Show Print

It all started in Prescott, Wisconsin, where brothers Charles and Herbert Hatch apprenticed in the letterpress print shop of their father, William Hatch. William moved his family to the bustling printing hub of Nashville in 1875, and the brothers started their own shop in 1879 called CR and HH Hatch. Located next to the Ryman Auditorium, just around the corner from Printer's Alley, their neighborly proximity to the Ryman afforded them the opportunity to establish a long-running relationship with the venue. By the 1930s, the Hatch brothers were producing posters and handbills for country music acts and Grand Ole Opry regulars like Roy Acuff, Hank Snow and countless others.

Hatch Show Print is still the Ryman Auditorium's signature producer of event posters, more than 100 years later.

Brian Gavron, events manager for the Ryman

Auditorium from

1999 to 2008 and collector of dozens of Hatch posters from some of the events he helped produce, remembers his excitement when a Hatch poster would arrive.

“Hatch is a beloved Nashville institution. Their signature style is recognized worldwide,” he says. “And when their latest work would arrive, fresh off the press, the staff would



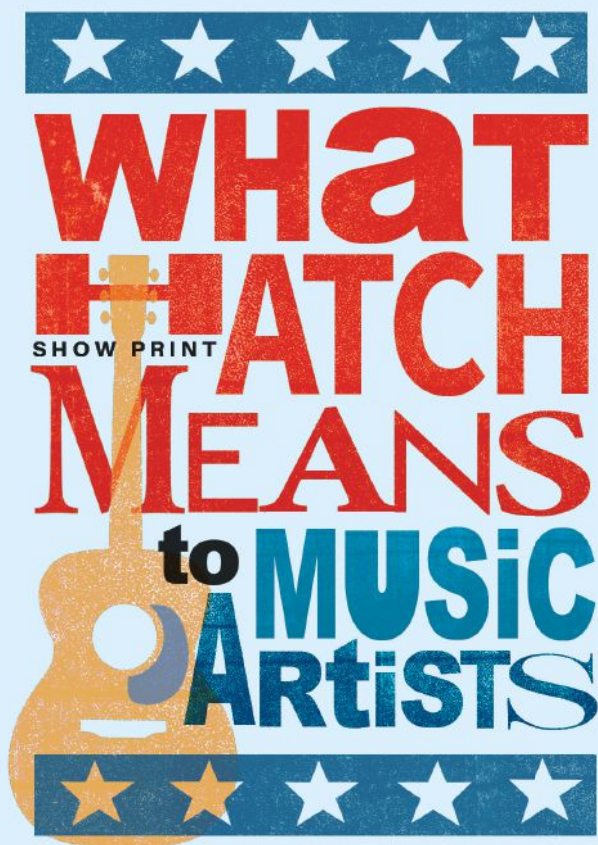
*Opposite page: Director of Hatch Show Print and shop manager Celene Aubry, right, and designer/press operator Mikala Kozuszek discuss the poster design for an upcoming James Taylor performance at the Ryman Auditorium. Hatch is the largest letterpress print shop in the country, having completed 298,644 posters and 891 orders in 2023. (That's nearly 1,150 posters a day, all done by hand.)*





Above, an engraving of an early printing press operation from the 1600s. The text at bottom announces “a new art” with “figures carved and plated.” Courtesy of the Plantin-Moretus Museum, Antwerp, Belgium. Published originally by Jan Galle. Artist/engraver unknown.

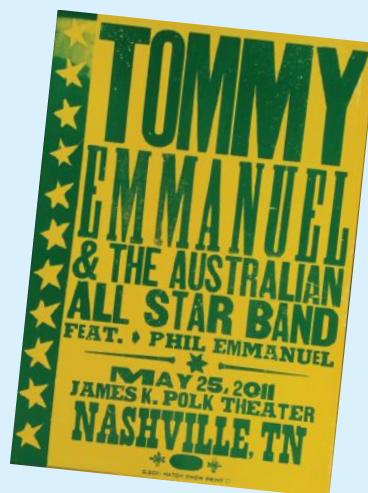
Right, not much has changed from those early days to how it's done at Hatch Show Print, now located in the Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum in downtown Nashville. Each piece of wood and lead (called “furniture” in the letterpress world) has a place and purpose in making a poster. Thousands of type blocks and art blocks are used and reused to create a Hatch Show Print poster.



“The first time I lived my dream of playing my own show at the Ryman Auditorium,” says world-renowned guitarist **Tommy Emmanuel**, “I didn’t realize I would automatically get my own Hatch Show Print poster. The first poster I got with my name on it had a guy holding a guitar. It wasn’t me, it was just an anonymous person holding a guitar, but my name was printed in the typical Hatch Show Print style. I still have those posters. My manager has one in his office, my agents have one in their office, and it means the world to me. Every time I see a Hatch poster,” continues Emmanuel, who was born and raised in Australia, “it brings back memories of seeing their posters from a long time ago like Hank Williams, Jim Reeves, Hank Snow, Patsy Cline, people like that. And when you move to Nashville, and you realize you are in the town where all this stuff comes from — the Ryman is right there, the Country Music Hall of Fame is right there, and all the things that make Nashville what it is — it just gave me a big explosion in my



“HATCH IS AS BIG A PART OF NASHVILLE AS BISCUITS AND GRAVY.”  
— TOMMY EMMANUEL





gather around to see what they had made for us.”

