



# MONTEAGLE SUNDAY SCHOOL ASSEMBLY

• A CHAUTAUQUA EST. 1882 •

PO Box 307  
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## From the President We are Richly Blessed

What a privilege it is to serve this unique and wonderful place. In particular, I have been so pleased by the number of people who have agreed to step up and fill the many roles that are necessary to keep our little sanctuary running. We have a terrific list of committee chairs and committee members who will serve us in the coming year.

Thank you to every one of you for taking on these responsibilities. I appreciate you saying “yes!” when the call was made.

Now that the No-Season Season is thankfully behind us (although I have heard many of you say the slower pace of the summer was a silver lining), we are hard at work on many fronts to plan for next year and beyond. Scott is doing his usual masterful job of making sure

all the trains are running on time and our finances are in order.

Ruth and the platform committee are already busy working on the program for next summer. The youth committee is excited about incorporating some new ideas that were learned this summer into our already wonderful program.

Everyone seems excited to, hopefully, put this pandemic behind us and enjoy a more “normal” summer. Regardless of the status of the virus, I personally intend to do everything within my power to ensure that we have a program. The annual meeting showed us what we can still do in a world of masks and social distancing. Also, if you did not get a chance to enjoy Church on the Mall, it was a real treat.



Above: Church on the Mall

Finally, I am excited to announce that the board has approved the undertaking of a master planning process. Under the leadership of Paula

Walker, a task force comprised of,  
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MSSA

## From the President

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Amanda Moody, Kent Ballow, Albert Ambrose, Anne Waring, Will Reynolds and Stephen Green will be looking at our property, both old and new, in order to make recommendations on its uses in the coming decades. A critical piece of that process will be seeking input from all of you, so stay tuned!

I hope you will agree that God has richly blessed our little slice of Heaven.

Overton Thompson  
President

## Property Projects

Summer may be over, but your property committee has been hard at work! The following are just a few projects that property has been working on!

1. The Archives HVAC will be replaced. This will ensure that our Assembly history is preserved for future generations. If you have not spent any time in the archives, make plans to do so. Under the direction of Morgan Merrill and her committee, the archives is a well organized, trip down memory lane. Whether you are curious about the history of your cottage or the history of the Assembly, you will find it there. Contact Morgan or Scott for more details.

2. Office computers have been replaced and new software installed. The old computers were 10 years old! Money has been allocated from CCF to address ongoing water and sewer issues.

3. Completed projects: Both the mall and east court gazebos have been painted and a new roof was installed on the bell tower.



4. In May, the property committee asked to engage Jennifer Smith (chair of reforestation) and her committee to help with noise abatement at the pickle ball courts. Jennifer serves as the horticulturist for the Metro Nashville Landscape Coordination Program focusing on urban forestry. Jennifer's committee has come up with a plan that will help with noise and stay in keeping with the Assembly's natural setting. Her committee has a plan for plantings to start in November. The Assembly is fortunate to have someone with Jennifer's knowledge and expertise offer her services on a volunteer basis. In addition, other noise abatement measures are being researched as well.

Please do not hesitate to reach out if you see something on the grounds that might need attention.

Happy Fall!  
Amanda Moody,  
Property Committee Chair

## QUICK BITES

Lawn trimmings are collected on Wednesdays.

The possession or use of alcohol or controlled substances on public grounds, in public places, or at public functions on the Assembly grounds is prohibited and subjects the offender to disciplinary action by the Board of Trustees.

Safety first! Call (931) 607-8615 when the main office is closed for any security questions or concerns.



The Monteagle Sunday School Assembly was organized by Charter issued by the State of Tennessee on October 4, 1882 for the purpose of: "... the advancement of science, literary attainment, Sunday School interests, and the promotion of the broadest popular culture in the interest of Christianity without regard to sect or denomination."

The Mission of the Monteagle Sunday School Assembly is to be a welcoming community of Christian faith where people gather to engage in spiritual growth and renewal, lifelong inquiry and learning, recreational and cultural enrichment, while being good stewards of our natural resources and our Assembly heritage.

## New Member Spotlight:

### Claudia and Bill Haltom

If you find yourself at a porch party with Claudia and Bill, you won't run out of things to talk about. Although their professional years and raising children are behind them, they are both busy and active in this new phase of their lives. And they love having MSSA as the backdrop for their retirement.

