

the tennessee magazine

March 2026

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THERE'S A PLACE
TRENTON

EGGSTRAVGANT EATS

SHUTTERBUG SHOWCASE

Pet Portraiture



the tennessee magazine

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TENNESSEE'S
ELECTRIC
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Celebrating the Extraordinary Nature of Everyday Life

MARCH 2026



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experience
further!**



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ON THE COVER
“Sophie the Spaniel doing what she loves best — running and adventuring on her farm,” is how Glenda McDonald of Somerville described her pet portrait. See the winning entries beginning on page 14. *Photograph by Glenda McDonald*



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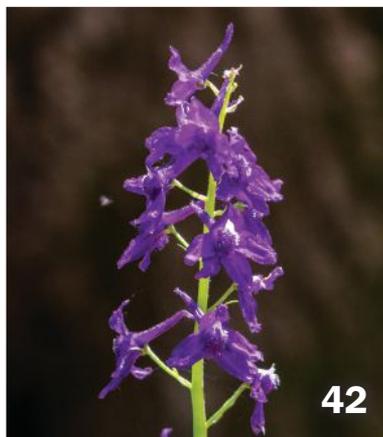
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the
tennessee
magazine

Celebrating the Extraordinary
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Mission Statement

Cumberland Electric Membership 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.

Between the Lines

News from your Community



Chris A. Davis

CEMC General Manager

Together through the storm

Winter Storm Fern tested all of us in ways few of us will forget. Freezing temperatures, heavy ice, downed power lines, fallen trees and broken poles created dangerous conditions that hit our communities hard and challenged the electric system we rely on every day. At the peak of the storm, Cumberland Electric Membership Corporation had as many as 35,000 members without power across our five-county service area. While all districts sustained damage, the hardest-hit areas were in the east, including Robertson, Cheatham and Sumner counties, with the Portland District bearing the brunt.

I want to start by thanking our members for their patience and understanding as our crews worked diligently to restore power as quickly and safely as possible. We know outages are frustrating, especially in the middle of winter when electricity is essential for heat, water and daily life. Your support and understanding during this storm meant a great deal to all of us.

I also want to recognize the outstanding work of our crews and employees. More than 600 personnel, including CEMC/Cumberland Connect employees and contract crews, battled bitter cold, ice-covered roads and

dangerous conditions to restore power. They left their own homes and families to climb poles, clear fallen trees and repair downed lines, showing incredible skill, courage and dedication. Equally important were those manning the phones and our control center, coordinating restoration efforts and keeping members informed every step of the way. We are especially grateful to the outside contract crews whose help made a real difference in restoring power to the membership.

This storm also highlighted the strength of our community. We are thankful for the local businesses and community members who showed kindness with meals, words of encouragement and support for our crews. Neighbors checking on neighbors and members helping one another reminded us why CEMC exists: to serve our communities.

On behalf of our board of directors and the entire CEMC team, thank you for your trust and support. We are proud to serve such a strong, caring community. Together we faced Winter Storm Fern, and together we will keep powering our communities forward.



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By Mike Knotts

Tennessee Electric Cooperative Association

Not a company, a co-op

At the moment I write these words, something odd is right in front of me. There are large piles of snow and ice plowed into the sides of a large parking lot. They are remnants of Winter Storm Fern. If you draw a line from Selmer to Lafayette, straight through the Nashville Metro area, you will know the track of damage caused by the ice storm that Fern created.

What is odd, however, is that it is 73 degrees and sunny outside. How quickly the weather can change, and how quickly we can forget the conditions that existed just a few days prior. If you are future-oriented in your thinking, as I am, it is even easier to forget yesterday's troubles and become fixated on tomorrow's things to come.

But it is important to take a moment and reflect before moving on. As the saying goes, those who don't learn from history are doomed to repeat it.

Co-op members experienced the highest number of power outages in a generation, many lasting days in length. More than 175,000 of your neighbors experienced an interruption of some kind in their electric service. While outages caused by weather are often unavoidable, they are never good and never tolerated.

Speaking on behalf of the hardworking men and women of your local co-op, when the lights go out, we gear up and get to work. And work they did.

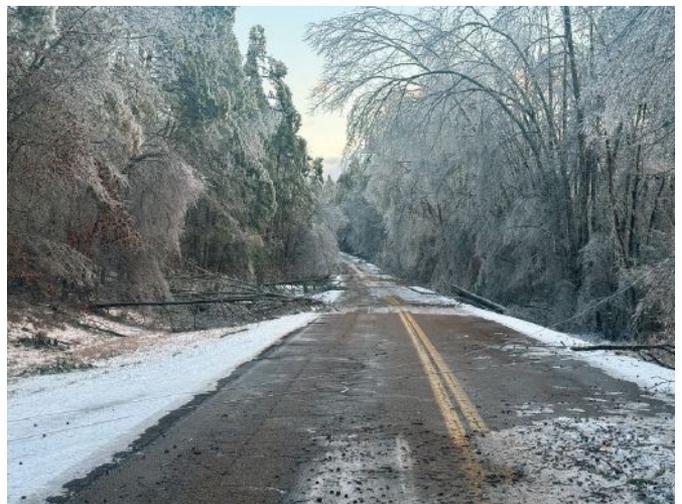
An ice storm is the most damaging type of weather event for an electric utility. This is because when ice accumulates along a power line, it makes the cable heavier and increases the tension against the poles that hold them up in the air. For a typical distance in between two poles, 1 inch of ice is equivalent to hanging a Mazda Miata from the wires. It causes both the wires and the poles to break.

And to add insult to injury, the trees that surround the power lines suffer the same fate. Limbs begin to break off, and some fall into the lines, causing even more damage. Once the precipitation begins to fall, there is nothing to do but see what breaks.

Co-op lineworkers braved the bitter cold, dangerous road hazards and difficult working conditions to make repairs as quickly as possible. In some cases, just as the crews pulled away from the jobsite, limbs cracked and trees fell right back into the job they just finished.

But they kept at it. Your co-op had a plan. Employees prepared. And they executed the plan. I was asked by a public official afterward, "Why did your companies complete their work more quickly than others?" My answer was simple: because they are co-ops.

Co-ops respond to Fern's fury





By Chris Kirk

Editor, *The Tennessee Magazine*

I'm eager to welcome back spring

Fool me once, shame on you. Fool me twice ... well, winter seems to get me every year.

It feels like right about the time I get my legs back underneath me after the holidays, I *think* winter's end is in sight. But then January and February get in one last wallop of winter.

Winter Storm Fern landed an icy haymaker at the end of January, and it has taken weeks for the cobwebs to clear. As always, Tennessee's electric cooperatives answered the bell, springing into action and toiling through adverse — even hazardous — conditions to clear rights-of-way, repair equipment and restore power.

You can read some more thoughts on Fern from Mike Knotts and see some photos of the damage on pages 6 and 7. It is because of the remarkable restoration work undertaken by electric cooperative personnel and mutual-aid assistance workers that I get to turn that page and look toward spring.

The next edition of our “There's a Place” travel series takes us to Trenton in West Tennessee (see page 28). Learn about the town and its world-famous teapot collection. Perhaps you'll be motivated to attend the 45th Annual Teapot Festival, which runs April 26-May 2.

Along those same lines, check out Tennessee Events on pages 34 and 35. Communities statewide are coming out of their wintertime slumbers, and programming is ramping up. We don't have enough room to print every event submission, so be sure to check out the full calendar at tnmagazine.org/events.

And be sure to read Robin Conover's “Point of View” on page 42 where she shares tips for capturing nature's re-emergence. I can hardly wait for the landscape to be dotted with vibrant splashes of wildflower color.

All this talk about spring, and I didn't even mention our Shutterbug Showcase beginning on page 14. Meet our winners' pets as their personalities are revealed in these cute, creative portraits.

Welcome, spring!

Thanks for reading,

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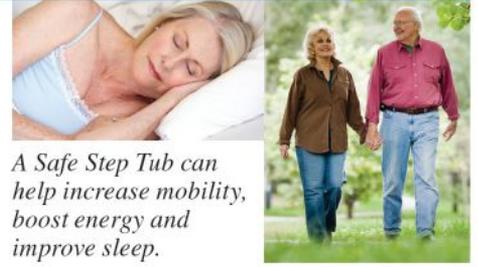
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|------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|
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Divided, we fall. United, we ... don't be mean.

A mother's voice informs a grown-up: Take care of your stuff, and be kind.

As signs of spring are popping up around us, I feel my inner child squirming happily. My outer old guy is pretty darn happy too. Springtime puts me in touch with a younger boy who counted on goodness and walked through a world less complicated.*

All that was expected of me was to get good grades, clean my room and get along with my sister. My mother set my childhood rules simply. They were this: Take care of your stuff, and don't be mean.

As I grew older, I quickly realized that I had to be bothered with other things like money and who to vote for. Bigger questions needed answered like where do we come from, and why are we here? There was also that most complicated of things for a young boy: girls. Money, I learned to handle. Who to vote for? Figured it out. But women? They were — and still are — a mysterious wonderland.

It's no wonder springtime brings an innocence in the air, a sweet and appealing surrender. The buds on the trees and the sweet smell of rebirth connect us all to the simplicity of youth.

And this spring is especially sweet as we remember how, not that long ago, we were huddled together as brutal ice storms ravaged our neighborhoods.

I took a walk in my neighborhood this morning. Most all of the broken limbs have been hauled away. The scars are still visible on what remains standing; bright, yellow wood is exposed where tough bark once

protected. Like scars tend to do, they will blend in with time, but it will always be evident that a limb was once there.

The storms were harsh, but what we heard not long thereafter of neighbor helping neighbor clear the mess with chainsaws was like music to my ears.**

I often turn to my backyard when I start to feel the weight of the world, like ice storms, on my shoulders. I can control things — to an extent — in my own backyard. When I can't, friends are always there to help.

When I am angry and afraid from watching the news, let's say, or from scrolling through hateful and violent videos on social media, I can turn it off, slip on my shoes, throw on a jacket and go outside. There are always chores to be done. I can walk along my creek, replenish the bird feeders, check in with neighbors, pull some weeds, clear some brush, etc., and I can immediately feel the weight of the world lift.

