

JUNE 2022  
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LIFE AT  
**Center Hill Lake**  
& The Upper Cumberland Region

Where to **EAT**

Where to **STAY**

Where to **PLAY**

*Time for*  
**FUN**

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LIFE AT  
**Center Hill Lake**  
& The Upper Cumberland Region



**T**he Purple Door Antiques & Uniques is one of those little shops off the Square in Smithville where you never know what you may find. From antique furniture and glassware, to new craft items and embroidery, there's a little bit of everything.

Owned by Randy and Janice Caldwell, the shop is easy to find. Located just off the Smithville Square, as the name implies it's the one with the purple door. Once you walk inside you'll find all sorts of items, old and new.

"We are a mix of antiques and new items," Randy said. "Janice also does custom embroidery and we have an artist in the back room, Karen Walker, which hosts paint parties where a group of people get together

and Karen guides them as they paint artworks. She also has an art school for children."

Walker's art studio, Creation Station, offers art supplies and art classes which can be found at their Facebook page, "Creation Station Smithville, TN."

"We have five vendors including ourselves and we have all kinds of items," Randy explained. "When I go picking [buying antiques] I really try to look for some unique items to stay true to our name."

The Caldwell's opened the shop late last year after falling in love with the small town and the community. "We raised three kids in Murfreesboro, and they all went to MTSU," Randy said. "We bought a

# SHOPPING

## ON THE SQUARE

BY CHRIS TRAMEL

# Art and Antiques

## THE PURPLE DOOR ANTIQUES AND UNIQUES

place here [Smithville] about nine years ago, with the intent of retiring here. We thought we would be here once a month, but ended up being here every weekend.”

“I retired about a year and a half ago and we decided to buy this building,” Randy explained. “We really wanted to be a part of the business community here, and it gave us something to do in our retirement. Fortunately for us this is a bit of a hobby that we enjoy and it’s about our vendors doing well as anything.”

The business started up on November 12, 2021, just as the Christmas season was underway, and has gained many loyal customers ever since. While the store opened in the midst of a global pandemic, Randy says that he feels the crisis made people even more aware of the importance

of supporting local businesses.

“We’re also very fortunate to have all the other businesses around the Square. We’re very thankful for all the other businesses that have paved the way in Smithville. We saw the resurgence of businesses here, and revitalization of the downtown area. I understand the importance of a downtown and how it’s the heart of a community.”

The Purple Door is open Tuesday through Saturday 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and Sunday 12:00 noon to 5:00 p.m. on Sunday. They are located at 106 W Walnut Street, Smithville, TN, or you can visit their Facebook page at The Purple Door Antiques and Uniques. Their phone number is 615-427-8017.

# Cheryl's Beau Bees is Buzzing

There's something special about small town America's mom and pop businesses. They are more personable and friendlier than the big box store chains. They are places where you will see friends and family, and catch up on the local gossip. Places where you can get a good meal and a cup of coffee and feel like home.

That's what Steve and Cheryl Jones have strove for with their local business. But, Cheryl's Beau Bees is more than just a restaurant or gift shop. For the Jones, it's also a place of healing.

The Jones family have been in Smithville for nearly 20 years. He hails from Texas originally, while she is from Iowa. The family was brought to Tennessee due to Steve's job in the trucking industry, and they liked the area so much they decided to stay.

"We like it here," Steve said. "There's good people, good seasons, and don't tell the people of Texas, but this is prettier than Texas."

Steve now works as a home inspector, while Cheryl continues to serve as a flight attendant for American Airlines, a position she has held for 36 years. She even serves as a Chinese translator, speaking Mandarin.

While both are still working regular jobs, they began to think about their future. "I kept saying that if you had a good restaurant here in Smithville, we could make some money," Cheryl said with a smile. "I've always been a crafter. I repurposed all of our furniture here, and I do a lot of the crafts."

"She's been bugging me about doing something for 20 years," Steve said. "And she's a first rate cook. I married her for how she looks, but turns out she's a great cook," he added laughingly.

But it was through a great tragedy in the Jones' life that their brand was born, a brand that started as a way to mourn and slowly emerged as a way to help others.