### Keeping it old school

“We only use computers for education, scheduling tours and to communicate with our customers,” says Celene Aubry, director of Hatch Show Print and shop manager. “Some of our designers may start with pencil sketches, but it’s very rough. Our designers work on the press from design concept to finished poster. There are no Photoshop mock-ups. We never touch a computer out here. We were still using fax machines as a way to communicate as recently as 2010.”

### Artistic curiosity — Working at Hatch

Hatch currently employs four interns and has a staff of a dozen or so, but a graphic design degree from a prestigious university will not necessarily get you a job at Hatch.

“There’s no vocational training,” says Aubry. “Traditionally, the art of printmaking was passed down through an apprentice system, and that’s still the way we do it here. Our press operators and designers will show their

heart. And Hatch Show Print is right up there with everything else. They’re as big a part of it as biscuits and gravy.”

*Tommy Emmanuel’s music, videos, bio and more are at [tommyemmanuel.com](http://tommyemmanuel.com).*

Bluegrass chart-topper **Irene Kelley**, writer of hit country songs for Alan Jackson, Trisha Yearwood, Loretta Lynn and many more, says, “Seeing my name on a Hatch Show print for the first time was a real thrill. That iconic style made me feel immortalized. Their posters are so cool, instantly identifiable. It’s like being in a painting by (folk artist) Howard Finster.”

*You can find Irene Kelley’s music, tour dates and more at [irenekelley.com](http://irenekelley.com).*

Americana artist **Antsy McClain**, lead singer for **The Trailer Park Troubadours** and columnist for *The Tennessee Magazine* (My Tennessee Notebook, page 10), says he



portfolio, but they are hired for many different reasons because what we do here is so unique.”

“They submit a portfolio,” Aubry adds. “But whether or not they are hired on here is based on artistic curiosity. We start from zero, teaching them how every single press works, how we build a poster, why the type is the way it is, where it all belongs and how we incorporate imagery, color and graphic elements into the poster. They are trained in all of that, and former experience helps but may not be applicable to this very specific way of working.”

“It takes about an hour to print each run,” says Aubry. “And they are onto the next poster.” Most designers/press operators make roughly two runs per day.

“We plan two to four weeks per job, depending on the client, from initial communication to delivery of the order,” says Aubry. But there are a lot of orders in line ahead of you. Hatch Show Print takes custom orders for

private clientele, but the waiting list can be as long as four months. If you’re wanting Hatch to print your wedding announcements, for instance, keep this



thought he had “arrived” when he saw his band’s name on a Hatch poster.

“It was my first-ever real gig in Nashville,” McClain recalls. “Opening for the amazing Goose Creek Symphony. I snatched it off the venue window that night, rolled it up carefully and took it home. I spent more money than I had at the time to get it framed.”

It now hangs prominently in my home. It’s a great conversation piece, and it never ceases to make me smile.”

“Plus,” McClain recalls, “how cool is it that they had a mobile home woodblock ready to go?”

*Antsy McClain’s music, books, graphic art and events can be found at [unhitched.com](http://unhitched.com).*

**“I FELT LIKE I HAD ARRIVED.”**  
— **ANTSY MCCLAIN**



**“SEEING MY NAME ON A HATCH SHOW PRINT MADE ME FEEL IMMORTALIZED.”**  
— **IRENE KELLEY**







Above left, spacing above and below lines of type is made by adding lead pieces at various widths, hence the name now used in typography as “leading.” Spacing between letters (kerning) is created the same way. Above right, thousands of custom-carved woodblocks are organized by category and reused. A modern Hatch poster will contain elements carved and created by a host of Hatch printmakers, interns and designers spanning decades. “We only throw woodblocks away when they get so damaged from overuse that they won’t print anymore,” says shop manager Celene Aubry.

wait time in mind. A minimum order for prints is 100. Prices vary depending on how many colors are used, etc. See the Hatch website for more details.

### The look of Hatch

The blocks used for printing are cataloged thematically, and staff have to memorize where everything is, whether they need hands, cars, sunbursts, dogs or the oft-used chicken blocks. (Hatch? Chickens? Eggs? Get it?)

A Hatch Show Print poster is immediately recognized — not for its perfect printing but for the flaws each poster has and the inconsistent ink coverage due to the time-weathered woodblocks.

“If a client wanted perfection from Hatch,” Aubry says, “we would have to close! None of our type has held up perfectly; it’s all so old.”