Taking care of my stuff and being kind remain important rules for me to live by. My mother has been gone since 1999, but her voice still informs me as I deal with life. Things like money, who to vote for and why I am here are easier to handle when I break it all down to basics. I've had some recent experiences that bring Mom's voice to the surface, allowing me to reflect on her small way of teaching big things.

On a recent sunny afternoon, I was walking into the grocery store and spotted a handsome gentleman in

I was taught there are three things you never discussed in polite society: politics, religion and money. It sank in. As an adult, I don't care who you vote for, who you pray to or how much money you make — as long as you use your turn signals.

his 70s. He had a smile that could have been pulled down off a movie poster. I complimented him on the smile, calling it his superpower. He blushed a little and thanked me, and we started to chat.

Two sentences into our conversation, he asked me about my political leanings. It felt like he had thrown cold water on me. I had yet to learn his name or know anything about him, but somehow who I vote for was more important than any friendly gestures I might have made. We doubtless had a world of things in common, but at that moment, I felt strangely at odds, being reminded, however vaguely, that he and I weren't neighbors shopping at the same store but possibly something "other."

I smiled awkwardly and gave him a sideways glance. "Sorry," I said. "I don't talk politics on the first date."

He laughed, thankfully, and I walked away with a feeling I never like: regretting being kind to a stranger.

It's very likely that he and I vote for some of the same people. But that's irrelevant. I was enjoying feeling neighborly and "same," and with one remark, he made me feel "other." It felt inappropriate and, well, tacky.

I grew up being taught that there are three things you never discussed in polite society: politics, religion and

money. And it sank in. Now, as a grown-up (so called), I don't care so much who you vote for, who you pray to or how much money you make — as long as you use your turn signals.***

As I shopped, my mind was less on my grocery list and more on the diverse bunch of people in my life who mean the world to me. I am sure they have ideas quite different from mine. I would hope so! As I've traveled the world, I've broken bread and played music with people of all races, religions and political leanings — rich, poor and in-between.

I'm sure a good number of them pray to someone other than my chosen target of adoration. They likely root for different football teams. Many, I'm sure, cancel out my political selection every time I go to the voting booth. But they have been my teachers, my brothers and my sisters. They are kind, and they take care of their stuff. Their humanity reminds me of our sameness rather than any otherness we might share.

As I travel, I am often invited to places of worship. For some, it's their way of taking care of you, making you feel at home. It happens a lot right here at home too.

I was mulling over mayonnaise brands at my neighborhood Walmart when a friendly man started chatting

These footnotes, when taken with food, have been known to ease indigestion

* I grew up during the Civil Rights Movement, Vietnam War protests and the Watergate hearings. One of my earliest memories is sitting on the floor of my grandmother's house while my mom and aunt cried, watching the coverage of JFK's assassination. I would witness many more such tragedies — Martin Luther King, RFK, Malcolm X and more — before I was 12. So when I say I walked through a world less complicated, it has to do with how my parents protected me from the world outside. Many of us have that shelter as children. But we lose that protection as we get older and realize the world has always been a mess. Power struggles and money grabs make it a harsh place, but our world as children is largely made up of our neighborhood and the grade school playground.

** OK, the sound of chainsaws can hardly be called music. It's still an annoying sound, as grating as leaf blowers and the headers of your neighbor's Dodge Charger. But when they are being wielded by neighborhood drinking buddies in hunting jackets and toboggan caps, it's pretty darn sweet.

*** Do you ever find yourself wishing you could block people in real life like we do on social media? After encountering someone rude or thoughtless, that you could just push a button and that person would simply disappear — just to you?

I'm that way with people who don't use their turn signals.

Using your turn signal tells me what kind of person you are far better than where you sit for a few hours on Sunday or how you might cast your ballot.

If I'm waiting to pull out, and you turn on your signal, alerting me that you are turning in, that allows me to proceed. You are kind and thoughtful. You take care of your stuff.

Conversely, not using your turn signal makes me feel invisible and tells me that no one is important to you but you.

I try to give you the benefit of the doubt, telling myself you were raised by wolves or that your parents never owned a car or learned to drive, so valuable pieces of etiquette slid by you somehow. But eventually, I surmise that your heart is dark, and you regularly push children down and take their candy.

**** This is an important place to stop and come clean: I'm a terrible joiner. Again, it's not you, it's me. My reluctance has a lot to do with the old joke: "I would never belong

to a club that would have me as a member." Whenever I'm embraced by a group of people or given an award of some kind, my first reaction is suspicion. And I think, "Either these folks have no idea who I am, or they're just being nice."

***** If you'd like to learn more about Tom Morales and Woolworth on Fifth, see *The Tennessee Magazine* article I wrote called "Sit-In Style." It highlights his efforts to restore the building to its original architectural glory while renewing its purpose as a gathering place for neighbors of all colors and creeds. It's no longer a restaurant but an entertainment venue called the Woolworth Theatre that still adheres to Morales' original vision when he said, "Some places demand to be saved." Read the article online at tnmagazine.org/sit-in-style.

me up, commenting about the overwhelming choices for everything. I agreed. After a minute of small talk, he asked me if I was happy with my faith life. He introduced himself as a new pastor and handed me his business card. I looked at the card, dumbstruck.

“Forgive me,” I said, handing the card back. “But I made a decision never to go to church with someone I met at a Walmart.”

The pastor laughed. I mean, really laughed. He had a great sense of humor, and he was clearly a nice guy.

I laughed along, saying, “It’s not you, it’s me.”****

As he left, I kind of wished we could grab a coffee sometime and be friends, but his first act as a human with me was contrary to how good friendships are built. He didn’t want a friend, he wanted a parishioner, and it made me lose interest in what he was selling.

After he left, I looked down at a jar of Miracle Whip. The irony was not lost on me, and I smiled all the way to the devil’s food cake mix that was also on my list. True story.

Not to be transparently biased, but living and working in Tennessee, I am reminded of our sameness far more often than how we might be divided as neighbors. Tennessee’s history as the Volunteer State remains a beautiful example of humanity to me, and the pioneering role of Tennesseans in the Civil Rights Movement continues to inspire.

I had the honor of meeting chef and business owner Tom Morales, a native Tennessean who had spent years making a name for himself in New York City and then returned home to create and revive several Nashville-area restaurants.*****

His most recent labor of love at the time was downtown Nashville’s Woolworth on Fifth. It was the home of some of the first sit-in protests of the 1960s. Local African American students defied social norms of the day and sat down at the segregated food counter asking to be served.

The notion that people of different races couldn’t eat together seems utterly absurd to us today. Some 60 years later, it almost seems like that all happened on another planet. If you watch news footage of the day, it seems very other-worldly, indeed.

Fast forward to 2022. I’m at Woolworth on Fifth in downtown Nashville with friends from all over the country as part of a regular event that I host. I explained the significance of this restaurant to everyone. I asked them to look around at their fellow diners.

I break out in goosebumps now, every time I think of it. Seated all around us were people of every race and,

one can assume, most every religion and political party. They were side-by-side, elbow-to-elbow, enjoying their sandwiches — and their sameness — eating from one menu, together in harmony, laughing and visiting.

Just like family.

No assigned seats, no dividing lines. It was another moment, in a parade of moments, when I felt proud to call myself a Tennessean. I love this state. I love this country. And I know our better angels are watching over us still, expecting great things.

Common ground is made up of our uncommon pieces. Some of us were raised poor, others were raised wealthy, and our religious affiliations are as numerous as the birds in the trees.

Things like politics, and even religion, can change as we change. The limbs we hold onto as we climb through life, they change. Ice and wind take their toll, but we adjust and learn.

But what doesn’t change is what nests us, what pulls us together: home, family, friends, dreams.

We go through ice storms that bring destruction and temporary losses of power, but we get out the chainsaws, haul away the wreckage and rebuild.

As we enter another season of green and gracious hope, I say a little prayer to whomever might be listening and ask for a season of unity to take root, hungry and new, on ground where so many lines have been drawn to divide us — imaginary lines, really, when you break it down into basics.

Nests are being built in the trees, and new lives are starting for the birds and for many of us. And we all need a safe and peaceful world where needs are met, hope is real and dreams are granted.

And maybe, just maybe, everyone will use their turn signals.

A man can dream.

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Antsy McClain is a Nashville-adjacent singer-songwriter, author and graphic artist. Go to unhitched.com for more. Use this QR code to download “When You’re Laughing” and “I’m Everyone” FREE to readers of *The Tennessee Magazine*. Each song deals with different aspects of this month’s column, celebrating our “sameness” and embracing the concept of turning strangers into friends.





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Shutterbug Showcase

Pet Portraiture

Shutterbug Showcase has gone to the dogs ... and cats and livestock and birds and reptiles for our “Pet Portraiture” photo contest. More than 1,300 submissions creatively captured canine and other animal companions and showed us your curious, cuddly, cute pets.

Guest judges Lacy Atkins and Robin Conover, both award-winning photographers, returned to help select the winners in each of our three categories: Junior, Professional and Adult Shutterbugs.

Thank you to everyone who submitted photographs. Be sure to visit tnmagazine.org to view these winning entries and additional images recognized as finalists.

Check future issues of *The Tennessee Magazine* for details on our next Shutterbug Photography Contest.



