

OLDE TOWNE PEARISBURG

REGISTER

June 2015

In this edition, we report on a curious phenomenon that took place not too far from here in October, 1863. In recently cleaning out some files from the Historical society, we discovered these snippets. The first part is taken from Frank Moore's "The Civil War in Song and Story," published in 1889.

"The Southern papers told a curious story about a ghostly army that was seen down there. Nobody has pretended to give a solution of the mystery; but it was wisely suggested that it was an optical illusion. Here is the story:

A remarkable phenomenon was witnessed a few miles west of Lewisburg, Greenbrier County, Va. (now West Virginia), on the 1st of October, 1863, about three o'clock P.M., by Mr. Moses Dwyer. Dr. Dwyer was seated on his porch at that time, as well as by others at or near the house.

The weather was quite hot and dry; not a cloud could be seen; no wind ruffled the foliage on the surrounding trees. All things being propitious, the grand panorama began to move. Just over and through the tops of trees on the adjacent hills, to the south, immense numbers of rolls, resembling cotton or smoke, apparently of the size and shape of doors, seemed to be passing rapidly through the air, yet in beautiful order and regularity. The rolls seemed to be tinged on the edge with light green, so as to resemble a border of deep fringe. There were apparently thousands of them; they were perhaps an hour in getting by. After they had passed over and out of sight, the scene was changed from the air above to the earth beneath, and became more intensely interesting to the spectators who were witnessing the panorama from different standpoints.

In the deep valley beneath, thousands upon thousands of (apparently) human beings (men) came in view, traveling the same direction as the rolls, marching in good order, some thirty or forty in depth, moving rapidly - 'double quick' - and commenced ascending the almost insurmountable hills opposite, and had the stoop peculiar men ascending a steep mountain. There seemed to be a great variety in the size of the men; some were very large, whilst others were quite small. Their arms, legs and heads could be distinctly seen in motion. They seemed to observe strict military discipline, and there were no stragglers.

There was uniformity in dress; white blouses or shirts, with white pants; they were without guns, swords or anything that indicated 'men of war.' On they came through the valley and over the steep road, crossing the road, and finally passing out of sight, in a direction due north from those who were looking on.

The gentleman who witnessed this is a man with whom you were once acquainted, Mr. Editor, and as truthful a man as we have in this country, as little liable to be carried away by 'fanciful speculations' as any man living. Four others (respectable ladies) and a servant girl witnessed this strange phenomenon.

On the 14th instant the same scene, almost identical, was seen by eight or ten of the Confederate pickets at Runger's Mill, and by many of the citizens in that neighborhood; this is about four miles east of Percy's. It was about an hour passing."

This story is also related in a letter written by Private James Peck to his relatives on Big Stoney Creek here in Giles. Peck was at Camp Fort Spring, Greenbrier County, Virginia (now West Virginia).

"Dear Uncle and Aunt,

I this evening seat myself to write you a letter for the first time since I have been in service...There was something mysterious seen near Lewisburg and at different places in the county. I will give you the particulars. On Tuesday, the 1st of the month, Mr. Dwyer, a gentleman residing near the Kanawha Turnpike, happened to be at a neighbor's (Mr. Piercy's), sitting on the porch with Mr. Piercy's family, when one of them called his attention to a body of mysterious rectangular objects moving vertically through the air just above the trees in an adjacent Sugar Orchard. These objects were apparently about eight feet long and two and a half in width and one inch thick. They were white tinged a little with green. They moved directly North in a column of about fifty yards wide with the order and regularity of soldiers. The rear was nearer the ground than the front and consequently had to pass through the orchard. In emerging from the trees they resumed their original order and so remained until out of sight. Immediately following but a little further West was seen a vast Army of Men dressed in white and moving in quick time and in as good order as soldier on dress parade. After passing any obstacle they would resume their places in ranks. Thus passed the entire column occupying more than an hour and presenting a scene of awful grandeur and sublimity to those who beheld it.

