

PETERSBURG NEWS

A Lions Club Service to the Community

October 1, 2026

From the Mayor's Office



Mayor
Kevin Coffield

Greetings all! The fall months are approaching, which means Petersburg gets into some of the most fun times around town! With Spooktacular and the annual Christmas parade on the horizon, kids of all ages should be able to find something to smile about. I'm sure Parks and Rec will keep us abreast of what's happening in good speed.

This is my first column as Mayor, and I need to let you all know, like many folks here in town, I'm double hatted, as Mayor of Petersburg and as the Editor of The Petersburg News. What this means is, in working as the Editor, I'll be handing off articles that I would typically write to avoid any conflict of interest. I won't be able to write about politics or political events. I can still (and will) continue to write about general events, events effecting Petersburg, historic pieces, as well as a plethora of other things. I just thought it was in the best interest of everyone to know about this shift and that I'm very aware of it.

I've included a overview of the 2027 Petersburg budget. The idea is to give you a bit of a look inside to see some of what we see. I'm hoping this will help explain some of how the budget works. If you'd like a deeper look, feel free to come to the monthly BOMA meeting where there's a more detailed look.

And speaking of money, Petersburg has been awarded a HUD grant! Laura Bailey will be attending a class shortly that will provide all the details necessary for those interested in making application for a portion of the available funds. I'm really excited to see how this works out for everyone!

God bless Petersburg!

Kevin Coffield, Mayor

Town Board Meeting- The Town Board welcomes input and ideas for alternative solutions from the residents of Petersburg at the next BOMA meeting on Tuesday, October 6 @ 6 p.m.

Kevin Coffield, Mayor

Serving Petersburg Over the Past 25 Years

By Gene Roberson

Looking back on the past 25 years since joining the Petersburg Lions Club in 2001, I'm amazed at the huge variety of ways the Lions have served this community. In this article, I want to share some memorable services the Club provided between about 2001 and 2010. Next month, we'll look at some of the services provided to the community between 2011 and 2020.

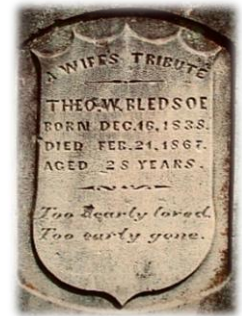
In 2001-3, the primary Lions services included a spotted horse show that provided affordable entertainment while raising funds for the professional eye exams and eyeglasses we provided to residents who needed but could not afford. The Lions also held an annual "Kite Day" each summer, providing entertainment for the youth of Petersburg.

In 2004, members compiled a list of about 30 potential services that the community needed, and over a period of several meetings, we decided on 4 that seemed to provide the greatest benefits. Those were: The Petersburg News, another big entertainment event, free smoke detectors & installation, and annual leadership seminars. 22 years later, the Petersburg News remains one of the most significant services of the Club.

The smoke detector project was inspired by the house fire that took the life of Mayor Fulcher. The annual leadership seminars attracted the attention of Leadership Lincoln, and the Petersburg Lion Club provided training for them for the next several years.

The BIG entertainment event became the annual Bluegrass and Chicken Festival, which the Club produced at Lions Pride Park for the next decade. We started producing that annual event in 2005 and continued it through 2010. Another big change near the end of the decade, Dollar General began developing the property where Shear Image had been located, and the club lost access to some parking locations that were vital to the financial success of the horse shows and Chicken Festivals that provided the revenue that supported most of the Lions services. How the club responded to that challenge would transform the nature and scope of Lions services to the community for the next 2 decades. Look for that story in the November edition of this paper.

Theophalus W. Bledsoe Dec. 16, 1838 – Feb. 21, 1867



Theo Bledsoe headstone

Who was this young man whose monument stands in Cumberland Cemetery, it's obelisk awaiting final restoration. "Theo W. Bledsoe", inscribed above his wife's epitaph reads, "Too dearly loved, too early gone". "A wife's tribute", young Helen, a widow of substance and determination, would carry in service to God and family.

Son of Thomas Bledsoe and Ava Harris, Theo was heir to notable legacies. Grandfathers, Howell Harris, for whom Howell, TN is named and Anthony Bledsoe, whose name still marks local roads and communities. Imagine childhood filled with stories of great-grandfathers, Revolutionary War Patriots, Joel Harris, DAR #A051701 and Jacob Bledsoe Sr., DAR #A011219. Collectively with brothers and cousins, they were the "Long Hunters" pioneering Bledsoe's Lick and Bledsoe's fort, defending Fort Blackmore and as "Over Mountain Men" winning Kings Mountain.