Shutterbug Showcase



Above:

1ST PLACE, PROFESSIONAL

"Church Ladies,"

Renee Lowery, Fairview, Middle Tennessee Electric

Top Right:

1ST PLACE, ADULT

"Big Smiles and Sunflowers,"

Nancy McKenzie, Darden

Bottom Right:

1ST PLACE, JUNIOR

"Goin' 4 a Ride,"

Courtney Judd, Lewisburg, Duck River EMC

Left:
2ND PLACE, PROFESSIONAL
"Boundless Joy,"
Andrea Moore, Manchester,
Duck River EMC



Above:
2ND PLACE, JUNIOR
"Happy, Happy Goat,"
Millie Davis, Tullahoma,
Appalachian EC



2ND PLACE, ADULT

"Egg or the Chicken First,"
Adam Whitman, Doyle,
Tennessee Valley EC



Middle Left:

3RD PLACE, ADULT

"Get Your Motor Running,"
Robin Solomon, Franklin,
Middle Tennessee Electric

Bottom Left:

3RD PLACE, PROFESSIONAL

"Snow Buddies,"
Cage Parrish, Franklin,
Middle Tennessee Electric



Above:

3RD PLACE, JUNIOR

"Don't Worry, He is Very Meowsical,"
Keilah Easton, Dandridge,
Appalachian EC



HONORABLE MENTION, PROFESSIONAL *"Relaxing in My Chair,"*
Jim T. Jennings, Hendersonville, Appalachian EC



HONORABLE MENTION, JUNIOR *"Under the Table,"*
Bella Telfer, Jackson, Southwest Tennessee EMC



HONORABLE MENTION, ADULT *"Booger's Rest Stop,"*
Tony Pariso, Crossville, Appalachian EC



HONORABLE MENTION, ADULT *"Happy Sophie,"*
Glenda McDonald, Somerville, Chickasaw EC



HONORABLE MENTION, JUNIOR *"Horse on the Move,"*
Elijah Denharder, Morrison, Caney Fork EC



HONORABLE MENTION, ADULT *"Peaceful Indulgence,"*
Odessa Roberts, Portland, Cumberland EMC



HONORABLE MENTION, JUNIOR *"All Smiles,"*
Maverick Wheeler, Centerville, Meriwether Lewis EC



HONORABLE MENTION, PROFESSIONAL *"Flexie Surveys Her Domain,"*
Gary Sanderson, Pikeville, Sequachee Valley EC



HONORABLE MENTION, JUNIOR *"Larry and Rosemary,"*
Dylan Driver, Watertown, Middle Tennessee Electric



HONORABLE MENTION, PROFESSIONAL
"Eye See All," Megan Dickens,
Maryville, Fort Loudoun EC

Connect for a Cause campaign raises \$22,240 to support local food banks

This past holiday season, Cumberland Connect set out to do more than connect homes to fast, reliable internet. Through our Connect for a Cause initiative, we combined connectivity with compassion to support families facing food insecurity across Middle Tennessee.

Launched on Nov. 13, and running through Dec. 31, 2025, Connect for a Cause was built on a simple promise. For every new Cumberland Connect service sign-up, we donated \$20 to local food banks serving our communities. Each new subscriber not only gained a stronger connection at home but also helped put food on the tables of neighbors close by.

Throughout the campaign, donations supported hunger relief efforts across our service area, including Stewart, Montgomery, Cheatham, Robertson and Sumner counties. Progress updates were shared on our website and social media so that the community could see the impact being made.

By the close of the campaign, Cumberland Connect subscribers helped raise a total of \$22,240 for local food banks, proving that small actions can add up to a powerful impact.

Those funds are being distributed evenly among six local organizations that work tirelessly to support families in need:

- Bethesda Center in Ashland City

- Hands of Hope in Portland
- Loaves and Fishes in Clarksville
- Gallatin CARES in Gallatin
- United Ministries in Springfield
- Manna Café in Dover

Each organization received \$3,706.67, helping them continue their essential work throughout the year.

While Connect for a Cause officially wrapped up at the end of December, its impact continues well beyond the holiday season. We're incredibly grateful to every new subscriber who helped turn a service sign-up into meaningful support for our neighbors. Together, we proved that when a community connects, great things happen.



The Bethesda Center is the recipient of the Connect for a Cause Campaign donation in the Ashland City District.



CEMC/Cumberland Connect employees present Hands of Hope with the Connect for a Cause donation in the Portland District.



The Connect for a Cause donation for the Clarksville District is awarded to Loaves and Fishes.



Gallatin Cares receives the Connect for a Cause donation in the Gallatin District.



United Ministries employees accept the Connect for a Cause campaign donation in the Springfield District. Not pictured is Manna Cafe of Stewart County, which also received a Connect for a Cause donation in the Dover District.



Your home's most overlooked energy leak

Are your rooms drafty in the winter? If you get near the windows in the summer, do you find hot spots? Does it seem that your thermostat can't ever catch up? If you answer "yes" to any of those questions or if your home feels uncomfortable, your windows might be part of the problem.

Comfort

Windows affect how your home feels. Poor window seals let outdoor air in and indoor air out. In the winter, cold air sinks near windows, making the whole room cooler. In the summer, heat radiates through glass, making the whole room hotter. When one room is uncomfortable, the whole HVAC system works harder. Some other ways to know if your windows are leaking energy are

outside noise entering the home and condensation or frost on the windows.

Cost

Windows impact energy bills. In fact, windows can account for 25%-30% of heating and cooling energy loss in a typical home. The more energy that escapes, the more you pay to replace it. HVAC systems have to run longer to maintain the desired temperature, and those small leaks add up over time.

Grid impact

Windows matter beyond your home. Inefficient windows lead to more HVAC use. Heat waves and cold snaps push energy demand higher. When many homes are losing energy all at once, the entire

system feels it. Efficient windows and homes help stabilize the grid, and in turn, energy reliability for all electric co-op members.

Tips to improve window efficiency:

- Weather stripping
- Caulking
- Window film
- Thermal curtains
- Thermal blinds

Improving your windows is just one way to make your home more comfortable and energy-efficient. Visit cemc.org to learn more about energy-saving tips, programs and resources available to Cumberland Electric Membership Corporation members to help you save money and use energy wisely.

Make a spring electrical safety checklist

Spring is a good time to give your home's electrical system a basic safety check before heavier summer use begins.

Start by testing smoke detectors and carbon monoxide alarms and replacing batteries if needed. Check outlets and switches for warmth, buzzing sounds or discoloration, which can indicate wiring problems.

Inspect power strips and extension cords, and replace any that are damaged or overloaded. Power strips should never be daisy-chained together. Make sure cords are not pinched under furniture or stretched across walkways where they can be damaged.

In kitchens and bathrooms, confirm that outlets near sinks are protected by ground-fault circuit interrupters. These outlets help prevent shocks and should be tested monthly.

Spring is also a good time to clear clutter away from electrical panels and make sure breakers are clearly labeled. Never block access to the panel.

If you notice flickering lights, frequently tripped breakers or burning smells, contact a qualified electrician.

Addressing small issues early can prevent fires and costly repairs later.



Storm season is coming: Protect electronics

Lightning, high winds and torrential downpours can put your home and neighborhood at risk of power surges and outages. And those can damage your expensive household electronics.

So prepare for spring storms to protect yourself and your electronics from harm.

- First, install surge protectors as a first line of defense. Use them for computers, televisions, exercise equipment and other sensitive devices. Look for protectors with indicator lights that show when protection is active.

- During severe storms, unplug electronics and turn them off — excluding things like the refrigerator and medical oxygen tanks. Even the best surge protectors cannot block a direct lightning strike.
- If your home experiences frequent outages, consider installing whole-house surge protection, which is installed at the electrical panel. An electrician can explain whether this option makes sense.
- Backup power options such as battery packs or portable generators can help keep



essential devices running in case the power goes out. Portable generators should only be used outdoors and far from windows and doors to prevent carbon monoxide poisoning. Generators should never be plugged directly into wall outlets. If connected to your home, the main breaker must be turned off to prevent dangerous backfeeding onto power lines.

- After an outage, wait a few minutes before turning electronics back on. This helps protect devices from voltage spikes as power is restored.

The Seven Cooperative Principles

1

Voluntary and Open Membership

Cooperatives are voluntary organizations open to all persons able to use their services and willing to accept the responsibilities of membership, without gender, social, racial, political or religious discrimination.

2

Democratic Member Control

Cooperatives are democratic organizations controlled by their members, who actively participate in setting policies and making decisions. The elected representatives are accountable to the membership. In primary cooperatives, members have equal voting rights (one member, one vote), and cooperatives at other levels are organized in a democratic manner.

3

Members' Economic Participation

Members contribute equitably to, and democratically control, the capital of their cooperative. At least part of that capital is usually the common property of the cooperative. Members usually receive limited compensation, if any, on capital subscribed as a condition of membership.

4

Autonomy and Independence

Cooperatives are autonomous, self-help organizations controlled by their members. If they enter into agreements with other organizations, including governments, or raise capital from external sources, they do so on terms that ensure democratic control by their members and maintain their cooperative autonomy.

5

Education, Training and Information

Cooperatives provide education and training for their members, elected representatives, managers and employees so they can contribute effectively to the development of their cooperatives. They inform the general public, particularly young people and opinion leaders, about the nature and benefits of cooperation.

6

Cooperation Among Cooperatives

Cooperatives serve their members most effectively and strengthen the cooperative movement by working together through local, national, regional and international structures.

7

Concern for Community

While focusing on member needs, cooperatives work for the sustainable development of their communities through policies accepted by their members.



Taking your connection outdoors

Cumberland Connect now offers Outdoor Wi-Fi



For many Cumberland Connect members, reliable internet access has become just as important outside the home as it is inside. From backyard movie nights and poolside streaming to working remotely from the porch or managing connected devices across open property, the need for dependable outdoor connectivity continues to grow.

That's why Cumberland Connect is expanding its service offerings with Outdoor Wi-Fi, a new add-on designed to extend high-quality internet coverage beyond the walls of your home or business.

What is Outdoor Wi-Fi?

Outdoor Wi-Fi is a professionally installed solution that extends your existing Cumberland Connect internet service into outdoor spaces. Unlike standard indoor routers or extenders that struggle once signals hit exterior walls, Outdoor Wi-Fi uses weather-hardened equipment and direct Ethernet wiring to deliver stronger, more consistent coverage outside. The service is ideal for open-air areas such as yards, patios, gardens and wide-open land where traditional Wi-Fi coverage often falls short.

Built for real-world outdoor use

Outdoor Wi-Fi equipment is designed to withstand the elements,

including heat, cold, rain and seasonal weather changes. Because the system is hardwired back to your GigaSpire router, the signal does not rely on wireless backhaul through exterior walls, which can significantly weaken performance.