Whether this be a dream, an optical illusion or means used by omnipotence to foreshadow events and to strengthen his suffering people I will not endeavor to determine. I will state however that those who know the parties will give them credit for candor, intelligence and veracity.

I will now bring my letter to a close. Aunt, I am much obliged to you and Lewis for the cheese and sugar. So nothing more but remain with respect, your obedient Nephew,

James P. Peck"

Further research of this event provides scant evidence other than these accounts. It is indeed a mystery that will go down with the ages.

PEARISBURG TODAY

Meet the Pearisburg Community Market Vendors

If you are curious about the vendors who have made a commitment to providing you with the best local and regional offerings, meet the following Pearisburg Community Market producers and artisans!

Sugar by Suzanne is a small, home based bakery run by Suzanne Whittaker in Pearisburg. According to Suzanne, "We work on everything from wedding cakes and birthdays to dessert catering for most of the year, however, during the summer we love to take part in the local Farmer's Markets and festivals! Farmer's Markets give us a great opportunity to expand the menu beyond the typical cakes and candies and showcase our breads and the fudge we are becoming very well known for! Sugar by Suzanne is a State Inspected home bakery." Visit www.sugarbysuzanne.com or email sugarbysuzanne@aol.com for more information.

Dockery Branch Farms is a family owned and operated business located in the heart of Southside Virginia. According to the owners, "Founded in fall of 2010, our Real Country Sausage is made using an original recipe developed by our family over 100 years ago. Our Real Country Sausage that was once enjoyed as a breakfast delicacy is now enjoyed for every meal as our products have expanded since the early times." They continued, "We are committed to serving its valued customers with the freshest, highest quality farm fresh country sausage and hand tied sausage links that can be produced while maintaining our integrity by promising to never include preservatives or fillers. Dockery Branch Farms is a family owned and operated business that uses recipes used by 4 generations and is eager to share the savory flavor with you and your family."

The Green Market's, Ron Holdren, has been doing 'green' long before 'green' was the cool thing to do. He, along with his wife, Lisa, built a greenhouse twenty-five years ago behind their convenience store, Ron's Stop 'N Shop in Pembroke. After closing the store in 2000, they have continued to expand their greenhouse and farm operation. Ron says that he was fortunate to be able to return to his roots by furthering his pursuit of farming. Based on the season, Holdren will provide a variety of fruits and vegetables to the community market including strawberries, peaches, cherries, apples, greens, Asian vegetables, herbs, sweet potatoes, pumpkins, winter and summer squash, beans, onions, okra, eggplants, more than 3 dozen different tomatoes, and 30 varieties of peppers. He also plans to sell homemade jams and jellies that his mother and brother make.

Kathleen Anderson of **Nanny's Garden** always loved to bake for her family. Several of her products are free of sugar and/or animal products. In the fruit breads, she substitutes canola oil for butter, adds fruit for sweetness, and/or pumpkin for moisture and structure. She locally sources many of her ingredients, including flour milled at Elliston's Big Spring Mill. Kathy has expanded her products to include cookies, gluten-free brownies, fruit breads and other baked goods as well as a variety of hummus dips, spreads, vinegars, seasonings, dried herbs and apple or pumpkin butters. Freshly picked seasonal berries, and asparagus from Three Birds Berry Farm as well as cherries and chestnuts from Kathy's trees are available. Beautiful wreaths and gift baskets are also available for the holidays.



DEPARTMENT NEWS**RECREATION
DEPARTMENT**

Danielle Martin has been hired as the new Pearisburg Recreation Department Director. She began her employment with the town on March 31st.

She brings with her much experience in outdoor recreation and hopes to offer more opportunities for hikes and river events.

She has been very active since beginning her employment, meeting with school officials and working with the other local recreation departments in the county.

Summer programs are underway. Please check out our website at www.pearisburg.org often for updates on upcoming sports and activities.

