

# OLDE TOWNE

## PEARISBURG REGISTER

SEPTEMBER 2014

### WILLIAM BRANCH GILES

Many may know the origin of our county's name but most may not know about the man behind the name.

Giles was born in Amelia County, Virginia in 1762. He attended Prince Edward Academy, now Hampden-Sydney College, and the College of New Jersey, now Princeton University. He then went on to study law with Chancellor George Wythe at the College of William and Mary and was admitted to the bar in 1786. Giles supported the new Constitution during the ratification debates of 1788, but was not a member of the ratifying convention.

Giles was elected to Congress in a special election in 1790, taking the seat of Theodorick Bland, who had died in office. Giles is believed to be the first member of Congress to be elected in a special election. He was re-elected three times before resigning in October, 1798, on the grounds of ill health, and in disgust at the Alien and Sedition Acts.

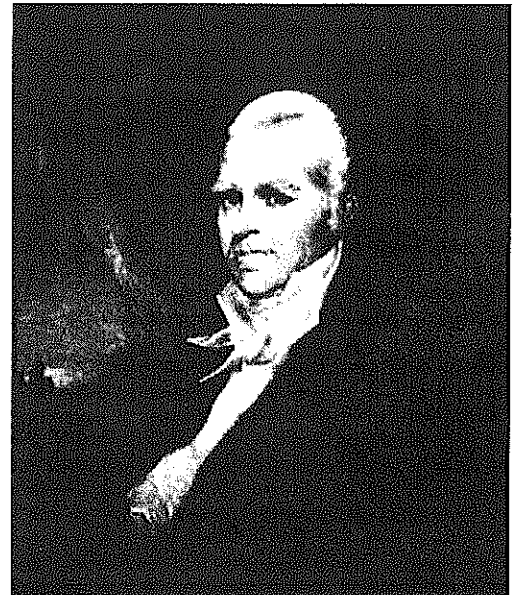
After another term in the House, from 1801 to 1803, Giles was appointed as a U.S. Senator from Virginia following the resignation of Wilson Cary Nicholas in 1804. Senators in those days were elected by the state legislatures. Giles served in the US Senate, being reappointed in 1810, until he resigned in March 3, 1815.

During his time as a Senator, he supported the election of James Madison as President in 1808, in preference to the Federalist's candidate Charles Cotesworth Pinckney, and was Madison's chief advocate in Virginia.

After the election, however, he joined the increasing criticism of Madison; first as too weak on Britain and then, in 1812, as too hasty in going to war. He particularly disliked Albert Gallatin, Madison's Secretary of the Treasury, and was largely responsible for defeating Gallatin's bill of 1811 for a new Bank of the United States.

After leaving the U.S. Senate, Giles served one relatively uneventful term in the Virginia House of Delegates in 1816-1817 and then retired from political office for a time. When James Barbour left the Senate in 1825, Giles attempted to persuade the legislature to appoint him as replacement; they appointed John Randolph instead. In 1826, he was again elected to the House of Delegates, and in 1827 he was elected Governor. Giles served as Governor of Virginia for three one-year terms, from March 4, 1827 to March 4, 1830.

In Giles's last term, he was a member of the Virginia Constitutional Convention of 1829-30. He opposed the movement in the Convention to strengthen his own office, the governorship. Strong governorships in other states, such as New York, were at the center of political machines kept together by patronage and corruption, he said, and the reason that Virginia had not



suffered from those ills was that the governorship in his state was too weak to be worth fighting for. Rather than follow the example of New York, with its party machine, it was better for Virginia to retain George Mason's executive model. Giles lost to some extent: while the governor's term remained short and was still accountable to the General Assembly, the office of the governor was made more independent.

During his life, Giles married Martha Peyton Tabb, eldest daughter of John Tabb, in 1797, and remarried after her death to Frances Ann Gwynn of Prince William County in 1810. Giles fathered seven children between his two wives. He died in 1830 and is buried at his estate of "Wigwam" in Amelia County.

Giles has no direct ties to our area, having been raised and buried in Amelia. However, when the county was being formed in 1806, leaders elected to name it in his honor. There is also a Giles County in Tennessee named for him.

