STAYING CONNECTED

This spring I had the opportunity to participate in a retreat for clergy spouses held in Beersheba Springs, TN. This retreat was hosted jointly by the Memphis and Tennessee Conference. WHAT A WONDERFUL TIME OF FELLOWSHIP! It reminded me that as United Methodist we have a unique connection with each other. That connection is very evident in our itinerate years but often fades in our retirement years. Many of our retirees are not as mobile as they previously were. They are no longer driving or health concerns are keeping them closer to home. For many of us “computer” is not our first language and for some it is a foreign language entirely. Much of what is happening in the United Methodist Church – district, conference, and worldwide is shared on the internet. For those without internet, the isolation and loss of connectionalism is complete. The goal of The Retirees’ Association is to help our retirees stay connected. The News ‘N’ Views is published both on-line and in print and is mailed to over 360 retirees and surviving spouses. In our newsletter we will feature opportunities to fellowship together and remain connected. Unable to join us in person? Share your news or send greetings in the News ‘N’ Views. Our reporters are trying to contact each of our retirees at least once a year. Once a year is not nearly often enough. We encourage our retirees to contact the editor with their news. The contact information will be on each edition of the News. I will take calls, e-mail, snail mail – even smoke signals (on a clear day). The main point is that YOU ARE IMPORTANT and we want to remain connected. Share your photos – you know what they say “A photo is worth a thousand words” (and with photos I don’t have to type nearly as much!). In the past edition you may have noted that I had asked our reporters to list who they had not been able to contact. Even if we were not able to contact you, we wanted you to know that you are important to us. Beginning in 2017 I have begun sending cards to retirees that we did not reach with the goal of assuring them that they are important. Do you want to contact a colleague but have lost the address? No Journal – No address – No Problem. Just call your District or Conference Office (just don’t tell them I sent you!)

(Pictured left top: Beersheba Springs. Right: Harold & Jacque Stricker at Advent Brunch, Bottom Left: Theron & Cecil Kirk at Retirees' Retreat)
CLERGY SPOUSE LUNCHEON
Collierville UMC
Tuesday, June 6, 2017 12 noon
Theme: Precious Moments
Luncheon cost: $15.00
All reservations must be made in advance.
Make checks payable to Carroll Gallimore and mail to:
Mrs. Carroll Gallimore
367 Rockwell Rd
Jackson, TN 38305

There are no current funds available for the luncheon. It would be greatly appreciated if attendees would voluntarily add a small donation to their reservation checks. This will help with this year’s preparations and any funds left over will be available for next year’s luncheon committee.

Memphis Conference Retirees’ Luncheon
Hosted by The Board of Pensions
Monday, June 5th
Collierville U.M.C.

Memphis Conference Retirees’ Retreat
October 2 – 3, 2017
Lakeshore Assembly
NOTE: This is a Monday – Tuesday not the usual Tues – Wed.
Watch your mailbox for more information!
Memorials

Charles Parker – February 2, 1941 - February 6, 2017
Darrilyn Parker – August 21, 1941 - April 7, 2017
No family address available

Sykes, Ozella – July 20, 1916 - March 18, 2017
Correspondence may be sent to: Daughter, Mrs. Vita Dalton, 602 Elm St, Murray, KY 42071

Ora Bell Peck – March 16, 1932 - February 17, 2017
Correspondence may be sent to: Rev Paul Peck 3717 Ramona Dr., Paducah, KY 42001

Sometimes it’s hard to see through our tears. But even when we can’t see, God has promised to be there - loving us, strengthening us, giving us what we need to face each day.

God cares, cares right down to the last detail
James 5:11 The Message

Reporter Deb Morris

David and Deborah Morris (Humboldt, TN) - We are enjoying the warmer April days. David has been outside walking, now that "spring has sprung." We both watched ALL of the University of Kentucky basketball games this season, like many others. We wish they had gotten a little further in the tournaments.

Larry and Vicki Kendrick - Things are going great for the Kendricks. After retiring last year, they moved to Brownsville. I'm sure they are glad to be settled for a while. When talking to Brother Larry, he told me that they are enjoying travelling and just being "out and about." They are attending church at Archer's Chapel, the last church in which they served.