Outdoor Wi-Fi is intended for outdoor environments only. Walls, metal structures and enclosed buildings can greatly reduce signal strength. For members who need connectivity inside detached buildings, Cumberland Connect recommends dedicated extenders or hardwired solutions for the best experience.

Three coverage options to match your needs

Outdoor Wi-Fi is available in three service levels, allowing members to choose coverage that fits their property and use needs.

The **Yard** option is ideal for patios, pools and backyard gathering spaces close to the home, providing coverage up to approximately 250 feet when there are no obstacles.

For larger open spaces, the **Acre** option extends coverage up to approximately 500 feet with a clear line of sight, making it well-suited for expansive yards and open green areas.

The **Field** option is designed for long-range outdoor coverage. This directional unit can reach

up to 1 mile in a focused 120-degree beam when there is a clear line of sight, making it ideal for wide-open land where traditional Wi-Fi solutions cannot reach.

Because Outdoor Wi-Fi performance depends on terrain and visibility, Cumberland Connect technicians work with members during installation to determine the best placement for optimal results.



Professional installation and transparent pricing

Outdoor Wi-Fi is offered as a monthly add-on to any internet service plan, with pricing starting at \$15 per month depending on the coverage option selected. A one-time installation fee of \$100 applies and includes professional setup, Ethernet wiring from the existing router and placement testing to ensure the strongest possible coverage.

With spring approaching, now is a great time for members to explore Outdoor Wi-Fi and plan ahead for expanded outdoor connectivity. Learn more and sign up at CumberlandConnect.org/outdoor-wifi.

Extend your connection outdoors! Scan to learn more about Outdoor Wi-Fi.



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Seal, save and stay comfortable all year long



Q: I'd like to make my home more energy efficient to help lower my utility bills. Do you have a recommendation for some easy wins?

A: Absolutely! Understanding the fundamentals of home energy efficiency — such as air sealing, insulation and duct sealing — is a great place to start!

The efficiency fundamentals: Air sealing, duct sealing, insulation and HVAC maintenance

Although we often think about each of these systems individually, they all work together to improve comfort, protect indoor air quality, lower your monthly heating and cooling costs, and extend the effective lifespan of your HVAC system.

Seal the deal: Home envelope air sealing

Air sealing is the process of closing small cracks, gaps and holes in your home's building envelope — the barrier between indoors and outdoors. It's especially important to have older homes inspected, but new con-

struction shouldn't get a free pass! As new homes settle, cracks and gaps often appear. Sealing up these gaps before winter (or summer) can dramatically reduce drafts, energy loss and discomfort.

Look for leaks in these areas:

- Attic and crawl space hatches.
- Window and door frames, sashes, jambs and sills.
- Plumbing and electrical penetrations (pipes, wires).
- Recessed lights, vents, fans and vent ducts.
- Around baseboards and where walls meet ceilings.
- Refrigerator, dishwasher or exhaust fan penetrations.
- Outlets, switch boxes and vent registers.

Get your ducts in a row: Duct sealing and insulation

What you can't see can hurt your energy bill. For the most part, your home's ductwork won't be visible to you. However, just because you can't see a crack or feel a leak doesn't mean your home won't give you some helpful signs that maintenance is needed.

If any of these symptoms sound familiar, it might be time to consult with your local heating and cooling expert:

- Higher-than-normal or unpredictable energy bills.
- Difficulty maintaining your desired temperature.
- Hot or cold spots or drafty rooms.
- Noticeable dustiness.
- Whistling or whooshing sounds when your HVAC runs.
- Dirt, dust, mold or condensation around air vents.

Not only does this waste lead to higher energy bills, but it also means your HVAC system is working much harder than it needs to.

Layer up: Attic and wall insulation

Insulation slows heat flow (via conduction, convection or radiation), helping keep warm air in during the winter or out during the summer months. Proper insulation reduces the load on your HVAC system and lowers energy use.

Insulation is measured in R-value, which indicates its resistance to heat flow — the higher the R-value,

Ducts leaking just **20%** of conditioned air passing through them can cause your heating and cooling unit to work **50% harder!**

the better the insulation power. Here in Tennessee, many homes are under-insulated — especially older houses. If the floor joists are exposed in your attic, for example, that's a strong indication that you need additional insulation.

Here are a few key areas to consider:

- **Attic insulation:** Consider blown-in cellulose or fiberglass batt insulation to reach the recommended R-values for your region.
- **Crawl space insulation:** Insulating the floor above the crawl space can help maintain warmth on the first floor.
- **Wall insulation:** Harder to retrofit but sometimes possible with dense-pack cellulose or foam injection.

You don't always need a full insulation overhaul. Even topping off attic insulation or insulating around rim joists can make a big difference.

Keep your HVAC in tip-top shape

HVAC maintenance is essential for comfort, safety and efficiency — and helps prevent unexpected breakdowns when you need your system the most. We recommend scheduling a tuneup twice a year — once in fall (before heating season) and once in spring (before cooling season).

Certainly, if you notice strange sounds coming from your unit and higher-than-normal bills, call in the pros regardless of whether your inspection is due.

If you have your home air sealed or insulated, it might be a good idea to add a tuneup to the list. Why? Because home envelope sealing could change airflow and pressure dynamics, which can affect how your system operates.

Brad Wagner is a programs operations manager at TVA EnergyRight, and he's committed to helping people make informed decisions and lower their energy costs.



Pro Tip

Insulation works best when the building envelope is tight. That's why professionals and building-science guidance recommend sealing first, then insulating.





Sale of Lots
 GIBBONPORT
trenton
 Public Square

TEAPOT MUSEUM

SPEED
 LIMIT
31



35.9806° N 88.9415° W



Trenton

A quirky sense of home

Despite its odd speed limit and unusual festival, Trenton is a model of nostalgic Americana

Story by Mark Johnson • Photographs by Amber Weaver

There's a place in West Tennessee called Trenton. This cozy Gibson County village boasts what is arguably the most uncommon item that has ever inspired a popular festival in any of these American states. As a matter of fact, the item isn't even of these American states, and its name is nearly unpronounceable, unless you're French. But more on this later.

Centrally located a half-hour north of Jackson, south of Martin, east of Dyersburg and west of Huntingdon, Trenton is a small-town island in a sea of West Tennessee row-crop country. I arrived in Trenton via Interstate 40 West, from Nashville to Jackson, and then headed north on Highway 45 through Humboldt — of West Tennessee Strawberry Festival fame — and into my destination.

I drove into town on a blustery Veterans Day, and dozens of roadside American flags flapped in the wind along South College Street as I approached, as if waving hello. Arriving in late morning, I navigated to the National Guard Armory where I'd been invited by my Airbnb host, a bubbly local Realtor named Kim Holt, to attend Trenton's Veterans Day program. I found an empty chair in the back, grabbed a coffee and settled in.

The hour that followed was a Norman Rockwell painting come to life, a perfect portrait of small-town Americana.

Singer Layne Smith gave a moving rendition of "America the Beautiful," followed by the same song (which I found odd but endearing) performed admirably by the Trenton Rosenwald Middle School (TRMS) band. There was hardly an errant squeak.

Your cup of tea is here



Trenton City Hall
Contact: 731-855-2013
trentontn.net

After a keynote address by Tennessee National Guard Chief Warrant Officer Jayson D. Keel, the TRMS band played a melody of the military branch theme songs with veterans of each branch standing as their song was played. I made a mental note that every American citizen should attend a Veterans Day program like this at least once.

The ceremony ended with a buffet-style meal, the crowd filing past long tables piled with pulled-pork barbecue, potato salad, coleslaw, dinner rolls and an array of homemade desserts. By now, I had located Kim, who had introduced me to Trenton Mayor Tony Burris, Alderman Rickey Graves and City Councilwoman CeCe Jones — also the town historian. Kim insisted that we now meet for coffee at the To the Last Drop Coffee Shop in downtown Trenton.

At the charming coffee shop — located in a historic brick building featuring an enormous mural depicting the history of Trenton — I chatted with Rickey, CeCe and Kim about their town. The three told me about the tight-knit, neighbor-helping-neighbor community, the Southern hospitality and the stunning 1899 courthouse with its elaborate red-and-yellow brick design. They talked about the historical significance of Trenton, the county seat of Gibson County, and how Confederates and Gen. Nathan Bedford Forrest defeated Col. Jacob Fry's Union forces during the Dec. 20, 1862, Battle of Trenton.

They even related the history of the town's odd 31-mile-per-hour speed

limit, relating how it was suggested by a city employee back in the early 1960s as a unique way to draw the attention of overzealous drivers. So renowned is this oddity that visitors travel to Trenton just to have their photos made with the speed limit signs or to purchase a replica sign for themselves.

The cost? \$31, of course.

But even after providing me with this wealth of information, my welcoming committee knew the inevitable question was coming.

“So, what’s the deal with the teapots?” I asked.

Yes, teapots. Trenton, as it turns out, is quite famously known as the Teapot Capital of the World, and nowhere else is even a close second. But these aren’t any old teapots like the kind you might find on your grandma’s stove-top. Most likely, these teapots don’t even contain tea.

All of this I discovered when my little entourage left the coffee shop and drove approximately 30 seconds to the town hall/police station building, which also contains the Teapot Museum. The four of us walked into what appeared to be a community meeting space complete with folding chairs and a podium. Around the perimeter of the room was built wooden and glass cabinets displaying hundreds of beautifully painted porcelain ... things.

Technically, the things are called “veilleuses-theieres” — French for “nightlight teapot” — and I’ve never seen anything quite like them. Each one was handmade and painted somewhere in Europe between the mid-1700s to mid-1800s, mostly by unknown artisans.

Most of them do, in fact, look like a porcelain teapot fitted atop a matching porcelain stand into which a small candle would be placed to warm whatever was in the vessel on top. (Rarely, I’m told, was this tea but usually some type of medicinal, aromatic fluid.)