### **GREETINGS FROM THE GILES COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

While just over two hundred years old, Giles County is relatively young by most standards, but its history began much earlier. Native Americans were attracted by our great river and fertile hunting grounds. Later, Scots-Irish immigrants, pushing the borders of the western frontier, settled near the river as well. The conflicts between the Native Americans and the European settlers are told in the stories of Mary Porter, Mary Draper Ingles, and numerous others. Towns began to form in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century creating business centers for a largely rural population.

The Civil War saw Union forces marching through Pearisburg and Newport on their way to and from West Virginia. The Andrew Johnston house, now owned by the Society, was used as Union headquarters briefly in 1862 by Col. Rutherford B. Hayes and Sgt. William McKinley, both later presidents of the United States. Driving the back roads of Giles County, more evidence of our history is visible from the remnants of mills and iron furnaces, limestone quarries, ferry and bridge crossings, small communities, old farmsteads, and the railroad tracks running on both sides of the New River.

So come and explore our past and learn about our shared history! The Society is open Wednesday, Thursday, & Friday from 12 noon until 5pm and Saturday & Sunday from 2pm until 5pm. Admission to the Museum and House are free but donations are always greatly appreciated. If you are looking to do some research for genealogy or other purposes, our Research Center is open during the same hours and on Saturday's, our local genealogist is available on site. There is a small fee, \$10 per day, to use the Center to help cover our costs.

In closing, please keep an eye out for information about our annual meeting in September as well as our annual Christmas event in December. You can also follow us in our weekly column, "The Cupola," in "The Virginian Leader." If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us at (540) 921-1050 or [director@gilescountyhistorical.org](mailto:director@gilescountyhistorical.org).

*Published by the Giles County Historical Society to foster historical preservation and heritage appreciation among the residents and business community of the Town of Pearisburg, County of Giles, and the State of Virginia.*

# PEARISBURG TODAY

## CLOVERBUDS VISIT



Two groups of Cloverbud campers visited the town and learned about local government and how a Town Council operates. The young people formed a council and occupied the council seats and conducted a brief meeting. With their limited budget the choice had to be made on whether to buy vanilla or chocolate ice cream or cupcakes. One camper became the Town Attorney and made sure that no closed discussions were held. Two others became citizens and argued for and against the choices. Once the discussion was over the young Mayor called for a vote. After the meeting the young Town Manager took the group for a tour of the Municipal Building.

Campers discussed public safety issues with the Police Chief and Officer Journell and looked at a police car and a backhoe. All of the campers got to sit in the vehicles and posed for a group picture in the backhoe bucket. The visit concluded with lunch and ice cream or cupcakes, depending on the council decision. We are not sure if the campers or the town staff had more fun and look forward to future visits by area youth.

## GILES COUNTY CHAMBER OFFICE RELOCATES

After twenty years located at the corner of Main Street and Wenonah Avenue in Pearisburg, the Giles County Chamber of Commerce relocated to 201 North Main Street. The decision to move was based on the following: improved parking, better visibility and the ability to realize the goal of opening a Visitor's Center in Downtown Pearisburg.

The Chamber will utilize the new space as an office, exhibit area for local art from the Giles Arts Council, and a tourist information center. Chamber Director Cathy Clark is decorating the space with photos of the County integrated with tourism props.

There will also be an exhibit space dedicated to "Giles County in Film". This area will be used to showcase the movies, commercials, advertisements, independent films and television episodes filmed in Giles County over the years.

A retail area with Giles County merchandise will be added in the near future as well as display areas for Chamber members to showcase their businesses.

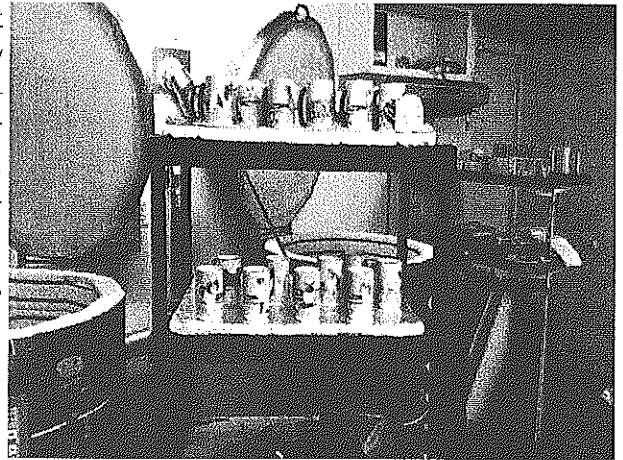
According to Clark, "Although the office relocated during the July 4th weekend, the setting up of the office will be a work in progress." She continued, "We will be planning a grand opening in early fall once all exhibits and the visitor center information area is complete."