Jennie Doss (Jackson, TN) - I have known Ms. Jennie for several years, and it was good to talk for awhile with her. David and I could both relate to her statement that "I'm glad to get out of bed in the morning." (I imagine this is true for just about all of us now.) She says that most of her going these days seems to be to doctors' offices and pharmacies. Continuing in the conversation, Ms. Jennie was telling me that her son lives with her now, and that he has someone to come in and do the cleaning - a big help, I am sure.

Marsha Dorgan (Murray, KY) - When talking to Marsha, she was at home but during the second week of April, she was going to see her daughter, Megan, in Colorado Springs, Colorado for a couple of weeks. (Marsha divides her time between Colorado and Kentucky.) On April 4 it was 73 degrees and windy in west Kentucky, while in Colorado it was 43 degrees with eight inches of snow on the ground! What a difference! When in Kentucky, she enjoys being with her grandchildren.
**Russell & Carol Gallimore (Jackson, TN)** - Former News & Views Editor Carol Gallimore is making good progress rehabbing her latest knee replacement. She and Russell will celebrate their 53rd Wedding Anniversary on May 8. Their youngest grandson, Vann, age 9 of Southaven, MS has auditioned to be a singing actor in an upcoming Broadway musical in New York City. He has starred in several productions at the Lander’s Center in Southaven, MS, and at the Desoto County Family Playhouse in Hernando. In the photo, Vann is pictures in “Seussical, Jr.”. Russell is preparing for his 18th Tennessee Senior Olympic competitions in Franklin, TN in June. Carol and Russell have made their big debut on the silver screen (grandson Vann isn’t the only who can act!) Russell and Carol were see on a television ad purchasing insurance.

**Reporter Beverlyann Jetton**

Beverlyann Jetton (Jackson, TN) – I continue to keep busy (sometimes too busy) gleaning food for a local food pantry and soup kitchen. I collect food from local groceries and restaurants that would normally be thrown out. Did you know 40% of the food we raise or produce in the USA ends up uneaten in a landfill? At Forest Heights U.M.C. we have had new 5 children enroll in our Sunday School – (that’s a 500% increase! – yeah, go ahead and do the math – we started with zero). I am enjoying teaching the elementary age children. They can keep you on your toes! Our church is also mentoring a high school student in cooperation with a local agency, Keep My Hood Good. Working with other organizations is one way a small membership church can impact their community.

Gail & Benny Hopper (Jackson, TN) went to visit friends at The Villages in Florida. Their friends were from the church that they served in Ohio during seminary. Benny and Gail plan to take their grown children and their spouses on a New England cruise the middle of July.

**Tom & Mary Perkins (Dyersburg, TN)** - My first Sunday at Nebo U.M.C. this father and daughter came forward for baptism. It was scheduled for the following Sunday after I had time to talk with them...Cassie is a twenty year old with a heart of pure love. Jason had made his profession of faith earlier and wanted to be baptized with his daughter. Cassie had been baptized as an infant. She wanted to reaffirm her baptismal vows alongside her dad. It was as touching as it appears. I could never have imagined becoming such a part of this wonderful family. Retirement ministry is bittersweet. Usually, you are scheduled long enough to fall
completely in love with a congregation, only to move on when permanent arrangements are made. The good side is your friendship base keeps expanding. You cannot be selfish and do retirement ministry. You are there to pave the way for another.

**Nancy Blankenship (Memphis, TN)** – Sends her greetings to all her friends. She is doing well and is keeping busy and enjoys receiving and reading the News ‘N Views

**Tom Hicks (Memphis, TN)** – I enjoyed talking to Tom (one of the blessings of being a reporter). After a long conservation with him I felt like I had met a new friend. He misses his calls from his last reporter Bev and Joyce Farnsworth and hope they are doing well. Thomas remains home most of the time as he no longer drives – especially in Memphis traffic. He and his wife were blessed with a son and two daughters, two remain in the Memphis area. His son is a safety engineer with Fed Ex and lives with Tom. Tom enjoys cooking and keeping the house organized. He has the organization down to a science; planning meals 1 month in advance so he only has to go shopping once a month. I can certainly take lessons from him! He looks forward to receiving and reading the News ‘N’ Views. Since he is no longer as mobile as he used to be he feels like he is losing touch with the Memphis Conference. Tom looks forward to attending at least part of Annual Conference this year. If you see him at Conference make sure to go and greet him.