TOWN POOL

The pool opened on May 23, 2015. You can call the pool at 921-2357 (921-ADIP) to make reservations for pool parties. The pool opens at noon each day and closes at 6pm.

**WHITT
RIVERBEND PARK**

Camping, fishing, a walking trail and picnic shelter are available for public use.

Camping is primitive (no running water or electricity) for \$5 per person per night and the shelter is \$25 per day. Call us with any questions you may have at 921-0340.

HOLIDAY CLOSURES**July 3, 2015****TIPS FROM YOUR
BUILDING
INSPECTOR**

The growing season is upon us, and those residing within the corporate limits of Pearisburg are asked to adhere to the ordinance prohibiting grass and weed growth exceeding 12 inches.

Virginia law allows localities to enforce the ordinance as it concerns occupied or vacant developed or undeveloped property within the Town.

A **NOTICE OF VIOLATION** will be sent to responsible persons when a property becomes non compliant (growth in excess of 12 inches). The notice will state a reasonable time to bring properties into compliance. The Town will enter upon and bring properties into compliance with the ordinance if responsible parties fail to do so, in which event the cost and expenses shall be chargeable to and paid by responsible parties.

CHANGE IN VIRGINIA LAW this year requires the Town to deliver only an initial notice of violation concerning the ordinance for this calendar year. After the initial notice has been sent the Town may enter upon and bring property into compliance at any time there is a violation of the ordinance.

FINANCE DEPARTMENT

Just a note: If utility bills or taxes are due on the weekend, the Town will honor the Monday following without penalty. If bills are due during a holiday closing or during a closure for inclement weather, the bill will be honored on the next day of business without penalty.

Vocational agriculture classes are growing in popularity in many public school systems. Some Virginia high school Ag programs have a greenhouse or give students the opportunity to raise small farm animals like goats. But only three in Virginia offer a chance to work with cattle on a real farm. One of those is the **Giles County Land Lab**. The lab is "100 percent hands-on," said farm manager Ben Woods. "The kids will be involved immensely, not only with the cattle, but with the planning, planting and harvesting of marketable crops. And the same thing with the design of agriculture building facilities, we hope to have them involved in every aspect of the operation here."

As for the products the Giles County Land Lab will bring to the market, "All of the produce available will be planted, managed, & harvested by students in Giles County. Our goal is to encourage the next generation of community to stay on the farm."

Reliant Farm is operated by Brent and Tonia Strange. They are first generation farmers restoring an 18th century sustainable farm in Newport VA. They currently offer all natural, pasture raised heritage pork and free range eggs. They use no antibiotics, hormones or pesticides. Their pork is USDA inspected. They will have pork for sale by the cut.

Beliveau Estate Winery will be hosting a wine garden every third Thursday, from 4-8 at the market. Since opening in May 2012, Beliveau Estate Winery has received more 45 competition medals: Gold, Silver, and Bronze. Wine will be sold by the glass and by the bottle.

When asked what **Mother Daughter Creations** will bring to the market Tammy replied, "I make crafts ...I have handmade wreaths, decorative mason jars, crochet baby blankets and other crochet items, hand crafted goats milk and glycerin soaps, and much more." She will be at the market every third Thursday.

According to Chef Kate, **The Farm Table** is a Farm to Fork initiative that will provide activities/services that will begin to address the need for healthier food selection and preparation. It will serve fresh prepared food at the market, weekly. Local produced, non-processed foods (many which are available for purchase from the vendors at the Community Market) will be featured as main components in the items demonstrated and subsequently sold as meals at the market. For weekly menus, visit the Pearisburg Community Market Facebook page. For more information on Farm Table products and/or food services available onsite at the Community Center or for pick up for community activities, business meetings and more, contact chef.kate83@gmail.com.

Under the Green Umbrella spreads love through food and through friendly conversations. Tracie Harrah states, "We strive to inspire and to build meaningful relationships with those around us. We know who we are and we want to get to know you. It's about family here, and just letting the love grow with our gourmet baked goods, lemonades, and prepared foods." Visit <https://www.facebook.com/letthelovegrowUTGU> for more information.