Fans find this quality endearing, citing this as what sets Hatch apart from other printers and poster designers.

**“ASIDE FROM OUR  
TYPOGRAPHY, IT’S THE  
OLD, DISTRESSED LOOK  
FROM THE BLOCKS THAT  
MAKES IT ‘HATCH.’  
DIGITAL DESIGN HAS  
TRIED TO REPLICATE  
THIS THROUGH  
TYPEFACES THAT HAVE  
A DISTRESSED LOOK TO  
THEM, BUT THEY JUST  
CAN’T DO IT.”**

**— CELENE AUBRY**

those psychedelic posters from the ’60s are so hard to read.”

“Aside from our typography,” says Aubry, “it’s the old, distressed look from the blocks that makes it ‘Hatch.’ Digital design has tried to replicate this through typefaces that have a distressed look to them, but they just can’t do it.”

Hatch Show Print, like every good recipe, is what it is because of the ingredients: simple, real, genuine. And like every good recipe — biscuits and gravy, let’s say, to carry on Tommy Emmanuel’s analogy — we want it to stay unchanged, constant.

“When we moved here to the Country Music Hall of Fame, it was a monumental task,” says Aubry. “But everyone threw

in. Even the museum staff helped us after their own shifts were over. I realized then how special all this is. It’s a labor of love.” ■



At its current location in the Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum, tourists from around the world enjoy an accessible tour experience and a roomy gift shop with affordable prints, T-shirts, caps, books and more. Tours can be arranged at Hatch’s website: [hatchshowprint.com](http://hatchshowprint.com).



Serious collectors of rock and country music posters agree: Hatch is an important part of any collection. Pam Surface, a collector from northern California who owns thousands of music posters dating back decades, has dozens of Hatch pieces in her collection.

“I like that Hatch has been in business forever,” Surface says. “Their style is so unique ... and readable! Some of





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# Nashville bookseller jailed for selling a picture

Alanson Billings was tried in 1846 for selling a sketch allegedly intended to 'excite discontent, insurrection or rebellion' amongst the enslaved

In 1846, a bookseller was arrested in Columbia, Tennessee, and accused of circulating abolitionist literature — a crime as illegal then as selling crack cocaine is today. The man, Alanson Billings, was tried and found not guilty. But his story should remind us that slavery and free speech were not compatible.

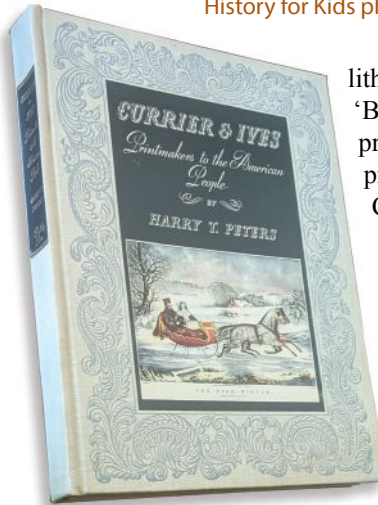
I first discovered this case when I researched my 2018 book *Runaways, Coffles and Fancy Girls: A History of Slavery in Tennessee*. Recently I dug up more details thanks to the folks at the Maury County Archives.

Here's the gist of the story:

Alanson Billings was born in New York in 1795 and served in the War of 1812. In the 1830s, he became a bookseller in Buffalo, New York, and then in Louisville, Kentucky.

In 1839, Billings opened a store at 100 Union St. in Nashville. For the next seven years, his store ran advertisements in Nashville newspapers. He sold Bibles, medical journals, dictionaries, military manuals, history books, novels, drawings, quills, ink — everything an educated person would want.

*The print that got Alanson Billings arrested in Columbia in 1846 can be found in this Currier and Ives book. It depicts the branding of slaves in Africa prior to being shipped to America. Tennessee History for Kids photo*



lithographic prints was one representing 'Branding slaves on the coast of Africa previous to their Embarkation' (a print produced by the New York firm of Currier's). ... A young man came in and said it was an abolition document. I remarked that if I thought so, I would not have it about me, nor say anything that appeared like abolitionism. I heard no more of the picture until Saturday — which was two or three days after the above conversation — when another person walked behind my counter and picked out the aforementioned print, saying this was the one I want ... in an

hour afterwards the Sheriff came to me with a warrant."

Billings spent two nights in jail before some friends bailed him out. When he got back to Nashville, he sent the above account of his experiences to the (Nashville) *Republican Banner* and added:

"As to my being an abolitionist, I deny the charge wholly, publicly and privately, and for those who accuse me of being an abolitionist, I care not."

You might ask why Billings had to deny being an abolitionist. In fact — First Amendment notwithstanding — it was against Tennessee law to sell or distribute any literature that criticized the institution of slavery.