**Bill Mount (Spartanburg, S.C.)** – Bill retired from Wafford College in 2003 and has been enjoying retirement. He says that Monday through Friday he does nothing, then on the weekends he rests up! He indicates that there is one problem with retirement: You never get a day off! He enjoys cooking and learning new topics that he did not have time to pursue when working. His two sons live in Charlotte, N.C. and Atlanta, GA. Bill enjoys visiting with his sons and their families.

**Harrell and Janice Nation (Jackson, TN)** – This year Janice and I were initiated into “the art of cruising”. Our maiden voyage celebrated our 48th wedding anniversary. We traveled to Cozumel and Progresso, Mexico December 31 through January 5th. Our son Keith, his wife Kayla and our grandchildren Kaylyn, Kathryn and Kolby as well as their German exchange student, Ben, traveled with us. We brought in the New Year with all kinds of activities. On January 3rd, our anniversary, we were serenaded by an Elvis impersonator! This spring we are looking forward to a trip to London, Belfast and Scotland. We continue to enjoy our venture of serving our Savior with the folks at Forest Heights U.M.C. in Jackson.

**Wayne & Judy Holms (Milan, TN)** – Wayne and Judy Holms are doing well and keeping busy in Milan. They have 3 grown children. Wayne retired from the Navy before entering the ministry
and they raised their children all over the world. They are delighted that all three made west Tennessee their home. Judy has the delight of caring for her newborn grandchild and marvels how younger mothers have the energy to juggle careers, homes, and childcare. This Easter they will have the whole family over. I made Judy promise to snap a picture and send it in for the next edition. Stay tuned.....

**Stan & Marilyn Waldon (Kevil, KY)** – moved to Ballard County, when they retired last year. They have been busy remodeling the family home place. As they finish this project we are looking forward to a photo tour.

**Craig & Marilyn Ramsey (Milan, TN)** – F.U.M.C., Milam made it possible for us to stay here when we retired. We both sing in the Chancel Choir and Craig directs the hand bell choir. Marilyn continues to be active in the United Methodist Women at both the local and conference levels. We volunteer at the local thrift store ministry and work in the soup kitchen. With grandchildren in Denver, Colorado we are traveling there (and many other places). We are really enjoying a more flexible schedule. 2017 is our 50th wedding anniversary and we have several special trips and activities planned.

**Nancy Wheatley (Huntingdon, TN)** - The highlight of January 2017 was the birth of a new great granddaughter, Hazel, born January 31st. I share this grandchild with John and Ann Archer. Hazel is my third great grandchild. Two great grandchildren live in Nashville and one lives in Memphis. I receive Facebook and e-mail pictures frequently and get to visit with them occasionally. In April I will be having some minor eye surgery – then it will be time to get on the golf course again. I am enjoying the NCAA basketball tournament very much. My bracket sheet has a few errors but overall I am doing pretty good. This year I lost several dear friends, Charles & Darrilyn Parker and Ozella Sykes. Dossie and I had I close friendship with them for many years dating back to when we served Goshen UMC in Calloway County, KY in the 1960’s Ozella and her husband Bonnie were members of the first church we served in 1959. They nurtured us well. I am so glad to see signs of spring. This year our church published a Lenten Devotional Book with contributions by many of our members. I have been involved in a book study written by Adam Hamilton, *Christianity and World Religions: Wrestling with Questions People Ask*. I found it very thought provoking and educational and it help me to see people and their faith in a new way. This summer we have many family gatherings planned. I am not sure if I will be able to attend Annual Conference this year. If I am not there, I will see you all at the Retirees’ Retreat in October.

**Allean Simmons (Jackson, TN)** – I have not had the opportunity to meet Allean, even though we live in the same town. I enjoyed talking with her on the phone and look forward to being able to meet. This Easter week has been a special time for Allean. Her son from Milwaukee is visiting. Throughout the week the rest of her family drops by. They
have had several family dinners – Mexican night, BBQ, Fish fry, and culminating with a huge Easter dinner. I am going to have to wrangle myself an invitation – sounds like they know how to do a homecoming! Not all the family will be there – they are all spread out. She has 5 children, 12 grandchildren, 22 great grandchildren, and 8 great great grandchildren – Praise the Lord! Last year Allean had double knee replacement and has recovered well. She has completed her formal rehab and continues exercising independently at a local gym through the Silver Sneaker program.