But a great many of these veilleuses-theieres are odd and beautiful works of art that look nothing like a typical teapot. Instead, they are Napoleonic lighthouses, Arabic fortune tellers, musicians, castles, opera singers and nuns along with well-dressed elephants, cherubs riding strange fish and many other unexplained scenes of undefined creatures. Each is exquisitely hand painted, and many are leafed in gold.

So how did a small, agricultural town in West Tennessee become the world’s hub of priceless, European veilleuses-theieres?

CeCe Jones filled me in.

“Dr. Frederick Freed, a New York City OBGYN, was born and raised here in Trenton, the son of a prominent citizen, Julius Freed,” she explained. “After earning his degree from Vanderbilt in the early 1900s, Dr. Freed opened a private practice in New York and became a well-known doctor. The story goes that he had a patient from France who gifted him one of these teapots, and he then began collecting them. For years, he obsessively had scouts looking for them, and he would often travel to Europe and find the teapots and ship them home to New York. By the time he retired, he had 650.”

CeCe said that as an old man in the 1970s, Dr. Freed was asked to

donate his collection for display at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York but instead chose to send 525 of the teapots home to Trenton. His stipulation was that the collection must be on display 24 hours per day and always for free.

“So, you can come and visit the museum at any time of the day or night,” she pointed out, noting that the room is connected to the police station next door. “Want to see it at 3 a.m.? Just ask someone at the front counter of the police station to let you in, and they will.”

Later that day, Mayor Burriss told me how, in 1980, local hospital administrator John Melton landed on the idea to create a festival to honor Trenton’s peculiar collection.

“He said, ‘You know, we’ve got these teapots here — the city ought to honor that,’” Mayor Burriss said. “The townspeople thought that was a great idea, and they scheduled it to happen the week before Humbolt’s strawberry festival, which was already a big deal. The Teapot Festival began in 1981 as just a one-day thing, then went to a weekend and now is a full week.”

So how, you might ask, does a festival honor priceless porcelain teapots that are displayed securely behind thick, bulletproof glass, never to be touched? The festivities begin on a

Sunday morning with the ceremonial lighting of three replica teapots. What follows is a week of small-town fun, including band concerts, church meals, bingo, “singings,” dog shows, fireworks displays, the Teapot Trot 5K run, a wrestling match on the firehouse lawn, a competition in which residents display their own homemade and decorated teapots in their front yards, the naming of the Grand Marshall and Miss Teapot and a Saturday afternoon parade. Then, a festival honoring a delicate, unpronounceable French teapot culminates in the loudest, most rowdy of Americana events — a tractor pull.

The teapots, Mayor Burriss points out, are almost incidental to the festival, this year April 26 through May 2.

“More than anything, it’s just a great week for the community,” he says.

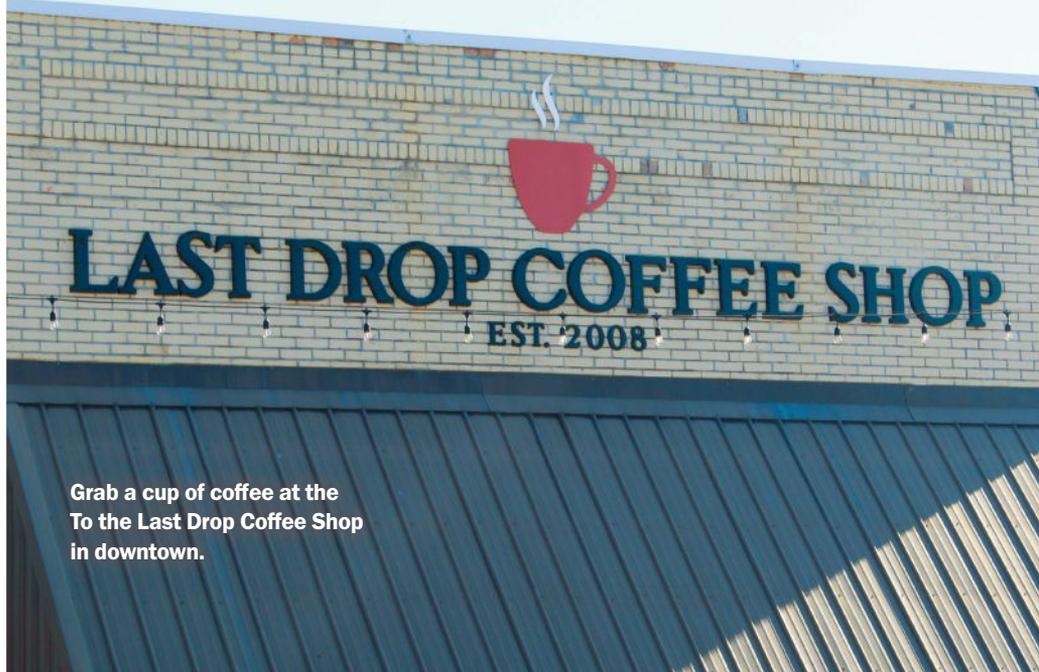
“It gives us a reason, once a year, to get together, break bread, enjoy each other’s company and showcase our town to visitors. Sure, the teapots are beautiful and fascinating, but they pale in comparison to warmth and sense of fellowship you’ll find in our little town.”

That warmth was palpable as I visited the shops, eateries and personalities of Trenton over my two days there. From Melba’s Bakery & Cafés delectable chocolate-chip cookies to Cotton’s Cafés hearty breakfast and a tableful of ornery locals sparring loudly over politics to Scott’s Pizza & Kitchen with its authentic Chicago-style sandwiches, I found great food and better conversation. At the National Guard Armory, the Gibson County Courthouse, Davy Crockett’s Cabin and Museum in nearby Rutherford and even in my little Airbnb, there was an authentic sense of Tennessee pride that I’ll not soon forget.

Absolutely, come for the teapots. But stay for the coffee, cookies and down-home community.



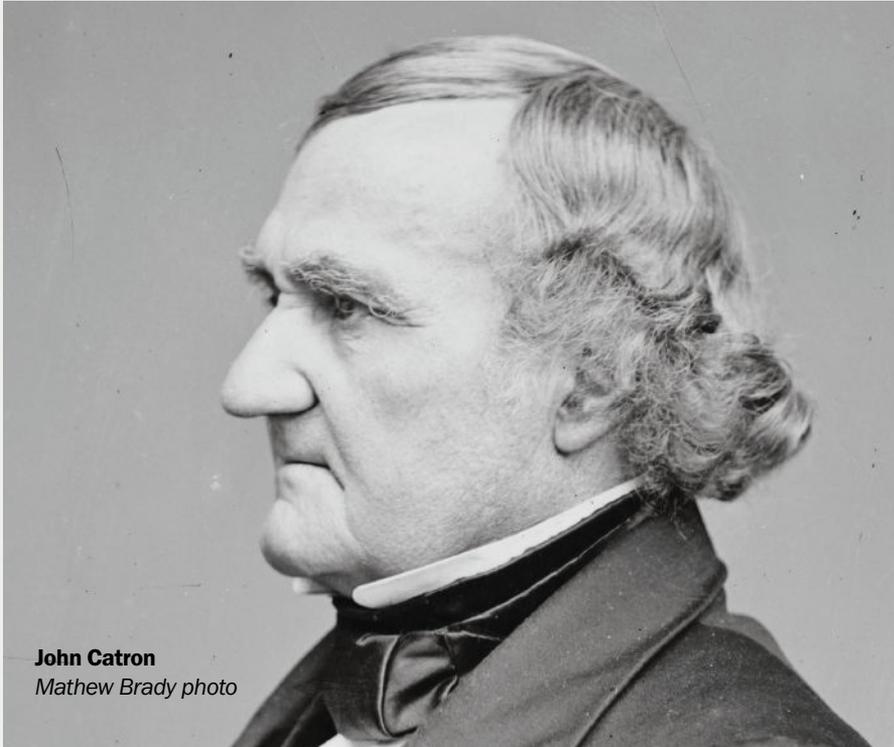
The Gibson County Courthouse was built in 1899 and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.



Grab a cup of coffee at the Last Drop Coffee Shop in downtown.



One of the historic houses found on South High Street was built in 1831.



John Catron
Mathew Brady photo

The Tennessee slaveholder not allowed to free his slaves

There were about 7,300 free Black people in Tennessee in 1860. Among them were people honored with historic markers such as Isaac Dockery of Sevier County and Sarah Estell of Nashville.

However, there would have been more free Black people in Tennessee were it not for the fact that, starting in 1834, Tennessee's courts prevented slaveholders from freeing their slaves in their wills because of a case called *Fisher's Negroes v. Dabbs*.

Peter Fisher was a private in the Revolutionary War who, in 1792, received a land grant for property along the east fork of Bledsoe's Creek in Sumner County.

Unfortunately, I can find no newspaper articles that mention Fisher during his lifetime. I do know that, in 1827, he had no wife and no living children, at least in the eyes of Tennessee law. But he owned nine slaves — four male (Shedrick, Levie, Handy and Washington) and five

female (Eliza, Elly Dale, Perry, Eddie and Jimmy).

On July 31, 1827, Fisher directed in his will that his nine enslaved people be freed after his death. His will said his former slaves would have the right to live on his property and derive income from the land and livestock for 15 years. He also instructed that once his debts were paid, his estate's money would be distributed to his nephews and nieces, aside from a small amount of money that was to go to his former slaves.

(Neither his will nor the ruling in the case address Fisher's relationship to his enslaved people. It is very possible that one of the females was the mother of Peter Fisher's children, who were also, legally, slaves.)

Fisher died two days after he wrote his will. After his death, some of his nephews and nieces contested the will on the grounds that Fisher was, they claimed, in an "imbecilic and deranged state" when he wrote it. That was one of a couple of legal matters that prevented the execution of Peter Fisher's will. Two years later, the General Assembly passed a bill authorizing the courts to decide what to do about the case, then known as *Fisher's Negroes v. Dabbs*. (James Dabbs was the court-appointed administrator.)

