By JENNIFER PEEBLES

SCHOOLS

pick up garbage from county busi-

nesses brought less trash to the coun-

ty incinerator in April than they did in March, a shortage that could

speed up the county's efforts to go in-

The

school

pride

built

By JENNIFER PEEBLES

In a one-room school in Cairo, a

community shared hopes, dreams

and raised their children together

Built on a Sears, Roebuck and Co. execu-

tive's philanthropy and a community's will-

ingness to dig deep in its pockets, this is one

schoolroom that doesn't look big enough to

But it held the hopes and dreams of a community for a better life for its children.

pipes or electrical wires during much of its

life as a school, but it was equipped with the

love — and the community support — it need-

And for the now-grown children of the Cairo Rosenwald School, the white-clap-

board walls around its one tiny schoolroom

are still big enough and strong enough to hold

an entire world view of what it was like to

grow up in a mostly black farming communi-

ty in the World War II era. It is a philosophy that taught the need for education, commit-

ment to hard work and regular church-going

— not to mention the valuable lesson that an

exploded pressure cooker is very hard to

"You've heard it takes a village to raise a

child?" asks Lester Mae Hill, a Cairo student

in the 1940s. "Well, the village raised the kids

When the children of the Cairo School -

and their parents, children and grandchil-

dren — get back together May 17, they will mark a new era in the life of the little one-

room building on Ziegler's Fort Road, which

A plaque to be unveiled that day will show

closed in 1958 after 36 years as a school.

Don't forget

There's more Sumner County

news in the local, sports, living and

business sections, plus other news

from the world, nation and state.

It may not have been outfitted with water

hold much more than memories.

ed to rear two generations.

# SUMNER TODAY



# Trash haulers short of quota again

Resource a reporter, this is still my favorite. 30 days to improve – or else

to its own trash-hauling business.

The seven private haulers — including three large companies and GALLATIN — The companies that four smaller ones — brought 3,072.5 tons of trash to the Sumner County

Resource Authority in April, or

about 927.5 tons short of a monthly

quota they agreed on in early March.

garbage to the incinerator in March, an amount 781.3 tons shy of the 4,000-

tons-per-month quota.
"I think if the numbers don't change much, I think the board may go ahead with the franchise," said Resource Authority General Manager Bob Brown

The authority is threatening to go into business against the private haulers to make sure the incinerator

has the garbage needed to burn. One of the incinerator's two boil-

"You've heard it takes a village to raise a child? Well, the village raised the kids here." - Lester Mae Hill

school there and Ruby Williams' husband attended school there.

owned building in Sumner County to be so

The former students may look back fondly

at their schooling at Cairo (pronounced KAY-

ro, like the corn syrup), but it was by no

means easy. The school itself was born in an

era of racial segregation that did not end in

Sumner County until 12 years after the Cairo

They attended a one-room school, fetched

water with a pail and used outhouses, while

white students learned in better facilities

with modern conveniences. They walked to

get an education while Sumner's white stu-

at the school last week to talk about their ex-

as youngsters — smaller people sat in the

Several of the Cairo students got together

They took seats in the old desks they sat in

dents rode buses.

that the school is listed on the National small seats for the younger grades, bigger

Register of Historic Places, the first black- people in the bigger seats for the junior high-

HENDERSONVILLE

Steeple Players are not using

Hendersonville First United Meth-

odist Church's stage and their grand

musical productions to preach the

But their grand-scale perfor-

mances have brought people of all

faiths and backgrounds into this building, whether it be to belt out a

February because of a shortage.

The Resource Authority's directors voted last week to give the haulers 30 days to bring more trash and meet the quota, or the authority may create its own trash-hauling op-

eration by this summer, Brown said.

The major hauling companies, such as the big three — Browning-Ferris Industries, Waste Management Inc. and Sanifill — own their own private landfills where they can dump garbage without paying a "tip-

The haulers brought 3,218.7 tons of ers was shut down almost 24 hours in ping fee," a \$46-per-ton fee the authority charges each time a truck dumps its load at the incinerator's trash pit.

The Resource Authority's directors have told Brown to write a letter to the haulers, "basically telling them what the numbers are, and if they don't improve then we'll go ahead with the franchise.'