Jerry & Dot Carr (Oakland, TN) – Our daughter, Cynthia, had another MRI in March. The area of her brain which has caused a "wait and see" approach for several months has not changed much. So, we will still wait. She will have an MRI again on May 24. In the meantime, she, Dot & I are all functioning pretty well. We wish you all good health and happiness in this new year. Thanks for your continued concern, prayers and support.

SOME LESSONS LEARNED IN STILLNESS by John & Karen Lee

THANKS for inviting us to share some of our lessons learned from the “still” times in our lives. On December 2nd, I had a double hernia repair that was supposed allow me to go home the next day. However, because of a severe reaction to morphine shots the next day, I didn't go home until a week later. My blood pressure dropped so low that my kidneys stopped functioning and my blood sugar bottomed out. All of this plus loosing over two pints of blood threw me into a semi-comatose “still” edge between an earthly life and eternal life!

As a result of this “still” stressful time, I re-learned at least 3 very valuable lessons and truths: One- THE LORD IS STILL MY SHEPHERD! He was with me “through the valley of the shadow of death”! He still “restores my soul”! Two- OUR LORD STILL ANSWERS PRAYER! When I went into that “still” semi-conscious state, I am told that our Associate Pastor, Rev. Jerry Spurrell and his wife, Jill, walked into my hospital room and began to pray and take authority over death in Jesus’ name! Three- THE LORD HAS GIVEN ME A WONDERFUL WIFE! When I met Karin in Tulsa, Oklahoma in the spring of 2007, I found a marvelous companion for my life! In addition to ministering with me in Kenya East Africa, Indonesia and here in the States, she has stuck with me “like glue” in sickness and in health. After having been “active” in ministry for 104 years (59 for me and 45 for her), we are making plans to retire this year to a “Senior Citizens” community. We have not fully decided WHERE but we know this year is WHEN. Therefore, we are accepting the challenge of II Chronicles 20:17 that says: “Position yourselves, stand still and see the salvation of the Lord... Do not fear or be dismayed”.

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Reporter: Jenna Garland:

Jenna Garland (Hazel, KY) - I was pleased to host the Retirees’ Executive Committee at my home last month. We began planning the fall Retirees’ Retreat that is held at Lakeshore. I enjoyed having them in my home. I am still volunteering at Life House Care Center in Murray once a week. I also play the piano for a Bible study at the Wesley Village once a month. I teach beginning piano to two children on Monday’s before they go to Manna Monday at church. I am looking forward to Easter. The darker the world gets the brighter the Church shines. Thank God He is Risen. Have a blessed Easter. Hope to see you in the fall at the Lakeshore Retirees retreat.

Nell Dotson (Kirksey, KY) - is doing well. She was able to go to the UMW meeting on the sex trafficking of women and children. That meeting was featured in her local paper.

Fay Garrett (Murray, KY) - is doing alright with the help of her grandson who lives with her in the rooms which were added for her mother when she was living. Another grandson’s wife comes by every day and helps her after she gets off from work. What a great blessing they are to her.

Dan and Aileen Leslie (Kirksey, KY) - are doing well after Aileen had back surgery. Her doctor was very pleased with her progress. Dan said the children and grandchildren are all doing well. He is enjoying teaching a Bible class at 1st United Methodist Church in Murray.

Robert and Sue McKinney (Dexter, KY) - We spend most of our time with the usual church events, and going to the doctor, if not for us, then with some of the family or church members. We still keep some of our great grandchildren a couple of days a week, which truly brings enjoyment in our lives. We now have six great grandchildren, five girls and one boy. The newest one, Lynnlee Brooke Coles is 2 months old, and another little one, Claire Grace Coles who is 8 months. The others are Josee Coles age 2, Brycen Coles age 4, Aubrey Coles age 7 and Ally Coles age 10. God has truly blessed us with these little ones. Robert has been fishing a couple of times this spring which he looks forward to each spring, hasn’t brought home many fish yet. I guess it is safe to say, we are mainly just trying to stay busy and stay well.