The most famous bookseller found guilty of violating this law was Amos Dresser of Ohio. In 1835, Dresser was accused of attempting to sell abolitionist literature in Nashville. He was whipped on the Public Square — an event that horrified newspapers in the North but which the *Republican Banner* thought lenient. "Had it not been for the prudence and firmness of the committee, his life would have been the immediate forfeit of his crime," the paper said. "As it was, he escaped with the infliction of twenty stripes upon his bare back."

Every so often, Billings went on selling trips to places like Columbia, Fayetteville and Shelbyville. In January 1846, on one of these selling trips, he was arrested in Maury County. A few days later, he wrote this account of what happened:

"I opened my stock of books in a store which I had rented. Amongst my

**Books! Books!!**  
**A. BILLINGS & SON,**  
 100 Union Street,  
 Dealers in Medical, Law, Blank, School  
 and Miscellaneous Books and Station-  
 ery,  
 INVITE the attention of purchasers to their stock  
 — consisting, in part, of Stokes and Bell's  
 Practice; Eberle's Practice; Elliotson's Practice;  
 Dunglison's Physiology; Dunglison's Medical Dic-  
 tionary; Quain's Anatomical Plates; Pancoast's  
 Wistar; Moreau's Midwifery; Pancoast's Operative  
 Surgery; Blackstone's Works; Stephens' Nisi Prius;  
 Greenleaf on Evidence; Thomas' Coke; Anthon's  
 Latin and Greek Readers; Fleming and Tibbin's  
 French Dictionary; Webster's large Dictionary;  
 Webster's School Dictionary; Walker's large Dic-  
 tionary; Walker's School Dictionary; Comstock's  
 Philosophy; Grimshaw's United States Eclectic  
 Readers; Goodrich's Readers; Pike's, Smith's  
 Smiley's and Ray's Arithmetics; Mitchell's, Onley's  
 Smith's and Morse's Geographies; Cobb's, Saunders'  
 and Parley's Elementary Spellers; Theological, Mis-  
 cellaneous and Blank Books, Foolscap, Quarto Post,  
 Packet Post, Tissue, Note and Envelope Paper,  
 Sealing Wax, Steel Pens, Quills, Ink, Pen Knives,  
 Pencils, Wafers; Letter Stamps; Seals, Pocket  
 Books, Diaries and Visiting Cards for sale very  
 cheap. Give us a call before you purchase.  
 January 13, 1845.—if

*One of the many advertisements that ran in the Nashville Republican Banner for Alanson Billings' bookstore in Nashville (Republican Banner, Jan. 20, 1845)*

Less than a year after Dresser was beaten, the Tennessee General Assembly made Tennessee's anti-abolitionist law harsher. "If any person shall knowingly circulate or shall aid and abet in circulating in this State any paper, essay, verses, pamphlet, book, paintings, drawing or engraving ... calculated to excite discontent, insurrection or rebellion amongst the slaves or free persons of color," the new law said, "such person shall be deemed guilty of felony, and for the first offense, on conviction thereof, shall suffer confinement at hard labor in the public jail or penitentiary house of the state for a period of not less than five nor more than ten years."

Back to Alanson Billings:

Through the spring of 1846, Billings continued to operate his Nashville shop. Then, in June, he announced his bookstore would close. "Being desirous to change my business, I now offer my entire stock at the lowest possible prices," he said. Today, we don't know what role the fear that he might be sentenced to hard labor played in that business decision.

The case came up on the Maury County circuit court in early September. After considering the evidence, the jury could not agree on whether to convict or acquit Billings. Finally, Attorney General Nathaniel Baxter entered a motion of "nolle prosequi" — which meant the state dropped charges. But in a strange footnote, Billings was ordered to pay the cost of his jail time and of his prosecution — including \$1.75 for the cost of his lodgings.

Billings reopened his bookstore in 1847, but the next year he was the statewide salesman for a cough medicine. Sometime in the 1850s, all mention of his name vanished from the public eye. When he died in 1864, it didn't make the newspaper.

During the years following the Civil War, there developed in the South a belief that society before the war was nobler and more genteel than society after the war. People forgot about the effect slavery had — not only on the former enslaved but also on everyone else.

On June 30, 1905, the Nashville American published an article about a walking stick

Another bookseller found guilty of violating this law was Amos Dresser, who was accused of selling abolitionist literature in Nashville in 1835 and was whipped on the Public Square. The Nashville Republican Banner thought it a lenient punishment: "Had it not been for the prudence and firmness of the committee, his life would have been the immediate forfeit of his crime. As it was, he escaped with the infliction of twenty stripes upon his bare back."

school. ... Such relics as this stick take us back into a sacred past, around which clings fond memory and places us again on our mother's lap."

The American failed to mention that in the "sacred past" of the 1840s, the stick's original owner was arrested and nearly sentenced to five to 10 years of hard labor simply because he sold a Nathaniel Currier illustration. Like so many turn-of-the-century writers, the columnist ignored — or simply didn't know — the effect slavery had on, among other things, the act of selling books and drawings.