The authority's board meets again at 5 p.m. May 19 at the Resource Authority headquarters, 625 Rappahannock Wire Road, Gallatin.



## If you see a tourist, say howdy!

If you see any visitors wandering around Sumner County today, give them a big ol' Sumner County smile and tell them to come back and see

I'm sure most Sumner County residents are always nice to our visitors, but being nice today has special meaning. Today is National Tourist Appreciation Day. In fact, this week — May 4-10 — is Tourism Week, and the month of May has been declared National Tourism Month.

shows that Sumner County, as well as the state, has many reasons to appreciate our visitors.

Tennessee has at least 7.7 billion reasons to be nice to our visitors; that's how many dollars travelers spent here in 1995, a 6.4% increase over 1994. That amount ranks Tennessee 15th among the 50 states. Traveler expenditures generated 138,600 jobs, the tourism industry the second-largest employer in

County spent \$43.65 million, which represents an increase of 10.53% over 1994. The increase compares favorably with the statewide average increase of 6.4% and the average 7% increase in the 13 Middle Tennessee counties that comprise the Greater Nashville Regional Council.

Tennessee's 95 counties in traveler expenditures, which created more than 520 jobs and a payroll in excess of \$7.2 million. More than \$880,000 of local tax revenues were generated in Sumner County by travelers in

A lot has happened locally in tourism promotion in the last two years. An effort by the United Chambers of Commerce of Sumner County has resulted in the Sumner County Commission investing more of the county's hotel occupancy tax collections in tourism promotions. The United Chamber Board created a position for a full-time tourism director, and I was fortunate to be

hired into that position in May 1995. Since that time, 362 rooms in four hotels have been added within the county. With that addition, Sumner County is now better able to host large events like the BassMasters Tennessee Top 100 fishing tournament held last October at Rockland

Sumner County by the more than 400 visitors during the fishing tournament. They slept in hotels, ate at restaurants, bought gas, shopped and visited our attractions and historical sites. Research shows these 'new" dollars turned over twice before they left the county, which makes the local economic impact of the event a conservative \$750,000.

So, you may ask again, what does all this mean to the average Sumner County resident? The answer is simple — tax dollars. Every time a dollar is spent here, half of the local sales tax money collected goes di-

So when you see a visitor, go out of your way to help them. If you see an out-of-town or out-of-state license tag on a car, be a little bit more patient as they try to find their way. To borrow a phrase used several years ago by the Tennessee Department of Tourism, "Be very nice to our visi-

tourism director.

Sumner Voices welcomes your

The most recent information available from the U.S. Data Center

Sumner County ranks 20th among

So what does all of this mean? It means that tourism is serious busi-

ness in Tennessee.

At least \$250,000 was spent in

#### Turn to PAGE 2G, Column 1 munity into the Christian world and

\$10 and the performance will be at 7 p.m.

famine after interpreting the dream

spired, the roster of performances

put on by the three-year-old Steeple

Players reads more like those on

Broadway marquees, such as Alice in

Wonderland, Fiddler on the Roof, Steel

Magnolias, and Godspell.
"Our outlook is to bring the com-

Although this play is biblically in-

of an Egyptian pharoah.

Call the church at 824-8725 for more information.

# Frost takes some

many of the early variety strawberries were killed by the Spring frosts, the county's agricultural extension leader promises there will be plenty of other great-tasting berries for this year's annual festival in Portland. On 3G.

## Local road repairs

for the group.

Edith Glover, her daughter Angela Sweatt and

Sweatt's daughter Angela at Cairo School.

The Steeple Players will perform Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor

Tomorrow's performance will benefit Habitat for Humanity. Tickets are

Friday and Saturday performances are also at 7 p.m. and Sunday's will

leader who rescues Egypt from the Christian world into the commu-

Dreamcoat tomorrow through Sunday at Hendersonville First United

be at 2:30 p.m. The ticket price for Friday, Saturday and Sunday is \$5.

If you're planning to hit the road this week, take a moment to re-

nity," said Cay Barton, a choreogra-

that have a good message to them."

are real sappy," Barton chuckled.

pher and all-around trouble-shooter

There are a lot of secular plays

Plus, "a lot of the Christian plays

Hendersonville First United

Methodist is one of Sumner County's



of road construction projects in Sumner County. The map, updat-

Tennessee behind health care.
In 1995, travelers in Sumner

Recreation Area in Hendersonville.

rectly to our schools.

tors. They're very nice to us."