Bob and Doris Saywell (Murray, KY) - are doing well. He just turned 80 years old and had a big bash at the First United Methodist Church in Murray on January 22. It was a wonderful time of celebration. They are planning a trip to Branson, Missouri in April. I hope they have a safe and marvelous trip.
Carol Craig (Evansville, IN) – Carol has visited her granddaughter, Grace several times this winter and spring. Grace is growing faster than the weeds. Grace will soon be celebrating her first birthday! In March, Carol had the opportunity to visit a friend in Burbank, California. While there, they attended the taping of two Dr. Phil shows. They even got to drive up to Techatchipi, California to visit Frank and Ann Gardner’s grandson, Matthew. Matthew is a pipe welder and travels all over the U.S.A. With summer coming Carol will be on the road between Evansville and Hazel, KY keeping the grass mowed at both properties. Easter will be spent in Evansville with family gathered around the table.

Reporter Jacque Stricker

Harold and Jacque Stricker (Cottage Grove, TN) - We don’t have much to report (or we are not telling!). I had a friend ask me once what I had been doing and I said “I don’t know, but it takes me all day to do it and I am tired at the end of the day”. Harold said I ought to mention a couple of sentences about our youngest daughter. Can you imagine me saying just a couple of sentences? I can’t, but I will try. Our daughter was nominated by one of their church members for the recipient of “Dare to Be” (daretobe.com) and received the award in Louisville, KY in March. Natalie Grant and Charlotte Gambill have been doing this since 2012 and select seven women a year from across the United States that exemplifies qualities above and beyond. Most people move away from crime and drug areas, but our daughter and son-in-law have accepted with “Jesus’ love” the children whose parents are addicted to drugs. (Right now, she has 9 children plus her own).

Zada Russ (Madison, TN) - has been under the weather with a month of gout and now arthritis. The arthritis is affecting her crocheting of the homeless mats. She is almost through with her 6th homeless mat. She attends Bible Study and Church as regularly as she can, and fills her days reading. She sends “Greetings” to all the retirees.

Richard and Mary Jane King (Paris, TN) - have been doing well. Rick has a “frog” that has moved into his vocal cords and he is waiting patiently for that frog to leave.

Joe and Bernice Walker (Springville, TN) are doing so, so, Bernice said. They weathered the winter and are looking forward to spring (what else do you do in Springville!)

Our dear sweet Ozella Sykes has gone to be with our Lord. She was such a sweet lady who I believe use to be a Reporter for the News and Views until her eyesight started going. She was involved in the church and went to the Retiree’s Retreat and Conference as long as she was
able. When I would call she would always say “I thought it was about time for you to call”. She is missed here, but she is with all her family and friends in heaven. Rev. Mike Wimberly and Rev. Paul McAdoo were honored to do the services on March 20th.

**H.B. and Rosie Fields (Paris, TN)** - are finally getting close to finishing up on their mobile home. The mobile home came with the land they purchased and it started out they needed to “fix” a few things, but it ended up tearing everything out down to the metal frame. They replaced, windows, plumbing, leveled the ground so the mobile home would only be 18 inches above ground, but somehow it is now twice the height. And recently they had to have a new well dug. Well, “mama said there’d be days like this …” H.B. said the churches are doing well. Harold heard me pleading with H.B. Field asking for something, ANYTHING that I may put in the news and views so the following is Harold helping me:

Nothing really new to report but I have a view (thankfully). Bombs and missiles exploding, vehicles running into crowds of people, guns or people using gas to injure and kill- terrorism, anger, hatred- sure is DARK out there. My feet hurt, my knees, hip and back hurt- my blood pressure is up- my eyes are dim- sure is DARK out there. JUST A MINUTE! With my cane, my walker, my wife’s hand, I make it to church. WOW! Other people just like me- we share, we support each other. We lift our voices in praise and prayer- Not so DARK now, when the Light of God’s word is spoken and lived. Flowers and trees are in bloom, the grass is green- the garden waits. WOW! Did I say garden? The DARK is gone, Friday is past, the Tomb is empty. The Light Shines, He lives and I live.

**Reporter Judd Mowery**
(Judd, you have really got to send me a picture! This looks nothing like you!)

**Judd & Gale Mowery (Troy, TN)** - We are doing well except Gale has vertigo. I am preaching at Obion Chapel and Hornbeak on the first and third Sundays and New Ebenezer Cumberland Presbyterian on the second and fourth Sundays. I have had some flare ups with my knees and a few joint pains. I mowed my yard last week between the rains. I hope all the readers have a happy Resurrection Day.