Finally, an interesting footnote about Alanson Billings. Not only had his story been lost to Tennessee history, but his tombstone was very nearly lost as well. About eight years ago, Donna and Jim Kasper were digging trenches for utility lines in the front yard of their Sumner County residence. The heavy equipment they were using struck something huge, which turned out to a tombstone that had

owned by James S. Billings, who ran a cigar stand at the Tulane Hotel. The article said the stick had originally belonged to James' grandfather Alanson. "Alanson Billings was an old stationer of the earlier days ... and he sent his wagon through the country loaded with books, a practice that has long ago ceased," the article said.

"That was before the day of the railroad, the telegraph and the telephone — it was in the sweet old time of which we dearly love to hear, when our grandparents went hand in hand to church or

been knocked over and buried for many years. That led to the discovery of other tombstones — one of which turned out to be that of Alanson Billings.

The Kaspers have gone to great lengths to take care of Billings' grave and others that have been found in the area.

"We love being the caretakers of all the history on our property," Donna Kasper says. ■

*Alanson Billings' tombstone is on private property in Sumner County. The owners of that property, Donna and Jim Kasper, have gone to great lengths to restore his grave and the others around it. Tennessee History for Kids photo*





# Find the Tennessee flag



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

Note that the icon we hide will not be on an actual flag or historical marker, will not appear on pages 20-25 and will not be placed in any ads. This month's flag will not appear on this page (that would just be too easy). Good luck!

Send **postcards only** (no phone calls, please) to: *The Tennessee Magazine*, Find the Flag, P.O. Box 100912, Nashville, TN 37224. Or you can fill out the form at

tnmagazine.org or email [flag@tnelectric.org](mailto:flag@tnelectric.org). Entries must be postmarked or received via email by Friday, Aug. 30. Winners will be published in the October issue of *The Tennessee Magazine*.

## June Flag Spotters

Thanks for the postcards and emails again this month identifying the correct location of the flag, which was found on the steering wheel on **page 10**.

Winners are drawn randomly from each month's entries. June's lucky flag spotters are:

**Bethany Wickham**, White House, Southwest Tenn. EMC  
**Tyler Todd**, Murfreesboro, Middle Tennessee Electric  
**Greg Kelly**, Dandridge, Appalachian EC



## Artist's Palette

### Assignment for October

**Three age categories:** 8 and younger, 9 to 13 and 14 to 18 years old. Each group will have first-, second- and third-place winners.

**Media:** Drawing or painting on **8½-by-11-inch unlined** paper, canvas or board. We encourage the use of color. **Please follow these size guidelines.** Oversized canvas entries are especially difficult to handle and cannot be returned. Framed pieces will not be accepted.

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

**Deadline:** Art must be postmarked by Friday, Aug. 30.

**Include:** Your name (*legibly, please!*), age, mailing address, phone number, email address and electric cooperative. Leaving anything out will result in disqualification.

**Please note:** By entering, you give *The Tennessee Magazine* permission to publish your work in print, online and via social media.

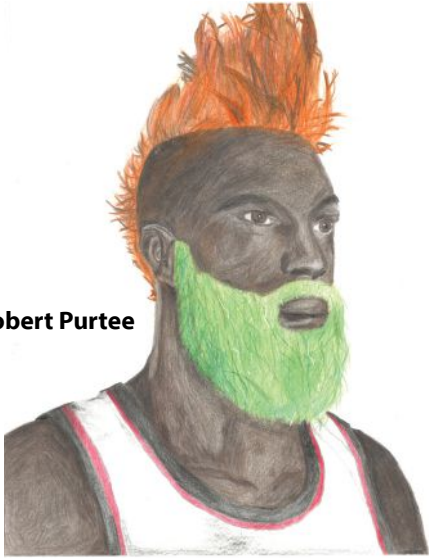
Artwork will not be returned **unless** you include a self-addressed, **stamped** envelope (SASE) with your submission. **Only the U.S. Postal Service** will be used for returns. *For best reproduction results, do not fold artwork.*

**Each entry needs its own SASE, please.** Siblings must enter separately with their own envelopes. **Attention, teachers:** You may send multiple entries in one envelope along with one SASE with sufficient postage. **Winners** will be published in the October issue of *The Tennessee Magazine*. First place wins \$50, second place wins \$30 and third place wins \$20. Winners are eligible to enter again after three months. Winners will receive their awards, artwork and certificates of placement within six to eight weeks of publication.