Randy Cline is the Sumner County

columns on topics of interest about Sumner County. Send your contributions by fax or mail to the number and

SUMNER TODAY

Wednesdays in The Tennessean

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From left, Ruby Williams, Lester Mae Hill and Verdell Williams stand in front of the historic Cairo School, Hill and Verdell Williams attended

aged students, the seats with the initials and

hearts carved into them, with the gaping cir-

cles cut out in the upper-right corner where

They say time makes some things bigger

"I was thinking about the size of this build-

"We used to run around the building,

Hollerman, who retired last year after 35

His wife, Frances, also attended the school

Steeple Players revel in amazing technicolor

**Getting there** 

years as a teacher, most of them in the

Sumner schools, was a student at Cairo from

ing," said Walter Hollerman, a former Cairo

around the sides of it, and inside it looked

like the size of the Kroger store in Gallatin."

This is some of what they had to say.

Back then, it was one for all

the inkwells once were placed.

and other things smaller.

Turn to PAGE 3G, Column 3

## sweetness out of strawberry fest

## COMMUNITY NEWS

view our map But don't despair. Even though

> ed weekly, gives you the latest on new and ongoing projects. On 4G.



tion, with newcomer Kyle Stewart

revealing a natural ability for the

sport. On 6G.



## 'Good As Gold' recipes

1. Place the strawberries in a medi-

um-sized saucepan. Cover and cook

over medium heat for five to eight min-

utes, until it looks like soup. Transfer to

2. Without washing it first, use the

same saucepan for this step. Combine

the comstarch sugar, and lemon juice

3. Pour the still-hot strawberry soup

back into the comstarch mixture, whisk-

ing constantly. Return the pan to the

stove, and cook over medium heat,

stirring constantly until thick. This

Remove from heat, and stir in the

4. Transfer back to the same bowl

the strawberries had been in and cool

processor or blender, and return to the

6. Fold in the whipped cream and

bowl. Cover tightly and chill until cold.

From The Enchanted Broccoli

Red Wine & Cassis Strawberries

3 cups ripe strawberries, washed

3 tablespoons cassis (black cur-

rant-flavored liqueur) or creme de

3/4 cup dry, fruity red wine

4 tablespoons sour cream

cookies (optional)

mures (blackberry-flavored liqueur)

1. Quarter the berries, and place

them in a bowl with the sugar, liqueur,

2. Spoon the berries and marinate

into wine goblets for serving. If desired,

top each dessert with a dollop of sour

From Good As Gold: America's

Finest Chefs and Famous Cooks

Celebrate 100 years of the Modern

wine and mint. Mix well and serve

immediately, or refrigerate for up to

eight hours until serving time.

cream, and serve with a cookie.

Serves four.

Olympic Games.

1 tablespoon shreded peppermint

5. Puree until smooth in a food

should take about five minutes.

lemon rind.

and hulled

(optional)

to room temperature.

Serves four to six.

3 tablespoons sugar

in the pan, and whisk until uniform.

a medium-sized bowl and set aside.



Probably the best way in the world to eat strawberries is standing in a kneedeep patch pulling them off the vine. That's when they are warm and juicy and the sweetest.

But if there are any berries left over from your picking adventure try one of these recipes.

Just plain strawberries with cream and a little sugar is

divine. A little more sophisticated dessert is strawberries with a splash of liqueur poured over top.

#### **Dixie Strawberry Shortcake**

2 quarts ripe strawberries, hulled 1 recipe Beth's Buttermilk

- Biscuits (see below) 4 tablespoons sugar
- 1 large egg, beaten
- cup heavy cream
- 1 tablespoon vanilla extract 1/4 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1 cup reduced-fat sour cream

Preparation time: 30 minutes. Cooking time: 12 minutes.

1. Preheat the oven to 450 degrees Fahrenheit. Using a food processor or blender, puree one cup of the berries and pour into a serving bowl. Slice the remaining berries; toss with the puree and set aside

2. Prepare the dough, sifting two tablespoons of the sugar with the flour and adding the beaten egg with the buttermilk. Pat down the dough to 1 1/2 inches thick; cut with a 3 1/2-inch round cutter (preferably fluted) into six shortcakes, re-rolling the scraps as you go. Bake on an ungreased baking sheet for 12 minutes or until golden and puffy.