It took a few years for the case to make its way to the Tennessee Supreme Court of Errors and Appeals — the equivalent of the state Supreme Court before the Tennessee Constitution of 1834 took effect. However, during those intervening years, something important occurred. The Nat Turner Rebellion of 1831 terrified Southern slaveholders and

resulted in a wave of new laws that imposed severe limits on what free Black people could do (the subject of my September 2023 column).

By the time the Tennessee Supreme Court of Errors and Appeals ruled on *Fisher's Negroes v. Dabbs*, a lot had changed since Fisher's death.

The April 1, 1834, (Nashville) *National Banner* contained the majority opinion in *Fisher's Negroes v. Dabbs*, written by Tennessee Chief Justice John Catron.

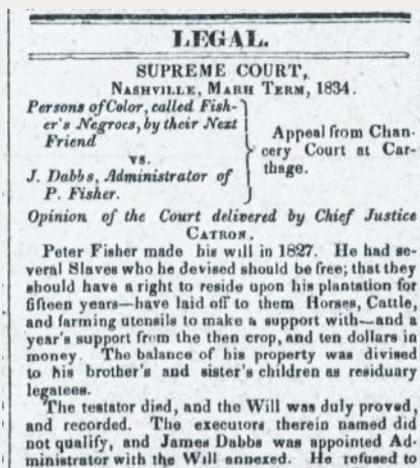
Catron said that if the court allowed Fisher's slaves to stay on his property, it would be equivalent of a "free negro colony," which he said was bad idea. "Freed negroes are a very dangerous and most objectionable population where slaves are numerous," he wrote.

Catron said it would also be wrong to send the freed slaves to another Southern state, saying that such an act would be a "violation of moral duty." And he rejected the idea of sending freed slaves into a state north of the Ohio River: "Such a population inhabiting a country near us would become a most dangerous receptacle to our runaway slaves," he wrote.

Catron ruled that Peter Fisher's slaves to be freed upon "the condition only, that they be transported to the

coast of Africa" (which he later specified as Liberia).

I've been unable to find any further information about the enslaved people previously held in bondage by Peter Fisher. Some of them might have been transported to Liberia. Some of them might have remained enslaved in Tennessee. Perhaps some Sumner County researcher will learn what



(Nashville) *National Banner* — April 1, 1834

happened to the human beings that Fisher tried, but failed, to emancipate.

We do know, however, three important things about Chief Justice John Catron:

First of all, President Andrew Jackson appointed Catron to the U.S. Supreme Court, where he served from 1837 until 1865. Catron was

a proslavery justice who sided with the majority in the 1857 *Dred Scott v. Sandford*. Like *Fisher's Negroes v. Dabbs*, the *Dred Scott* decision restricted the process of slaves becoming free. In fact, the *Dred Scott* case is considered a major cause of the American Civil War.

If you think you have Catron figured out, here's No. 2:

Even though he was proslavery, Catron opposed the Confederacy — for which was hated in the South and admired in the North. "When the (Confederate) rebels attempted to conscript citizens of his state, and were engaged in plundering Union citizens, Judge Catron charged the Grand Jury to 'ferret out all marauding parties in the state and indict them for such offenses,'" *The New York Times* reported in his obituary. After war broke out, Catron's home and all his property were confiscated by the Confederate government.

If you now think you have Catron figured out, here's No. 3:

John Catron and his wife, Mathilda Childress Catron, had no children. But, in 1834, when he wrote the majority decision in the *Fisher's Negroes v. Dabbs* case, John Catron already had a mixed-race son through an enslaved Black woman named Sally Thomas.

That son, James Thomas, became free in 1851 and moved to Missouri in 1857, becoming one of the wealthiest Black men in St. Louis in the late 19th century. James Thomas also wrote his memoirs, but they weren't published until 70 years after his death, under the title *From Tennessee Slave to St. Louis Entrepreneur: The Autobiography of James Thomas*.

John Catron — a largely forgotten man of immense power and contradiction — died in May 1865. His remains lie in a vault at Nashville's Mt. Olivet Cemetery.



John Catron's mausoleum in Mt. Olivet Cemetery in Nashville. Tennessee History for Kids photo

Tennessee Events

Festivals, celebrations and other happenings around the state

APRIL 18

Rutherford County's Earth Day Celebration

Murfreesboro Historic Downtown Square. amybyers@mte.com or [facebook.com/RCEarthDay](https://www.facebook.com/RCEarthDay)

The 2026 Earth Day Celebration will be held on Saturday, April 18, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. on the historic square in Downtown Murfreesboro.

Sponsored by Middle Tennessee Electric, Rutherford County's Earth Day Celebration is dedicated to educating and mobilizing the community toward meaningful environmental action.

This year's theme, "Go Green, Breathe Clean," underscores the importance of protecting and improving the air we all share. The event encourages residents to embrace greener habits that reduce pollution and contribute to a healthier, more sustainable environment.

This is a can't-miss event with a variety of fun attractions — live music, free food, giveaways, kids' activities, local vendors and more. And don't forget to visit MTE's booth!

You can follow the event's Facebook page to get the latest information leading up to Earth Day: [facebook.com/RCEarthDay](https://www.facebook.com/RCEarthDay).



Photos courtesy of Middle Tennessee Electric

West Tennessee

MARCH 3-8

'Back to the Future: The Musical'

Orpheum Theatre, Memphis. 901-525-3000 or [orpheum-memphis.com](https://www.orpheum-memphis.com)

MARCH 6-8

Ultimate Elvis Tribute Artist Weekend

Graceland, Memphis. 800-238-2000 or [graceland.com](https://www.graceland.com)

MARCH 14

14th Annual Mid-South Daffodil Show

Dixon Gallery and Gardens, Memphis. 901-312-1248 or [daffodilusa.org](https://www.daffodilusa.org)

MARCH 14

Diana Ross

Orpheum Theatre, Memphis. 901-525-3000 or [orpheum-memphis.com](https://www.orpheum-memphis.com)

MARCH 14

Bricks and Sips: Steampunk Adult LEGO Night

Discovery Park of America, Union City. 731-885-5455 or [discoveryparkofamerica.com](https://www.discoveryparkofamerica.com)

MARCH 19-20

Masquerade Company Jewelry Sale

West Tennessee Healthcare Henry County Hospital, Paris. 865-212-0101 or [masqueradefundraising.com](https://www.masqueradefundraising.com)

MARCH 28

15th Annual Thomas Media Motor Mania Car Show

Jackson Fairgrounds. [wyn1069.com/motomania](https://www.wyn1069.com/motomania)

APRIL 11

Fayette Cares Plant Sale

Oakland Elementary School. 901-465-3802 or [fayettecares.org/plants](https://www.fayettecares.org/plants)

Middle Tennessee

MARCH 3-8

'Suffs'

Tennessee Performing Arts Center, Nashville. 615-782-4040 or [tpac.org](https://www.tpac.org)

MARCH 7-APRIL 12

Cheekwood in Bloom: Red, White and Blooms

Cheekwood Estate and Gardens, Nashville. 615-356-8000 or [cheekwood.org](https://www.cheekwood.org)

MARCH 12-29

'Mamma Mia!'

Hendersonville Performing Arts Company. 615-826-6037 or [hpactn.com](https://www.hpactn.com)

MARCH 14

Blood Assurance Blood Drive

Nashville Zoo. 615-833-1534 or [nashvillezoo.org](https://www.nashvillezoo.org)

[tnmagazine.org/events](https://www.tnmagazine.org/events)

MARCH 14, 21 & 28 & APRIL 4, 11 & 18

Wildflower Hikes

Owl's Hill Nature Sanctuary, Brentwood.
615-370-4672 or owlshill.org

MARCH 15

Daffodil Day

Historic Bell Buckle. 931-808-7640 or
bellbucklechamber.com

MARCH 20-21

Quilts in the Boro

Lane Agri-Park Community Center,
Murfreesboro. 615-631-0460 or
quiltingbees.org/quilt-show.html

MARCH 21

64th Annual Irish Celebration

Public Square, Erin.
houstoncounty-chamber@gmail.com or
houstoncochamber.com

MARCH 21-22

Middle Tennessee Daffodil Show

Cheekwood Estate and Gardens, Nashville.
615-356-8000 or cheekwood.org

MARCH 27-28

18th Annual Blooming Arts Festival

Downtown Linden. bloomingartsfestival.com

MARCH 27-28

'A Spark of Spring' Ladies Fashion Show and Luncheon

Historic Granville. 931-653-4151 or
granvilletn.com/spring-show

MARCH 28

Second Annual Oreo Festival

MTSU Livestock Center, Murfreesboro.
931-952-0472 or
brianna-victory-events.com

MARCH 28

Holi at Cheekwood

Cheekwood Estate and Gardens, Nashville.
615-356-8000 or cheekwood.org

APRIL 1-30

Spring Artisan Festival

Historic Granville. 931-653-4151 or
granvilletn.com

APRIL 3-4

Great Spring Art Hop

Cheekwood Estate and Gardens, Nashville.
615-356-8000 or cheekwood.org

APRIL 4

Eggstravaganzoo

Nashville Zoo. 615-833-1534 or
nashvillezoo.org

APRIL 9-11

Mule Day

Columbia. 931-381-9557 or
muleday.com

APRIL 10-11

Mayberry — I Love Lucy Festival

Historic Granville. 931-653-4151 or
granvilletn.com/mayberry-lucy-days

East Tennessee

MARCH 6-7

31st Annual Cousin Jake Tullock Memorial Bluegrass Festival

Etowah. info@etowaharts.com or
etowah-arts.com/events

MARCH 12-13

'West Side Story' — Knoxville Symphony Orchestra

Tennessee Theatre, Knoxville.
865-684-1200 or tennesseetheatre.com

MARCH 14

Knox Shamrock Fest

World's Fair Park, Knoxville.
travis@etkidney.org or visitknoxville.com

MARCH 14

Lucky Shamrock Market

Market at Cambridge Square, Ooltewah.
423-364-3599 or charlottegraceevents.com

MARCH 17-22

'Mamma Mia!' (Touring)

Tivoli Theatre, Chattanooga.
423-757-5580 or
tivolichattanooga.com

MARCH 26-29

Big Ears Festival

Knoxville.
bigearsfestival.org

MARCH 28

Spirit of Nations Powwow

Jefferson County High School, Dandridge.
visit jeffersoncountyttn.com/events/
spirit-of-nations-powwow

MARCH 28

Norris Lake Cleanup

Anderson County Park and Hickory Star
Marina, Norris Lake. 865-659-2829 or
norrislakeproject.com/upcoming-cleanups

APRIL 11

Chattanooga Autism Celebration Walk

Coolidge Park, Chattanooga. 423-708-8902
or charity.pledgeit.org/chattautismwalk

APRIL 11-12

2026 Master Your Garden Expo

Camp Jordan Arena, East Ridge.
423-855-6113 or
mghc.org/garden-expo

Submit your events

The *Tennessee Magazine* publishes event listings as space allows, giving preference to events of regional or statewide interest and those that are annual or one-time happenings. The magazine does not publish recurring events such as those held weekly.