# Artist's Palette *August Winners*

**WINNERS, 14-18 AGE GROUP:** **First place:** Robert Purtee, age 15, Upper Cumberland EMC; **Second place:** Collin Owen, age 17, Forked Deer EC; **Third place:** Ethan Pozza, Age 14, Sequachee Valley EC

Robert Purtee



Collin Owen



Ethan Pozza



Alexandra Chetyrkina



Carmella Thurman



Ever McLellan



**WINNERS, 9-13 AGE GROUP:** **First place:** Alexandra Chetyrkina, age 13, Middle Tennessee Electric; **Second place:** Carmella Thurman, age 12, Volunteer EC; **Third place:** Ever McLellan, age 10, Middle Tennessee Electric

Elijah Griffith



Saylor Gilliam



Nolan Obirek



**WINNERS, 8 AND YOUNGER AGE GROUP:** **First place:** Elijah Griffith, age 4, Sequachee Valley EC; **Second place:** Saylor Gilliam, age 8, Middle Tennessee Electric; **Third place:** Nolan Obirek, age 7, Middle Tennessee Electric



# FASCINATING FUNGI



**Mushrooms add rich flavor and texture to your soups, salads and many other culinary dishes.**

***Marinated  
Mushrooms***

*Recipes by*

*Tammy Algood*

*Food styling*

*by Cynthia Kent*

*Photographs*

*by Robin Conover*

Summer doesn't last long. Before you know it, kids will be back in school, and Halloween decor will be spilling off retail shelves. Like summer, most foods are better consumed when they are fresh, and that especially goes for mushrooms. They don't last long, so when you bring them home, make the most of them while they're at their best. These fantastic fungi recipes are just the things to help you savor the sweet end of summer.

### Mushroom Salad

Yield: 4 servings

½ pound whole mushrooms (button, shiitake or cremini)  
 Juice of ½ lemon  
 ½ cup shaved Parmesan  
 3 tablespoons olive oil  
 1 garlic clove, peeled and minced  
 ¼ cup fresh snipped herbs (basil, tarragon, parsley, thyme or a mixture)  
 ½ teaspoon salt  
 ½ teaspoon black pepper  
 Arugula salad greens

Cut the mushrooms into thin slices and place in a salad bowl. Drizzle with the lemon juice. Add the Parmesan, oil, garlic, herbs, salt and pepper, tossing to evenly blend. Place the salad greens on individual plates. Evenly distribute the mushroom mixture on top and serve.

### Mixed Mushroom Tart

Yield: 8 servings

1 single pie pastry  
 4 tablespoons olive oil  
 2 garlic cloves, minced  
 ¼ cup minced onion  
 3 cups mixed mushrooms, sliced (button, morel, chanterelle, shiitake or baby portobello)  
 2 cups shredded Monterey Jack cheese

2 eggs, beaten  
 ¾ cup half-and-half  
 ¼ teaspoon seasoned salt  
 ¼ teaspoon black pepper

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees. Place the pastry in a 9-inch tart pan with a removable bottom. Use a fork to generously prick the bottom and fill



with pie weights. Bake 12 minutes. Remove the pie weights and bake an additional 6 minutes. Cool completely on a wire rack.

Increase the oven temperature to 375 degrees. In a large skillet, heat the oil over medium heat. Add the garlic, onions and mushrooms. Cook 8 minutes, stirring frequently.

Meanwhile, combine the cheese, eggs, half-and-half, salt and pepper in a medium bowl. Add the mushroom mixture and blend well. Pour into the prepared crust. Bake 25 to 30 minutes or until the tart is set. Cool on a wire rack at least 5 minutes before slicing and serving.

### Wild Mushroom Mayonnaise — A terrific sandwich spread

Yield: 6-8 servings

1 cup mixed wild mushrooms  
 ¼ cup rice or white wine vinegar  
 ⅔ cup mayonnaise  
 ¼ cup sour cream  
 1 large garlic clove, peeled and minced  
 ½ teaspoon garlic or onion salt  
 ½ teaspoon black or white pepper  
 2 teaspoons fresh chopped parsley, optional

Place the mushrooms in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Cover with water and add the vinegar. Bring to a boil and cook 2 minutes. Drain and allow to cool before finely chopping.

Place the mushrooms in a mixing bowl. Add the mayonnaise, sour cream, garlic, salt, pepper and parsley, if using. Stir until smooth. Refrigerate until ready to use.

**Mushroom Sauce — Use with everything from mashed potatoes to grilled chicken or pork. If you can't locate the particular mushrooms called for in the recipe, substitute a pound of what is available.**

Yield: 6-8 servings

4 tablespoons unsalted butter, divided  
 1 large shallot, peeled and minced  
 ½ pound cremini mushrooms, sliced  
 ¼ pound chanterelle mushrooms, sliced  
 ¼ pound porcini mushrooms, sliced  
 ½ teaspoon salt  
 ¼ teaspoon black pepper  
 2 tablespoons all-purpose flour  
 2 cups low-sodium vegetable or chicken stock  
 ¼ cup dry red wine  
 1 tablespoon fresh parsley, chopped

Place 2 tablespoons of the butter in a large saucepan over medium-high heat. Add the shallots and saute for 1 minute. Add the mushrooms, salt and pepper. Saute for 4 minutes. Sprinkle with the flour and then add the stock.