## BUSINESS NEWS!

If you're looking for unique gifts, The Pearis Mercantile is a must visit. The shop is filled with unique and eclectic gifts, which include jewelry, stained glass, birdhouses, small furniture and gifts for all occasions. According to Ann Wheeler, about 25% of the inventory is on consignment. Pearis Mercantile is located at 200 N. Main St. next to the Post Office. In addition to gifts, The Mercantile offers items needed by Appalachian Trail hikers. For more information please call Ann at 921-2260.

Also new to Pearisburg is Zeppa Studios. Melissa Zeppa is owner of the unique and whimsical animal themed giftware and accessories business. Zeppa Studios make and ships unique animal themed gifts from the business located off the Giles County Court House parking lot behind Wenonah Avenue. They do not warehouse finished products, only blank canvases in order to provide customers with a uniquely special purchase. They offer note cards, coasters, hand painted ceramics and other gifts printed from their artwork or from personal photos provided by buyers. You can visit [www.zeppastudios.com](http://www.zeppastudios.com) to shop. The business is open by appointment. You can call 921-1835 to set up your shopping appointment.



We welcome Grant's to Pearisburg. They opened up the newest grocery store in town where Sav-A-Lot had previously been located. They opened in August.

## NEW A.T. HIKERS SERVICES IN PEARISBURG

The Town of Pearisburg has been an active and proud Appalachian Trail Community for many years. However, this year the Town and its members have launched a number of new initiatives to become even better friends and neighbors to the hikers.

The Holiday Motor Lodge located on Main Street has been a partner in this effort. They have converted the game room into a hiker dormitory. It opened in March offering 17 beds, private bathrooms and showers. When available, staff at the Lodge will provide shuttles service for the hikers.

The Bank Food and Drink, Pearisburg Eye Associates, Pembroke Stop and Save, Dr. Stubbs and Pearis Mercantile have joined the A.T. Community Supporter Program and have offered services to hikers passing through. Businesses do not have to be located in Pearisburg to join the program. If you would like to learn more about serving Pearisburg's A.T. Hiker Community, please call 921-0340.



### HOLIDAYS

LABOR DAY—SEPTEMBER 1, 2014

COLUMBUS DAY—OCTOBER 13, 2014

VETERAN'S DAY—NOVEMBER 11, 2014

THANKSGIVING—NOVEMBER 26-28, 2014

You can now pay Water/Sewer bills by e-check. Also Camping Fees at Whitt -Riverbend Park.

Check the new web page:

[www.pearisburg.org](http://www.pearisburg.org)

# Mayor's Corner

This has been a busy summer and I trust everyone took advantage of the good weather to enjoy time with friends and family.

It is hard to believe that another school year is getting underway. Council is very involved with planning the needs of the Community Center. This is going to be a big and expensive project. We will be asking for citizen input into what should be done. Unfortunately, the building will not have heat this winter and the front section will remain closed.

Council hosted two of the three cookouts for the AT workgroups this summer and had a great time meeting and greeting these hardworking individuals. A special hats off to the Jolly Rovers who came all the way from New York to work on the Trail relocation.

The town continues to see steady progress. Pearis Mercantile, Grant's and Carilion Clinic Family Medicine Giles all represent significant investments in the future of our town. We look forward to more exciting developments in the future. If you have any questions or concerns please let me know.

**Robert L. Dickerson**

[mayor@pearisburg.org](mailto:mayor@pearisburg.org)

## APPALACHIAN TRAIL RELOCATION

Work continues on the relocation of the Appalachian Trail with work crews from the Konnarock Crew holding several summer week long work projects. Two separate relocations will move the Trail onto permanent routes between Peter's Mountain and Angel's Rest. The first project was dedicated and opened to hikers this summer from the New River Bridge to Peter's Mountain. This route skirts the Celanese plant and climbs the mountain near Pocahontas Road. Local Pearisburg AT Community members joined with the workcrew to complete part of the new section.