A generation removed from war in Petersburg's growing prosperity; heroic adventure called her sons to arms. Secession, though not embraced by business and major landowners, fearing economic chaos would follow, Theophalus and his peers enlisted immediately, preceding the vote to secede. Second Lieutenant T. W. Bledsoe joined Company B, "The Petersburg Sharpshooters," under Col. David Smythe, attached to the 8th Regiment CSA, Col. A. S. Fulton.

Ironically, having seen little action nearing their enlistment end, conscription extended service through Appomattox. Western Theater engagement proved merciless, with loss as great in the following years. Thus, privation and disease took Theophalus W. Bledsoe, age 28. "Too early gone".

Cumberland Presbyterian Church



Nobody Like Jesus

Pastor Troy Green

There has never been anybody like Jesus of Nazareth. Some attribute it to the accumulation of legend or fabrication, but that is not what the evidence shows. The theory that the Bible changed and expanded over time is refuted by the fact that as we find older and older accounts, we see the story hasn't changed. Older variants are not variant. And in spite of assertions to the contrary, there are contemporary references to Jesus outside of the Bible. The letters of Paul are some of earliest parts of the New Testament yet he quotes hymns and creeds that were already embraced by the Christian community. I Corinthians 15:3-8 is an example, "For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures, and that he appeared to ... [several eyewitnesses]."

We cannot explain all the reasons God sent His Son into the world to die for our sins, but every person has to come to terms with the fact that He did. Nobody in the history of mankind has even come close to the positive impact that Jesus has had. You may not feel personally involved with Him, but He has influenced your life. We all have to consider why and grapple with what it means that God walked the earth, taught the truth, died on our behalf, rose from the dead, and appeared to hundreds to provide evidence for faith in Him. He even told us what to do, "This is the work that God would have you do, you believe in Him [Jesus] whom He has sent." (John 6:29)

"What you do today can improve all your tomorrows." – **Ralph Marston**

First Baptist Church of Petersburg

107 Church St. 931-659-9957
Sunday School 9:45 a.m. Worship 11a.m. Wed. 6 p.m.

Cumberland Presbyterian Church

High St 931-212-6479
Sunday School 9:30 a.m. Worship 10:35 a.m.

Medium United Methodist Church

Delina 931-993-6005
Sunday Services at 10 a.m.

"Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."
(Mark 12:31)

Constitution Day

On September 17, 2026, this year of America's 250th Anniversary, the Town of Petersburg and DAR, Robert Lewis Chapter, joined Bells Across America in commemorating the signing of our constitution. At 3 p.m., Petersburg's historic bells joined others across the nation in tolling for one minute. They echoed those of Philadelphia, 1787, as our Forefathers exited Independence Hall.

Choosing Petersburg and its historic bells, the Robert Lewis Chapter created an educational commemorative opportunity across Lincoln and Marshall Counties. Its unique location and resurgence of historical interest promotes an ever-widening outreach.

Constitution Day Proclamations were signed by Walt Patrick, Lincoln County Mayor, Craig Blackwell, Marshall County Mayor, Kevin Coffield, Petersburg Mayor and Cole Blocker, Commander, American Legion Hart-Beard Post #155. Our introductory speaker was Marion Joyce, DAR Chapter Regent. Commemorative souvenirs were shared with the Lincoln County Library, offices of the Registrar, Assessors, Archives, and the Lincoln County and Petersburg Mayor's Office, as well as several Petersburg businesses. Educational outreach included the Petersburg Raising Arrows Home School, a Storyboard at the Marshall County Library, and readings for Marshall County Schools.

Bell ringers were Greg Merritt, Petersburg Cumberland Presbyterian Church, Paster Doug Watt, Petersburg United Methodist Church, and Petersburg Mayor Kevin Coffield rang the Petersburg Town Square Bell. Hearing these bells echo simultaneously, stirred excitement, as we joined to remember that moment in America, September 17, 1787.



Cane Creek Church of Christ

Hwy 431
Sunday Bible Study 10 a.m., Worship 11 a.m.
Sunday 5 p.m.