**Julie King (Murfreesboro, TN)** - She said she is alive and still mowing her yard. She has always enjoyed walking and still walks 2 ½ miles a day. She says high to everyone!

**Doug and Blair Meeks (Brentwood, TN)** - Last spring Blair and Doug went to Bremen, Germany where Doug spoke at the Celebration of Jurgen Moltmann's 90th birthday and then spent three weeks in Rome, including several days at the Methodist Ecumenical Center where Doug preached. Doug also spoke at the Global Action Platform in November. His subject was the crises of the loss of jobs caused by robotics, artificial intelligence, and the export of jobs
abroad. In March, Doug spoke on theology and inequality at the Center of Theological Inquiry at Princeton. He was able to attend the American Theological Society of which he is a past President. In between these conferences Blair and Doug had several days in New York where they saw two plays. One of the plays, "Oslo," is well worth seeing. Later this month they will go to Los Angeles to see their two granddaughters in an orchestra concert and softball and La Crosse games.

William Clayton and Charlotte Davis (Shalimar, FL) - are both are doing fine. They keep quite busy. They are working with the prayer warriors, grief recovery and working in the soup kitchen. He also does funerals and weddings, teaches Sunday school, and preaches once a month. They are both real involved in the Emmaus Community.

Wesley and Becky Fears (Oakland, TN) – report that they are both are doing fine. Becky has had two surgeries this year and Wesley has been taking good care of her. Wesley and Becky have been spending time with family. They both had a great time at their granddaughter’s wedding. Becky has been fixing their house and they are looking forward to summer.

Bob and Cynthia Moore (Franklin, TN) - traveled to Fripp Island, South Carolina to visit their daughter and son-in-law. They also spent time with their grandson and his wife. They had a wonderful time.

Reporter Glenn Hill

Glenn Hill has had a rough year so far – his computer crashed and after countless attempts at repair he bought a new one. Despite having the geek squad come out he is still not able to use his new computer. The old one is sitting there mocking him. He also bought a “smart” phone only to find one of them was not as smart as advertised. Not to be defeated, he picked up a pen and paper and wrote a beautiful report. Somewhere along the line we have lost the art of a handwritten letter. I enjoy receiving and reading Glenn’s news and I hope you will too.

Glenn & Georgia Hill (Murray, KY) – With the most current news I have, I begin this article announcing today’s (April 4, 2017) arrival of our fourth great grandchild. We now have two g-grand girls and two g-grand boys. Ripley was born weighing in at nine pounds, twelve ounces. His parents are Christopher and Adison Hill of Sedalia, KY. Glenn is about to finish up a season of bowling and compliments his three man team for finishing second in a twelve team league. Glenn says that “spring is a beautiful time of the year. God is blessing them and they wonder if others have noticed that the “allergy season” is upon us again? The tree pollen was at the highest level of the season. He has celebrated the “allergy season” so much that he had to
cancel a preaching appointment. The Hills are still active at Martin’s Chapel U.M.C. where he serves in too many capacities (Ed note: The last I heard he was getting pay back by being elected as the church treasurer – sounds like someone missed an important business meeting!). Georgia is active in the “doing” ministry of the church. Glenn, Georgia and several friends went to see the movie “The Shack” and thought it was very good. The Hills enjoyed a visit from a Gregory Knipp who was a member of their church when he was a student at Murray State. Gregory’s father is a United Methodist pastor in Shelbyville, KY. Glen still occupies his time selling Eagle storage buildings and carport barns. The company is out of Jackson, TN but he is able to work from his hometown of Murray, KY. Glenn says “all in all they are doing well for the shape they are in”. They feel blessed to enjoy the days that God has given them.

**Reporter Marcia Tate**

**Bill & Marcia Tate (Jackson, TN)** – are keeping very busy. Both are very active in the Emmaus community. Bill has been troubled with back pain and will have an MRI soon to help determine the cause. “We have been very busy with Holy week and other activities. We enjoy having lunch with friends. We plan to take a trip this summer with our family. Bill will probably have back surgery sometime soon. We have been busy getting our yard cleaned up after winter and planting flowers.”