"In 2018, our 28-year-old son passed away," Cheryl explained. "His name was Beau and we called him Beau-Bi-Won Kenobi because he was a huge Star Wars fan. His sisters shortened the nickname to 'Beau Bee.' I started doing 'Bee' crafts to help me through my grief. Steven had even got me a booth in a little town."

"One day I was in our shed, cleaning out some stuff, and I found a Mother's Day card he had gotten me," Cheryl said. "It said, 'I love you Mom. I love you the most,' and it had a bee on it and was signed 'Beau Bee.' That's when I really started the 'Bee' crafting. I had always been a crafty, or artsy, person, and it just really helped me."

"My daughters read that a life that touches others goes on, so it kind of started with us painting rocks," Cheryl continued. "Mostly we painted

little bees on rocks, then we branched out and added inspirational messages. We would leave the rocks around everywhere around the country. Sometimes I would take them with me when I flew and leave them places, and people were starting to find them, go to his Facebook page, and tell us their story about what the rock meant to them and helped with whatever they were going through."

"We heard a lot of stories from people who had also lost their children, parents or siblings. So, we started making what we called 'Touch Stones.' They were tiny and had little bees on them, with Beau's hashtag on the back. We liked those because you could put them in your pocket, and if you felt stressed you could touch it. That made his life touch their life, and that way his life lived on."

"We wanted a place that reminded us of him, and where people could come and relax and we could happily share his memory," Cheryl continued. "One day I was at Button Willow General Store here in Smithville, getting some coffee, and I looked across and saw a little red sign that said, 'For Sale.'"

"I went home and told him [Steve] and he said, 'Let's go have a look at it.' A week later we were buying it."

Today, Cheryl's Beau Bees is a place where you can sit down and have a good meal, and do a little shopping with their many gift items.

"We have a lunch counter and serve soups, sandwiches and salads," Cheryl explained. "Soup is kind of my thing. I have about 30 different recipes and rotate around. There are some that are town favorites like our Italian tortellini, cream of mushroom, and Mexican street corn. I have a chicken gnocchi and sometimes we do chicken and dumplings on Saturdays."

"In the winter we do two soups a day, but in the summer we go down to one," Steve added. "We also serve sandwiches and have salads. We have chicken salad, pimento, tuna, and make everything fresh in house." They also serve different casseroles from time to time.

The restaurant also features a retail area with a variety of craft items, stuffed animals, purses, clothing, their 'We Bee Jammin' preserves, essential oils, cosmetics, and other gift items. Many feature the store's Bee themed items.

Cheryl's Beau Bees is open Tuesday through Saturdays, 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and is located at 108 West Walnut Street, Smithville, TN, just off the town square. They can be reached at 615-215-2328 or you can visit them on Facebook at Cheryl's Beau Bees or at their website Cheryl'sBeauBees.com.



# Legacy Haus

## A MIX OF OLD AND NEW

**L**egacy Haus is a little shop in Smithville that offers something for all ages. Young or old, man or woman, chances are there is something there that will pique your interest.

"We sell a little bit of everything," said owner Otis Rice. "We have stuff for men, women, and children. We have antiques, toys, comic books, vintage and new clothes, sport coats and caps, and even old steamer trunks and clocks."

If you are into leather items, Legacy Haus is the place for you as well. Rice is crazy about leather items, and even has several hides inside the shop.

Rice is from Baxter, TN, and spent 25 years in the retail car business. Looking for a change, Rice is a relative newcomer to the Smithville merchants with the shop opening in April 2022.

Located in a restored storefront with original brick walls and wood floors, Rice said he was dismayed that the original tin ceiling tiles were too far gone to save. "It's a beautiful old building, inside and out."

"We've had a generous helping of support from the locals and other business owners. I assumed some might have thought I was competition, but actually everyone has been very supportive," Rice said.

Rice continued, saying, "When we were designing the store, people asked me what motif I was looking for, I said, 'Imagine someone shopping at super high line stores for 40 years, then having a yard sale. That's what I wanted the place to look like. I think we got pretty close.'"

Legacy Haus is located at 104 West Walnut Street, just off the Smithville Square. They are open Tuesday through Sunday from 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. They can be contacted at 931-650-1321.