Bill and Claudia met at University of Tennessee, Knoxville, as undergraduates. As a young co-ed from South Pittsburg, Claudia spotted her future husband when he was giving a speech as president of the student body – a speech she describes as “hysterical.” They both remained in Knoxville through law school, overlapping for one year before Bill graduated. He moved back to his hometown of Memphis, where he practiced law for 40 years. Claudia also had a distinguished law career, spending her last 17 years on the bench as a Magistrate in Juvenile Court. Somehow along the way, they managed to raise two sons and a daughter!

Bill is a full-time writer now and has published eight books to date, including one released in January 2020 entitled “Why Can't Mother Vote? Joseph Hanover and the Unfinished Business of Democracy” in conjunction with the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment. He enjoyed plenty of porch time at Everbright this past summer working on his next book, which is about the transformation of old Sears buildings into modern urban

villages. He also writes a regular opinion column for *The Tennessean*. Bill was scheduled to give a lecture this past Summer, but, we'll just have to wait until next summer.

Claudia is not letting any grass grow under her feet either. Her experience with the juvenile justice system allowed her to see the far-reaching consequences of poverty, including school drop-out rates, crime, and victimization of young women. Upon her retirement, she founded A Step Ahead Foundation ([www.astepaheadfoundation.org](http://www.astepaheadfoundation.org)) in 2011, which tackles the issues of teen pregnancy prevention and provides scholarships, enabling them to stay in school, pursue careers, and better plan their lives – truly, getting “a step ahead.” Since its founding, the foundation has awarded \$1,100,000 in educational scholarships.

Over the years, the Haltoms had spent quite a bit of time in Monteagle Assembly, often staying with Doug Ferris and Dot Neale. But when Bill retired in 2018, they started looking in earnest for their own place. Claudia was out walking with her daughter one afternoon and happened to pass Everbright. She commented “This is such a cute house!” to the people on the porch, who replied that they were only renting, but it was for sale. They invited Claudia and her daughter inside for a tour – and the rest is history. She just *knew* it was the house for them, so they made an offer. (Bill didn't even see their new home until the night before the closing!) Bill says



that Monteagle reminds him of his childhood, when kids enjoyed a sense of safety and the pure freedom of riding their bikes wherever they want to go. They love going to the dining hall and church services. They try to attend as many platform programs as they can. Claudia has learned to play Mah Jongg, so she is looking forward to meeting other players next summer. But most often, you can find them relaxing on their beloved porch!

We concluded with a few quick questions:

#### **Favorite Movie?**

Bill: “To Kill a Mockingbird” (They have two beagles, Atticus and Scout)  
Claudia: a toss-up between “A Sixth Sense” and “An Affair to Remember”

#### **Pet Peeve:**

Claudia: Littering, especially trash thrown out of car windows  
Bill: self-righteous people

#### **Favorite Food:**

Bill: Pasta, especially pasta primavera  
Claudia: a fan of sweets, particularly almonds covered with dark chocolate.

## HIGHLIGHTS

### **Warm Welcome**

Be sure to welcome  
new members  
Claudia and  
Bill Haltom



### **Don't Forget to VOTE!**

Tuesday, November  
3rd is voting day.  
Early vote or vote on  
the 3rd. Just be sure  
to VOTE!

## HOUSING QUESTIONS? ASK RHONDA!

Should you have concerns that your cottage has not rented to your satisfaction during the season or off-season, contact the housing office to discuss your options. If you are willing to consider offering your cottage for 3-day rentals, negotiate or prorate rentals, or if you have questions about your rentals, call Rhonda.

The housing office can also help if you want to rent a golf cart during the season. The housing number is (931) 924-9000.

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## ARC PROJECT SUBMISSION DEADLINES

Planning a renovation project? The Architectural Review Committee will accept projects for review and recommendation to the Board of Trust for approval four times per year. Questions about possible projects, the process, and necessary requirements should be referred to the General Manager. Projects submitted by the following dates will be reviewed and presented at the board meeting following the submission.

January 15    February 28

June 10    July 31    September 30

The ARC is available throughout the year to advise members on their project planning prior to submission of a request. Not sure if you need ARC approval? Check with the General Manager first.