In July an Advanced Rock Workshop was held in Pearisburg to learn techniques needed for building trail in steep areas. The Jolly Rovers from New York State conducted the workshop and Konnarock Club worker groups are putting the new skills to good use moving the Trail from Route 634 to Route 100. This relocation will move the Trail out of the residential area of Bluff City in keeping with the purpose of the AT. The local Committee and Holiday Motor Lodge hosted three cookouts for the trail workers and Tangent Outfitters provided a float trip on the New River.



## DEPARTMENT NEWS

### NEW FACES AROUND TOWN

The Town welcomes three new faces to our staff. Matthew Craig has started his employment with the Town at the Sewer Plant, Joseph Carroll with the Street Department and Penny Harless began in July in the Town Clerk's Office.

### PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

The Public Works Department along with the temporary summer help has accomplished much this summer. They were busy revamping the playground at the Community Center park. All the equipment in the park was given a fresh coat of paint and all of the equipment has fresh mulch under and around it. They also painted at the Town Pool, ball field dugouts, the park bathroom, the concession stand and the bleachers.

### RECREATION DEPARTMENT

As a very busy summer is coming to an end we can look back and say that all of our programs were a success. We offered Tee-ball and coach pitch this year along with our normal summer athletic programs. We are now looking forward to the new programs that we will be offering for the fall season. New this year will be flag football for youth and adults. We will also be expanding our youth volleyball program to include grades 4-8 and basketball to include grades 4-8. You can follow us on Facebook or visit the Town's website at [www.pearisburg.org](http://www.pearisburg.org) to get the most up-to date information on our programs and registration information.

### LIBRARY

The 2014 Summer Reading Program for children age six to twelve was held at the Pearisburg Library each Wednesday, beginning June 25 through July 23.

The special kick-off program was provided by Magician Mike Klee on June 25. On July 2, members of the Pearisburg Junior Woman's Club came to do activities with the children and helped them make ice cream sundaes which were enjoyed by all in attendance. On July 9, former Pearisburg resident Dr. Kerri Cooper-Bailey presented a live Fur, Feathers and Scales program. Everyone enjoyed the animals she brought with her which included a hognoose snake. On July 16, Giles Arts Council member Ms. Corbin Vierling assisted the children with some butterfly craft projects complete with glitter. Mrs. Mary Jane Vierling and other adults present also provided help. During the finale on July 23, we had two surprise guests. Mr. Chris Walter, along with his therapy dog Trooper, stopped by to visit the kids. They are members of Therapy Dogs International. Children can build their confidence in reading aloud by practicing with the dogs who love to listen. After enjoying the special guests, we had a pizza party and other treats. Certificates were awarded and all of the children who completed our ten-hour reading challenge received special recognition. We had as many as thirty-seven children in attendance at one of the sessions.

We also had preschool story times, conducted by the Pearisburg Junior Woman's Club and the American Heritage girls, on these same dates. As many as twenty young children attended. We used the Paws to Read theme as well, so the little ones enjoyed many stories about our four-legged friends. They loved the animal puppets used with the stories. They also were able to participate in some fun songs and games. On the last day of the program, each child received a certificate and a bag of nice treats. We were fortunate to have some great art on the walls of our activity room this summer. Giles High School art students did a nice job using the Paws to Read theme.



## The Town of Pearisburg is now offering Text and Email Alerts

The Town has a new website and with it came new features that our citizens can take advantage of. As a citizen you now have the ability to get our NEWS & EVENTS either emailed to you or a text notification sent to you. NEWS & EVENTS is the section of the website that keeps citizens up to date with community activities, classes, emergency news such as water breaks and road closures and other items of interest. The Town maintains several calendars on the website that you may subscribe to get information sent to you. You can subscribe to as many of the calendars as you wish. The Recreation Dept. calendar would keep you alert to sign-up dates, practice schedules, game schedules and special events. The Main calendar has all of the office holiday closures, meetings, and community events. There is also a Farm to Fork calendar that would have all of the classes listed.

It is very simple to sign up to get these notifications. Simply visit our website at [www.pearisburg.org](http://www.pearisburg.org), select "Notify Me" and register. You customize what and how you wish to receive the information. We encourage interested citizens to sign up so that they have the most current information available to them. We are always available to answer your questions and to help you get registered.

Citizens currently have the option of reserving the shelter and campsites at Whitt Riverbend Park online. In the near future citizens will be able to view the Community Center calendar and reserve the Community Center rooms and shelter online. When this option is ready it will be posted in our NEWS & EVENTS.