# CHERYL'S BEAU BEEES

*Good Food &  
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**Come try the newest lunch counter in Smithville.**

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***Come browse locally made crafts and repurposed furniture.***

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**108 W Walnut St • Tuesday – Saturday 10-5**



BY CHRIS TRAMEL

**N**estled in the rolling hills of Liberty, Tennessee, at a point along the roadway known as the Forks of the Pike, the Rowland family has been working their farm for generations. The land was once a dairy farm, where five brothers and sisters grew up, bailing hay, milking cows, and raising tobacco.

It was on this farm where Mitchell Rowland, Genrose Davis, Tim Rowland, Westa Morrison, and Terry Bess Malone spent most of their childhood, playing along the green fields and the stone fences.

"This was our family farm and our grandfather owned it until the late 90s," Terry Bess said. "We were all raised here."

"I was born here," Genrose added.

The farm is located on a section of knolls that overlook the Forks of the Pike, a section where roads leading to Murfreesboro, Liberty, and Alexandria all intersect. It was even the location of Civil War encampments, where troops would guard the vital passages to the small towns. There were even a few small skirmishes and battles located near the farm.

It was their love for the farm that inspired the family to share their location and create a venue for large gatherings. Tim Rowland is the official owner of the venue, but make no mistake, the Barn at Rowland Hills is a family affair.

"This is my retirement venture," Tim explained. "I have a fulltime job right now, but I wanted to build something that would carry me through retirement."

Rowland began construction of the building in 2018, and right away had help from his brother and sisters. Mitchell Rowland, who has since

passed away, had a big part in helping Tim with the interior of the barn. "He was my main helper," Tim explained. "We had the shell of the building erected, then we worked on all the interior ourselves."

Along the way, Genrose, Terry Bess, and even sister Westa Morrison, who lives in Alabama would all chip in to help create the facility.

The nearly 7,700-square-foot barn features an enormous main room, along with a couple of dressing rooms, bathrooms, and a full kitchen and lounge area. The venue is large enough that it actually hosted the 2022 DeKalb County High School Prom with 258 students and 40 or so adults.

Built specifically for hosting weddings, family reunions, graduation parties, and baby showers, the location offers scenic views with a downhome feel.

The site does not offer catering, but does have nearly 200 chairs with tables, as well as many church pews, which can be moved outdoors for open air events. On the grounds of the venue, Rowland Hills offers a scenic pond, gables and even a fire pit area where Rowland used large rocks unearthed during the building of the barn, arranged as a seating area.

Check out their Facebook page – The Barn at Rowland Hills [www.facebook.com/The-Barn-at-Rowland-Hills-102826255737435](http://www.facebook.com/The-Barn-at-Rowland-Hills-102826255737435) or 615-347-1986 or email at [thebarnrowlandhills@gmail.com](mailto:thebarnrowlandhills@gmail.com).

*The Barn at Rowland Hills is located at 293 Old Highway 53, Liberty, TN, 37095.*