3. While the biscuits bake, in a clean medium-size bowl with an electric mixer on high, beat the heavy cream until frothy. Add the remaining sugar, vanilla, and cinnamon, beating until stiff, then fold in the sour cream. To serve, split the hot biscuits and generously layer with beries and cream, inside and on top. Makes six servings.

#### **Beth's Buttermilk Biscuits**

2 cups sifted all-purpose flour 1 tablespoon baking powder

1 teaspoon salt 1/2 teaspoon baking soda 1/3 cup solid vegetable shorten-

2 tablespoons unsalted butter or margarine, at room temperature 3/4 cup low-fat buttermilk

Preparation time: 20 minutes. Cooking time: 12 minutes.

Follow directions in Dixie Strawberry Shortcake recipe for preparing the biscuits.

Both recipes from Reader's Digest Down Home Cooking - The New, Healthier Way.

### Fresh Strawberry Mousse

4 cups sliced strawberries 6 tablespoons cornstarch 1/2 to 2/3 cup fresh lemon juice

1 teaspoons grated lemon rind 1/2 pint heavy cream, whipped



By ROCHELLE CARTER Staff Writer

PORTLAND — As many as half of the early variety berries in this area were damaged by late spring frosts, but there still should be plenty available for the 56th Annual Portland Strawberry Festival next week.

Farmers saw temperatures dip below freezing many mornings last month, according to the National Weather Service in Nashville. As a result, they lost a lot of their Early Glow berries, a "real good, sweet early variety" that is susceptible to frost occurring in the late spring, said Wesley Myers, Sumner County's agricultural extension leader and a strawberry farmer.

"They bloom earlier and they have been damaged some, probably as much as 50%," Myers said.

This year's strawberry season will be shorter because so many blossoms didn't make it through frigid April nights. Plus, our uncommonly cool spring is slowing down the ripening process, Myers said.

"Usually, we will have some ripe and ready to pick by the first weekend in May," Myers said. This year, "most strawberry fields will be in full production by the 14th.

"A lot of people would like to be picking by the weekend before that and, normally, we would be, but be-cause of the frost and the cool tem
"We will more than likely have a fairly good crop," Myers said. ■

#### Festival schedule

The 56th Annual Portland Strawberry Festival starts at 7 p.m. next Wednesday with the church choir concert in the Portland High au-

ANGIE WALTON / STAFF

The Kiwanis Club will have its prayer breakfast 7 a.m. Thursday, May 15, at McKendree Memorial United Methodist Church, 208 Wheeler St. May 16 is Chamber Day at the I-65 Tennessee Welcome Center from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Saturday, May 17, starts at 6 a.m. with the Rotary Pancake Breakfast. The Strawberry Stride 5K and Fun Run starts at 8 a.m. at Meadowbrook Park. The 56th annual Strawberry

Parade will be at 1 p.m. Call 325-9032 for information.

peratures we might not be picking

too many by Mother's Day.' On rare occasions, berries from other locales had to be shipped in for the festival, said Alice Walker, executive director of the Portland Chamber of Commerce.

Farmers have planted several varieties of mid- and late-season berries such as All-Star, Honey Eye, Cardinal, Red Chief, and Guardian, so there should be plenty of other

berries available, Myers said.

Tiny Cairo School holds much more than memories

FROM PAGE 1G

with him. She walked 10 miles, round trip, to school and back each

"Back then, it was fun to us," Frances Hollerman said.

Walter Hollerman, who now lives in Gallatin, recalls the pros and cons of learning in a school where grades 1-8 were lumped together.

Students had more freedom to learn at their own pace, he said.

"If he was teaching eighth-grade mathematics, and he was teaching fractions, and I was in the fourth grade, I could get fractions then or I could come back to it later. You were exposed to all the subject matter in all the grades.'

On the other hand, "No teacher is good at all the subjects. Back then, we had one teacher teaching it all."

#### Parents did more than attend PTA meetings

Today, parental involvement in the schools might mean going to a PTA meeting once a month.