## SAFETY FIRST

The MSSA security team is at your service. If you have any emergency --medical or otherwise-- call 911, but our seasoned team is here to help for non-emergency situations. If you have a safety issue or see suspicious activity anywhere on the grounds or at the Point, don't hesitate to call (931) 607-8615 after 5 pm or call the office during business hours. There are no silly concerns--it's better to call and quell your fears than to let something go because you are afraid of a false alarm.

Consider putting the security number by your home phone and/or plugging it into your cell phones.

Kids got cell phones? Plug the security number in those too.

Together we'll keep MSSA the safe haven it is!



## From the Platform

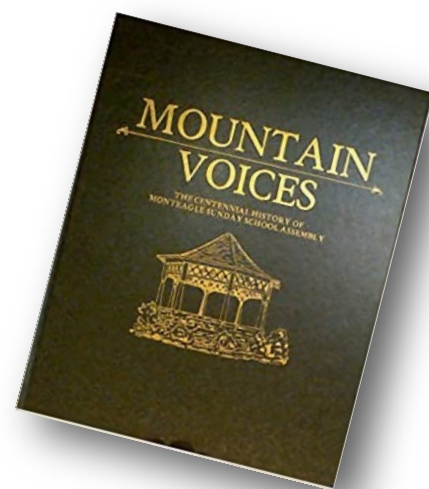
### Building on Our Chautauqua Heritage

I recently received an email reply that began, “Awesome job title!” referring to the signature block with Platform Superintendent following my name. “An awesome job needs a title to match,” I replied. As the work of organizing the 139th Platform is well under way, this exchange prompted me to take a moment and review portions of *Mountain Voices: The Centennial History of the Monteagle Sunday School Assembly*, the histories of the Chautauqua Lake Sunday School Assembly (now the Chautauqua Institution), the Chautauqua Literary and Scientific Circle, and the International Chautauqua Alliance. Reaching into the past provides an appreciation of the platform’s roots and reminds us that we are not a camp or a program. The platform, and platform superintendent, represent the Chautauqua heritage and are not arcane vocabulary that we continue to use without thought.

Goals for the platform were lofty from the beginning in 1874. Chautauqua (New York) originally sought to be an experiment in self-learning; to educate and “uplift the masses.” Monteagle historical accounts include phrases such as “discuss live questions of the day and receive

inspiration to pursue faithfully and systematically, plans for study and general improvement.” By the late 1870s New York had expanded the platform from Sunday School teachers to academic subjects, music, art, and physical education. Here, we find the seeds of the Assembly’s present day purpose and mission, “...to engage in spiritual growth and renewal, lifelong inquiry and learning, recreational and cultural enrichment, while being good stewards of our natural resources and our Assembly heritage.”

Faith, education, recreation, and culture are the abbreviated version of that mission. The four words succinctly define the standard of offering a varied program based on a firm belief that every human soul needs balance in life. Our resources — space/venues, money, time/schedule — are shared among the four areas. Faith is our foundation. Warren Chapel services, guest ministers, the Jervis Bible Week, and Missionary Fund demonstrate our belief that all we have comes from God. Lecturers will present ideas on literature, history, the arts, politics, design, and more. Workshops provide the opportunity to learn and create. Sashiko, the ancient art of stitching found on the robes of Asian emperors; Southern family cooking; and the garden as art are a few examples of topics to be explored. Calm walks with a sketch pad, morning exercise, and the action of tennis and pickle ball all offer the health benefits and social interaction of recreational pursuits. Humans are uniquely created to express and appreciate beauty, and cultural arts have been a part of every civilized society. Harpists, local musicians teaching line dancing, jazz, an a cappella ensemble singing Bach to



Beatles, an American folk ensemble, a Shakespeare performance, and a historical, dramatic impersonator, are a few of the creative performances to be presented.

The 139th platform will offer a variety of events, but fewer than in recent years. I am working with platform guests as we plan amidst the on-going reality and concerns of COVID-19, and the likelihood that it will be a consideration during the 2021 season. There will be much to celebrate and all who gather on this mountain will join in continuing the Chautauqua heritage of learning, listening, playing, and praying together.

Ruth Cobb,  
Platform Superintendent