# THE BARN AT ROWLAND HILLS



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# EAT

## **Kilgore's Restaurant**

2595 Nashville Hwy  
Smithville, TN 37166  
615-215-8249

## **Sonrise Diner**

305 W Broad St  
Smithville, TN 37166  
615-215-3463

## **White Possum Grille**

1060 W Broad St  
Smithville, TN 37166  
615-597-9009

## **Patty's Restaurant**

715 W Broad St  
Smithville, TN 37166  
615-318-1158

## **Cloverleaf Restaurant**

10905 Nashville Hwy  
Liberty, TN 37095  
615-536-5534

## **Twisted Oaks**

3349 Nashville Hwy,  
Dowelltown, TN 37059  
615-318-1290

## **F.Z. Webb Soda Fountain**

605 S. Congress Blvd  
Smithville, TN 37166  
615-597-4186

## **McDonald's**

502 S. Congress Blvd  
Smithville, TN 37166  
615-597-8944

## **Hardee's**

135 W Broad St  
Smithville, TN 37166  
615-597-8570

## **Arby's**

510 S. Congress Blvd  
Smithville, TN 37166  
615-215-6565

## **KFC/Taco Bell**

105 E. Broad St  
Smithville, TN 37166  
615-215-1050

## **Sonic Drive-In**

602 S. Congress Blvd  
Smithville, TN 37166  
615-597-9494

## **Bumpers Drive-In**

303 E Broad St  
Smithville, TN 37166  
615-597-6190

## **El Rancho Mexican Restaurant**

1101 W Broad St  
Smithville, TN 37166  
615-597-4272

## **Los Lobos Mexican Restaurant**

106 E Broad St  
Smithville, TN 37166  
615-215-8971

## **Disco Tienda Latina**

431 E. Broad  
Smithville, TN 37166  
615-597-2695

## **Fiesta Jalisco Mexican Grill**

130 Walmart Dr  
Smithville, TN 37166  
615-215-8220

## **China Garden**

130 Walmart Dr  
Smithville, TN 37166  
615-215-9001

## **Dairy Queen**

303 West Broad  
Smithville, TN 37166  
615-597-5545

## **Subway**

100 E. Broad St  
Smithville, TN 37166  
615-597-7111

## **Pizza Hut**

120 E. Broad St  
Smithville, TN 37166  
615-597-1462

## **Dominos Pizza**

408 E. Broad  
Smithville, TN 37166  
615-597-0001

## **Wheel House Restaurant**

350 Sligo Rd  
Smithville, TN 37166  
615-597-5245

## **Blue Water Grille**

1287 Floating Mill Rd,  
Silver Point, TN 38582  
931-858-2275

## **The Dam Restaurant**

1560 Craft Center Dr  
Smithville, TN 37166  
615-215-0315

## **Fish Lipz**

6323 Jefferson Rd,  
Smithville, TN 37166  
615-597-4807

## **Coppertop Restaurant**

450 Cove Hollow Cir  
Lancaster, TN 38569  
615-548-4115

## **Hwy 56 Market & Deli**

600 N Congress Blvd  
Smithville, TN 37166  
615-597-3300

## **Cheryl's Beau Bees**

108 W Walnut St  
Smithville, TN 37166  
615-215-2328

## **Mama's Legacy Kitchen**

456B West Broad St  
Smithville, TN 37166  
615-670-7196

# STAY

## **Evins Mill**

1535 Evins Mill Rd  
Smithville, TN 37166  
615-269-3740  
[www.evinsmill.com](http://www.evinsmill.com)

## **The Retreat at Center Hill**

358 Relax Dr,  
Smithville, TN 37166  
615) 597-4298

## **Timber Ridge Inn**

16300 Smithville Hwy  
Silver Point, TN 38582  
(931) 858-4032

## **Bridgeway Motel**

713 W Broad St  
Smithville, TN 37166  
(615) 597-4166

## **Eastside Inn**

598 E Broad St  
Smithville, TN 37166  
(615) 318-1268

# PLAY

## **Harmony Lane Farm & Creamery**

285 Harmony Lane  
Smithville, TN 37166  
615-684-7659

## **Greenbrook Park**

812 Fisher Ave  
Smithville, TN 37166

## **The Harvester**

206 W Main St  
Smithville, TN 37166  
615-597-2000



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# MARINAS



## CENTER HILL MARINA

Center Hill Marina features over 600 rental slips, a fully stocked Ship Store, cabin rental, pontoon rental and a floating eatery The Copper Top Restaurant.

The Ship Store offers a full range from groceries to snack, cold drinks, beer, ice, boating supplies, marine parts, bait, tackle, resort apparel, sunglasses, souvenirs and many other essentials for your boating experience. It also offer non-ethanol fuel in 87 and 93 octane, as well as oil and propane exchanges.

After spending a full day out on the water, end the evening with a delicious meal at Copper Top Restaurant. It is open mid-May thru Labor Day and offers a wide variety of delicious foods.

Center Hill Marina is located at 450 Cove Hollow Circle, Lancaster. Visit their website at [www.ctrhill@dtccom.net](http://www.ctrhill@dtccom.net)

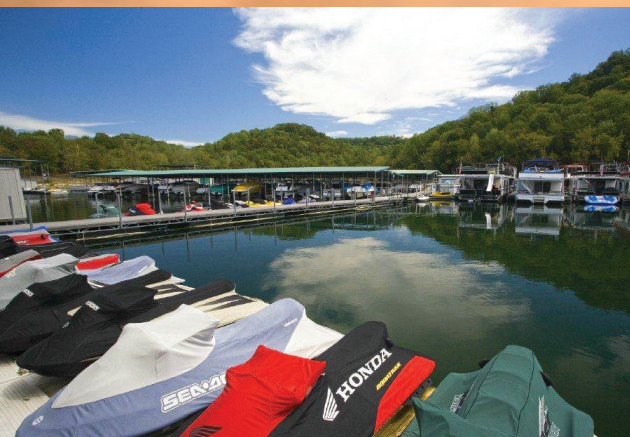
## COOKEVILLE BOAT DOCK

Cookeville Boat Dock is located at 13800 Cookeville Boat Dock Rd., Baxter, TN and is a family friendly marina. They offer yearly dockage, boat and gear rental, a pro shop, mechanical services along with a floating restaurant. This marina has been family owned and operated for over 50 years.