**Marilyn Meeks (Collierville, TN)** - reports that she has just returned from a Viking River cruise which sailed on the Rhine River. “We started in Amsterdam and went through Germany and France, ending up in Switzerland. And, yes, it was just as wonderful as it looks on those ads on Masterpiece Theater!” They saw a combination ale house and church at a village on the Rhine. You actually walk through the ale house to get to the church. On top of the church is a rooster. The protestant churches in Germany all have roosters on top, to signify the cock which crowed three times at Peter’s denial. The Catholic churches have crosses.
Reporter Joe Moseley (Atoka, TN)

I’m happy to report that Carol and I are doing well. Carol’s oncologist reports that Carol is CANCER FREE!!! Despite of being short of breath when I exert myself, I experience very little restrictions. Though I frequently walk with a can, I can get around without it. “We” have planted a much smaller vegetable garden this year. I tilled, Carol raked, and I have planted tomatoes, cucumbers, jalapeños, and lettuce. Carol is doing most of the weeding. In God’s time we’ll both share in the eating. Since June of last year I have had the privilege of serving Communion at Campground United Methodist Church on the first of each month and have already preached a few times this year. I’m also happy to report that we are planning a trip to the Northwest. We had originally planned it for 2015 but a bout of Guillain-Barre and Carol’s cancer diagnosis changed our plans. Highlights include: Theodore Roosevelt National Park, The Badlands, Custer State Park, Mount Rushmore & Crazy Horse Memorial, Little Big Horn, Yellowstone and the Grand Teton. Then a stop to see a life-long friend of Carol’s in Denver. We are planning on leaving after Annual Conference. So far our hope and prayer of 2017 being better than 2015 & 16 is being answered. Praise God from whom all blessings flow!!!

Fred & Anna French (Paducah, KY) - I’ve noticed that things are beginning to wear out around us - the antique couch (the middle cushion has three definite wear spots where I’ve been napping for 30 years); the washing machine Lou has been using since we bought it 20 years ago, and of course we've replaced the iron she uses after each days' washing, and my right knee will be replaced this month. It could be because I estimate having walked at least 20,000 MILES. My heart seems well enough, after quadruple by-pass seven years ago, and both hips have been replaced already. Ya know, maybe there’s nothing really to complain about.

JERRY HARBER (Memphis, TN) - Carol and I are well and happy. Just published my sixth novel in the Saint Gabriel series. This one is Saint Gabriel Returns. In book five, our hero, archeologist Dr. Stephen Saint Gabriel is on the verge of dying from an assassination attempt. The title of book six gives away that he doesn’t die, allowing him to continue his work in ancient Antioch. These are fun books to write as I try to take facts and bend them just a little to create good mysteries. In the next couple of months, I’ll publish my third in the series called The Beale Street Murders. All eight of my novels are available as eBooks on Amazon.com.
**Reporter Pat Calhoun (Dyersburg, TN)**

**Fred & Lorene Thomas (Union City, TN)** – (information via Rev Brad Jordan, Pleasant Valley U.M.C. – Fred’s pastor). Both Fred and Lorene are at The Manor Nursing Home in Union City. Thankfully they are able to be in the same room. Fred was recently hospitalized and is working on regaining his strength. Please keep him in your prayers.

**Michael Blake (Martin, TN)** – Both Michael and his mother are doing well. At 94, his mother still goes to church and plays the piano. Michael meets regularly with his covenant group and enjoys the contact. Michael’s planned trip to South Sudan in October 2017 has been changed to Uganda due to the unrest in that region. The orphanage in South Sudan was successful in relocating the children and staff to Uganda. Michael enjoyed going on a retreat at the Abby of Gethsemane near Bardstown, KY. Michael continues to be active as a pulpit fill.

**Frank & Ann Gardner (Martin, TN)** – enjoyed a beautiful joint Easter Sunrise service with Stanley Chapel and Garners United Methodist churches. They had over 140 in attendance. After the early service they enjoyed a time of fellowship and breakfast. Their youngest grandson will be graduating from Middle Tennessee State University soon. They are proud of him (as they are of all their grandchildren). Another grandchild is working as a welder in California. He hopes to be transferred closer to home, possibly Alabama. His job has afforded him the opportunity to see many parts of our country.