The magazine assumes no responsibility for the accuracy of information submitted for publication and advises calling or emailing ahead

to confirm dates, locations, times and possible admission fees.

To be included in the calendar, visit our website, tnmagazine.org, and fill out the submission form. You can also email listings to events@tnmagazine.org or send them to: **Tennessee Events, P.O. Box 100912, Nashville, TN 37224.**

Please include the name of the event, where it will be held (both town and physical location), a phone number readers can call

for more information and an email or website address, if applicable, where readers can learn more.

Information must be received at least two months ahead of the event date, and we accept submissions up to a year in advance.

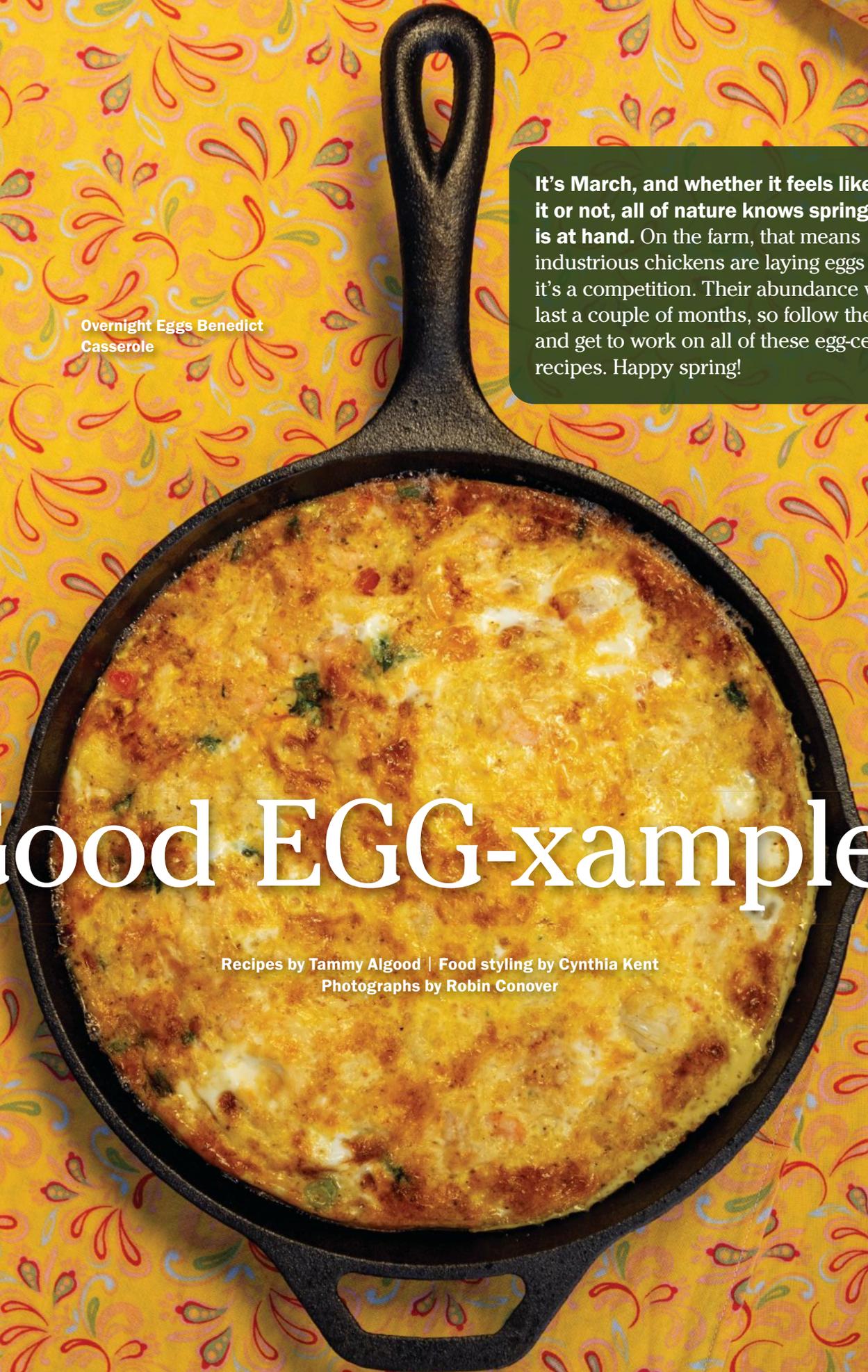
Due to the great demand for space in each month's magazine, we cannot guarantee publication. Find a complete listing of submissions we've received at tnmagazine.org/events.

Overnight Eggs Benedict
Casserole

It's March, and whether it feels like it or not, all of nature knows spring is at hand. On the farm, that means industrious chickens are laying eggs like it's a competition. Their abundance will last a couple of months, so follow their lead and get to work on all of these egg-cellent recipes. Happy spring!

Good EGG-xamples

Recipes by Tammy Algood | Food styling by Cynthia Kent
Photographs by Robin Conover



Seafood Frittata

A deliciously different meal option minus the usual sausage and bacon.

Yield: 6 to 8 servings

- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 2 tablespoons unsalted butter
- 1 red bell pepper, seeded and chopped
- 2 green onions, sliced
- 1 garlic clove, peeled and minced
- 1 cup packed arugula or coarsely chopped spinach
- 2 cups seafood (shrimp, crab, lobster or a mixture), cooked and chopped
- 8 eggs
- ½ cup half-and-half or milk
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon Old Bay seasoning
- ¼ teaspoon black pepper
- ½ cup grated Gruyere or Parmesan cheese
- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh parsley for garnish

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees. Place the oil and butter in an 8- to 10-inch ovenproof skillet over medium heat. When the butter has melted, add the peppers, onions and garlic. Saute until tender, around 3 minutes.

Sprinkle with the greens and give it a quick toss. Allow it to cook another minute to wilt then top with the seafood. Whisk the eggs together with the half-and-half or milk in a mixing bowl until just blended along with the salt, Old Bay seasoning and pepper. Stir in the cheese and pour over the seafood. Cook for 5 minutes just until the edges start to set.

Transfer to the oven and bake 12 to 14 minutes or until the eggs are set and cooked to your liking. Allow to rest 2 minutes before serving warm with a parsley garnish, if desired.

Baked Boursin Eggs

Yield: 4 servings

- 6 eggs
- ½ cup milk
- 2 tablespoons creme fraiche
- 2 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted and cooled
- ½ teaspoon salt

- ¼ teaspoon white or black pepper
- 3 tablespoons crumbled Boursin cheese with garlic and herbs
- Chopped fresh parsley or chives for garnish
- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh parsley for garnish

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

Place the eggs in a mixing bowl along with the milk, creme fraiche, butter, salt and pepper. Whisk for 1 minute or until well blended. Pour into the prepared pan and top with the crumbled cheese. Bake uncovered for 7 minutes. Stir gently and bake an additional 7 to 9 minutes or until the eggs are cooked to your liking. Serve warm with an herb garnish.

Parmesan Cream Eggs

Luxurious with toasted ciabatta or sourdough bread

Yield: 4 servings

- ¼ cup finely chopped baby spinach
- 4 eggs
- ½ cup creme fraiche
- 2 tablespoons finely grated Parmesan cheese
- 1½ teaspoons white truffle paste, optional*
- ⅛ teaspoon salt
- ⅛ teaspoon black pepper

Preheat the oven to 400 degrees. Grease 4 ramekins and place in a baking pan so the cups don't touch. Evenly divide the spinach among the ramekins and set aside.

In a mixing bowl, whisk together the eggs, creme fraiche, Parmesan, truffle paste (if using) and salt. Evenly divide into the ramekins, pouring over the spinach, and place in the oven.

Fill the baking pan with enough hot water to reach halfway up each ramekin. Bake for 14 to 16 minutes or until the eggs are cooked to your liking. Serve warm with a sprinkle of pepper over each.

* *White truffle paste is available at most large supermarkets as well as online.*

Bacon Gruyere Egg Cups

Yield: 12 cups

- 6 eggs
- 1-¼ cups shredded Gruyere cheese
- 1 cup small curd cottage cheese
- 2 tablespoons cornstarch
- 1 tablespoon milk
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon white or black pepper
- 6 bacon slices cooked and crumbled

Bring a pot of water to a soft boil over high heat and preheat the oven to 300 degrees. Place a 9-by-3-inch baking dish on the lowest rack and fill halfway with the hot water.

Grease 12 regular sized muffin cups with cooking spray and set aside.

Place the eggs, Gruyere, cottage cheese, cornstarch, milk, salt and pepper in a blender. Puree until smooth. Evenly pour into the muffin cups, filling about 2/3 full. Sprinkle the bacon over the top and press slightly into the egg mixture.

Bake above the water bath in the oven for 22 to 24 minutes or until the edges begin to pull away from the sides. Cool in the pan 5 minutes before removing from the pan and serving warm.