They offer pontoon and fishing boats, kayaks and stand up paddleboats. The store is stocked with everything from cold drink to wake boards.

Drive down or boat up and enjoy a meal with a beautiful view from the floating Lighthouse Restaurant,

The menu includes something for every taste- catfish, burgers, homemade pie, ice cold sweet tea, and fresh salads, just to name a few.



## EDGAR EVINS MARINA

Edgar Evins Marina is located inside Edgar Evins State Park, on one of Tennessee's cleanest and most beautiful lakes. You will discover the marina is family oriented, eco-friendly – a full service marina offering over 350 private slip rentals, security staff and coded entry gate, free wi-fi, plumbed in pump-out system throughout for boats withholding tanks, a full rental fleet including luxury houseboats, ski boats, pontoon, bass and fishing boats and jet skis.

The marina has its own gas island and a Ship's Store featuring grocery items, fishing license and tackle, boat supplies, live bait, film, apparel, refreshments, snacks and more.

The Galley, one of the finest restaurants on the water, features gourmet cuisine with indoor/outdoor dining.

Edgar Evins State Park is located at 1630 Edgar Evins Park Road, Silver Point, TN 38582



# HIDDEN HARBOR

Hidden Harbor Marina knows that boating is central to enjoying your vacation, provides an assortment of pontoon boat rentals, fishing boat rentals and houseboat rentals, so you can have several options! All boats are well-maintained and designed for your fun and enjoyment. Whether you are looking for a houseboat, pontoon, deck or fishing boat, you can find it right here.

After spending a fun day on the lake, pitch your tents at one of the camp sites or stay in one of the cozy cabins. Cabins are comfortable and welcoming home-away-from-home where your family and friends can grill out, relax and enjoy the surrounding beauty near the lake. We offer two different sizes of cabins for our guests to choose from. Each of these cabin rentals in Tennessee include a bathroom with shower, kitchenette with refrigerator, electric stove and oven, microwave oven, and cooking utensils for your convenience. Each cabin also has a front porch with charcoal BBQ, picnic table and rocking chairs so that you can enjoy the beautiful weather at Hidden Harbor Marina. With so many amenities, there isn't much for you to do except relax and enjoy your stay.

The Ship's Store at Hidden Harbor Marina carries all the supplies you might need including grocery items, cold drinks, souvenirs, fuel, fishing supplies and more. A short order grill is also located at the store.

Hidden Harbor Marina is located at 2685 Casey Cove Road, Smithville. Visit their web site at [www.hiddenharbortn.com](http://www.hiddenharbortn.com)

# HURRICANE MARINA

Hurricane Marina is located off Highway 56 North at 864 Floating Mill Road, Silver Point and offers 600 boat slips, boats and houseboat rentals.

Center Hill Lake's oldest marina has been transformed into a state-of-the-art facility in one of the lake's only natural harbors. From their 24-hour fuel stations that accept all major credit cards to the new Blue Water Grille restaurant, every inch of our marina was designed with the boat owner's convenience in mind.

The Ship Store has everything you need to host a party or outfit your boat on Center Hill Lake, and the golf cart valet service will take you directly from the parking lot to the pier. To ensure that you have the safest boating experience, Hurricane Marina has also installed an extra-wide main pier that won't buckle or warp over time and increased the lighting in parking areas and along all docks. A security gate and cameras throughout the marina and parking lot for your safety.