Bring to a boil, then reduce the heat to medium-low. Cover and simmer for 30 minutes. Add the wine and parsley and simmer 5 minutes. Whisk in the remaining 2 tablespoons of butter until completely melted. Serve warm.

### Fried-To-Perfection Mushrooms

Yield: 4 servings

1 cup peanut or canola oil  
2 eggs  
¾ cup milk  
½ cup finely crushed saltine crackers  
1 pound whole mushrooms (morels, button, cremini)  
½ teaspoon salt  
½ teaspoon black pepper

Place the oil in a large cast iron skillet over medium-high heat.

Meanwhile, whisk together the eggs and milk in a small bowl. Place the crackers in a shallow bowl. Dip the mushrooms in the egg mixture and dredge in the crackers. Carefully add to the hot oil and fry 2 to 3 minutes or until golden-brown. Turn to evenly brown, and don't overcrowd the pan. Drain on paper towels. Sprinkle with the salt and pepper, and serve warm.

### Marinated Mushrooms

Yield: 6-8 servings

2 pounds whole button or cremini mushrooms\*  
1 large red bell pepper, seeded and julienned  
1 (8-ounce) jar whole small green olives, pitted and undrained  
4 sprigs fresh rosemary or thyme  
8 peppercorns, slightly crushed  
6 garlic cloves, peeled and sliced  
1 cup dry white wine or low-sodium chicken stock  
¼ cup chopped fresh parsley  
3 tablespoons canola or vegetable oil  
3 tablespoons white balsamic or white wine vinegar

Place the mushrooms, bell peppers, olives and herb sprigs in a shallow baking dish in a single layer. Set aside. Place the peppercorns, garlic, wine or stock, parsley, oil and vinegar in a jar with a tight-fitting lid. Close and shake vigorously to emulsify. Pour over the mushroom mixture, cover and refrigerate overnight or for 8 hours. Bring to room temperature for 30 minutes before serving as an appetizer.

\* Slice in half if large

Never harvest mushrooms growing wild. Only highly trained mycologists can determine whether they are poisonous. Purchase only cultivated mushrooms from the supermarket.

Keep all fresh mushrooms in the crisper drawer of your refrigerator. They need air circulation, so paper containers are better than plastic or Styrofoam.

Mushrooms can quickly absorb moisture, so never allow them to soak in water before use. Instead, brush the mushrooms or quickly rinse with cold water and drain thoroughly.

Dried mushrooms can be stored in a cool, dry place for up to 6 months. You can use them in the dried form or simply rehydrate in warm stock or water, drain and use.

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



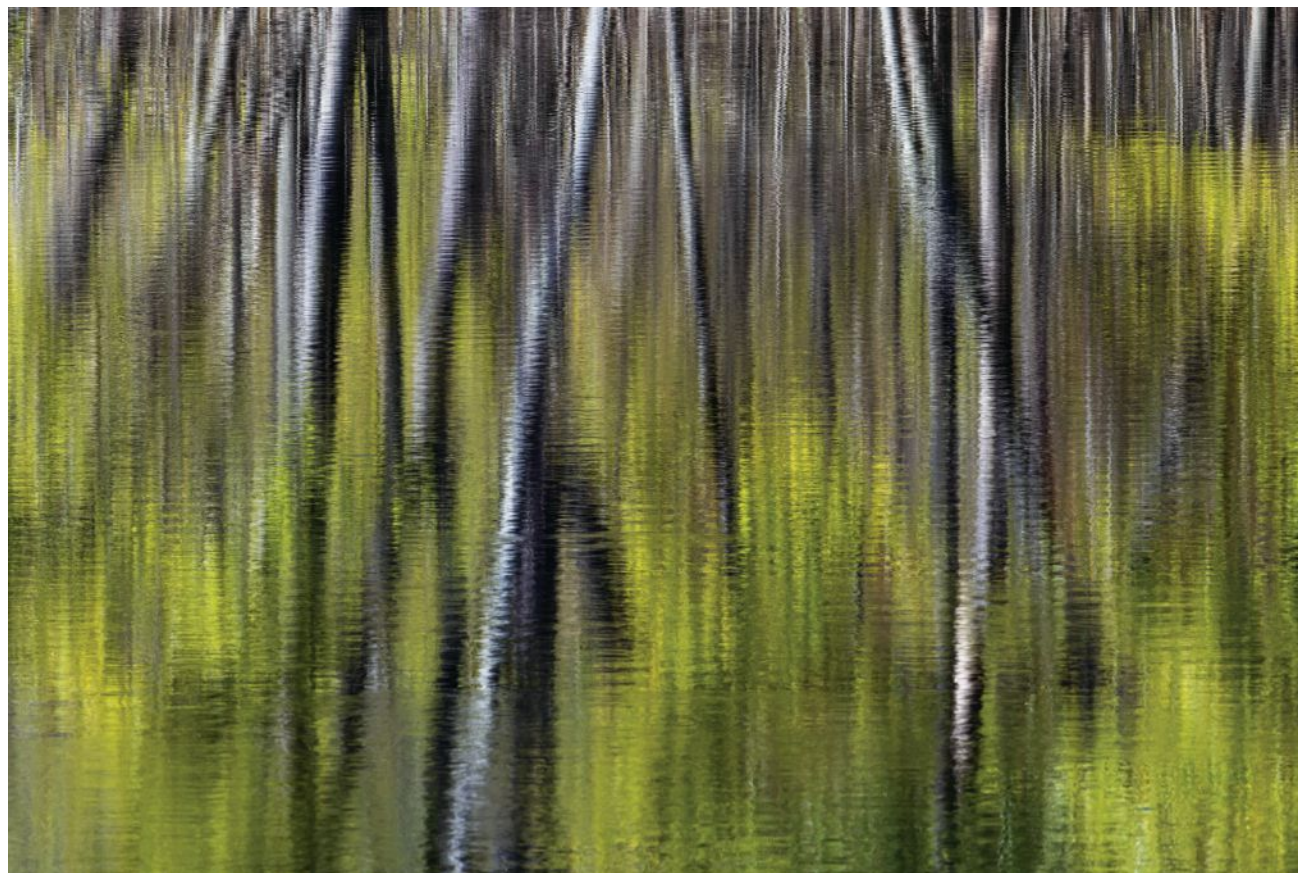
Email your cooking questions to  
Tammy Algood: [talgood@tnelectric.org](mailto:talgood@tnelectric.org).