East Side Church of Christ

306 Water St. 931-659-9352
Sunday Bible Study 10 a.m., Worship 11a.m.

Hannah's Gap Baptist Church

283 Bledsoe Rd.- Petersburg
Sunday School 10 a.m. Worship 11 a.m.

Lone Oak Church of Christ

2419 Highway 130
Sunday school 9:30 a.m., Worship 10:30 a.m., 6 p.m.

Petersburg's Evolving Budget

This is the budget, established in 2026 for the period of July 1, 2026 and running through June 30, 2027. The Petersburg News editorial staff believes the town can work with the current budget, with careful management of Town financial resources.

The FY 2027 budget provides an increase in General Fund balance compared to FY 2025. The balance is projected to grow by the end of June 2027. This budget, as it stands, has met with the State Comptroller's Office approval.

The table below shows the General Fund Budget for the current year [FY 2027] and the previous two years.

	General Fund		
	FY 2025 Audited	FY 2026 Estimated	FY 2027 Proposed
Revenues:			
Local Taxes	\$ 206,698	\$ 188,639	\$ 199,600
State of Tennessee	-	-	-
Other Sources	310,288	119,693	118,150
Total Revenues	\$ 516,986	\$ 308,332	\$ 317,750
Expenditures:			
Salaries	\$ 164,919	\$ 55,432	\$ 96,649
Other Sources	119,689	189,853	204,640
Total Expenditures	\$ 284,608	\$ 245,286	\$ 301,289
Beginning Fund Balance	403,113	656,873	719,919
Ending Fund Balance	635,491	719,919	736,380
Number FTE Employees	4	3	2

The biggest change in General Fund revenue occurred in the "Other Sources" line item. Most of the decrease resulted from the Memorandum of Understanding with the Lincoln County Sheriff's Dept., as well as the non-renewable FY 2025 Grant of approximately \$95,000 in COVID relief funds from the federal government.

In spite of the decrease in revenue and the increase in expenses, the FY 2027 budget provides for an increase in the General Fund balance. Compared to the beginning of FY 2025, the balance is projected to grow by more than \$325,000 by the end of June 2027.

"A people free to choose will always choose peace." - **Ronald Reagan**

Petersburg United Methodist Church

301 Church St.
Sunday School 10 a.m., Worship 11a.m.
Bible study Wed. 6 p.m.

Howell Church of Christ

Worship Sunday morning 9 a.m.
Bible Study Sunday morning- 10:15 a.m.
Sunday night 6 p.m. Wed. night- 6:30 p.m.

Liberty Valley Church of Christ

2900 Liberty Valley Rd., Belfast
Sunday School 10 a.m. Worship 9 a.m. & 5 p.m.
5th Sunday Service 10 a.m./Meal 11 a.m.
followed by Singing

McEwen Cemetery Restored

by Warren Gill



McEwen Cemetery

The 250th anniversary of our country has been wonderfully celebrated this year, which has revived interest in the Revolutionary War. In Petersburg this has translated into learning more about our own Revolutionary War hero, Joseph Greer, the King's Mountain Messenger.

Many people know that Joseph Greer himself is buried in a small cemetery on \$300 Road, but few know that most of his descendants are buried in McEwen Cemetery, located near the end of Honey Road, about a mile east of Petersburg.

Mary Gillespie Whitaker, a descendant of Joseph Greer, maintained the McEwen cemetery in the 1950's. Mark, her son, took it over after that. He built a chain link fence around the cemetery and often took his small herd of goats out there to keep weeds and brush under control. Mark died in 2011 and the cemetery was mostly neglected and eventually abandoned.

After years of isolation, the cemetery was covered by various trees and dozens of weeds. Most of the markers were covered by the tangled jungle, but few of the taller memorials were visible.

Last year, Mark's daughter, Bette Whitaker Harris, told me that Mark had left her and her brother, Bill, some stock, allocated to maintaining both the Old Orchard Cemetery and the McEwen Cemetery.

("McEwen" con't on pg. 4, col. 3)

October Happenings

by Donna Salyers

Lincoln County and Fayetteville City Schools will be closed October 5-9 for Fall Break. **Marshall County Schools** will be closed October 12-16 for Fall Break. Enjoy!!!