If you are hungry after a day on the lake check out the The Blue Water Grill. The restaurant was voted Best Restaurant on the Water" by Nashville Lifestyles Magazine. Menu items include appetizers, sandwiches, pizza, salads, steak, chicken, grouper and lobster. Visit them at [hurricane@suntexmarinas.com](mailto:hurricane@suntexmarinas.com)



# PATES FORD MARINA

Pates Ford Marina, located at the southern end of Center Hill Lake at 6323 Jefferson Road in Smithville, not only features pontoon boat rentals, boat slips, cabin rentals and FishLipz Grill, it plays host to numerous events including one of the largest on the lake, WakeFest.

The Annual In-Water Boat Show, scheduled to be held May 30-31, will feature houseboats, wake boats, pontoons, fishing boats, personal watercraft and more – all on the water and ready to drive. A new Sea-Doo Spark will be given away on Sunday after the show.

TNT Watersport's WakeFest is a community outreach event designed to promote the sport of wakeboarding. Started in 2005 on Old Hickory Lake, WakeFest has ever growing popularity not only locally but in the southeast. With divisions starting as young children and up to professional, all ages and skill levels are celebrated in this grassroots tournament.

In 2012, Wakefest re-located to Pates Ford Marina at Center Hill Lake in order to expand and attract an even larger group of riders and spectators. The re-location was a success with over 75 riders and 2,000 spectators making it one of the largest grassroots tournaments in the Southeast.

This year's Wakefest again will award thousands of dollars in prizes. For more information and registration details visit the marinas site at [www.patesfordmarina.com](http://www.patesfordmarina.com)



# SLIGO MARINA

Sligo Marina offers pontoon boat rentals, boat slip rentals, Ship's Store, cabin rentals, gas island, and the Wheel House Restaurant.

Pontoon boats are available for half-day and full-day rental. Double deck pontoon boats include a slide and have a 14 person limit. If you are looking for a place to store your boat at Center Hill Lake Sligo Marina has multiple options available. Slips available include covered and uncovered and can accommodate boat sizes ranging from Jet Ski's to large pontoon boats. The marina has a launch ramp and nightly tie-ups are available. Electricity and water are available.

A rental cabin is a great way to spend the weekend at Center Hill Lake. The rustic rental cabins sleep six and include three full beds, two baths, kitchenette, and screened porch. The cabins overlook the lake and include a boat slip.

The Sligo Ship's Store carries most common items needed for a day on the lake. There is also a gas island for boat refueling. If you are hungry after a day on the water stop by the Wheelhouse Restaurant for a great meal.



# FISH

## WHO DOESN'T LOVE TO FISH?

It's just one of the many favorite pastimes at Center Hill Lake. Whether fishing from the shore or a boat, enjoying casting for the big one year round. Fish species found in the lake include Largemouth Bass, Smallmouth Bass, White Bass, Spotted Bass, Rock Bass, Striped Bass, Walleye, Sunfish, Catfish, Crappie, Paddle Fish and Bluegill.

<u>FISH SPECIES</u>	<u>SIZE LIMIT</u>	<u>DAILY LIMIT</u>
Striped Bass	15 inches	No Limit
Large Mouth Bass	15 inches	5*
Small Mouth Bass	18 inches	5*
Spotted Bass	No Limit	5*
Rock Bass	No Limit	20
White Bass	15 inches	No Limit
Walleye	16 inches	5
Sunfish	No Limit	20
Crappie	10 inches	15
Paddlefish	Off Limits	Center Hill Lake is closed to taking or possessing paddlefish.
Catfish	No Limit	No Limit NOTE: Fishermen may only keep one catfish longer than 34 inches per day.

Tennessee State Fishing License to fish on Center Hill Lake is required anyone 13 years and older.

[WWW.TNWILDLIFE.ORG](http://WWW.TNWILDLIFE.ORG)

**CENTER HILL LAKE**  
**CANEY FORK RIVER**



**STRIPED BASS**



**LARGEMOUTH BASS**



**SMALLMOUTH BASS**



**SPOTTED BASS**



**ROCK BASS**



**WHITE BASS**



**WALLEYE**



**SUNFISH**



**PADDLEFISH**



**BLUEGILL**



**CHANNEL CATFISH**



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# RAILWAY HERITAGE

## The Cookeville Depot Museum

BY CHRIS TRAMEL

The golden age of train travel has long since passed. The days of billowing smoke stacks and the wailing of the train whistle echoing across the valleys is all but a distant memory today. But there are places along the highland rim where you can revisit those days and get a glimpse of the once might Tennessee Central Railway.