Overnight Eggs Benedict Casserole

Yield: 8 servings

- 1-½ heaping cups Canadian bacon, chopped
- 6 English muffins, toasted and coarsely chopped
- 1 cup packed Arugula
- 1 cup grated white Cheddar cheese
- 8 eggs
- 1 cup + 2 teaspoons cream, divided
- 1 cup milk
- 1 teaspoon garlic or onion salt
- ¾ teaspoon white pepper, divided
- ½ teaspoon paprika
- 1 cup unsalted butter
- 3 egg yolks
- 2 tablespoons lemon juice
- ½ teaspoon stone ground or Dijon mustard
- ⅓ teaspoon salt
- ⅓ teaspoon cayenne

Grease a 9-by-13-inch baking dish and place half of the Canadian

bacon evenly in the bottom. Top with half of the English muffins, half of the Arugula and half of the cheese. Repeat and set aside.

In a mixing bowl, whisk together the eggs, 1 cup of the cream, milk, garlic salt, ½ teaspoon of the pepper and paprika. Pour over the casserole ingredients, cover and refrigerate overnight.

When ready to bake, remove the casserole 30 minutes prior to reach room temperature. Preheat the oven to 375 degrees. Bake covered for 30 minutes. Uncover and bake 20 minutes longer or until a knife inserted in the center comes out clean.

Meanwhile, make the hollandaise sauce by bringing the remaining cream to room temperature. Place the butter in a medium skillet over medium-low heat to melt.

Place the egg yolks, lemon juice, mustard, salt, remaining white pepper and cayenne in a blender and puree. When the butter has started to bubble, slowly drizzle the hot butter into the blender while it is running. When incorporated, check for thickness. If necessary, add the room temperature cream to the mixture to make it pourable. Drizzle over the hot casserole and serve warm.

Best Fried Eggs

Yield: 2 servings

- 2 tablespoons unsalted butter
- 2 eggs
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon black pepper

Place the butter in a large skillet over medium heat. Break the eggs one at a time into a saucer and gently slide into the skillet once the butter has melted. Reduce the heat to low and sprinkle evenly with the salt and pepper. Spoon the butter over the eggs as they slowly fry until they cook to your liking. Serve immediately.

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.



Bacon Gruyere
Egg Cups

Tips & Tricks

- For the egg cups and any baked egg recipe, always let it sit for a few minutes before serving. This allows the eggs to pull away from the edges and makes removal a snap.
- Egg whites are sometimes referred to as albumen. The whites contain a large amount of water and half of the egg protein.
- Always keep eggs refrigerated, and keep in mind that shell color isn't related to egg quality.
- Make sure there isn't even a speck of egg yolk in the whites when separating for meringues. Otherwise, you'll have eggs that don't whip up to maximum volume.
- When boiled, older eggs are much easier to peel than fresh ones.

Ask Chef Tammy

Jamie asks, "I have several recipes that call for the juice of one lemon or lime. I have always tried to guess at the amount since I rarely have fresh on hand. What's the actual measurement I should be using?"

Jamie, a regular-sized lemon will give you about 3 tablespoons of juice and 2½ teaspoons of finely grated zest. Limes are typically a bit smaller than lemons, so the amount is reduced to 1½ tablespoons of juice and 1 teaspoon of finely grated zest.

Stephanie writes, "Do you prefer a leave-in thermometer or an instant-read?"

Stephanie, while both are excellent, I reach for the instant-read more often. It only requires insertion in the center of the meat (not next to any bone) to give an accurate reading. I use the leave-in option for large, slow roasting items like whole chicken or turkey.

Email your cooking questions
to Tammy Algood:
talgood@tnelectric.org.

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Lynchburg

Community Corner

– What our neighbors are up to –

Find the Tennessee Flag

We have hidden somewhere in this magazine the icon from the Tennessee flag like the one pictured above. 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 with the page number where it's located. Include your name, mailing



January's flag location

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/flag or email flag@tnmagazine.org. Entries must be postmarked or received via email

by Wednesday, April 1. Winners will be published in the May issue of *The Tennessee Magazine*.

January flag spotters

Thanks for the postcards and emails again this month identifying the location of the flag, left, which was found on Capt. Butch Wilmore's suit on page 12.

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

Gordon Percell

Jackson, Southwest Tennessee EMC

Kyle Burns

Franklin, Middle Tennessee Electric

Kenneth Lewis

Dunlap, Sequachee Valley EC

Artist's Palette Assignment for May

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 — May, P.O. Box 100912, Nashville, TN 37224. (Please make sure you include the month on the outside of the envelope!) Only one entry per artist, please.

Deadline:

Art must be postmarked by Wednesday, April 1.

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 May 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 March Winners

14-18 AGE GROUP WINNERS



FIRST PLACE: Elianna Dunn,
16, Volunteer EC



SECOND PLACE: Nasah McKay,
14, Meriwether Lewis EC



THIRD PLACE: Ryan Tompkins,
15, Middle Tennessee Electric

9-13 AGE GROUP WINNERS



FIRST PLACE: Autumn Wright,
13, Fayetteville Public Utilities



SECOND PLACE: Alyssa Bunch,
11, Sequachee Valley EC



THIRD PLACE: Zoe Magruder,
11, Middle Tennessee Electric

8 AND YOUNGER AGE GROUP WINNERS



FIRST PLACE: Molly Carter,
8, Middle Tennessee Electric



SECOND PLACE: Olive Magruder,
5, Middle Tennessee Electric



THIRD PLACE: Claire Adare,
3, Caney Fork EC

Point of View

by Robin Conover



Whether you were hit hard by Winter Storm Fern or not, I think we can all agree that spring is finally here! After a tough winter, the thought of getting outside and enjoying the longer, warmer days of spring makes me smile.

Watching the landscape come alive again with each spring is like a breath of fresh air, both literally and figuratively. It's a chance to start anew, appreciate what we missed during the cold winter months and see new life begin its annual cycle.

My mom used to talk about all the wildflowers in the woods behind the farmhouse where she grew up. Her favorites included dwarf larkspur, bloodroot and trout lilies — all flowers I see on almost every spring hike in Tennessee.

I got my love of nature from her, and I like to think I've followed in

her footsteps — appreciating the beauty of Mother Nature every chance I get.

Dwarf larkspur is also one of my favorite spring wildflowers. It's not the first to bloom, but these distinctive plants break through the leaf clutter of winter several weeks before their first blooms open in late March to early April.

When early morning or late afternoon sunlight hits these plants, the colors and structure come alive. They often grow in thick patches, so it can be tough to get a good photo of them.

For this shoot, I chose one plant to focus on. It was in the sunlight while the background, the base of a large oak, was in the shade.

Separating the subject from the background can be tricky for photographers, but it can make or

break a photo. In this case, I wanted to make the single stem stand out while blurring the background. A long lens and an f-stop of 5.6 helped me achieve this.

I left the two stalks to the left out of focus to show how shallow the depth of field can be with a long lens. There was about 2 feet between the subject and the background.

You don't need an expensive camera to get this effect. Most smartphones have a "portrait" mode. Give it a try this spring for closeups of blooms, people or any of your favorite subjects.

POINT OF VIEW PARTICULARS

"Dwarf Larkspur"

Canon EOS 5D Mark IV, EF 200-400 mm f4 L IS USM 1.4 Ext at 560mm, ISO 800, f-5.6 at 1/320 second, Gitzo tripod



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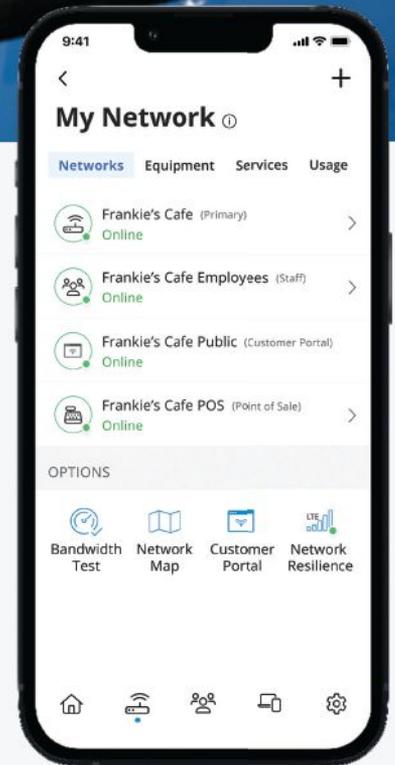
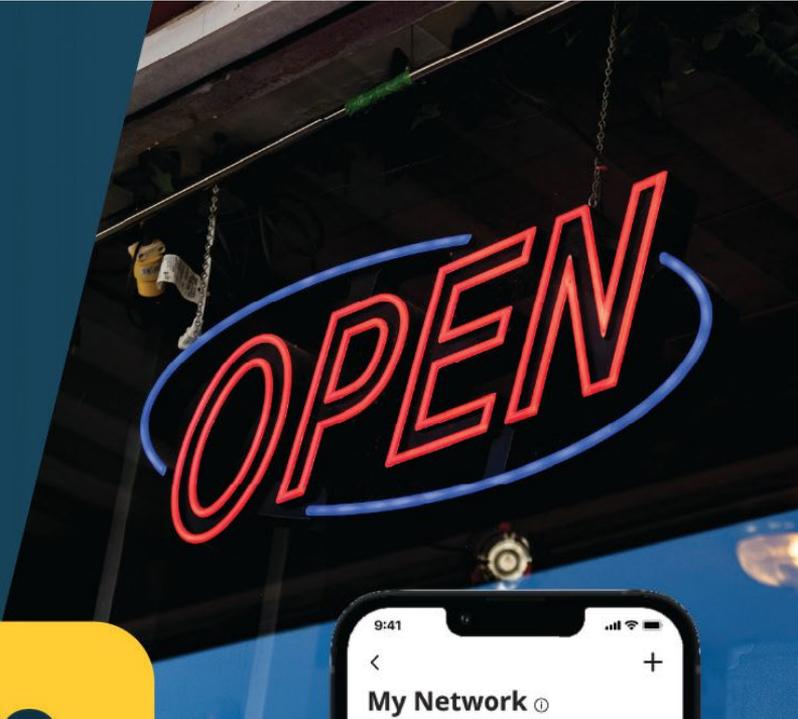
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