Please visit the Pearisburg Community Market Facebook page for updated information on events and vendors.



Mayor's Corner

I am very pleased with the initial success of the Pearisburg Community Market. The schedule of fun events to be held at the Farmers Market is exciting. Vendors will sell local produce and every week some type of entertainment is planned. The Market is open Saturday from 9 – 2 and the Third Thursday from 4-8 in the evening. Be sure to come out for the Third Thursday Summer Concerts. There will be food and farm vendors set up. Bands are scheduled for outdoor concerts each month. This is sure to be the place to be in Giles County.

June 19 and 20 is Festival in the Park. We are going to have the biggest one yet. More rides, better bands, and a big fireworks display. Don't miss out on any of the fun. This year we also have the State of Virginia's traveling exhibit commemorating the 150th Anniversary of the Civil War. This display will be open all day on Saturday June 20. This may be your only chance to tour this display before the commemoration ends this year.

I am also pleased that council will be able to approve a new budget this year without having to increase water or sewer fees and without a real tax increase. The improvements being made around the Community Center, at the New River landings, and with the Farmers Market will help keep Pearisburg moving forward. Have a great summer and let me know if I can help you in any way.

Robert L. Dickerson

mayor@pearisburg.org

Community Center Repairs

Work has been completed on asbestos removal at the Community Center. This has allowed town crews to repair broken steam pipes in the building. The east hallway remains closed until repairs are completed on the floor. Council has approved installation of a ramp in this hall that will make the first floor classrooms handicap accessible. This improvement will also include expanded concrete pad at the entrance that will make this the main handicap accessible entrance to the building.

In addition to this work, major improvements have been made to the kitchen area. The old steam table serving line has been removed and replaced with stainless counters. Using grant funds a new commercial refrigerator and freezer have been added to the equipment at this location. The fire suppression hood on the stove has also been repaired and is operational for the first time in many years.

Future work is being considered including plumbing repairs and bathroom improvements. This work will be scheduled as funding allows



Town of Pearisburg Welcomes New Community Market Manager

With the grand opening of the Pearisburg Community Market scheduled for May 30, the Town of Pearisburg is pleased to announce the appointment of Virginia Tech graduate, Hayley Warner, as their new Community Market Manager.

Hayley is a graduating Hospitality Tourism Management senior with interests in travel tourism, event management, health and nutrition, and local agriculture. According to Hayley, "We are very passionate about local agriculture and sustainable practices in my home. We keep five chickens, receive two different CSA's, frequent the local farmers markets, and compost as much as we can."

Hayley read about the town's Farm to Fork Program and the recent grant to initiate the Community Market and jumped at the opportunity to apply for the Farmer's Market Manager position.

She relayed, "My training in Hospitality Tourism has given me a different perspective that I believe will benefit me in the promotion of the farmer's market and in the customer service aspect when working directly with vendors and customers."

"I love educating myself and others about local agriculture practices and proper nutrition," she continued. "I am very excited about being on the ground floor of the creation of the farmer's market. This is a total win-win situation. It allows local farmers, distributors, artists and other vendors to sell and promote their products while offering fresh food, and family fun activities to the town of Pearisburg."

The Community Market is open, May-October, on Saturdays 9-2 and the third Thursday of each month from 4-8 on the front lawn of the Community Center on Wenonah Avenue. Activities change weekly. For more information visit the Pearisburg Community Market on Facebook or the pearisburg.org website.