At the Cairo School, the parents spent more than a year raising the money to get the school built.

In those pre-government-lunchprogram days, parents donated the food that was cooked on the kitchen's wood-burning stove and served to the students.

"They had a canning committee, and they would come down here to the school and they would can vegetables they had brought," Hill recalled, as some of her schoolmates jokingly urged her to tell the infamous pressure-cooker story.

"At one time they had a pressure cooker here, and one day the pressure cooker blew up when they were canning. [Its contents] went up to the top of the ceiling and it was up there 'til ... oh, when I graduated it was still

There was no running water in the school until 1953, when a pump house was built. (It pumped distasteful sulphur water.) Before then, beginning in 1922, students were dispatched with a bucket across the road, where student Elnora Jackson's father, Charles (Jack) Robb, offered them water.

For toilet facilities, the children used boys and girls' outhouses, one of which is still standing today.

A large pot-bellied stove sat for a time at the front of the schoolroom, recalled Mary E. Hogan, who attended the school in the 1920s and sent two sons to it as well.

"We called it 'Big Belly,' " she said. 'And one day, somebody came and stole Big Belly.

"We didn't have any linoleum," she said, motioning at the yellow covering that has been installed in recent years. "Our floor was wood and we had to put oil on it to keep the dirt

But the community overcame what it did not have by sticking to-

"From this one-room school," said Verdell Williams, a student at Cairo from 1938-44, "we got lawyers, we got nurses, we got preachers, teachers. They all started right here in this one-room school. Dietitians.

... With the morals and the things that our parents believed — they believed in going to church, and they believed in doing right, and they believed in hard work and they believed in working for everything they got, and nobody gave us anything,"

"Still don't," another voice adds.

#### The picture of philanthropy still hangs in Cairo School

"We would have box suppers, pie suppers, to raise the money," re-called Edna Hollerman, Walter Hollerman's mother.

She knows both sides of the story. Of her 13 children, all of them attended the Cairo School - except, she said, "my baby." (In case you're wondering, the baby is now an assistant principal at Gallatin High School. And Mrs. Hollerman has 45

great-grandchildren.) Edna Hollerman also attended school in what the Cairo students refer to as "the old school," a long-gone structure that was the precursor to the existing Cairo school building. It stood near where the current school stands today.

How old was the old school? Mrs. Hollerman, 87, started there when she was four.

Then, in the early 1920s, a Chicagoan who would never set foot in Cairo made big news.

The foundation formed by Julius Rosenwald (1862-1932), a philanthropist who made a fortune as an early investor and executive of Sears, Roebuck and Co. who was committed to helping black people, offered to put up \$500 to build a school in Cairo.

The Rosenwald Fund built 5,300 schools in 15 Southern states in the early part of the century.

The group also offered scholarships and fellowships and funded health services for blacks, but the cookie-cutter, largely one-room schools that popped up all over seven were built in Sumner County



A group of former students and their family and friends gather at the Cairo School last week. Many families had multiple generations who attended the small, one-room school.

## County's first, but largely forgotten, community

Before Tennessee pioneer James Winchester died in Before that, they made a bid to become Sumner's county the early 19th century, he reflected on the two cities he had helped found — a Cumberland River port city called Cairo in Sumner County and a Mississippi River port town called Memphis.

His assessment was different than the ones we modern-day folk might have, says Sumner County historian Walter T. Durham.

"He felt that Cairo had been successful, and Memphis had been a failure," said Durham, who wrote a biography of Winchester. Cairo - a good chunk of which is now under the wa-

ters of Old Hickory Lake — was Sumner County's first real town, founded in the 1790s in the county's southeastern "It was a good-sized town," Durham said.

It also was a planned community — streets and alleys were laid out and lots sold for development.

It was such a thriving town, Cairo residents made a pitch to become the state capital in the early 1800s.

seat, but the state legislature snubbed them, in favor of laying out a new town, to be called Gallatin.

Cairo boasted large warehouses that stored cotton, tobacco and other commodities for shipment to the major ports at Natchez, Miss., and New Orleans. Winchester and business partner William Cage also

ran a large general store that sold everything you could need to live on the Tennessee frontier, Durham said. 'Cairo looked like it was going to really take off,"

Durham said. But Gallatin's rise would be part of Cairo's fall, Durham said.