If you wish, you could subscribe for an email version of our Olde Towne/Pearisburg Today Newsletter that is published quarterly. Just subscribe on line and it will come to you at the date of next publication.

### PEARISBURG FARM TO FORK

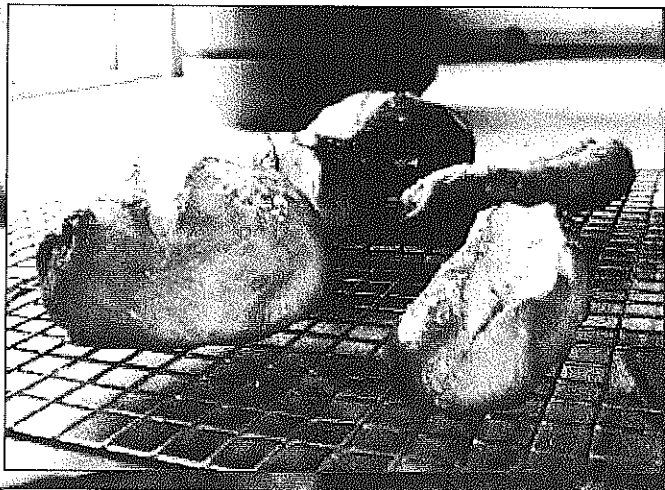
Farm to Fork offers cooking classes on a variety of topics. Here's a sample of some of the class offerings you can expect to see August-December.

#### Let's Talk Coffee September 18

Chef Michael Behmoiras and Strange Coffee Company will provide you with a brief overview of the sensory aspects of tasting coffee and the terminology used in describing coffees. A group tasting and samples will be provided. This class will be held at The Bank Food and Drink Restaurant.

#### Let's Make Scones September 28

Learn how to make scones with instructor Rick Tawney. At the end of the class, participants will taste the results! This class will be held at the Pearisburg Community Center.



#### WHAT IS COMING SOON!

- How to Make Homemade Pasta, Kevin White of Palisades Restaurant
- Halloween and Christmas Cupcakes, Susan Whetzel of DoughMestic
- Bread Making, Neville Harris of Woods Hole Hostel and Mountain Retreat
- Cooking for Two, Sarah Burkett, Senior Extension Agent, Family and Consumer Sciences
- Appalachian Breakfast, Ron Matney, formerly of Harvest Restaurant
- Basic Cooking for Kids, Doris Fleming of Zeppoli's Italian Restaurant
- Garnish Your Food, Doris Fleming of Zeppoli's Italian Restaurant
- Truffle Making, Genie Rasch of Chocolate Spike
- Sauces, Katelyn Dinger of Harvest Restaurant

To register call 540-921-0340 or visit Farm to Fork at [www.pearisburg.org](http://www.pearisburg.org) for an up to date listing of classes.

Pearisburg Farm to Fork

~ COOKING FRESH, GOING LOCAL ~

## U P C O M I N G   E V E N T S

<b>COCKTAILS AND CONVERSATIONS</b>	<b>THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 4, 2014</b>	<b>6 PM</b>
<b>AT THE BANK FOOD AND DRINK</b>		
<b>TOWN COUNCIL MEETING</b>	<b>TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 9, 2014</b>	<b>7:30 PM</b>
<b>COCKTAILS AND CONVERSATIONS</b>	<b>THURSDAY, OCTOBER 2, 2014</b>	<b>6 PM</b>
<b>AT THE BANK FOOD AND DRINK</b>		
<b>ART ON THE LAWN</b>	<b>SATURDAY, OCTOBER 4, 2014</b>	
<b>ANNUAL FIREMANS PARADE</b>	<b>SATURDAY, OCTOBER 4, 2014</b>	<b>7 PM</b>
<b>TOWN COUNCIL MEETING</b>	<b>TUESDAY, OCTOBER 14, 2014</b>	<b>7:30 PM</b>
<b>GHS HOMECOMING PARADE</b>	<b>FRIDAY, OCTOBER 17, 2014</b>	<b>4 PM</b>
<b>PEARISBURG EYE ASSOCIATES 5K</b>	<b>SATURDAY, OCTOBER 18, 2014</b>	<b>9 AM</b>
<b>COCKTAILS AND CONVERSATIONS</b>	<b>THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 6, 2014</b>	<b>6 PM</b>
<b>AT THE BANK FOOD AND DRINK</b>		



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