The Cookeville Depot Museum has a long history. The depot building was built in 1909, and was considered the crown jewel of the Tennessee Central line. From there, millions would travel along the lines, connecting the area to Nashville.

“The reason why the building was so special was because of its all brick construction and the pagoda style roof, which was very unusual in 1909,” Museum Manager Beth Thompson explained.

“We had over one million soldiers that came through this depot during World War II,” Thompson said. “It’s very special for that reason. It was not only an R and R site, with the USO right across the street, but it was also used in the Upper Cumberland for war games to train the troops. The terrain was very similar to that of France and Germany, and the Cumberland River had the same width and swiftness as the Rhine, so the military came her a lot, even before Pearl Harbor.”

In June 1941, Major General George S. Patton conducted maneuvers with the 2nd Armored Division in the vicinity of Manchester, Tennessee. By 25 July 1942, the War Department selected Cumberland University, in Lebanon, Tennessee as the location of the Headquarters for the Army Ground Forces field problems, commonly known as the Tennessee Maneuvers.

While the depot was a vital transportation hub in times of war, it was also important to the civilian population, and the building reflects its time when segregation was in effect. “During the time of passenger service, between 1909 and 1955, the depot ran under the “Jim Crow” laws, which were current at the time,” Thompson explained. “So, this building has two waiting rooms, a white waiting room and a segregated waiting room.”

Jim Crow laws were a collection of state and local statutes that legalized racial segregation. Named after a Black minstrel show character, the laws, which existed for about 100 years, were meant to marginalize African Americans.

“The museum also has a baggage room and a station agent’s office, which has a beautiful bay window in it so the station agent could look up and down the tracks,” Thompson said.

With the creation of better highways and interstates, passenger trains slowly fell out of favor by the midcentury. This left many historical buildings in disrepair and in danger of being demolished. But through the efforts of local volunteers, some of that history was able to be saved.

“By 1955, the passenger rail service had stopped and by the mid-60s the depot was pretty much out of service,” Thompson said. “In the mid-70s they scheduled the destruction of all the depots on the Tennessee Central line, along with most of the rail.”

“There was a group of very concerned individuals who became concerned about losing the building,” Thompson continued. “They went to the City Counsel and convinced the City of Cookeville to buy the depot from the railroad, which they did for \$1.”





Restoration began afterwards, mostly by a few city employees and a bunch of volunteers. Ten years later, by 1985, it was opened as a museum and put on the National Historic Register.

Besides the building itself, the museum features a 1913 Baldwin steam engine, a 4-6-0 iron horse designated as #509, as well as a Tennessee Central red caboose from the mid-1910s. The museum also features two small track cars.

Inside the building the museum displays many different artifacts from the history of rail. "We have a lot of lanterns, and signal flags, railway uniforms, and even a railroad pocket watch," Thompson said. "The baggage room has been converted into a kid's area with a ticket booth where they can sell tickets, a train table and movies and entertainment. We have a G-scale Thomas the Train running around inside."

"In our front room we have a HO scale model railroad display depicting Cookeville in 1955, and we have a small gift shop."

While the Cookeville Depot managed to be saved from the wrecking crews, other depots along the line were not as fortunate. But according to Thompson, some of that history has been reborn. "Both the Baxter and Monterey depots were torn down in the 1970s, but both buildings have now been rebuilt. Both are now used as museums and welcome centers. Monterey features a dining car for their location, while Baxter has been gifted a 1960s caboose."

The Cookeville Depot Museum is located at 116 W Broad Street, Cookeville, TN 38501, and is open Tuesdays through Saturdays, from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. with free admission. You can contact them at (931) 528-8570 or at [www.cookeville-tn.gov/307/Cookeville-Depot-Museum](http://www.cookeville-tn.gov/307/Cookeville-Depot-Museum).



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# The Splendor of CEDARS OF LEBANON

BY CHRIS TRAMEL

Middle Tennessee is unique in its topography and geology. One of Tennessee's three Grand Divisions, the area offers different elevations, which in turn contain a variety of habitats, some with species of plant life exclusive to the area. Comprised of the Central Basin, the Highland Rim and the Cumberland Plateau, forest and plant systems intertwine, bringing with it a variety of birds and wildflowers. Cedars of Lebanon State Park is one of those places where you can see the splendor of nature, with some species found nowhere else in the world.