**Ginny asks:** “What is the best way to reheat leftover fondue? I have tried placing it back in the fondue pot, but that doesn’t work well.”

**Ginny,** that can be tricky because as it cools, fondue firms up. I put very hot water in a microwaveable bowl (around a third full) and place another bowl inside it. That second bowl needs to be slightly smaller and also microwaveable. Add the fondue to the smaller bowl and microwave for 1½ minutes. Stir well and repeat for another minute before serving warm.

**Roger writes:** “Does it really make a difference in baking whether I use medium, large or extra-large eggs? I really don’t see much of a significant difference when looking at the uncracked eggs.”

**Roger,** in the matter of baking, egg size does matter. Nearly all recipes unless otherwise stated call for large eggs. These usually weigh 1.7 ounces each. A medium egg is 1.6 ounces, which isn’t much of a difference, but an extra-large one is 1.9 ounces. Your best bet for recipe success is to stick with large eggs.



# Point of View

By Robin Conover

"Forest Reflections" by Robin Conover,  
Canon EOS 5D Mark IV, 200-400mm, f4 L IS USM EXT lens  
with built-in 1.4x extender at 560 mm, ISO 320,  
f22 at 1/20 second with a circular polarizer, Gitzo tripod

Vibrant reflections always catch my eye. The interaction of bright sunlight on the surface of water and the resulting reflections cast upon it usually stop me in my tracks. When these elements come together as they did on the afternoon I shot this image at Radnor Lake State Park, they can result in stunning images.

As a photographer, I tend to stay away from shooting in the middle of the day, especially on bright, sunny days. It's a general rule of thumb that shooting during this time of day will not result in great photographs. The quality of light will be harsh, creating too much contrast for a successful image.

That being said, we all know that rules are meant to be broken, and photographers prove this paradigm all the time. The French Impressionist painter Claude Monet also broke the rules of his era with his painting style and use of color. His famous works such as "The Water Lilies" and "Water Lily Pond" were often strongly rebuked by the critics of the time.

Monet's quote, "These landscapes of water and reflection have become an obsession," has always

*"These landscapes of water and reflection have become an obsession."*

— Claude Monet

spoken to me. When I view reflections, I simultaneously feel a calmness and an excitement as I focus on the water's surface. It seems as if nature is painting a watercolor for me to see in real time.

In my mind's eye, nature's paintings are unique and fleeting, captured only as one moment in time in each of the still

photographs I take.

At first, the lake was still and almost mirroring a perfect reflection of the trees on the distant shore. Not long after I set up my tripod and chose an exposure, a gentle breeze began to ruffle the surface, adding some interesting patterns.

I set the exposure for the greatest depth of field and to allow for some of the movement to blur the surface ever so slightly. The resulting texture brings the scene to life and reminds me of the brush strokes of the Impressionists, emphasizing the black and white tree trunks at the lake's edge with rich yellow and green splashes of leaves.

Pro tip — adding a circular polarizer to your lens can cut out glare from the water's surface and deepen the intensity of the reflection. ■





# HOMework

DOESN'T HAVE TO BE A

# HEADACHE



Cumberland Connect fiber internet helps your family focus less on buffering and more on studying.



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