Petersburg Senior Citizens, 68 Morgan Circle, Petersburg, TN are celebrating their 50th anniversary, and their one-year anniversary, at their new location. You are invited to join them in the celebration with a potluck meal on Thursday, October 1 at 11 a.m. Everyone is welcome! They also meet Monday thru Friday 9 a.m.-noon. Bingo is the first Thursday of each month from 9:30-10:30 a.m. They are also having a yard sale October 16 & 17 (Friday & Saturday), \$5 to rent a space, 9 a.m.-2 p.m.

Come and visit the **Petersburg Library**, located at the Morgan Cultural Center, 103 Alumni Lane, Petersburg.

Petersburg American Legion Post will meet on Saturday, October 10 @ 9 a.m.

Pickin' and Grinnin' on Petersburg Square will be on Saturday, October 10, 5-8 p.m.

Petersburg Community Cultural Coalition Chili Fest & Fall Market will be Saturday, October 24, 12-5 p.m., at 103 Alumni Lane, Petersburg. They will have a chill cook-off and best cornbread contest with some really nice Lodge prizes for the winners, Fall market vendors, a historic presentation about Joseph Greer, Petersburg Library book sale, and more. Come out for a bowl of chili, shop, relax, and enjoy a lovely Fall Day! Admission is \$10.00 for adults and \$5.00 for kids, 12 and under, admission includes a bowl of chili and a drink. All proceeds go to building a community pickle ball court. If you are interested in participating as a vendor or in the chili and corn bread cook off, please email Petersburgourtownfair@gmail.com.

Petersburg Parks and Recreation Spooktacular 2026 on the Petersburg Square from 6-8 p.m. Trunk or Treating, Games, Pumpkin Decorating, and more. Come see us!

Sounds of Freedom festival

by Kevin Coffield

On August 29, the Lifeline Warrior Foundation held its "2026 Sounds of Freedom" festival at Paislee's Place, in Petersburg. The motto for the event was "Standing Beside Those Who Served." I asked Stuart Rudy about the organization. He responded, "First we tie veterans to resources that already exist, doesn't matter what they need." That includes home rework, tuition assistance, visits to the VA, or help with paperwork.

Rudy said they were based in Fayetteville, but that's not where they stayed. Fayetteville is more of a staging area. "Two weeks ago, we took a motorized wheelchair to Muscle Shoals, AL. I mean, it really doesn't matter," he said.

The soldiers in the original group were soldiers that had served together. The original reason was the number of soldier suicides from their unit. "We started checking on all of our people and thought, how many different, crazy, bad situations people were in." He spoke about how bad it can be, is, for vets out of funds, or medication, or just general help.

The event helped defray costs of storage buildings. For example, one storage building just about doubled its rental price. Without the building, materials can go bad or be stolen. With the building, costs can be maintained and materials kept under lock and key. The event bought them some time. That's it. They're looking for other places where storage can happen by increasing the frequency of events. Read more about this conversation with Stuart Rudy in future editions of the Petersburg News.



The Lions Club is accepting a limited number of advertisements to offset the cost of producing this community newspaper. Ad space is \$25 per month. If you want to advertise in the paper, please contact us at my email address: kevincoffield1953@gmail.com.

The Petersburg News

If you're interested in receiving The Petersburg News electronic edition, contact kevincoffield1953@gmail.com and he'll be more than happy to add you to our growing list of readers! The Petersburg News is produced by the Lions club for the people of Petersburg. We hope you enjoy!

Live in such a way that people
see your good work...

And glorify your Father in heaven.
(From Matthew 5:16)

<http://www.petersburgcpchurch.org/>



Daily Lunch Specials

Monday- Thursday
6am-2pm
Friday- Saturday
6am-7pm

147 Railroad Street
Petersburg, TN

Local Services Available

Carpentry-Plumbing-Electrical-Painting

Bathrooms, Kitchens, Any Room
Remodeling, Decks, Water Damage,
Termite Damage, etc.