Gallatin was just three miles from the river even then. And the county seat just seemed like the place to be, the

"creme de la creme" of county towns, he said. Winchester and Cage's town planning also was a bit

'A lot of it was just overpromotion," Durham said. "The area was not ready for that much town."

is most noted for today.

A brown-tinted photograph of Rosenwald still hangs in the school, above the doorway.

\$1,900. The county government which at the time wasn't doing much to educate black students—chipped in \$700. Cairo would have to match

"One of Mr. Brinkley's favorites was the 19th Psalm," Walter Hollerman said. "I can still recite that amount.

It took "a couple-three years" to raise the money, Mrs. Hollerman re-

They had all kinds of fund-raising methods, including forming a club money in the month their birthday

The school was built in 1922, according to blueprints the Rosenwald people used for all its one-room schools, said Velma Brinkley of Gallatin, daughter-in-law of late Cairo teacher J. Hutch Brinkley. Though she didn't attend the school, she researched its history and worked to get it on the National Register and the Tennessee Register of Historic Places.

### The principal, teacher and even a cook

You really get to know your teacher well after eight years of school with them, Walter Hollerman

"You looked up to them as role models - basically because you didn't know any other teachers.'

J. Hutch Brinkley, of Gallatin, taught at the Cairo School briefly in the late 1920s, then transferred to another school district and served in the Navy

In 1945, he returned and taught there until the county closed the Cairo School.

"He was the principal, the teacher, the substitute cook," joked Velma Brinkley, who is married to Hutch's son Frank, also a school ad-

"The janitor. Whatever else needed to be done, he did." Substitute cook? It helped that

the kitchen area was put in the front of the schoolroom. The school had two cooks in that

period - Nannie Turner and Hester Patterson, whose daughter, Odelia Patterson Jenkins, was a student at the school. ("Mrs. Patterson Lord, she could cook some cornbread," joked Hill.) But every now and then the cooks

couldn't make it. So Mr. Brinkley worked a double shift.

"He cooked and he taught and he never missed a class," Hill said. "He would stand up here and teach and be peeling potatoes.

Whenever things like that came alone — would be what Rosenwald up, it was like things just moved on.

You almost didn't recognize it." Mr. Brinkley would call on stu-dents from the kitchen to recite

while he prepared lunch, Velma The total school construction cost Brinkley said. "They just had to 900. The county government — speak loudly so he could hear."

most of it today."

Bible study was a regular part of the curriculum.

"Every day before we would start the day, we always had devotion," Hill said, as Verdell Williams continthat called on members to donate ued for her: "which consisted of a spiritual song and reading from the Bible, and prayer. And each one of us had to perform one of those functions during the year."

#### An era eventually must come to an end

In 1958, the county decided to "consolidate" the outlying black schools and closed Cairo School.

The Cairo Improvement Club, the local civic group - many of whose members are Cairo students — has been using the school ever since as a community center.

They've kept the school in good shape through the years, and no major additions or renovations have been done to the building since it was built - unless you count the installation of the cement wheelchairaccess ramp.

No one kept a formal count of how many students were educated in the 36 years of the Cairo School, Velma Brinkley said.

One of J. Hutch Brinkley's class

## **Getting there**

An open house and dedication service at Cairo School is scheduled for 2 p.m. Saturday, May 17.

The ceremony will open with a service at Williams Chapel Church, across the road from the school. After the church service, the bronze National Register of Historic Places plaque will be unveiled at the school by local and state officials.

A reception will be held inside the school building. The school's bell will be one

of the items on display at the reception, along with a school register, report cards, photographs and other artifacts. The public is invited. There is

no admission charge. The school is near the intersection of Zieglers Fort Road

and Cairo Road.

To get there, take Cairo Road from Gallatin and follow it until it dead-ends at Zieglers Fort Road. There, take a left on Zieglers Fort. The school is on

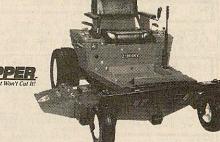
registers has been saved, and it shows he had 30 students that partic-

ular year, she said. "Miss Edna, when you were making all those pies and frying all those fish, did you ever think ...?" she

asked Edna Hollerman.

"No," Miss Edna replied. "I sure

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