Located in eastern Wilson County, just on the edge of what is considered the Central Basin, Cedars of Lebanon State Park was named for the eastern red cedar trees found throughout the area. The trees reminded early American settlers of the famed Biblical cedar forests that thrived across Mount Lebanon.

Park Manager Jeff Buchanan said that the purpose of the park is to preserve the topographic and cedar glade environment that is common to the area, particularly the eastern Middle Tennessee area. "We have the largest preserved complex of that environment in the State of Tennessee. The park, the forest, and the natural area together is about 10,000 acres."

## EXPLORE MORE!

"It was originally a National Recreation Area as part of the WPA Park system (Works Progress Administration) through the National Park Service, then they donated it to the state in 1955."

President Franklin D. Roosevelt created the WPA as part of his New Deal plan to lift the country out of the Great Depression by reforming the financial system and restoring the economy to pre-Depression levels.

Characterized by thin limestone soils and little surface water, the area is forested with eastern red cedar or by hardwoods on low hills or where deep soils occur. Forests are interspersed with extensive level open cedar glades, unique habitats that support rare or endemic plants, and attract birds of open country such as indigo bunting, prairie warbler, field sparrow and yellow-breasted chat. Adjacent oak-hickory woods are home to forest species such as barred and eastern screech owl, tanagers, vireos, and several warblers. Over 121 species have been recorded.

"We have 19 different species of rare plants that are only common to the cedar glade environment," Buchanan said. "Several of the species are endangered."

The 1,139-acre park has 117 campsites equipped with picnic tables and grills, and electric and water hookups. A modern group lodge, open year-round for organized groups, has a total sleeping capacity of 80 people. The park also has nine two-bedroom cabins accommodating up to five people. They are fully furnished with a complete kitchen, living area, and one bathroom. There is a queen-sized bed downstairs, a king-sized bed upstairs, and a twin in the loft.

# STATE PARK

“We feature about 12 mile of hiking trails that show off the topography and cedar glade environment,” Buchanan said. “We also have a couple of caves that are open seasonably to exploration. We have a campground here, as well as a group lodge, rental cabins and a couple of assembly buildings. We also have horseback trails, but we do not rent horses.”

There are also a couple of new additions to the park opening this season. “We have a brand new splash pad that we are going to open this year,” Buchanan explained. “We are also planning to open a brand new ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) style trail in the next month or so.”



Jackson Cave

The Sadie Ford Heritage Farm and Cultural Art Center is also close by. It occupies 73.3 acres opposite the entrance to Cedars of Lebanon State Park and represents a cultural landscape with a high level of historic integrity. The house and outbuildings, including a milking barn, livestock barn and corncrib, are characteristic of an early-to-mid 20th-century working farm. As the last extant pre-park farm in the area, this property allows the park to create a furnished, functioning farm circa 1920-1937 for an immersive, year-round, and educational experience of living history open to the public.

So, if you want to get back to nature, breathe the fresh air and taken the unique beauty of Middle Tennessee, look no further that Cedars of Lebanon State Park. You can visit them at 328 Cedar Forest Road, Lebanon, TN 37090, or contact them at 615-443-2769 or at [tnstateparks.com/parks/cedars-of-lebanon](http://tnstateparks.com/parks/cedars-of-lebanon).

The Nature Center & Butterfly Garden

*“The park, the forest, and the natural area together is about 10,000 acres.”*

*- Jeff Buchanan, Park Manager*



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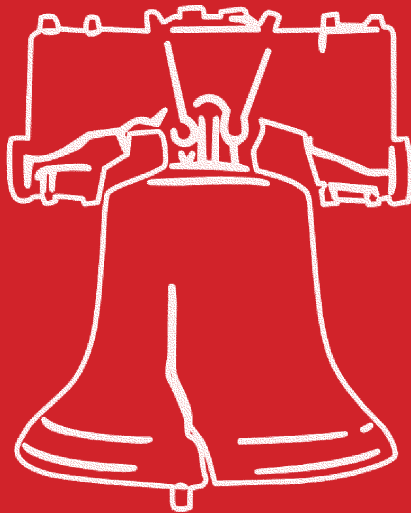


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