References Available



Call Greg Merritt @ 931-205-5134

Spooktacular '26

by Donna Salyers

It's hard to believe, as hot as it has been, that Fall is here. That also means that the Petersburg Parks and Recreation is inviting you to the Spooktacular 2026. It will be on Halloween, Saturday, October 31 from 6-8 p.m. If you are decorating your "trunk" you can come earlier to get set up. We would love to fill the historic Petersburg Square with decorated trunks, candy, and games for the kids. If you would like to participate in decorating your truck and/or dressing up and handing out candy and playing games with the little trick or treaters, please contact Petersburg Parks and Recreation through our Facebook Messenger or contacting a member of the Parks and Rec committee to reserve your spot. Since, it is on Halloween night you can still go around the neighborhoods that you normally do on Halloween, as well.

DJ Dave will be live on the square playing your favorite Halloween tunes. About 7 p.m., we will have a costume line up and let the kiddos show off their costumes to everyone. DJ Dave will announce for all the little spookies to line up on the inside of the square and he will announce who they dressed as and their name if they choose to tell him.

We will have a pumpkin decorating contest for the kids. So, let the kids start thinking how they want to carve or paint their pumpkins to enter into the contest. Bring your decorated pumpkin with you that evening. We will set them up on the inside of the square with a mason jar where people can see them and vote (a penny a vote) on their favorites. Winners will be announced about 7:45 that evening. Prizes will be awarded for first, second, and third places.

If you want to sign up for the Spooktacular or have questions, please contact us through our Facebook page, Petersburg TN Parks and Recreation or a committee member: Donna Salyers, Amy Wells, Teresa Fullerton, Mandy Reed, Jean Griffin, or Gwyn Nichols.

2026 Angel Tree Applications

Blank applications for 2026 Angels will be available starting on Halloween night, October 31 in the Merry Mailbox in front of Petersburg Town Hall. After you get it filled out, you can put it in the locked part of the Merry Mailbox or give it to Amy Wells or Donna Salyers.

The deadline to get the applications turned back in for adoption is **NOVEMBER 25**. We will not be able to accept any after that date.

(continued next column)

So please share with everyone who needs help this year with their angels.

Also, if you sign up an angel, you will be notified when the gifts are ready for pick-up. And you will have to be able to come and pick up the gifts. Petersburg Parks and Recreation cannot bring them to you.

If you would like to adopt an angel you can contact Amy Wells 931-652-7641 or Donna Salyers at Shear Image 931-659-9190. Thank you.

("McEwen" Con't from pg. 3, col. 1)

Bette was very encouraging when I told her that we had a plan to restore McEwen.

It was not an easy endeavor, particularly giving the extreme heat of August when the work was done, but the McEwen Cemetery has been cleaned up and restored to a place of quiet dignity.

With the help of the "Find a Grave" website, several facts have emerged.

- There are 76 memorials in the cemetery. Most are Greer descendants.
- Nineteen headstones carry the "Greer" name including 3 of his children – A. A. Greer, Sarah Catherine Greer Gillespie and Thomas V. Greer.
- There are 12 Gillespie graves. Mary Gillespie Whitaker's father was George Gillespie and his mother was Catherine Greer Gillespie, the daughter of Joseph Greer so the Gillespie's are also Greer descendants.
- There are 15 members of the Smythe family (also Greer descendants), 3 Gaunt's and 3 McEwen's.
- There are 2 Civil War Veterans. Gustavus Jarvis was a 3rd Lieutenant in Company B., 2nd Tennessee Regiment and Ebenezer C. McEwen who died during the Battle of Franklin.
- The last person buried there was Laura Smith Eddins in 1999.

While there are many splendid and well-preserved monument stones, there are also a few memorials which have been damaged and still need repair.

There is also an adjoining small black cemetery which has apparently been vandalized and will require additional effort and expense to restore.

The cemetery is on private property, and the owners ask to be informed before visiting the site. If you would like to visit, contact me at 615-478-3828, and I will obtain permission.



Lions Community Building Available for Reunions, etc.



Need a place to host wedding receptions, family reunions, etc.? The Lions Community Building may be just what you need. Rental = \$100 + \$50 deposit. The deposit will be returned if renters properly clean up after events. For more information, contact Nancy McDonald at (931) 637-0720.

Tables & Chairs for Events



Need tables and chairs for an event? The Lions Club has them for rent. Tables are \$5, and chairs are \$1.00. A \$50 security deposit is required. Contact Nancy McDonald: Call (931) 637-0720.

Town Hall Information

120 Eastside Square
Petersburg, TN 37144
(931) 659-9826

Open Monday-Friday 8 a.m.- 4 p.m.