**Jane Edwards (Newbern, TN)** – Jane is active at the Newbern U.M.C. They had a great homecoming celebration this spring. Rev. David Comperry was the guest preacher. Jane lives in a small town/rural area. She enjoys watching the wildlife in her backyard. She occasionally gets to see a group of four deer.

**Linda Mophis (Medina, TN)** – Linda is keeping her bags packed! She has a trip to Florida with family planned in 3 weeks, and another trip in 2 months. She loves the beach and ocean but is not too fond of sharks and hopes she never sees one.

**Mary Mitchell Morgan (Trenton, TN)** – The Morgans have had recent storm damage at their house. Several trees were damages but thankfully none fell on the house. A group from Central Baptist Church came and helped them clean up their yard. Mary has not been as active at Oak Grove U.M.C. as she would like. She had a stroke in 2010 and 2012 and has regained some of her strength and mobility. Charles has a ruptured disk in his back so they have been taking care of each other.

**Reporter Bobbie Clarke**

**John and Bobbie Clarke (Jackson, TN)** - have recently celebrated their granddaughter’s 15th birthday at her favorite restaurant, The Twist (located inside The Garden Plaza Hotel). They enjoy worshiping at Forest Heights U.M.C. where John serves as minister of visitation. After Easter he will be leading a
A group of lay people in serving Holy Communion to homebound members. The members enjoy John’s visit – no only his companionship but the flowers he often brings them.

**Marge Vaughn (Jackson, TN)** – Marge suffered a bad fall recently and was hospitalized with several broken bones. Her daughters are taking turns caring for her. She is excited to have her daughters with her but wishes it was under different circumstances. Marge says she is happy to be regaining her strength.

**Donald & Becky VanVoorhis (Bartlett, TN)** – Donald and Becky recently celebrated their mother’s 94th birthday. What a fabulous milestone to celebrate! Both Donald and Beck are doing well and enjoying their retirement.

**Book Review**

By Tom Smith

**IMAGINE HEAVEN by John Burke** (published by Barker Books, 2015)

This book was recommended to me by a member of my Sunday School class. Since reading it I have encountered several people who have read it or are reading it. So far I have not heard any negative comments. The descriptions given by those who had Near Death Experiences are vivid and amazingly consistent. Most of the descriptions relate how colors and lights in Heaven are beyond description by our inadequate imaginations and language. Burke does a commendable job tying together prophetic scripture and descriptions given by the people he interviewed. His interviews were exhaustive and included non-Christian, Christians, and atheists. I certainly feel the desire to read the prophets and Revelations again, with a new perspective. Is there sermon or devotional material therein? In the movie *Heaven is Real*, young Colton Burpo tells his father that a traditional painting of Jesus did not look like the Jesus he had seen in Heaven. Later Colton saw a painting by a contemporary American artist named Akiane and said that painting looked like Jesus. Recalling his interview with Akiane, the author writes: “World renowned by age ten, Akiane began getting tough questions. One day someone asked her why she decided on Christianity rather than a different world religion. “I did not choose Christianity,” Akiane replied. “I choose Jesus Christ. I am painting and writing what God shows me. I don’t know much about religions, but I know this: God looks at our love.” At an art exhibit, one man confronted her. “I am a Buddhist. You called Jesus the “Prince of Peace” yet in his name so many were massacred. How do you explain that?” “Jesus is peace, just like calm water.” Ten year old Akiane answered, “but anyone can drop a stone into water and make it muddy.” This book was easy to read and worth reading.
If you have not seen the movie or read the book you are missing an opportunity to be blessed. The author of the book is William P. Young who was born a Canadian and raised among a stone-age tribe by his missionary parents in New Guinea. Kathie Lee Gifford says, "The Shack will change the way you think about God forever." The movie follows the book in almost every detail. It is about God's grace, presence and forgiveness. When we find it hard to forgive, this movie helps us to experience some of the deepest hurts and yet we also experience the triune God showing how deep and wide God's love, grace and forgiveness is for all. It helps us to experience the fact that God is not the author of bad things in our lives, but instead the triune God is always there so that when we hurt God hurts. The movie should help all who see it to know that God is there through the painful times in our lives. You will be uplifted by this movie.