E n t e r t a i n m e n t S c h e d u l e f o r t h e P e a r i s b u r g F e s t i v a l i n t h e P a r k

Friday, June 19th

6:00-6:30pm Valley Bluegrass

6:45-7:30pm Black Twig Pickers

8:15-11pm Town Mountain

Saturday, June 20th

9:30-11AM Dance Motion

11:00-12:15 Rotary Auction

12:30-2:00 Giles School of Dance

2:30-3:30 Barry Bowman

3:50-4:50 David Francisco

5:15-7:45 Half Throttle

8:45-11:00PM Ride'n Shotgun

Buzz About the Pearisburg Community Market

A SAMPLE of some of the events you will not want to miss June-July at the Market

Music at the Market every third Thursday from 4-8

Wine garden: Beliveau Estate Winery

Different band performing every month from 6-8

Wine paired appetizers for purchase by FARM TABLE

Shopping with local and regional vendors

WNRV Kids Interviews

Market Tour of VA Breweries every second Saturday from 11-2

Different brews will be featured each month from a different VA brewery-2 glass maximum purchase for 21 or older

Food will be available for purchase from the FARM TABLE

Shopping with local and regional vendors

Market at the Festival

The Community Market will join Pearisburg Festival in the Park on June 20!

Opening of Music at the Market Concert Series May 21, 4-8

Featured Band: Hans Creek String Band-Bluegrass music

Wine garden: Beliveau Estate Winery

Appetizers for purchase from FARM TABLE

WNRV Kids Interviews

Shopping with local and regional vendors

Blues Brew and BBQ! June 13, 9-2

Featured Band: Indian Run Stringband-Old Time music

Featured Brewery: Parkway Brewing Company 11-2

Barbecue Lunch for purchase by FARM Table

Exhibits: Appalachian Trail

Shopping with local and regional vendors

A Tribute to the New River at the Market! June 18, 4-8

The Community Market unveils four river sculptures with Renew the New and Giles Art Council 5-6

Artists: Robert Tuckwiller, Corbin Vierling, Tacie Jones, and Nikki Pynn

Exhibit: LoCo Arts Recycled Art Sculptures

Band: Ratatouille, 6-8-Jazz music

WNRV Kids Interviews

Wine garden: Beliveau Estate Winery

Wine paired appetizers for purchase from FARM TABLE

Shopping with local and regional vendors

Touch A Truck! June 27, 9-2

Exhibit: 30-40 trucks and equipment on display

Shopping with local and regional vendors

Food for purchase from FARM TABLE

Renaissance Day! July 11, 9-2

Special Performance by LoCo Arts Shakespeare Camp at 12:30

Action packed scenes of "Great Macbeth Moments"

Eat with Your Hands Food for purchase by FARM TABLE

Featured Brewery: to be announced

Shopping with local and regional vendors

Music at the Market July 16, 4-8

Band to be announced

Wine garden: Beliveau Estate Winery

Wine paired appetizers for purchase by FARM TABLE

WNRV Kids interviews

Celebrate Farming and Agriculture! July 18, 9-2

Extension Agriculture booths, exhibits and activities

Buy Local Cookout Meal prepared for purchase by Farm Table

WNRV Speaking of Sports Live broadcast 9-10

Shopping with local and regional vendors

Activities change weekly! For a complete schedule visit the Pearisburg Community Market on Facebook

5 WEEKS WITH THE NEW RIVER VALLEY MASTER GARDENERS AT THE PEARISBURG COMMUNITY MARKET

The NRV Master Gardeners will offer a Kids Gardening Program at the Pearisburg Community Market this summer. The program will begin on June 20th from 10:30am-1:30pm. Below is a complete list of the dates they will be at the Market:

June 20, 2015

July 18, 2015

August 15, 2015

September 19, 2015

October 24, 2015

They have a very special project planned for participants! The Market will theme October 24th with the project. Stay tuned for details.

There will be days that the group will meet at the Giles Land Lab. Those dates will be announced.

A garden requires patient labor and attention. Plants do not grow merely to satisfy ambitions or to fulfill good intentions. They thrive because someone expended effort on them.

[Liberty Hyde Bailey](#)

It is only the farmer who faithfully plants seeds in the Spring, who reaps a harvest in the Autumn.

[B. C. Forbes](#)

The love of gardening is a seed once sown that never dies.

[Gertrude Jekyll](#)



Call 540-921-0340